



## **Daily Devotions in the Psalms**

**Psalm 30-34**

# Monday 11th May - Psalm 30

**A psalm. A song. For the dedication of the temple. Of David.**

1 I will exalt you, Lord,  
for you lifted me out of the depths  
and did not let my enemies gloat over me.  
2 Lord my God, I called to you for help,  
and you healed me.  
3 You, Lord, brought me up from the realm of the dead;  
you spared me from going down to the pit.  
4 Sing the praises of the Lord, you his faithful people;  
praise his holy name.  
5 For his anger lasts only a moment,  
but his favour lasts a lifetime;  
weeping may stay for the night,  
but rejoicing comes in the morning.  
6 When I felt secure, I said,  
"I will never be shaken."

7 Lord, when you favoured me,  
you made my royal mountain stand firm;  
but when you hid your face,  
I was dismayed.  
8 To you, Lord, I called;  
to the Lord I cried for mercy:  
9 "What is gained if I am silenced,  
if I go down to the pit?  
Will the dust praise you?  
Will it proclaim your faithfulness?  
10 Hear, Lord, and be merciful to me;  
Lord, be my help."  
11 You turned my wailing into dancing;  
you removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy,  
12 that my heart may sing your praises and not be silent.  
Lord my God, I will praise you forever.

It's amazing that David wrote this Psalm to dedicate a temple that he wouldn't see. But in doing so he helped Israel and he helps us, to pray and to praise God. David's praise remembers God's faithfulness, deliverance and healing (v. 1-3); possibly after the punishment of God following David's sinful census of Israel. He praises God for his mercy and calls on Israel to do the same (v. 3).

David meditates on how God can turn our sorrows into joys with those beautiful words "weeping may stay for the night, but rejoicing comes in the morning." David seems to point at his sin in v. 7 and God's mercy in not killing him!

God's dealings with David, despite many sorrows, is marked by mercy and grace that means he turns to rejoicing and praise. This Psalm doesn't promise that whatever you're going through in life, God will fix shortly. But we can sing David's words too. In Christ, we've been brought up from the pit; God has showed us infinite mercy. In Christ, we have received his favour, his grace.

We weep, sometimes over many years, but because of the gospel we know that one day, God will wipe away our tears and turn our sorrows into joys. We may get the delight of seeing it in this life, or we might have to wait for the new creation; but because of the resurrection, his faithfulness is certain.

We, like David, can still praise God as we look forward because we can look back on his faithfulness. Knowing Jesus means that our despair at sin and guilt is taken away and so we can dance and sing and rejoice, even as we mourn the sorrows of life. Keep looking to Christ to remember God's mercy, grace and faithfulness to you, that you might have joy. And don't stop there! Like David, let your joy move you to praise God for who He is and all He has done.

*Father, help me to remember your grace and mercy to me, that I might trust you and rejoice in you and praise you. Thank you that one day, every tear will be wiped away. Help me to be faithful as I wait for that day.*

James

# Tuesday 12th May - Psalm 31

**For the director of music. A psalm of David.**

1 In you, Lord, I have taken refuge;  
let me never be put to shame;  
deliver me in your righteousness.  
2 Turn your ear to me,  
come quickly to my rescue;  
be my rock of refuge,  
a strong fortress to save me.  
3 Since you are my rock and my fortress,  
for the sake of your name lead and guide me.  
4 Keep me free from the trap that is set for me,  
for you are my refuge.  
5 Into your hands I commit my spirit;  
deliver me, Lord, my faithful God.  
6 I hate those who cling to worthless idols;  
as for me, I trust in the Lord.  
7 I will be glad and rejoice in your love,  
for you saw my affliction  
and knew the anguish of my soul.  
8 You have not given me into the hands of the enemy  
but have set my feet in a spacious place.  
9 Be merciful to me, Lord, for I am in distress;  
my eyes grow weak with sorrow,  
my soul and body with grief.  
10 My life is consumed by anguish  
and my years by groaning;  
my strength fails because of my affliction,  
and my bones grow weak.  
11 Because of all my enemies,  
I am the utter contempt of my neighbours  
and an object of dread to my closest friends—  
those who see me on the street flee from me.  
12 I am forgotten as though I were dead;  
I have become like broken pottery.  
13 For I hear many whispering,  
"Terror on every side!"

They conspire against me  
and plot to take my life.  
14 But I trust in you, Lord;  
I say, "You are my God."  
15 My times are in your hands;  
deliver me from the hands of my enemies,  
from those who pursue me.  
16 Let your face shine on your servant;  
save me in your unfailing love.  
17 Let me not be put to shame, Lord,  
for I have cried out to you;  
but let the wicked be put to shame  
and be silent in the realm of the dead.  
18 Let their lying lips be silenced,  
for with pride and contempt  
they speak arrogantly against the righteous.  
19 How abundant are the good things  
that you have stored up for those who fear you,  
that you bestow in the sight of all,  
on those who take refuge in you.  
20 In the shelter of your presence you hide them  
from all human intrigues;  
you keep them safe in your dwelling  
from accusing tongues.  
21 Praise be to the Lord,  
for he showed me the wonders of his love  
when I was in a city under siege.  
22 In my alarm I said,  
"I am cut off from your sight!"  
Yet you heard my cry for mercy  
when I called to you for help.  
23 Love the Lord, all his faithful people!  
The Lord preserves those who are true to him,  
but the proud he pays back in full.  
24 Be strong and take heart,  
all you who hope in the Lord.

Pressure reveals what we cling to. What will it take for you to trust God in your struggles?

David's urgent prayer in Psalm 31:1-5 is bracketed by statements of trust, and he persistently cries for help. He knows a trap is set for him (v. 4), but that God – who is the only safe place for his "spirit" (v. 5) – is with him. His anguish is described as a narrow space, but he is sure God has set his feet "in a spacious place" holding him close even in the extremes.

David's enemies (v. 8) have hurt him, sorrow has made his heart and body weak (v. 9-10), and he feels he is only fit for pity (v. 11-12). Yet he knows his times are in God's hands (v15) as he asks that God's face might shine on him (v. 16).

This Psalm belongs firstly to David, then supremely to Jesus and only then it belongs to us, in Christ, as the people of God. The beautiful trust that's rooted in God's love here, is so powerfully expressed when Jesus echoes these words on the cross in Luke 23:46 (Ps 31:5). When we see afresh the faith of Jesus in the face of suffering, trusting his life to God; hear the challenge to take heart (v. 23-24)!

*Father God, we thank you for inspiring David to pray this Psalm, and we thank you that Jesus fulfilled it on our behalf. Lord we confess our assurance often comes and goes; but today, this day of anxiety, pressure, grief and even death, we are grateful that all our times are in your hands. Grant us the grace today to love you and take heart, as we hope in your unfailing love. We thank you, Jesus, in your great name we pray. Amen.*

Martin

## Wednesday 13th May - Psalm 32

Blessed is the one  
whose transgressions are forgiven,  
whose sins are covered.

2 Blessed is the one  
whose sin the Lord does not count against them  
and in whose spirit is no deceit.

3 When I kept silent,  
my bones wasted away  
through my groaning all day long.

4 For day and night  
your hand was heavy on me;  
my strength was sapped  
as in the heat of summer.

5 Then I acknowledged my sin to you  
and did not cover up my iniquity.

I said, "I will confess  
my transgressions to the Lord."

And you forgave  
the guilt of my sin.

6 Therefore let all the faithful pray to you  
while you may be found;  
surely the rising of the mighty waters  
will not reach them.

7 You are my hiding place;  
you will protect me from trouble  
and surround me with songs of deliverance.

8 I will instruct you and teach you in the way you  
should go;

I will counsel you with my loving eye on you.

9 Do not be like the horse or the mule,  
which have no understanding  
but must be controlled by bit and bridle  
or they will not come to you.

10 Many are the woes of the wicked,  
but the Lord's unfailing love  
surrounds the one who trusts in him.

11 Rejoice in the Lord and be glad, you righteous;  
sing, all you who are upright in heart!

What a beautiful psalm we have before us. It speaks to our freedom in Christ and how we are meant to live with this freedom. See how it opens in the first 2 verses; the "Blessed's" are there reminding us to look back to Psalms 1 and 2. It might pay to read these again. But the way to live a life that is blessed by God is one that is centred on His word (Psalm 1) and which is lived in relationship with His Son, King Jesus (Psalm 2).

With this in mind, can I invite you to draw a wobbly line down the middle of a page, on one side write 'righteous' and the other 'not righteous'? What the picture of the righteous is in this psalm is described with a set of actions that are done to them, and by them (1 – 7). On the other side write down the opposite, for the unrighteous. In the middle of the wobbly line is verse 8 – 9. These verses explain why the righteous are where they are and why the wicked are where they are. But it also gives hope for the wicked and warning for the righteous.

It is good to ask ourselves what it takes for a person from one side to move to the other and why.

Think for a moment on someone who has moved from one side to the other and maybe pray for someone you know who has moved away from the righteous side.

In verse 10 – 12 we have the life of the wicked and righteous compared for the last time. But see the joy... how does this joy reflect in your life today? Perhaps it might be helpful to repent of joylessness or pray that God might lift your burden so that you can rejoice and be glad.

Phil

# Thursday 14th May - Psalm 33

Sing joyfully to the Lord, you righteous;  
it is fitting for the upright to praise him.  
2 Praise the Lord with the harp;  
make music to him on the ten-stringed lyre.  
3 Sing to him a new song;  
play skilfully, and shout for joy.  
4 For the word of the Lord is right and true;  
he is faithful in all he does.  
5 The Lord loves righteousness and justice;  
the earth is full of his unfailing love.  
6 By the word of the Lord the heavens were made,  
their starry host by the breath of his mouth.  
7 He gathers the waters of the sea into jars;  
he puts the deep into storehouses.  
8 Let all the earth fear the Lord;  
let all the people of the world revere him.  
9 For he spoke, and it came to be;  
he commanded, and it stood firm.  
10 The Lord foils the plans of the nations;  
he thwarts the purposes of the peoples.  
11 But the plans of the Lord stand firm forever,  
the purposes of his heart through all generations.

12 Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord,  
the people he chose for his inheritance.  
13 From heaven the Lord looks down  
and sees all mankind;  
14 from his dwelling place he watches  
all who live on earth—  
15 he who forms the hearts of all,  
who considers everything they do.  
16 No king is saved by the size of his army;  
no warrior escapes by his great strength.  
17 A horse is a vain hope for deliverance;  
despite all its great strength it cannot save.  
18 But the eyes of the Lord are on those who fear him,  
on those whose hope is in his unfailing love,  
19 to deliver them from death  
and keep them alive in famine.  
20 We wait in hope for the Lord;  
he is our help and our shield.  
21 In him our hearts rejoice,  
for we trust in his holy name.  
22 May your unfailing love be with us, Lord,  
even as we put our hope in you.

Would you call yourself patient? What do you do while you are waiting for God to answer your prayers? Eat chocolate? Watch movies on Netflix? Bite your fingernails? Browse the web?

We are waiting at the moment. Waiting for the restrictions to end. Waiting for life to resume. Waiting for things to get back to normal. Psalm 33 talks about waiting patiently for God to answer our prayer. Verse 20 says "Our soul waits for the Lord." One translation uses the present continuous tense, "We are waiting for the Lord". This psalm teaches us what we can do while we are waiting:

1. Rejoice in God's greatness 33:1-3
2. Reflect on God's word 33:4-9
3. Reflect on God's wisdom 33:10-12
4. Reflect on God's omniscience 33:13-17
5. Reflect on God's faithfulness 33:18-19

To wait is a great lesson: to be quiet in expectation, to be patient in hope. The Gospel of Luke talks about a man named Simeon who waited a long time for God's promise to be fulfilled. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah (Luke 2:26). As the weeks and months and years went by, he must have found himself wondering whether it would ever come to pass. But one day a young Galilean family enter the temple, and when he lifts up the child Jesus, he prays this prayer:

"Lord, I am your servant, and now I can die in peace, because you have kept your promise to me. With my own eyes I have seen what you have done to save your people." What are you waiting for? Remember Simeon! Not only are his prayers answered, but the longing of his heart is fulfilled in the presence of his Saviour.

*Forgive me Lord, I don't find it easy to wait patiently for my prayers to be answered. Teach me to be quiet in expectation and patient in hope. Thank you for showing me, in this psalm, those positive things that I can do while I am waiting.*

John

# Friday 15th May - Psalm 34

**Of David. When he pretended to be insane before Abimelek, who drove him away, and he left.**

1 I will extol the Lord at all times;  
his praise will always be on my lips.  
2 I will glory in the Lord;  
let the afflicted hear and rejoice.  
3 Glorify the Lord with me;  
let us exalt his name together.  
4 I sought the Lord, and he answered me;  
he delivered me from all my fears.  
5 Those who look to him are radiant;  
their faces are never covered with shame.  
6 This poor man called, and the Lord heard him;  
he saved him out of all his troubles.  
7 The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear him,  
and he delivers them.  
8 Taste and see that the Lord is good;  
blessed is the one who takes refuge in him.  
9 Fear the Lord, you his holy people,  
for those who fear him lack nothing.  
10 The lions may grow weak and hungry,  
but those who seek the Lord lack no good thing.

11 Come, my children, listen to me;  
I will teach you the fear of the Lord.  
12 Whoever of you loves life  
and desires to see many good days,  
13 keep your tongue from evil  
and your lips from telling lies.  
14 Turn from evil and do good;  
seek peace and pursue it.  
15 The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous,  
and his ears are attentive to their cry;  
16 but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil,  
to blot out their name from the earth.  
17 The righteous cry out, and the Lord hears them;  
he delivers them from all their troubles.  
18 The Lord is close to the brokenhearted  
and saves those who are crushed in spirit.  
19 The righteous person may have many troubles,  
but the Lord delivers him from them all;  
20 he protects all his bones,  
not one of them will be broken.  
21 Evil will slay the wicked;  
the foes of the righteous will be condemned.  
22 The Lord will rescue his servants;  
no one who takes refuge in him will be condemned.

I love Psalm 34 as I was able to memorise almost half of this chapter through a popular Christian song early in my Christian life. This Psalm reminds me to always bless God's holy name whether in good times or in difficult times.

Psalm 34 is David's declaration of joy when he escaped from Gath with his life. David went to Adullam Cave where many desperate men joined him. This joyful and wise Psalm seems to have been written from that cave and sung in the presence of those men. This Psalm begins beautifully (Psalm 34:1-4) as David is full of gratitude to God who got him out of a mess that he himself created. God's amazing goodness is shown when He delivers us when we don't really deserve it.

'Glorify' means 'magnify' in Hebrew. To magnify means to make Him larger in one's perception. Magnification does not actually make an object bigger, and we can't make God bigger. But to magnify something or someone is to perceive it as bigger, and we must do that regarding God.

David challenged the reader to experience God's goodness personally. It could only come through a personal encounter, in some ways similar like to taste and to see. Taste and sight are physical senses, ways in which we interact with the material world. In some ways, faith is how we interact with the spiritual world. In this sense to taste and to see are trusting God, loving Him, seeking Him, enjoying Him, looking unto Him.

Have you experienced a low point in your Christian life like David? Sing and/or meditate Psalm 34. Be encouraged once again to taste and to see that the Lord is good; for blessed is the one who takes refuge in him. (v.8)

*Lord, please help me to truly magnify who you are in my life. Help me to your share your goodness so that others can taste and see that you are indeed good.*

Edwin