
Day 12 – May 5

Israel as a Monarchy (1100 – 930 BCE)

Psalms of Joy and Praise

Readings: *Psalm 139, 145, 148, 150*

Reflections:

- Psalm 139: A song by David about ultimate intimacy with God. Notice throughout this psalm that there is no hint whatsoever of anything religious or ritualistic. It is all deep, intimate personal relationship. God is ever present, ever intimate, all knowing and all loving. There is not a place you can go where God can not reach you. God knows every atom of your body and every secret thought of your heart. He loves you that much. This deep love for God fuels David's hate for God's enemies. In time we will learn something that David missed. God does not ultimately want to wage war on human enemies. God's greatest enemies are spiritual enemies (Eph. 6:10-20). As David concludes he opens wide his heart for God to change him from the inside out. Again, David does not appeal to sacrifices or the Law but rather simply turns to God and says, "You know my heart, change my heart as you lead me by your presence."
- Psalm 145: This psalm opens by declaring that God is worthy of praise because of his amazing love and wonderful works. It then outlines how God expresses his love. What an amazing truth to meditate on:
 - "The Lord is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and rich in love, the Lord is good to all, he has compassion on all he has made."
 - "The Lord is faithful to all his promises and loving towards all he has made. The Lord upholds all those who fall and lifts up all who are bowed down (humble)."
 - "The eyes of all look to you and you give them their food at the proper time. You open your hand and satisfy the desire of every living creature."
 - "The Lord is righteous in all his ways and loving towards all he has made. The Lord is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth."
 - "He fulfills the desires of those who fear him; he hears their cry and saves them. The Lord watches over all who love him...."

What great reminders of how much God loves us and loves to be in close, personal relationship with each of us.

- Psalm 148 and 150: Songs of praise to God.