

PSALM 76-150

76 – God is God over the battle, any battle. What battles do we fight as Christians? Consider these verses. V10 “Surely the wrath of man shall praise you; the remnant of wrath you will put on like a belt.” V3 “There he broke the flashing arrows, the shield, the sword, and the weapons of war.” V6 “At your rebuke, O God of Jacob, both rider and horse lay stunned.” Commit your battles to the Lord for this day.

77 – The psalmist says things like, “I miss you Lord. You used to be close. Where have you gone? How long will you be gone? I will remember the times of the past.” V11 “I will remember the deeds of the Lord; yes, I will remember your wonders of old.” Is this the kind of prayer Jesus might have prayed in the garden when he was about to be arrested? V4 “You hold my eyelids open; I am so troubled that I cannot speak.”

78 – This psalm recounts the history of the nation of Israel. It shows the following pattern. God is good, gracious, bountiful, merciful and kind. The people rejected that and disobeyed his commands continually, no matter what. V37-38 “Their heart was not steadfast toward him; they were not faithful to his covenant. Yet he, being compassionate, atoned for their iniquity and did not destroy them; he restrained his anger often and did not stir up all his wrath.” V4 “We will not hide them from their children, but tell to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the Lord and his might, and the wonders that he has done.” V32 “In spite of all this, they still sinned; despite his wonders, they did not believe.” Despite all the rejection and disobedience, God remained faithful. V72 “With upright heart he shepherded them and guided them with his skillful hand.”

79 – This prayer points out to God that invasions of enemies into the land of his people reflect badly on him. The psalmist calls on God to avenge. V10 “Why should the nations say, ‘Where is their God?’ Before our eyes, make known among the nations that you avenge the outpoured blood of your servants.” V8-9 “Do not remember against us our former iniquities; let your compassion come speedily to meet us, for we are brought very low. Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of your name; deliver us, and atone for our sins, for your name’s sake!” Note how the basis of the appeal to God is for his glory, for his name’s sake. Isn’t that greater than for our sake?

80 – This is another call to God when it seems he has abandoned his land and his people. The evidence of this is that the enemy advances. There is a chorus that is repeated in V3, 7, and 19. V3 “Restore us O God; let your face shine, that we may be saved.” Israel is compared to a vine that “you brought out of the land of Egypt.” The prayer is to God to look on this vine and rescue it from the enemies that surround it. V17 “But let your hand be on the man of your right hand, the son of man whom you have made strong for yourself!” It does not appear that this refers to Jesus even though the name “son of man” is one used by him. It seems more that the psalmist is referring to himself or God’s people by that name.

81 – V8 “Hear, O my people while I admonish you! O Israel, if you would but listen to me!” The entire psalm focuses on the truth that God’s people do not listen to Him. V13-14 “Oh, that my people would listen to me, that Israel would walk in my ways! I would soon subdue their enemies and turn my hand against their foes.” V16 “But he would feed you with the finest of the wheat; and with honey from the rock I would satisfy you.”

82 – This is another reminder that God is Lord over all the earth and that all nations will become his, as he is the one who created them in Genesis 1. V8 “Arise, O God, judge the earth, for you shall inherit all the nations.” It seems especially to do with God’s justice on behalf of the weak and the needy. V4 “Rescue the weak and the needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked.”

83 – This psalm looks at all the enemies that surround the people of God in the land of Israel and after naming them one by one, calls on God just as specifically to act. V16-18 “Fill their faces with shame, that they may seek your name, O Lord. Let them be put to shame and dismayed forever; let them perish in disgrace, that they may know that you alone, whose name is the Lord, are the Most High over all the earth.” How many times do we seek to climb the ladder to the top only to find it leans against the wrong wall! That brings shame. Will God not do that ultimately with people’s response to his Son Jesus when he rules over the earth and judges all the nations? Those who oppose or reject him will find that the wall they climbed was the wrong one. How appropriate is this in the light of what is happening in Israel today. Do enemies who want to destroy them and bulldoze them into the Mediterranean Sea not surround them? How great a witness would it be to have a church of Jewish and Palestinian Christians who worship together! Let us pray for that.

84 – V10-11 “For a day in your courts is better than a thousand elsewhere. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of wickedness. For the Lord God is a shield; the Lord bestows favor and

honor. No good thing does he withhold from those who walk uprightly." What is this like? What is it like to so desire to be in the presence of God that everything else pales by comparison? We might think that it felt like being with Jesus except that so many people missed him when he came the first time. Others were unexplainably drawn to him. What would it be like to walk and talk with Jesus and know who he really is? We can do that today.

85 – It appears that this psalm celebrates the blessings of God on his land and his people. These include physical blessings like favor on the land. V7 "Show us your unfailing love, O Lord, and grant us your salvation." It also includes spiritual blessings like forgiveness. V4 "Restore us again, O God of our salvation, and put away your indignation toward us!"

86 – One advantage of the Psalms is that many of them are written without specific references. That makes them adaptable to apply to our situation. This is a personal cry for help from the Lord. Because we do not know what the circumstance was for the author it is easy to pray this for our situations. V1 "Incline your ear, O Lord, and answer me, for I am poor and needy." There is also the reference to the nations. V9 "All the nations you have made shall come and worship before you, O Lord and shall glorify your name." The basis of all God does is found in who He is. V8 "There is none like you among the gods, O Lord, nor are there any works like yours."

87 – This psalm points to the place of God's dwelling and associates blessing with it. V5 "Indeed, of Zion it will be said, 'This one and that one were born in her, and the Most High himself will establish her.'"

88 – This is another very personal prayer from one who is despairing of even life. It recognizes that all of this is in God's control, both the trip down into the valley and the call to come out the other side. V6 "You have put me in the depths of the pit, in the regions dark and deep." V12 "Are your wonders known in the darkness, or your righteousness in the land of forgetfulness?" No matter how bad things look to us, our only real hope is God. Even if we think he is the one putting us into the trouble, he is the only one who can bring us out of it.

89 – This psalm celebrates the greatness of the Lord as the foundation for the kingship of David and his house. V20-21 "I have found David my servant; with my holy oil I have anointed him so that my hand shall be established with him, my arm also shall strengthen him." V26-27 "He shall cry to me, 'You are my Father, my God, and the Rock of my salvation.' And I will make him the firstborn, the highest of the kings of the earth." Ultimately this kind of relationship is found in Jesus as Messiah-King. He fulfills all the promises made to David.

90 – This is written as a prayer of Moses, "the man of God." It is an appeal for God to establish the work of our hands on the basis of who he is and what our relationship is to him. God alone is eternal. We are dust. V17 "Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us, and establish the work of our hands upon us; yes, establish the work of our hands!" Do we see the wrath of God expressed against us for our sins? Are we conscious that God always reacts with judgment against all sin? V7 "For we are brought to an end by your anger; by your wrath we are dismayed." V9 "For all our days pass away under your wrath; we bring our years to an end like a sigh." The fact that it is written by Moses seems to point to a timing of around the rebellion of Kadesh-barnea by Israel when they were sentenced to die in the next forty years for their rebellion. How temporary humans seem as Moses watched them die over this time! So are all humans and since we are so frail, we need a Savior, Jesus, for when this life is over. None of us likes to think about death. But we will live a healthier life if we consider it and prepare for it through Jesus.

91 – The Lord protects and rescues those who belong to him from all their enemies and troubles. Then why does it seem that his people go through such difficult times? It seems to be a principle of scripture that God takes his people through difficulty not around it. Yet his promise stands sure. V3 "For he will deliver you from the snare of the fowler and from the deadly pestilence." The psalm contains a deep confidence in God and vivid expressions of his care in these verses. V9-10 "Because you have made the Lord your dwelling place – the Most High, who is my refuge – no evil shall be allowed to befall you, no plague come near your tent." This is true in an ultimate sense though it often does not appear that way to us. May our trust in God increase!

92 – Praise to God comes from seeing him defeat our enemies and rescuing the righteous. V6-8 "The stupid man cannot know; the fool cannot understand this: that though the wicked sprout like grass and all the evildoers flourish, they are doomed to destruction forever; but you, O Lord, are on high forever." V4 explains the reason for the praise of the Lord. "For you, O Lord, have made me glad by your work; at the works of your hands I sing for joy."

93 – This very brief psalm seems to have too many themes to fit so few verses. The tie may be the greatness of God. V1 features God's majesty that shows by his strength seen in the firmness of the world's foundation. V2 points to the eternal nature of God and his throne. Verses 3-4 point to the power of the seas as they point out the

greatness of God. V5 points to the firm foundation that the word of God is, especially in his statutes. V4 "Mightier than the thunders of many waters, mightier than the waves of the sea – the Lord on high is mighty." Remember that all God is, Jesus is because he is God. So this is also true of Jesus even though when he was on earth it did not appear outwardly very often. It did show when he calmed the storm and in some of his other miracles.

94 – This is a call for God to take vengeance on the enemies of the psalmist. Enemies of God think they are able to get away with their opposition. They do not believe that God sees, hears, and judges. V22-23 "But the Lord has become my stronghold, and my God the rock of my refuge. He will bring back on them their iniquity and wipe them out for their wickedness; the Lord our God will wipe them out." V18-19 "When I thought, 'My foot slips,' Your steadfast love, O Lord, held me up. When the cares of my heart are many, your consolations cheer my soul." How great are these little thoughts tucked into this writing. Meditate on this thought for today. God knows and he holds us in his hand.

95 – It is not easy to see the connection between the two halves of this psalm. There is great praise in the first half, almost as great as anywhere else. V3 "For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods." Yet in the second half, the people are warned to seek the Lord or they will be punished by his anger. It is helpful to remember that the ultimate praise of God will be when he carries out his judgment and all his ways are vindicated as just.

96 – Note how many times in the psalms the concept of the "nations" or "all the earth" is mentioned as it carries out God's original purpose in Genesis One. Here, worship is due to the Lord for his judgment when he will make all things right. V5 "For all the gods of the peoples are worthless idols, but the Lord made the heavens." At the same time the psalm ends with the judgment of God. That is further reason the Lord is to be praised. He reigns. V10 "Say among the nations, 'The Lord reigns! Yes, the world is established; it shall never be moved; he will judge the peoples with equity.'"

97 – V10 does not seem to fit. Here again the purpose of God is in the phrase in V1, "let the many coastlands be glad." It seems to be a call for the judgment of God on all nations to vindicate his people. V10 "O you who love the Lord, hate evil! He preserves the lives of his saints; he delivers them from the hand of the wicked." Is it not also that the Lord's people are to worship him and recognize his greatness in seeking him to be honored as he will be when he does judge the wicked?

98 – V3 "He has remembered his steadfast love and faithfulness to the house of Israel. All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God." The call is for all the nations to recognize the greatness and uniqueness of the Lord. Zion should especially see it. In V2 the emphasis is on the revelation of God's righteousness. That again seems to come from his judging of the earth. V9 "For he comes to judge the earth. He will judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with equity."

99 – The Lord is to be exalted. He is awesome. What is particularly noted about this in this psalm is that the Lord is holy (V3, 5, 9). V9 "Exalt the Lord our God and worship at his holy mountain, for the Lord our God is holy!" V8 "O Lord, our God, you answered them; you were a forgiving God to them, but an avenger of their wrongdoings." We must never forget that God is holy and that means he must avenge our wrongdoings and sins.

100 – There is to be great enthusiasm, joy and gladness in the worship of God because, V5 "For the Lord is good; his steadfast love endures forever, his faithfulness to all generations."

101 – In this psalm, the writer seeks to root out all evil from his life by removing it from his house first. V2b-3 "I will walk with integrity of heart within my house; I will not set before my eyes anything that is worthless." V7 "No one who practices deceit shall dwell in my house; no one who utters lies shall continue before my eyes." He continues removing evil in V8. "Morning by morning I will destroy all the wicked in the land, cutting off all the evildoers from the city of the Lord."

102 – This is a prayer for the author against his enemies. What seems to set this psalm apart is that the appeal is based on the Lord's commitment to Zion. V16-17 "For the Lord builds up Zion; he appears in his glory. He regards the prayer of the destitute and does not despise their prayer." The change from the misery of the author as in V11, "My days are like an evening shadow; I wither away like grass" occurs in V12, "But you, O Lord, are enthroned forever; you are remembered throughout all generations." From that point on the focus is on the Lord.

103 – It is on the basis of "all his benefits" that the author appeals to the Lord for deliverance in his present situation. That situation is not referred to but it is the cause of a great psalm of praise to the Lord for his greatness

and his knowledge of us. V15 & 17 "As for man, his days are like grass, he flourishes like a flower of the field ... but the steadfast love of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear him and his righteousness to children's children." The psalm seems to focus on the difference between God who is eternal and humans and creation that are temporal. In spite of this difference, the Lord blesses those who belong to him. Therefore we are called on to join all elements of creation to praise him. V20-22 "Bless the Lord, O you his angels, you mighty ones who do his word, obeying the voice of his word! Bless the Lord, all his hosts, his ministers, who do his will! Bless the Lord, all his works, in all places of his dominion. Bless the Lord, O my soul!"

104 – All readers are called on to praise God for his control over all the water forms on the earth. This is a part of his cycles of nature that continue under his supervision. Have you ever thought specifically how God is sovereign over all aspects of creation like this? The key seems to be the relation to sinners since the entire psalm is praise about creation but it ends on this note. V34-35 "May my meditation be pleasing to him, for I rejoice in the Lord. Let sinners be consumed from the earth, and let the wicked be no more!" There is also the application and lesson from created animals of the earth. Note in V27-30 how dependent they are on the Lord. "These all look to you, to give them their food in due season. When you give it to them... When you hide your face... When you send forth your Spirit they are created, and you renew the face of the ground." Humans should look to the animals for lessons about dependence on God. They understand it better than we do.

105 – This is the story of the nation of Israel from the entrance to Egypt to the Exodus from it. It is told from the perspective of God and in the form of Hebrew poetry. V12-15 "When they were few in number, of little account and sojourners in it, wandering from nation to nation, from one kingdom to another people, he allowed no one to oppress them; he rebuked kings on their account, saying, 'Touch not my anointed ones, do my prophets no harm!'" This psalm makes us more aware of how little of God's perspective we have on our own lives. Let us make this a prayer that God will show us his ways and perspective more for each day. What do you need God's perspective on for this day?

106 – This psalm continues the story of Israel out of Egypt as they disobey and yet God preserves them. He did it through Moses who "stood in the breach before him" (V23) and Phinehas who "stood up and intervened" (V30). Two verses indicate the purpose of God. V8 "Yet he saved them for his name's sake, that he might make known his mighty power." V47 "Save us, O Lord our God, and gather us from among the nations, that we may give thanks to your holy name and glory in your praise." The emphasis seems to be on the number of times and the extent of the disobedience and rebellion of the Israelites. Yet God is faithful. All praise to him. How similar are we! How many times have we and do we turn from the Lord and disobey! Yet, how gracious is he to us through Jesus!

107 – The psalm is a call to praise the Lord for his goodness, faithfulness, love and steadfastness. It recalls these with several references or allusions to the deliverance from Egypt. This is definitely organized as a hymn with a chorus (V6, 13, 19, 28) or two (V8, 15, 21, 27). The theme is that troubles turn people to the Lord who rescues them. V43 "Whoever is wise, let him attend these things; let them consider the steadfast love of the Lord." The Lord is sovereign and because he changed the situation of Israel as slaves in Egypt, we know that he is able to change our situation. V33 "He turns rivers into a desert, springs of water into thirsty ground." V35 "He turns a desert into pools of water, a parched land into springs of water."

108 – This is a song of praise to the Lord. Its themes are music, the faithfulness of God, his salvation and deliverance. V13 "With God we will do valiantly; it is he who will tread down our foes." The enemies of Israel are listed with comments that show God's greatness and control. Remembering those lessons should encourage us in our faith in God, as he will also trample down our enemies.

109 – This is another prayer against the wicked people who are evil and attack the psalmist. There are some very graphic thoughts about what should happen to them. The entire psalm though is a call for the Lord to do it. V31 "For he stands at the right hand of the needy, to save him from those who condemn his soul to death."

110 – This psalm proclaims the ultimate victory of the Lord and his ruler. V5 "The Lord is at your right hand; he will shatter kings on the day of his wrath." This is a picture of Jesus as ruler. Jesus is the one at the Father's right hand in verse 1. Jesus is the "priest forever after the order of Melchizedek." Jesus is the one who will ultimately judge and punish the entire world.

111 – This seems to be a testimony of praise to the Lord. It appears to focus on the works of God. V2 "Great are the works of the Lord, studied by all who delight in them." In fact "works" shows up in five of the ten verses. His

greatest work is his salvation. V9 "He sent redemption to his people; he has commanded his covenant forever. Holy and awesome is his name!" O let us praise the Lord for his great salvation!

112 – This psalm of praise revolves around riches, material possessions and the blessing of God on the person who "greatly delights in his commands." V3 "Wealth and riches are in his house, and his righteousness endures forever." V5 "It is well with the man who deals generously and lends; who conducts his affairs with justice." There are many blessings for one who is faithful to God. One of the great blessings is in the confidence we can have in God even in times of bad news. V7 "He is not afraid of bad news; his heart is firm, trusting in the Lord."

113 – The psalm praises God for his greatness and his grace. Look at the pictures in this chapter of the greatness of God and also of his grace. The key verse is V6, "who looks far down on the heavens and the earth." The praise is for the same God who is so great and high that he also not only looks down but reaches down to those who are the lowest to raise them up to the position of the highest. NIV reads, "who stoops down to look on the heavens and the earth." "Looks" seems less active than "stoops" and the next verse seems to imply more action. God acts on what he sees when he stoops down to look.

114 – This points to the sovereignty of God over bodies of water in the deliverance of Israel from Egypt. It showed in the parting of the Red Sea and the provision of water from the rock. V7-8 "Tremble, O earth, at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob, who turns the rock into a pool of water, the flint into a spring of water." It seems that if the whole earth is to tremble at the presence of the Lord, all the people on that earth should also tremble. God must be regarded and treated as great!

115 – This psalm contrasts the lives of those who trust in idols with those who trust in the Lord. Those who trust in idols trust in that which is unable to help them in any way. Those who trust in the Lord trust in One who blesses them in every area of life. V13 "He will bless those who fear the Lord, both the small and the great." The psalm ends with a great blessing. V14-15 "May the Lord give you increase, you and your children! May you be blessed by the Lord, who made heaven and earth!" The issue may have something to do with death since the psalm then goes on to say in V17, "The dead do not praise the Lord."

116 – Here the psalmist contrasts the care of God with the care of other humans. First, humans are just as likely to be enemies. Second, the Lord delivers and is faithful. Third, there is great praise to the Lord in his deliverance. V8-9 "For you have delivered my soul from death, my eyes from tears, my feet from stumbling. I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living."

117 – This is the shortest psalm and shortest chapter in the Bible. Praise the Lord for his love and faithfulness that last forever. V2 "For great is his steadfast love toward us, and the faithfulness of the Lord endures forever."

118 – The psalm begins and ends with the same verse. "Oh give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever." This is the repeated refrain. This psalm is praise to the Lord for deliverance again. V10 "All the nations surrounded me, but in the name of the Lord I cut them off." The refrain and praise is for every one of God's children since it says, "Let Israel say... Let the sons of Aaron say..." That does not include everyone but then it says, "Let those who fear the Lord say..." V22 is used to describe Jesus in Matthew 21:42, "The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone." V28 is so encouraging. "You are my God and I will give thanks to you; you are my God; I will extol you."

119 – This is a majestic composition on the greatness of the words of God in all their forms. It is not too hard to say a couple good things about God's word. It takes real depth to think about 176 aspects to the word of God. We need to go deeper in our thinking, our meditation on God and his attributes. There are maybe a half dozen verses that do not have some specific reference to the words of God. Note these verses. V24 "Your testimonies are my delight; they are my counselors." V71 "It is good for me that I was afflicted, that I might learn your statutes." Ultimately and clearly the written word of God points us to the Incarnate Word of God, Jesus. He is the Living Word. At least twelve times the psalmist asks God to "teach me" from his word. May that be our prayer over all else! One prayer God seems guaranteed to always answer is "Lord, what do you want to change about me and my life?" This psalm is filled with aspects from value of God's word, to passion for it. Help us to increase in those.

NOTE – The next series of psalms from 120 to 134 are called "psalms of ascent." They were written to be sung on the way up to Jerusalem by those traveling for the religious festivals.

120 – This is an appeal for God to deliver and protect against enemies. Their opposition shows in the form of lying lips, deceitful tongue, and hatred of peace. How awesome by contrast that our best friend, Jesus, always tells and is the truth. V2 "Deliver me, O Lord, from lying lips, from a deceitful tongue."

121 – The only place to turn for help is to the Lord. He watches over his people and is their shield. V7 "The Lord will keep you from all evil; he will keep your life." The unique part to this psalm is that God is always available for us to trust in because he never sleeps. Think of the disciples who slept the night Jesus was betrayed and how much of a let down that was. V8 "The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in from this time forth and forevermore."

122 – The city of Jerusalem is blessed because it is the place God chose for his dwelling place. V4 "...to which the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord, as was decreed for Israel, to give thanks to the name of the Lord." V6 is a prayer request that all of us should participate in. "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem! May they be secure who love you!"

123 – This is another psalm that turns to the Lord for what is needed. In this case, it is less protection than provision and instruction based on the mercy of God. V3 "Have mercy upon us, O Lord, have mercy upon us, for we have had enough of contempt." How desperate we should be when we look to the Lord because we are totally dependent on his mercy to us. V2 "Behold, as the eyes of the servants look to the hand of their master, as the eyes of the maidservant to the hand of her mistress, so our eyes look to the Lord our God, till he has mercy upon us."

124 – The Lord makes the difference between being overwhelmed like a flood by our enemies and being rescued. God plus one is a majority. V8 "Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth." Trouble may come to us from any direction but our help is only in the Lord.

125 – Trust in the Lord brings great confidence. V2 "As the mountains surround Jerusalem, so the Lord surrounds his people from this time forth and forevermore." V1 "Those who trust in the Lord are like Mount Zion, which cannot be moved, but abides forever." May our confidence be in the Lord no matter what it looks or feels like to us!

126 – The theme verse is V1. "When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who dream." When the Lord answers the prayers of his people and restores them, it is such a feeling of joy and inner thrill that there is laughter and songs of joy. That is real worship. When we have more of a sense of the rescue that God has made for our souls, we will worship. V2 "Then our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy; then they said among the nations, 'The Lord has done great things for them.'" That joy and worship will also show in our lives in fruit, especially fruit in spiritual areas. V6 "He who goes out weeping bearing the seed for sowing, shall come home with shouts of joy, bringing his sheaves with him." No matter what the cost to do God's work, there will always be joy when the harvest is realized.

127 – V1 sets the tone. "Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain. Unless the Lord watches over the city, the watchmen stay awake in vain." The only hope anyone has is the Lord. That is whether it is for a building, or the safety of a city, or the ongoing blessing of children. Only in the Lord is our hope. V4-5 "Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are sons (children) born in one's youth. Blessed is the man who fills his quiver with them. He shall not be put to shame when he speaks with his enemies in the gate."

128 – The theme is set in V1. "Blessed is everyone who fears the Lord, who walks in his ways." The blessings from the Lord on one who walks in his ways extend to his wife, children, town and nation. V4 "Behold, thus shall a man be blessed who fears the Lord."

129 – It seems that those who oppose God's ways and people are to be punished with the prayers against them of the psalmist. V8 is the concluding prayer against them. "...Nor do those who pass by say, 'The blessing of the Lord be upon you! We bless you in the name of the Lord!'" That is the final in a number of prayers against those who oppose the Lord. The final one is that people may not pronounce a blessing on them. What kind of a life would that be if we lived outside of the blessing of God!

130 – What sets this psalm apart is that it is a confession of repentance and forgiveness. V4 "But with you there is forgiveness, that you may be feared." It is the mercy of the Lord that leads us to repentance. (Romans 2:4) V3 "If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities O Lord, who could stand?" See Romans 3:10-12 where no one does right, no one gets it, and no one seeks God. Apart from his grace, not one of us will stand a chance of pleasing God even with good things we think we do.

131 – What a beautiful picture of dependence and relationship with the Lord. V2 “But I have calmed and quieted my soul, like a weaned child with its mother; like a weaned child is my soul within me.” Lord, help us trust and rest in you like that. This may be an illustration for Israel. The author seems to offer his own trust in this as an example for the nation in V3. “O Israel, hope in the Lord from this time forth and forevermore.”

132 – This psalm recounts the process by which David brought the ark to Jerusalem and arranged to build the temple and God established his line of descendants forever to be on the throne. V4-5 “I will not give sleep to my eyes or slumber to my eyelids, until I find a place for the Lord, a dwelling place for the Mighty One of Jacob.” V8 is the answer. “Arise O Lord, and go to your resting place, you and the ark of your might.” This is another reminder of the truth that the promises God made to the nation of Israel were conditional. V12 “If your sons keep my covenant and my testimonies that I shall teach them, their sons also forever shall sit on your throne.” Jesus kept the covenant with the Father perfectly and he will fulfill this promise and reign forever on Israel’s throne.

133 – V1 “Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity.” Oneness in relationship is so important that this psalm says, V3 “For there the Lord has commanded the blessing, life forevermore.” Do we have and want that kind of relationship? Do we have brothers who care for us like that? Do we care for other brothers like that?

134 – This is a prayer of blessing for those whose ministry keeps them up all night. It may also apply to those who rise early in the morning to pray. V1 “Come, bless the Lord, all you servants of the Lord, who stand by night in the house of the Lord.”

135 – The Lord is to be praised for he delivered his people out of Egypt and into the Promised Land. No other god is able to do that because no other god is real or alive or able to do anything. Why do we continue to look to other things? V6 in the NIV reads, “The Lord does whatever pleases him in the heavens and on the earth, in the seas and all their depths.” ESV has a slightly different meaning. “Whatever the Lord pleases, he does, in heaven and on earth.” That seems to imply that the following list of things the Lord does pleases him. That list includes clouds that rise, lightning, wind and the death of the firstborn in Egypt. There is also the powerful and convicting statement that people become like what they worship. In the case of the psalm it is idols. V18 “Those who make them become like them, so do all who trust in them!” Lord, help us to worship you more so we become like you.

136 – V26 “Give thanks to the God of heaven for his steadfast love endures forever.” This psalm demonstrates that we are to give praise to God for every part of life. It illustrates from the deliverance of Israel from Egypt but continues with “who remembered us in our low estate ... and rescued us from our foes... and who gives food to all flesh.” Help us to think of everything we have as from you.

137 – This is a cry for God to hear Israel from captivity in Babylon and a call for God to take vengeance on the Babylonians for doing it. There is deep grief shared for separation from the land of God’s presence and blessing. V4 “How shall we sing the Lord’s song in a foreign land?” At the same time it is clear that the Lord will take vengeance on Babylon for its destruction of Zion. The prayer is also for the Lord to judge Edom for celebrating the destruction of Zion by the Babylonians (V7).

138 – This sounds like a psalm of thanks for some deliverance the Lord has provided. V8 “The Lord will fulfill his purpose for me; your steadfast love, O Lord, endures forever. Do not forsake the work of your hands.” V7 “Though I walk in the midst of trouble, you preserve my life; you stretch out your hand against the wrath of my enemies, and your right hand delivers me.” Lord, give us this kind of true and real faith in you so that we have confidence in you that you will do this kind of work in our lives.

139 – God is everywhere present so that no matter where we go, whether in attempt to escape or to run to him, we can know we are in his presence. He also has purpose for our lives. V16 “Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there were none of them.” In V19 the thought seems to change to deal with enemies again. “Oh that you would slay the wicked, O God! O men of blood, depart from me.” It is then in this context of seeking God’s wrath on his enemies that David asks God to examine his motives. V23-24 “Search me, O God...”

140 – This is another call for God to rescue. This time it is from violence, lies, traps, battle, and wicked desires. The Lord is the one who must rescue. The psalmist outlines what he feels would be appropriate punishments. V12 “I know that the Lord will maintain the cause of the afflicted, and will execute justice for the needy.”

141 – This is another call for God to rescue from evildoers. V10 “Let the wicked fall into their own nets, while I pass by safely.” It is also interesting that this psalm says in V5, “Let a righteous man strike me – it is a kindness; let him rebuke me – it is oil on my head. Let my head not refuse it.” In all that goes on, the psalmist knows that the key as expressed in V8 is, “But my eyes are toward you, O God, my Lord; in you I seek refuge; leave me not defenseless.”

142 – This time the cry for help is because there is no one else on whom to call. V4-5 “Look to the right and see: there is no one who takes notice of me; no refuge remains to me; no one cares for my soul. I cry to you, O Lord; I say, ‘You are my refuge, my portion in the land of the living.’” In the book “The Mystery of Marriage,” the author Gary Thomas says that love only happens when there is no other reason to stay in a relationship with someone. This is especially true with our spouse because there are so many things that happen that one can use as an excuse to leave. We are supposed to be the kind of person who reaches out to love others because we are so overwhelmed by God’s love for us. Our motivation for prayer requests should be for God’s glory, not our comfort. V7 “Bring me out of prison, that I may give thanks to your name! The righteous will surround me, for you will deal bountifully with me.”

143 – So many of the psalms express desperation for God. That gives us language to feel and express our dependence on God. We are right to learn to use the wording of these passages in our own prayers. V7 “Answer me quickly, O Lord! My spirit fails! Hide not your face from me, lest I be like those who go down to the pit.” Give us more of the spirit of V6. “I stretch out my hands to you; my soul thirsts for you like a parched land. Selah.”

144 – The psalm begins by questioning why God would take notice enough of humans to rescue them. Then it continues by calling on the Lord to do all within his power to rescue. This will be followed by great praise to the Lord and great blessings on those who are rescued by him. V11 “Rescue and deliver me from the hand of foreigners, whose mouths speak lies and whose right hand is a right hand of falsehood.” V12-15 is a great prayer of blessing. May we also seek our greatest blessing in our children, work, home and provisions!

145 – In this psalm, King David recognizes that God is his king. There are many benefits to having the Lord as your king. Most of these are based on God’s attributes of greatness, power, goodness, righteousness, grace, compassion, and that he is everlasting, faithful, and righteous. V13 “Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion endures throughout all generations.” The psalm is filled with praise as David realizes these blessings more and more. Help us see what blessings you have given to us and may our response be to praise and thank you.

146 – Do not trust in humans because they are not able to do anything significant for you because they are human and mortal. V3 “Put not your trust in princes, in a son of man, in whom there is no salvation.” Trust in the Lord because of all He is able to do. There is a list of some of what the Lord is able and does for those who trust him. V7 “...who executes justice for the oppressed, who gives food to the hungry. The Lord sets the prisoners free.” There are also several parallels with Psalm 1 in this psalm. See V9. “The Lord watches over the sojourners; he upholds the widow and the fatherless, but the way of the wicked he will bring to ruin.”

147 – The Lord is to be praised by his people particularly for what he has done for his people. He has intervened personally. V3 “He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds,” and cosmically, V4 “He determines the number of the stars and gives to all of them their names.” Jerusalem is especially to praise him for his grace to that city. V19-20 “He declares his word to Jacob, his statutes and rules to Israel. He has not dealt thus with any other nation; they do not know his rules. Praise the Lord.” How many more great blessings has God given us as his children! How much more should we praise him than Israel!

148 – This psalm calls to the highest heavens and its inhabitants, the sun, moon, and stars to praise the Lord. It then moves to call on all inhabitants of the earth to praise the Lord. We should praise him because he is the one who has created all and assigned their place. V14 “He has raised up a horn for his people, praise for all his saints, for the people of Israel who are near to him.” Praise is called for from the earth, great sea creatures and all deeps, fire and hail, snow and mist, stormy wind, mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars, beasts and all livestock, creeping things and flying birds, kings, princes, young and old, male and female. All are to praise the Lord. Would you not understand from this that we are to praise the Lord?

149 – God’s judgment on people is always one of the hard concepts for us to deal with. This psalm complicates that even more as it calls on God’s people to carry out the Lord’s vengeance on those who oppose him. V9 “To execute on them the judgment written! This is honor for all his godly ones. Praise the Lord!” Part of worshipping God is to line up with him when he carries out his judgments because it brings him glory. He is right and we are not right!

150 – “Praise God in...Praise him for...Praise him with...” v6 “Let everything that has breath praise the Lord!”