

Psalms



DailyLife
Five Oaks Church

Week 6: September 3–9, 2016

Day 1

September 5



Pray / Ask God to help you trust him in times of trouble.

STRUGGLES

King David sends this psalm to the choirmaster to be used in corporate worship. As the people sing the psalm, it encourages them related to handling times of trouble. We have each experienced trouble, haven't we? David prays "from the end of the earth," his metaphor for overwhelming trouble, a place that he experienced many times. Though King David was blessed in many ways, his life shows that a call to leadership also can be a call to trouble.



Read / Psalm 61



Reflect / Choose one or more of the following for reflection.

David knows that all the people will have times of trouble. They know the testimony of David's life, how God protected him in those difficult times. They can expect the same faithfulness from God for themselves as they follow him. In this way, David's struggles bless a multitude. You can also expect to see God's faithfulness, and the victory in your struggles can bless many. When trouble comes, where will you put your trust, and who will be your hope?

In verse 4 we find that David's experiences with God lead him to want to be in relationship with God forever. He sees the nearness of God as a good thing. There is no one else who ultimately has our best interests at heart. However, his interests are more important than ours, and in seeking these things, we are blessed. What do you think God wants you to do to cultivate this sort of relationship with him?

Verses 6–7 are a plea for stability. We want good things to last forever! Clearly David would not live forever in this world. These verses foreshadow a King who will live forever and a Kingdom that will endure to all generations. What better King than the one who knows you best! We pray, "Your Kingdom come. . . ." How can you allow God's Kingdom to come into your everyday life?

Day 2

September 6



Pray / Ask God to help you lean on him when people oppose you.

OPPOSED

This psalm directs the people where to put their trust when others wrongfully oppose them. In this world there may be people who want to take you out. They may want you to lose your job, or they may want to be positioned over you. If you are a follower of Christ, they might wish to get rid of what and whom you stand for. Whether secretly or openly, they take action to tear people down, but the Lord loves justice, and our strength is found in trusting him.



Read / Psalm 62



Reflect / Choose one or more of the following for reflection.

David learned abandonment to God early in his life: “For God alone my soul waits in silence. . . . He alone is my rock and my salvation” (verses 1–2). This abandonment and his history with God give him quiet confidence. Whatever happens, his God of “power” and “love” (verses 11–12) is in control. Will you make it your aim to abandon your life to God?

In verse 9, David compares God to both people of high estate and people of low estate. Regardless of their standing, he says they are “together lighter than a breath.” In the balance against God’s weighty influence, they have barely any influence. With respect to the coming election, regardless of who wins, how will you make sure to remember that God is in control?

In verse 12, David says of God, “You will render to a man according to his work.” This could be a reward and blessing, or a penalty and punishment. For us, the bottom line is that our faith must ultimately influence our lives so that good character continues to develop, which in turn influences what we do. Is this the sort of faith you have?

Day 3

September 7



Pray / Ask that you would thirst for a closer walk with God.

SATISFIED!

Some people think that depending on or pursuing a relationship with God is a crutch, a sign of weakness. However, the man who, humanly speaking, singlehandedly took down Goliath, the nemesis of Israel, longed to be close to God and was dependent on him. For those who have been without water, suffering with such thirst we cannot imagine, water will never lose its savor for the rest of their lives. This is how David longed for God,



Read / Psalm 63



Reflect / Choose one or more of the following for reflection.

In verses 3 and 5 David says, “Your steadfast love is better than life. . . . My soul will be satisfied as with fat and rich food, and my mouth will praise you with joyful lips.” All this satisfaction came from a relationship with God. Do you think there is any limit to how closely you can walk with God?

David wrote this psalm while hiding from his enemies in the wilderness of Judah. In verse 2 he reminisces about times he has worshiped God in a physical place of worship and encourages his soul with these memories. In verse 7 he again encourages himself, remembering how God has helped him in the past. Think back: Can you remember a time when God helped you? Encourage yourself with these things!

In verses 3–4, in light of the reality that Yahweh’s “steadfast love is better than life” David commits to praising him and then to blessing him the rest of his life. This is not just a prayer to get out of trouble and then go back to a selfish lifestyle. Have you come to the place in your walk with God where your intention, your commitment to him, is to follow him until you die?

Day 4
September 8



Pray / Ask your Heavenly Father to help you stand strong in him.

EVIL SCHEMING

All of us have seen people do mean and even hateful things, usually having some justification for their actions. However, few of us have personally witnessed those who really work hard at being evil, though you don't have to watch the news too long to see terrorist acts of this sort. However, all of us have, often unwittingly, experienced the schemes of what the Scriptures call "spiritual forces of wickedness in high places." These forces are unseen, and they work day and night with well-laid plans to steal, kill, and destroy. As you read Psalm 64, apply it to your spiritual enemies as well as the terror we often witness in news of world events.



Read / Psalm 64



Reflect / Choose one or more of the following for reflection.

Evil is a frightening thing. David opens his prayer with a request for God to preserve his life from the “dread of the enemy.” *Dread* means to have forebodings about, or to fear. This sort of fear is like negative faith—faith in evil rather than God. As David knew, it can weaken you. If you experience dread like this, whether of human foes or spiritual, are you willing to obey verse 10, rejoicing in the Lord and taking refuge in Him? He is far greater than all your enemies.

“The inward mind and heart of man are deep” (verse 6). Humans are capable of great evil, especially with the help of Satan and his hosts, but we are also capable of great good and glorifying God as he abides in us. There is a battle going on for each of our minds and motivations. For the most part, how do you experience this battle? Confess your struggle to one another and pray for each other.

In verses 7–8 we see God’s justice. He hates evil and deals with it in a just manner. Haven’t we all committed harmful acts? We all should thank God for his forgiveness and mercy! Consider the latest harm you have done to another. Is there anything he wants you to do to mend the situation?

Day 5

September 9



Pray / Thank God for his provision, glory, and Creation's beauty.

BOUNTY GIVEN

Today's reading is a psalm of gratitude for many things: God's faithfulness, atonement, his rule over nature, and for rain and provision of a bountiful harvest. As you read, consider the glory of God expressed in all of creation and his desire to be known by even those who dwell "at the ends of the earth."



Read / Psalm 65



Reflect / Choose one or more of the following for reflection.

In verse 3 David expresses his experience that iniquities (sin) can prevail against him. Haven't we all experienced this? The answer to this dilemma is clear to David: "*You* atone for our transgressions" (emphasis added). It was healthy for David and his people to be reminded of this and to consider it often. Notice he does not say, "*We* atone." David saw God's bigger story, that nothing that he could do would negate his sin and make him righteous. Have you come to the realization that only God can forgive and cover your sin?

This psalm speaks of the natural order of the earth: rain, plant growth, and supply of grain. As people have investigated living things, the plants that produce grain, for instance, humankind has found complexities that are astounding. The plant growth spoken of in the psalm is the coordinated work of countless plant cells functioning in symphony to flourish and produce this, just one small example of the complexities of living things. Now, stop a minute. Look at your cell phone. Would you say it was designed, or did it just somehow happen? How can we ever believe that life had no designer?

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