

Israel as a Monarchy (1100 – 930 BCE)

The Book of Psalms

Psalms of the Troubled Soul

Readings: *Psalm 5, 6, 7, 10, 11*

Reflections:

- This first grouping of Psalms reflects his complete trust in God in the midst of great danger and threat. Many times in this section the writer David contrasts his own intimate relationship with God to that of his enemy who completely disregards God. He contrasts his own complete dependence on God as opposed to the self-righteous, sinful and hateful character of his enemy. He will express deep emotion and at the same time deep confidence in God as his shield, refuge, deliverer and protector. He calls on God to deal with these enemies and sees God as the one to fight his battles for him.
- Aspects of God's character also shine through: "your unfailing love," "O righteous God who searches minds and hearts," "saves the upright in heart," "righteous judge, a God who expresses his wrath every day," "the victim commits himself to you, you are the helper of the fatherless," "the Lord is King forever and ever."
- What transferrable principles can we extract from these Psalms? First, in Jesus we learn that we as Christ-followers only war against spiritual enemies but must actively love our human enemies (Ephesians 6:10ff). In light of this, we can use these Psalms to help us remember our stance against the spiritual forces that oppose us. Second, the Psalms help us remember God's character and his heart for us when we come to him as weak, needy, humble, and dependent. Third, it encourages us to be completely transparent with God in our prayers and worship. David and the other writers just let all their emotions, questions, fears and frustrations all hang out before God. We are free to be completely real and authentic with God. Lastly, the Psalms remind us that our journey with God is not about ease and comfort but about ongoing struggle and character transformation.
- We will see throughout the Psalms that God is the God of the weak, the foolish and the needy. In this way the Psalms align fully with the meta-narrative, the story of God choosing the foolish to shame the wise and working through the weak to shame

the powerful. So if you feel completely weak, useless or lost, you are a top candidate for God to use you to do something significant for his kingdom!