

David: A Life of Worshiping God Psalm 63

A life long personal pursuit of worshiping God is not only what God came seeking for (John 4), and what we will be doing forever as Revelation 4 onward teaches us—it is what we are to be now. The definition of true believers as worshipers is at the heart of the church. Look for a moment at

Philippians 3:3 For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.

But with all that truth, reality is often much less, isn't it? We often move deeper in our studies—but not closer to the Lord.

We often have more contact with the truth—but less touch with God's power in our own personal lives.

We have more and more relationships at church, in groups, and in activities—but less and less depth.

And outside the church, the world is going faster, life is getting harder and spiritual lives need deepening. Could it be that the three thousand year old secret of David still works today?

DAVID SOUGHT GOD THROUGH HIS LONELINESS

We need a new generation of God hearted, Spirit empowered, Christ seeking worshipers.

Believers like David who used every tense of life to describe his pursuit of the Lord. He says this has been my **past pursuit**:

*Psalm 63:2 So I **have looked** for You in the sanctuary, To see Your power and Your glory.*

And even in the hot, empty, lifelessness of the bleak and hostile desert seeking God was his **present pursuit** even as he was being chased by Absalom (most likely the context of this Psalm):

*Psalm 63: v.1 O God, You **are** my God; Early will I seek You; My soul **thirsts** for*

*You; My flesh **longs** for You In a dry and thirsty land Where there is no water. v.3 Because Your lovingkindness **is** better than life, My lips shall praise You. v. 6 When I **remember** You on my bed, I **meditate** on You in the night watches. v.8 My soul **follows** close behind You; Your right hand **upholds** me.*

Then as David always looks ahead, he declares that desiring God will always be his **future pursuit**:

*Psalm 63:1-11 v.1 O God, You are my God; Early **will I seek You**; My soul thirsts for You; My flesh longs for You In a dry and thirsty land Where there is no water. v. 3 Because Your lovingkindness is better than life, My lips **shall praise You**. v.4 Thus **I will bless You** while I live; **I will lift up** my hands in Your name. v.5 My soul **shall be** satisfied as with marrow and fatness, And my mouth **shall praise You** with joyful lips. v. 7 Because You have been my help, Therefore in the shadow of Your wings **I will rejoice**. v.11 But **the king shall rejoice** in God; Everyone who swears by Him shall glory; But the mouth of those who speak lies shall be stopped.*

DAVID USES EVERY MEANS HE HAD TO PURSUE GOD

Even a quick glance at this Psalm in your English Bible shows an ancient Hebrew pattern; David uses seven different means to praise and worship God (seven as in an complete set).

We are challenged by our culture to never stop learning to use a few extra percentage points through life; but in a vastly more strategic way, God is saying through David—***why not start employing more and more of your capacity to worship God?***

Regularly use your lips, your tongue, your hands, your will, your mouth, your mind, and your intellect *to the max* in seeking to offer worship to God.

ONLY GOD CAN SATISFY

One of the most fundamental truths from this Psalm is that God can satisfy us to the very core of our existence and being. That is David's 3,000 year old testimony. He was as human as anyone can get.

David reflects every virtue and every vice. He struggles with fear, depression and lust; yet he sings with abandon, worships with a passion, and meditates into the very Throne Room of God. We can each identify with his struggles—and we can each learn from his pursuit of God.

When we stop and think about it, like we are at this moment—isn't it hard to believe that we neglect and spend so little time cultivating something that is 'better than life'—and spend the majority of all our time pursuing, protecting, and seeking to prolong what is a distant second?

ENJOYING GOD

God offers endless satisfaction, completion on a supreme level for each of us to enjoy and enlarge on a daily basis. Maybe this morning we need to pause and like David with our lips, tongue, mouth, mind and will express how much we want to just enjoy the Lord Himself right now.

MY FAITH LOOKS UP TO THEE

Ray Palmer, 1808–1887

Hymn # 410 "My Faith Looks Up to Thee" was written in 1832 by Ray Palmer, a 22-year-old school teacher. Several months after his graduation from Yale University, Palmer wrote the text for this hymn. He had experienced a very discouraging year in which he battled illness and loneliness.

The words for these stanzas were born out of my own soul with very little effort. I recall that I wrote the verses with tender emotion. There was not the slightest thought of writing for another eye, least of all writing a hymn for Christian worship. It is well-remembered that when writing the last line, "Oh, bear me safe above, a ransomed soul!" the thought of the whole work of redemption and salvation was involved in those words, and suggested the theme of eternal praises, and this brought me to a degree of emotion that brought abundant tears.

Two years later, while visiting in Boston, Palmer chanced to meet his friend, Lowell Mason, who stated: "Palmer, you may live many years and do many good things, but I think you will be best-known to posterity as the author of 'My Faith Looks Up to Thee'."

Lowell Mason composed a melody for this text. Soon the hymn appeared in its present form in a hymnal edited by Mason. And from that time on this musical expression has had an important place in nearly every hymnal that has been published:

My faith looks up to Thee, Thou Lamb of Calvary, Savior divine; now hear me when I pray, take all my sin away; O let me from this day be wholly Thine!

May Thy rich grace impart strength to my fainting heart, my zeal inspire; as Thou hast died for me, O may my love to Thee pure, warm and changeless be—a living fire!

While life's dark maze I tread and griefs around me spread, be Thou my guide; bid darkness turn to day, wipe sorrow's tears away, nor let me ever stray from Thee aside.

When ends life's transient dream, when death's cold sullen stream shall o'er me roll, Blest Savior, then, in love, fear and distrust remove—O bear me safe above, a

ransomed soul. 1

Jesus often talked about the satisfying ability of knowing Him. He said things like 'never hunger' and 'never thirst'. He talked about eternal life becoming like an endless spring gushing up from within us. To the woman by the well Jesus said it most directly—

John 4: 14 "but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life."

In Psalm 63 we find that David had also started drinking from that well of everlasting life; David had experienced the unbreakable covenant lovingkindness of God; and David was satisfied forever come what may in life or at death.

And what is the normal result of experiencing such life satisfying, soul filling realities? David shows us—he starts praising God.

Remember how he praises God with all he has (that list of seven parts of his faculties) he praises God. Twice he declares why he is doing that:

*Psalm 63:3 **Because** Your lovingkindness is better than life, My lips shall praise You.*

*Psalm 63:7 **Because** You have been my help, Therefore in the shadow of Your wings I will rejoice.*

David is our example and model that shows us that when a soul gets satisfied by God they can't hold it in. We sing, we share, we talk, and we think about the surpassing satisfaction that Christ has become to us; as the songwriter of yesteryear said, 'And the things of earth ...grow strangely dim, in the light of His glory and grace...'. Christ saves, and to all of us who seek Him with all our heart—Christ satisfies. Life is good—but God is BETTER!

That is what motivates us to also go and speak for Him who loves, saves and satisfies us. Another hymn birthed in times of loneliness is very powerful.

SO SEND I YOU

E. Margaret Clarkson, 1915–

Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I. Send me!" (Isaiah 6:8)

Hymn # 310 was written by a woman isolated from Christian fellowship and feeling very lonely; Margaret Clarkson was a 23-year-old school teacher in a gold-mining camp

1Osbeck, Kenneth W., *Amazing Grace—366 Inspiring Hymn Stories for Daily Devotions*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications) 1997.

town in northern Ontario, Canada. Her friends and family were many miles away. As she meditated on John 20:21 one evening, God spoke to her through the phrase "So send I you."

She realized that this lonely area was the place to which God had sent her. This was her mission field. As she quickly set down her thoughts in verse, one of the finest and most popular missionary hymns of the 20th century was born.

Miss Clarkson has authored many articles and poems for Christian and educational periodicals. For more than 30 years she was involved in the Toronto, Canada, public school system in various educational capacities.

Because of a physical disability, Miss Clarkson has been unable to fulfill her early desire of going to a foreign mission field. Yet her distinguished career in education, her many inspiring writings, and this challenging missionary hymn have accomplished much for the kingdom of God, even though she has remained in Canada.

These words have been greatly used by God to challenge many to respond to God's call for service with the words of the prophet Isaiah, "Here am I ... send me!"

So send I you to labor unrewarded, to serve unpaid, unloved, unsought, unknown, to bear rebuke, to suffer scorn and scoffing—So send I you to toil for me alone.

So send I you to bind the bruised and broken, o'er wand'ring souls to work, to weep, to wake, to bear the burdens of a world a-weary—So send I you to suffer for My sake.

So send I you to loneliness and longing, with heart a-hung-'ring for the loved and known, forsaking home and kindred, friend and dear one—So send I you to know my love alone.

So send I you to leave your life's ambition, to die to dear desire, self-will resign, to labor long and love where men revile you—So send I you to lose your life in Mine.

So send I you to hearts made hard by hatred, to eyes made blind because they will not see, to spend—tho it be blood—to spend and spare not—So send I you to taste of Calvary. "As the Father hath sent Me, so send I you." 2

PURSUIING GOD

One final note about this satisfying work of God's grace is seen in verse 8. Notice what happens when you find something you never dreamed even existed; something too good to be true, and too good to lose.

20sbeck, Kenneth W., *Amazing Grace—366 Inspiring Hymn Stories for Daily Devotions*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications) 1997.

Psalm 63:8 My soul follows close behind You; Your right hand upholds me.

David not only experienced the supreme satisfaction God gives, and couldn't stop singing and talking about it—he also clung to the Source, the Lord Himself. The Hebrew word cling is used of the bonding that comes when a husband truly loves his wife and their souls as well as bodies are 'glued' together.

In Genesis God describes marriage as a man and a woman that find that they complete each other so wonderfully that they become glued together. That is God's design for marriage. That is also God's attraction to our souls and spirits.

David became glued to God. That is exactly what v. 1 means. When you earnestly seek something you get glued to it. David wanted to stay as close as possible to the Lord. His heart, his mind, his will all had a target and that was the source of deepest satisfaction.

Now that again pauses us and makes us ask—if we are not clinging to the Lord, if our hearts and desires are less than glued upon Him, perhaps we are saying that we have not learned how to seek Him early enough, or earnestly enough, or completely enough to get satisfied. For once we get truly and deeply satisfied—we cling to Him. Are you clinging? Are you glued to God? Is He better than life? Or are you still clinging to what you are going to never be able to hold onto, and what you will lose sooner or later?

That is the message of Psalm 63—the God who supremely satisfies us and makes us long for unending, daily, moment-by-moment satisfaction!

DOWN TO EARTH REALITIES

One last thought—after this Psalm of communion in the very Throne Room with the Almighty God of the Universe, it seems strange to drop back to earth and end on such a human note in the last three verses. That is how some commentators (liberal ones) take the Psalm. They say that there is an addition by some scribe that "ruins" this Psalm.

But the opposite is true. This is by God's design. When David writes v. 9-11 he is reminding us that the real world we face every day, like the harsh realities of the Judean desert—do not go away. David began and ends this Psalm in the desert. He is saying that God can satisfy and captivate our hearts and minds here and now. We do not have to live in some imaginary world or hope for a never-never land where we can at last get what God has promised.

David found the supreme joy and complete satisfaction from God right in the place where his fears, struggles, disappointments and problems faced him. In the context of this Psalm in David's life, at the very same time that he was feeling the murderous hatred of his own son, he was also experiencing the deep peace and satisfaction that only God can give. Right where we are God wants to work; not after the storm rolls by—but in the midst of it.

What are the requirements to get something like this in our lives this morning? David shows us that there are only two prerequisites. First we must experience the Lord in an intimate and personal way. Like David we must be able to truly say:

Psalm 63: 1a "O God, You are my God..."

And then the choice that makes all the difference, we must choose the second half of this equation. Like David God must become what we want and seek with all our heart!

Psalm 63: 1b "...Early will I seek You; My soul thirsts for You; My flesh longs for You In a dry and thirsty land Where there is no water."

Have you come to the place as we sang earlier that you regularly say, "...and nothing I desire compares with You..."?

Now we need to get practical. David demonstrates this type of a life long, God seeking, worship that leads to endless satisfaction. Not perfection, just supreme satisfaction.

But how do we tap into this type of life? How do we experience this kind of power? Each of David's Psalms are inspired, breathed out by God. Each of them are profitable for doctrine (what God wants us to be doing); and for reproof (what God wants us to stop doing); and for correction (what God wants us to start doing); and for instruction in righteousness (what God wants us to keep doing).

David's testimony of how God is close to all who are lonely is captured by the Psalms. In fact, David wrote Psalms or testimonies to God's faithfulness from each of the three stages of his life—from his youth or growing years, from his peak or his strong years, and from his old age or his waning years.

EXPERIENCING GOD'S CLOSENESS ALL OUR YEARS.

It is amazing but true according to researchers, that the most acute loneliness is thought to be felt by teenagers. Teens feel neither old nor young. They feel between both worlds and can't seem to connect with either, so they desperately try to find the acceptance and approval of their fellow teens. Loneliness is unexpected by teens when it comes, they are taken off guard and are ill prepared for its fierceness. Unlike the elderly who have felt the sting of being alone often, teens often haven't. So David's testimony from his teen years is especially powerful.

David found God was with him while alone as a young shepherd boy writing Psalms 19 and 23. He had many a lonely night in the fields, the woods, and the hill sides of Judea. Instead of hating and fleeing those lonely times, he turned them into meditations upon the faithfulness of God.

Psalm 19 has three basic choices we each need to make:

1. **Learn to meditate on God's Character when you're alone.** v. 1-6 explains that David meditated upon the character of God when he was alone.;
2. **Learn to listen to God's Voice when you're alone.** v. 7-11 explains that David listened to the Word of God when he was alone;
3. **Learn to fear God's Disapproval when you're alone.** v. 12-14 explains that David feared the disapproval God (heeded His Word) when he was alone.

Remember that one of the prime characteristics of teens is their incredible need for acceptance and approval? David was a teen, he felt this need deeply—yet he chose to focus that desire towards God. He wanted to have God's approval and acceptance of all that he did and said. Psalm 19:14 is a clear cry from a teen who was after God's own heart.

Psalm 23 is the testimony of what you can learn about God in times of loneliness.

As I read this familiar passage and you hear these well known truths—stop—and ask yourself, "Have I experienced this, or is it just a fact that I carry around in my head and not my heart?" Here we go, listen to David's testimony of what he experienced, what he clung to from his long dark nights, and long lonely days. As you listen, ask the Lord to give you the same desire, then echo each of David's affirmations and make them your own testimony. Confess these loneliness lessons and find them true!

Psalm 23:1-6

- v. 1a The Lord is my shepherd; *(Lord, when I'm alone--shepherd me.)* Think of Jesus who said—*I am the Good Shepherd John 10.*
- v. 1b I shall not want. *(Lord, when I'm alone--satisfy me.)* Think of Jesus who said—*Whoever comes to me will never hunger or thirst John 6.*
- v. 2a He makes me to lie down in green pastures; *(Lord, when I'm alone--rest me.)* Think of Jesus who said—*And I will give you rest Matthew 11.*
- v. 2b He leads me beside the still waters. *(Lord, when I'm alone--lead me.)* Think of Jesus who said—*I am the Way John 14.*
- v. 3a He restores my soul; *(Lord, when I'm alone--restore me.)* Think of Jesus who said—*I am come that you may have life abundant John 10.*
- v. 3b He leads me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake. *(Lord, when I'm alone--sanctify me.)* Think of Jesus who said—*I will sanctify you through My Word John 17.*
- v. 4a Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, *(Lord, when I'm alone—walk with me.)* Think of Jesus who said—*Lo I am with you even to the end Matthew 28.*
- v. 4b I will fear no evil; *(Lord, when I'm alone--protect me.)* Think of Jesus who said—*Fear Not.*
- v. 4c For You are with me; *(Lord, when I'm alone--remind me.)*
- v. 4d Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. *(Lord, when I'm alone--comfort me.)*

- v. 5a You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; (*Lord, when I'm alone--calm me.*) Think of Jesus who said—*Let not your heart be troubled John 14.*
- v. 5b You anoint my head with oil; (*Lord, when I'm alone--empower me.*) Think of Jesus who said—I am sending My *Spirit*.
- v. 5c My cup runs over. (*Lord, when I'm alone--fill me to overflowing.*) Think of Jesus who said—*Out of them shall flow rivers of living water John 7.*
- v. 6a Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; (*Lord, when I'm alone--surround me.*) Think of Jesus who said—*And of His fullness we have received grace upon grace John 1.*
- v. 6b And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. (*Lord, when I'm alone--point me heavenward.*)

So in the midst of a hard life, a life of stress, a life of constant demands, a life on the run and a life of endless struggles—David chose to make regular, long term investments in seeking God. A long obedience in seeking God means--

SEEKING GOD THROUGH ALL OF LIFE

David compounded his investment in God. David cultivated a life long desire to seek the Lord in every avenue of life. So should we.

The fruit of worshiping God through the lonely days of life can be seen in the collected testimonies of our hymnbooks.

TEACH ME THY WAY, O LORD

Words and Music by Mansell Ramsey, 1849–1923

Teach me your way, O Lord; lead me in a straight path. (Psalm 27:11)

I have held many things in my hands, and I have lost them all; but whatever I have placed in God's hands, that I still possess.

—*Martin Luther*

I thank God for my handicaps, for, through them, I have found myself, my work, and my God.

—*Helen Keller*

Whatever absorbs our thinking will ultimately control our actions. It is so important for a Christian, then, to let the ways of the Lord become the controlling force in life. It was C. S. Lewis who reminded us that we are becoming now what we will be in eternity—either something beautiful and full of glory or something hideous and full of darkness.

A spiritual knowledge of Christ is always a personal knowledge. It is not gained through the experiences of others. Knowing the Lord in all of His fullness for every situation we encounter is a lifetime pursuit. Discipleship involves a willingness to be taught and then a desire to follow the ways of the Lord—to go with Him in the same

direction He is going. We must be willing to say with David Livingstone, the noted missionary statesman of the past century, "I will place no value on anything I have or may possess except in relation to the kingdom of Christ."

This hymn first appeared in 1920 in England. The author and composer, Benjamin Ramsey, was a well-known local church musician in the Bournemouth area of England. It has since had a wide use by student groups as well as by sincere believers everywhere who genuinely desire to have a greater knowledge of their Lord.

Teach me Thy Way, O Lord, teach me Thy way! Thy guiding grace afford—teach me Thy way! Help me to walk aright, more by faith, less by sight; lead me with heav'nly light—teach me Thy Way!

When I am sad at heart, teach me Thy Way! When earthly joys depart, teach me Thy Way! In hours of loneliness, in times of dire distress, in failure or success, teach me Thy Way.

When doubts and fears arise, teach me Thy Way! When storms o'er spread the skies, teach me Thy Way! Shine thru the cloud and rain, thru sorrow, toil and pain; make Thou my pathway plain—teach me Thy Way!

Long as my life shall last, teach me Thy Way! Where'er my lot be cast, teach me Thy Way! Until the race is run, until the journey's done, until the crown is won, teach me Thy Way!³

³ Osbeck, Kenneth W., *Amazing Grace—366 Inspiring Hymn Stories for Daily Devotions*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications) 1997.

FIRST WE FIND DAVID'S PSALMS FROM HIS EARLY YEARS

David suffers the intense loneliness of family disappointments—and from these times he grows in his relationship with the Lord. David was overlooked, ignored and even disliked by his family in **First Samuel 16-18**. He is left out of family gatherings, unrecognized for great achievements and basically left alone much of the time to do his "job" with the family's flock of sheep. David found God was with him while alone as a young shepherd boy. He had many a lonely night in the fields, the woods and the hill sides of Judea.

Instead of hating and fleeing those lonely times, he turned them into meditations upon the faithfulness of God. His testimony from his early years is captured in Psalms 19, 23, 101, and 132.

THEN WE FIND DAVID'S SONGS FROM HIS STRUGGLING YEARS

David suffers intense loneliness as he faces family conflict and danger. In **I Sam 19:11** as Saul tries to murder him, David writes **Psalm 59**. These times of danger are from his boss and father-in-law King Saul. Instead of being eaten up by the intense loneliness he must have felt with job and family pressures all dumped on him at once-- he expresses his needs to God. His prayerful responses to these tough times are captured in the Psalms and show a pathway through loneliness to the One who is closest of all. In that time of feeling so alone David writes **Psalm 59**—how to overcome the feelings of loneliness when we are in danger.

David finds an ***unshakeable trust in God's protection***. Some key truths from this Psalm are:

1. David turns to God in his fearful times v.1.
2. David trusts God in his fearful times v.9.
3. David triumphs through God in his fearful times v. 16.

Psalm 59 has several key defenses to the paralysis of loneliness during times of conflict and danger. Note these truths David found (circle them or underline them in your Bibles) and then ask your self are these personalized yet in your life.

David says the Lord is:

a defense (v. 9); a supply of mercy delivered (v. 10); a shield (v. 11); the ruler of all (v. 13); a defense and refuge in the day of trouble (v. 16); strength, defense, and mercy (v. 17). Now look back over those verses and change this from mere facts to personal reality. This method can transform your Bible study. This is how to apply God's Word to your life each day!

Here is how we do that. Note what David actually said starting in v. 9 "God is ***my*** defense". He made it personal. He reached out and touched God by faith—and so can we

when we face family conflict and danger. Remember this was David's habit since his youth.

Can't you just hear him singing that 23rd Psalm out on the hills of Judea during those long and lonely nights? The Lord is **MY** Shepherd, **I** shall not want, He makes **ME**...

Go through David's list and make it yours. Say to the Lord from your heart right now with me:

v. 9 be my defense; v. 10 deliver mercy to **me**; v. 11 be **my** shield; v. 13 rule over **my** life; v. 16 be **my** refuge in times of trouble; v. 17 be **my** strength today, show **me** Your mercy now I need it so, and defend me from this painful loneliness!

David learns to live with fear as he is a newlywed and faces the unpredictable outbursts of deadly rage from Saul.

In **First Samuel 20:35-42** as Jonathan warns him of the danger of Saul's wrath, David writes **Psalms 11 and 64**.

1. **Psalm 11** is a meditation on why David should not just run away from dangers—he needed to run to the Lord first.
2. **Psalm 64** is the Psalm about the poison of jealous, hateful, and hurtful tongues. After David's meteoric rise to giant slayer, King's helper, royal son-in-law and commander—there were many who hated and envied him. God shows him how to deal with poisonous language directed at him. This could be in the time of Saul or also in the time of Absalom's rebellion and the evil accusations of Ahithophel and Shimei (2nd Samuel 15-19)

David suffers intense loneliness as he loses his job, and is separated from his family. David writes **Psalm 52**—how to overcome the feelings of loneliness when we are away from our work, home, and family. From **First Samuel 21:1-9** as he flees to Ahimelech the priest, David writes **Psalm 52**. Some key truths from this Psalm are:

1. v. 1 God is good no matter what!
2. v. 2-4 People will always hurt us.
3. v. 5-7 Take God as your strength in times like this.
4. v. 8-9 Wait for God, cling to Him, grow through the alone time!

This was a big surprise to everyone but God. So recently unemployed for the first time David faces life, looks at his situation and finds the pain that always surrounds such a sudden and unexpected change in everything he had relied upon. Everything but what was most important.

David reverts to his default system. When the unexpected comes we usually respond by reflex. What was David's habit of life, what he did without thinking very long? David had trusted the Lord from his youth, and though his job ended—his relationship with the Good Shepherd hadn't changed a bit. That is exactly how Psalm 52 begins. Turn there with me.

- v. 1 God is good no matter what!
- v. 2-4 People will always hurt us.
- v. 5-7 Take God as your strength in times like this.
- v. 8-9 Wait for God, cling to Him, grow through the alone time!

Psalm 52:9 I will praise You forever, Because You have done it; And in the presence of Your saints ***I will wait*** (*hupomeno*) on Your name, for it is good.

David is captured and goes from fear to terror to nearly a complete breakdown because of fear.

In 1 Sam. 21:10-12 when David is captured at Gath he writes about this in **Psalm 56**. In this Psalm David is confident (Ps. 56:9)! Why! "THIS I KNOW THAT GOD IS FOR ME". He confesses a **distinct impression God is on his side!**

So what would God have us to do when all alone and in the worst situation we can imagine? Look at the tune again "dove". In Psalm 55 David says he wished he could fly away from his troubles on the wings of a dove. Now his troubles have arrested him.

- **Seek God.** What could possibly be better than the wings of a dove in a situation like this when you are all alone? Better than a dove or its wings is the God who made the dove! And that is just where David goes!
- **Cry out to Him.** Four times in three verses (v. 4, 10-11) David cries to Elohim—the Creator of the dove and everything else!
- **Remember His closeness in alone times.** This Psalm was very popular. Psalm 56 is quoted by the writer of Hebrews 13:6 (Psalm 56:4, 11); by Paul in Romans 8:31 (Psalm 56:9); and most of all by Jesus Himself in John 8:12.

John 8:12 Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."

Real life is only lived in Christ; real light comes only by the sunshine of His Face; real peace is only in His Presence—and that is what David found.

- **Remember that God cares.** The tears in the bottle phrase speaks loudly of God's promise to never leave us, never forget us, and never be indifferent to the cares of any of his children.

And what was the way David survived the intense loneliness of this horribly foreign place? In Psalm 56 we find no less than nine resolves David made while facing the "distant land" of a lonely new place of struggle. Here they are:

Psalm 56:3-11

1. Whenever I am afraid, ***I will trust in You.***
2. v. 4a In God (***I will praise His word***),
3. v. 4b In God ***I have put my trust***;
4. v. 4c ***I will not fear.*** What can flesh do to me? 5 All day they twist my words; All their thoughts are against me for evil. 6 They gather together, They hide, they mark my steps, When they lie in wait for my life. 7 Shall they escape by iniquity? In anger cast down the peoples, O God! 8 You number my wanderings; Put my tears into Your bottle; Are they not in Your book?
5. v. 9 When I cry out to You, Then my enemies will turn back; This ***I know***, because ***God is for me.***
6. v. 10a In God (***I will praise His word***),
7. v. 10b In the Lord (***I will praise His word***),
8. v. 11a In God ***I have put my trust***;
9. v. 11b ***I will not be afraid.*** What can man do to me?

But as the time goes on his confidence fades and in 1 Sam. 21:13-15 we see him go into a terrible time of fear. Yet as he looks back on this dark hour he writes **Psalm 34**. In this Psalm we see David magnifying God. Because of his **unwavering awareness God was watching**.

- Psalm 34:3 Oh, magnify the LORD with me, And let us exalt His name together. [***he gives glory to God***]
- Psalm 34:4 I sought the LORD, [***even in tough times he always sought for God***]
- Psalm 34:6 This poor man cried out, [***During tough times he had a proper view of himself; he was poor in spirit as Christ would later say.***]
- Psalm 34:8 Oh, taste and see that the LORD [is] good; [***he had a personal experience of God***] Blessed [is] the man [who] trusts in Him!
- Psalm 34:9 Oh, fear the LORD, [***During tough times he practiced the presence of God, acknowledging Him is to fear him. it changed his behavior. If we believe right we will behave right!***]
- Psalm 34:15 The eyes of the LORD [are] on the righteous, [***During tough times he knew he was in touch with God***]
- Psalm 34:22 The LORD redeems the soul of His servants, And none of those who trust in Him shall be condemned. [***During tough times the cross is the ultimate refuge***] (NKJV)

David left Gath and was so alone that he despairs. And now David feels abandoned as moves to a new location that is very foreign to him. David wrote **Psalm 13**—how to overcome the feelings of despair, abandonment and loneliness when we are in a very dark situation that seems hopeless.

1. **My life feels like an endless struggle.** *Psalm 13:1a How long, O Lord? Will You forget me forever?* By repeating himself four times he shows how deep this feeling runs. **What David says is, "I just can't go on."**
2. **My life seems to have lost God's blessing.** *Psalm 13:1b How long will*

You hide Your face from me? David saw a lack of the apparent blessing on God. ***My family doesn't seem blessed anymore. My work doesn't seem blessed anymore. My ministry doesn't seem blessed anymore. My spiritual life doesn't seem blessed anymore. What David says is, "I don't SEE YOU anymore in my home, my work, or my life."***

3. **My mind seems so troubled.** *Psalm 13:2a How long shall I take counsel in my soul, Having sorrow in my heart daily?* David said that he had dark thoughts and uncontrolled emotions. ***What David says is, "I can't stop these feelings of dejection and abandonment."***
4. **My life seems to have lost God's victory.** *Psalm 13:2b How long will my enemy be exalted over me?* ***What David says is, "I am constantly defeated."***

David cries out in this prayer to the Lord for three things, and that is what God wanted to hear. He answers and David goes on.

First David prays--**look at me.** *Psalm 13:3a Consider and hear me, O Lord my God; Enlighten my eyes, Lest I sleep the sleep of death;* David felt like God had turned His back on him. He asks the Lord to turn around and look at him. When I am overwhelmed at times one of the most touching moments is when my sweet Bonnie finds me. She sits down and talks, when I don't respond, she says "Look at me honey," and gently puts her hand under my chin and lifts my face up to look at her eyes of love and smile of comfort.

Second David prays--**answer me.** *Psalm 13:3b Consider and hear me, O Lord my God; Enlighten my eyes, Lest I sleep the sleep of death.* David felt like God had stopped talking to him. This Hebrew word literally means 'answer'. David is asking the Lord to let Him hear His voice like in the old days. This is when we take God's Word and say "Open Your Word to my heart again. Let me cling to Your truth. Help my unbelief!"

Finally David prays—**restore me.** *Psalm 13:3c Consider and hear me, O Lord my God; Enlighten my eyes, Lest I sleep the sleep of death.* David felt that he was going to die and never be king. He asks God to do what he promised. This is when we say to the Lord, "You promised to never leave me—I need Your presence again! You told me that you loved me to the uttermost—I need Your power again. You said that you would comfort me—I need Your peace again!"

One parting truth we can hold on to as we go--

To be abandoned means once you were not. For the true child of God there is always some awareness of this truth, regardless of how deep his or her depression may be. We may be depressed even to the point of feeling utterly abandoned. But the fact that we feel abandoned itself means that we really know God is there. To be abandoned you need somebody to be abandoned by. Because we are Christians and have been

taught by God in Scripture, we know that God still loves us and will be faithful to us, regardless of our feelings.⁴

- **David feels intensely alone as moves to a new location that is very foreign to him.** In First Samuel 21:11 as he fled from Saul to the Philistine city of Gath, David wrote ***Psalms 40 and 70***—how to overcome the feelings of loneliness when we are in a new situation that is very foreign situation. And in these Psalms he gives the pathway out of the pit that end with praising from the pits and praying from the pits. **The Pathway out of the Pits**

1. **LIKE DAVID--REMEMBER GOD'S WORK IN YOUR LIFE.** David first notes the five ways God had worked in his life. Here is God's grace directed towards David—*Psalm 40: 1-3 I waited patiently for the Lord; And He inclined to me, And heard my cry. 2 He also brought me up out of a horrible pit, Out of the miry clay, And set my feet upon a rock, And established my steps. 3 He has put a new song in my mouth— Praise to our God; Many will see it and fear, And will trust in the Lord.* The first step out of the pits is to remember God's work in our lives. Like David, we need to remember God's work of grace in our lives.
2. **LIKE DAVID--REAFFIRM YOUR TRUST IN GOD.** *Psalm 40: 4-5* David verbally says that he trusts God. Like David, we need to reaffirm our trust in the Lord.
3. **LIKE DAVID—RENEW YOUR SUBMISSION TO GOD.** *Psalm 40: 6-8* What a beautiful way to look at hard times! God is tunneling a well of water to refresh me; God is making room to bury into my life His greatest treasures.
4. **LIKE DAVID--REPEAT TRUTHS ABOUT GOD—**He is Righteous. *Psalm 40: 9-12.* Like David, we need to repeat truths about the Lord.
5. **LIKE DAVID--REJOICE IN GOD EVEN IN THE PITS.** *Psalm 40: 13-17 (=Psalm 70: 2-5)* Like David, we need to rejoice in the Lord.
6. **LIKE DAVID--PRAY FOR OTHERS WHILE YOU GO THROUGH THE PITS.** *Psalm 40: 16-17*

David suffers intense loneliness as he lives and works with a tough crowd.

David wrote more Psalms in this period than at any other time in his life. These **cave Psalms are 4, 57, 141-142**—how to overcome the feelings of loneliness when we are far from home and feel exiled. In First Samuel 22: 1-2 as he moved into a cave at Adullam with an incredibly difficult group of men, David wrote more Psalms than at any other time in his life. These cave Psalms are 4, 57, 141-142. In **Psalm 142** We see David calling on God because of his **unfailing hope God was listening and hearing**.

Psalm 142 is the classic confession of David when he was a caveman, alone and depressed. God satisfied him completely as he discovered great things about God. Remember, a heart that flees to God for refuge, will always be satisfied.

⁴ James Montgomery Boice, *Psalms—An Expositional Commentary—Volume 1—Psalms 1-41*, Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 1998, p. 111.

That is the summary of the Life of David. What do we find as we examine the life of David? DAVID was always fleeing to Christ as his refuge. In this overview of the dark days in David's life, we see how his needs were always met by the Lord..

1. **Cave times are usually accompanied by great distress.** (v. 3-4) Psalm 142: 3-4 When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, Then You knew my path. In the way in which I walk They have secretly set a snare for me. 4 Look on my right hand and see, For there is no one who acknowledges me; Refuge has failed me; No one cares for my soul.

In the middle of great troubles there are usually some associated symptoms of depression.

- David felt **overwhelmed in spirit** (v.3a): "Roof caving in!"; "Everything going wrong at once!"; "Always happens to me!"; "Not now!"; "I have some bad news".
- David thought his adversaries had **hidden a trap for me** (v.3b): "They're all after me"; "I've been railroaded"; "Framed".
- David feared that **no one regards me** (v.4a): "No one called..."; "I'm a nobody"; "Poor me..."; "I'm all alone".
- David also feared that there was **no escape for me** (v.4b): "One-way trip to nowhere"; "You're TOO old"; "I'm sorry but the qualifications for this position..."
- Finally, David felt that **no one cares for my soul** (v.4c). Have you ever let THESE DEADENING THOUGHT CROSS YOUR MIND? They will bring gloom as fast as a storm front in a summer thunderstorm. But hold on –

2. **Cave times usually accomplish great discoveries about God** (v. 5-7) Psalm 142:5-7 I cried out to You, O Lord: I said, "You are **my** refuge, **My** portion in the land of the living. 6 Attend to **my** cry, For I am brought very low; Deliver **me** from my persecutors, For they are stronger than I. **7 Bring my soul out of prison**, That I may praise Your name; The righteous shall surround me, For You shall deal bountifully with me."

Cave times open ways we never dreamed of for knowing God intimately. As we look there, why don't you take a moment and mark these for someone else who may need them someday. Or even for you if you ever feel the twinge of depression in your life. Look now and find:

When depressed I learn that You alone are my true REFUGE (any time, any where) Psalm 142:5a: **depression means its time to flee to the Lord my Refuge.** I will believe Your promise and turn to You as my Refuge right now.

When depressed I learn that You alone are my true PORTION (just what I need). Psalm 142:5b: **depression means its time to feed on the Lord my Portion.** I will believe Your promise to be all I need in this hard time.

When depressed I learn that You alone are my true LISTENER (who cares and hears). Psalm 142:6 'Give heed my cry': **depression means its time to speak to the Lord my Master**. I will believe Your promise and pour out all my troubles to You who care for me.

When depressed I learn that You alone are my true DELIVERER (comes and helps) "bring" Psalm 142:7a: **depression means its time to trust in the Lord my Redeemer**. I will believe Your promise and let You rescue me now.

When depressed I learn that You alone are my true OBJECT OF WORSHIP (loves and accepts my worship) Psalm 142:7b: **depression means its time to offer worship to the Lord my Lord**. I will believe Your promise and worship You even when I don't feel like it.

When depressed I learn that You alone are my true PROVIDER "surround" Psalm 142:7c: **depression means its time to rest in the Lord my Provider**. I will believe Your promise and let You surround me now with everything I need.

Cave life yields great discoveries about God. David sings them in Psalm 142. Listen to the confessions of this caveman:

- "Lord of Refuge, You are my Portion" (v.5),
- "O Listening One, hear my cry and Rescue me (v.6).
- "My God who Provides the righteous to gather about me, You are Sufficient" (v. 7).

We find in 1 Sam. 24:16-22 the context for **Psalm 57**. Here we see David rising above discouragement by **applying his great discoveries about God** he learned in Psalm 142. Now to the conclusion as the caveman confesses the end result of acting upon these great discoveries about god that he made in **Psalm 57**. Do you remember them from last time? David applies all those truths to his heart!

- v.1a – **God is Gracious** (Exodus 33:12 – 34:6), that means that God is gracious to even save us we are so sinful...and He has done so much more than that!
- v.1b – **God is Refuge**. He said it is Psalm 142:5, He says it here...Look at Psalm 91. God is our shelter, protection, covering and shade. The cross is our safe harbor Hebrews 6:19 – anchored!
- v.2 – **God is able—He accomplishes**.
- v. 4/6. Interlude – enemy without because enemy within
- v.5 Solution –focus on God. **God saves**.
- v.7a – **God Establishes**. See Psalm 40 5x He...Inclined to me, heard my cry, brought me up, Set my feet, Put a new song.
- v.7b – **God makes us praise** through sorrow
- v.8-9 – **God makes us thankful**
- v.9b – **God opens an audience to us...**
- v. 10 – **God is loyal**. Lamentations 3 - mercies fail not.
- v.11 – God uses our adoring His name--to pull us out of the cave to Him!

- **David suffers the intense loneliness of unemployment and unsettled home life.** David takes time to write ***Psalms 17 and 63***—how to overcome the feelings of loneliness when we are insecure. This was a time of no sure place to live, no reliable source of income and provision.
 - In First Samuel 22:5 and 23:14-16 as he was hiding from Saul in the Wilderness of Hareth, David takes time to write Psalms 17 and 63. Sam. 23:13-14 > Ps. 63 We see David seeking God. Why? ABUNDANT SATISFACTION GOD REFRESHED HIM. **Psalm 63** may have been in his time of fleeing Absalom as also are Psalms 3, 4, 5, and 63. Some truths from Psalm 63: v.4 worked for God; v. 5 witnessed God; v. 6-7 waited for God; and v. 8 walked with God.
- **David suffers the intense loneliness when betrayed by friends.** David writes ***Psalms 7, 31, 35-36, and 54*** as he records his heart on how to overcome the feelings of loneliness when we are betrayed by those we trusted as friends. In First Samuel 23:10-13 as he escapes from Saul at Keilah and goes into hiding in the mountains of Ziph, David writes Psalms 31 and 54. 1 Sam. 23:19-25 > Ps. 54 We see David finding refuge in God. Why? CONSTANTLY SETTING GOD BEFORE HIMSELF v. 30. In First Samuel 23:29 as he hides in the cave at En-gedi, David writes Psalms 35-36. In First Samuel 24:1-16 after he spares the life of his mortal enemy King Saul, David records his heart in Psalm 7. **Psalm 7** may also refer to other Benjamite adversaries such as Shimei and Sheba both who hated and attacked David.
- **David suffers the intense loneliness when wronged in a business deal.** David writes ***Psalm 53***—how to overcome the feelings of loneliness when we are in danger of bitterness over being hurt in a business deal. In First Samuel 25 in the Wilderness of Paran as he faces the danger of his anger toward Nabal “the fool” and as God delivers him, David writes Psalm 53. The key to this Psalm is the word fool which in Hebrew is Nabal (15 times in this Psalm and 15 times in the account of 1st Samuel 25).
- **David suffers the intense loneliness of the complete loss of his family, friends, and finances—and finds hope in the Lord in this dark hour.** David writes ***Psalms 16***—how to overcome the feelings of loneliness when we suffer the loss of family, or friends, or finances—or even all three at once.
 - Finally in First Samuel 27 as he is grieved and endangered over the raid on his family and city of Ziklag, David writes **Psalm 16** and mirrors the wording of his plea to Saul in 1st Samuel 26.19-20. So it seems that Psalm 16 is written after this event with Saul and the key is seen in 1st Samuel 30.6b when David ‘strengthened himself in **the Lord his God**’. That was the One he had entrusted with his life. Psalm 16:11 You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures

forevermore.

- **Psalm 16** is a Michtam or an engraved Psalm. Michtam speaks of something so special it can't merely be written on the surface like a pen on paper, it must be engraved like a chisel into stone to preserve it. So these truths were engraved into David's heart and life—he knew that God would show him, lead him, and give him the promises of His Word. There are actually six Michtams (Psalms 16, 56-60) all of which come from the furnace of affliction surrounding Saul's hunting down David to destroy him.

FINALLY WE FIND DAVID'S SONGS FROM HIS CLOSING YEARS; Finally We Find David's Testimony Of God's Closeness DURING HIS OLD AGE OR HIS WANING YEARS

- And finally, at the end of his magnificent career. David extolls his Master and King in **Psalm 18**. Especially note his life long praise to God in Psalm 18:46 The Lord lives! Blessed be my Rock! Let the God of my salvation be exalted. 2 Sam. 5:17-25 - 2 Sam. 22 and Ps. 18. We find David triumphing over all enemies! Why? SEEING LIFE FROM GOD'S PERSPECTIVE, And what might that be? Psalm 18 tells us: v.1-3 God is greatest attraction; v. 4-6 We are in desperate condition; v. 7-15 God is awesome; v. 16-24 It is God who rescues; v. 25-29 God is just; v. 30-36 God reveals Himself; v. 37-45 God conquers enemies; v. 46-50 God is to be praised. This Psalm is in God's Word twice. Once at David's coronation and then again at the close of his life—it was like a way of saying that he wanted to start his career right and end it well for the Lord!
- **David suffers the intense loneliness of old age.** And finally, at the end of his magnificent life, David extolls his Master and King in **Psalm 18**—how to overcome the feelings of loneliness when we are in our last days before death. Especially note his life long praise to God in Psalm 18:46 The Lord lives! Blessed be my Rock! Let the God of my salvation be exalted.

FIRST WE FIND DAVID'S PSALMS FROM HIS EARLY YEARS

David suffers the intense loneliness of family disappointments—and from these times he grows in his relationship with the Lord. David was overlooked, ignored and even disliked by his family in **First Samuel 16-18**. He is left out of family gatherings, unrecognized for great achievements and basically left alone much of the time to do his "job" with the family's flock of sheep. David found God was with him while alone as a young shepherd boy. He had many a lonely night in the fields, the woods and the hill sides of Judea.

Instead of hating and fleeing those lonely times, he turned them into meditations upon the faithfulness of God. His testimony from his early years is captured in Psalms 19 and 23.

1. **Psalm 19 has three basic lessons:** v. 1-6 explains that David meditated upon the character of God when he was alone; v. 7-11 explains that David listened to the Word of God when he was alone; v. 12-14 explains that David feared the disapproval God (heeded His Word) when he was alone.
2. **Psalm 23 is the testimony of what you can learn about God in times of loneliness.** Listen to David's testimony of what he experienced, what he clung to from his long dark nights, and long lonely days. As you listen, ask the Lord to give you the same desire, then echo each of David's affirmations and make them your own testimony. Confess these loneliness lessons and find them true!

David faces and wins an immense spiritual confrontation. Goliath is not just an enemy warrior—he is defying God.

1. In **First Samuel 17:4, 57-58** David is the giant killer and writes **Psalm 8**. We believe this because in the most ancient Jewish Targums (paraphrases of the Hebrew Old Testament into Aramaic from the time of Ezra onward)—specifically point this 8th Psalm as being about David and Goliath.
2. The words in the manuscripts before Psalm 9 are actually the ending of Psalm 8. Muthlabben means 'death of champion' and was paraphrased in the Targums referring to David's killing the 'man of the space between the camps' in **1st Samuel 17.4**. That no mans land was dominated by Goliath and was conquered by David.
3. Much like Satan was defeated by Christ's coming to earth. David may have sung this Psalm while in Saul's court to comfort him when the demons troubled him.

David explains his habits as a young man that fortified him for Goliath, a life of hardship and for being so useful to God.

He explains this in **Psalm 132** which records how David started walking with the Lord as a young boy. This may be David's confession after being anointed King by Samuel (1st Samuel 16.13) and looking back and remembering God's Hand on his life. This Psalm

may capture his resolves for his young years—stated when rising to be King, as a testimony of God’s faithfulness in the past and a reaffirmation of his consecration to the Lord. Some key truths from this Psalm are:

1. This psalm could be called *David’s spiritual secret*—what made him the Giant that we see him to be from the Scriptural record of his life.
2. David **put God ahead of comfort** in v. 3-5. He made time for God a holy habit in his life. Is it yet for you? Without regular, consistent, disciplines time alone with God—you and I will never amount to anything for eternity!
3. David also **personally longed for God** as a young shepherd boy. His family probably kept the Sabbath and the Feasts—but David had an internal, personal longing inside of his own heart for the Lord. Do you? Or is it just your parents that make you come and read and serve? Is it just your family or husband or wife that keeps you kind of going? Reality in spiritual life only comes when it is personal longing from your heart for God.
4. David wanted to be **clothed with righteousness** in v. 9a. That means he wanted to live the Lord’s way as much as possible. Consecration to the Lord was a choice. He wanted to come before the Lord like a holy priest. And isn’t that what God says we are to be—his holy priesthood that spend our life bringing Him offerings of worship and deeds of sacrificial service? Are you clothed with consecrated righteousness and living each day as a priest?
5. David **engaged in corporate worship** in v. 9b. Note the plural ‘saints’. He was personally a seeker of the Lord and that made him come into the congregation of saints with such a zeal he wanted to ‘shout’ to the Lord. This verse is repeated as v. 16. Do you engage in corporate worship? Does your heart shout? Does your face radiate a deep love for the Lord or a distracted, disconnected air of indifference to the times we join our hearts in worship to the Lord God Almighty?

David also had made some vows for personal conduct and consecration. These resolves (much like Jonathan Edwards) are captured in **Psalm 101** which can be called David’s pact for purity. He fled to the Lord as his refuge from sins of his youth. This Psalm, like Psalm 132, was also probably written when David starts his career as King—as a testimony of God’s faithfulness in the past and a reaffirmation of his consecration to the Lord.

Some key truths from this Psalm are:

1. The *pathway to a godly life* contains personal choices or resolves of holiness to God. Note the seven “I wills” (2a, 2b, 3a, 4b, 5b, 5c, 8a).
2. David **sought personal integrity** as his goal v.2b.
3. David **made a personal pact of purity** for his life and conduct v. 3a.
4. David had a **habit of scraping off anything displeasing to the Lord from his life** (like coming in from the horse barn; like barnacles on a boat; like taking a shower before a date) in v. 3b.
5. David **chose to limit his exposure to evil** and things that would displease the Lord in v. 4-5. He specifically says any sin I will not look at (v. 3 ‘nothing wicked before my eyes’ and v. 4b ‘not know [experience for myself] wickedness’).

6. David **sought to always have proper heroes** to look up to and emulate in v. 6a.
7. David had a **life long plan to purge evil** from being around his life and acceptable in his presence v. 8. (Like Paul having the Ephesians burn anything to do with Satan—so we must not have pornographic or occultic books, videos, games, and music in our homes, cars, computers, lives or minds.)

THEN WE FIND DAVID'S SONGS FROM HIS STRUGGLING YEARS

David suffers intense loneliness as he faces family conflict and danger. In **I Sam 19:11** as Saul tries to murder him, David writes **Psalm 59**. These times of danger are from his boss and father-in-law King Saul. Instead of being eaten up by the intense loneliness he must have felt with job and family pressures all dumped on him at once-- he expresses his needs to God. His prayerful responses to these tough times are captured in the Psalms and show a pathway through loneliness to the One who is closest of all. In that time of feeling so alone David writes **Psalm 59**—how to overcome the feelings of loneliness when we are in danger.

David finds an **unshakeable trust in God's protection**. Some key truths from this Psalm are:

4. David turns to God in his fearful times v.1.
5. David trusts God in his fearful times v.9.
6. David triumphs through God in his fearful times v. 16.

David learns to live with fear as he is a newlywed and faces the unpredictable outbursts of deadly rage from Saul.

In **First Samuel 20:35-42** as Jonathan warns him of the danger of Saul's wrath, David writes **Psalms 11 and 64**.

3. **Psalm 11** is a meditation on why David should not just run away from dangers—he needed to run to the Lord first.
4. **Psalm 64** is the Psalm about the poison of jealous, hateful, and hurtful tongues. After David's meteoric rise to giant slayer, King's helper, royal son-in-law and commander—there were many who hated and envied him. God shows him how to deal with poisonous language directed at him. This could be in the time of Saul or also in the time of Absalom's rebellion and the evil accusations of Ahithophel and Shimei (2nd Samuel 15-19)

David suffers intense loneliness as he loses his job, and is separated from his family. David writes **Psalm 52**—how to overcome the feelings of loneliness when we are away from our work, home, and family.

In **First Samuel 21:1-9** as he flees to Ahimelech the priest, David writes Psalm 52.

Some key truths from this Psalm are:

5. v. 1 God is good no matter what!
6. v. 2-4 People will always hurt us.

- 7. v. 5-7 Take God as your strength in times like this.
- 8. v. 8-9 Wait for God, cling to Him, grow through the alone time!

David is captured and goes from fear to terror to nearly a complete breakdown because of fear.

In 1 Sam. 21:10-12 when David is captured at Gath he writes about this in **Psalm 56**. In this Psalm David is confident (Ps. 56:9)! Why! "THIS I KNOW THAT GOD IS FOR ME". He confesses a **distinct impression God is on his side!**

- **Seek God.**
- **Cry out to Him.** Four times in three verses (v. 4, 10-11) David cries to Elohim—the Creator of the dove and everything else!
- **Remember His closeness in alone times.** This Psalm was very popular. Psalm 56 is quoted by the writer of Hebrews 13:6 (Psalm 56:4, 11); by Paul in Romans 8:31 (Psalm 56:9); and most of all by Jesus Himself in John 8:12.
- **Remember that God cares.** The tears in the bottle phrase speaks loudly of God's promise to never leave us, never forget us, a

But as the time goes on his confidence fades and in 1 Sam. 21:13-15 we see him go into a terrible time of fear. Yet as he looks back on this dark hour he writes **Psalm 34**. In this Psalm we see David magnifying God. Because of his **unwavering awareness God was watching**.

- Psalm 34:3 Oh, magnify the LORD with me, And let us exalt His name together. [**he gives glory to God**]
- Psalm 34:4 I sought the LORD, [**even in tough times he always sought for God**]
- Psalm 34:6 This poor man cried out, [**During tough times he had a proper view of himself; he was poor in spirit as Christ would later say.**]
- Psalm 34:8 Oh, taste and see that the LORD [is] good; [**he had a personal experience of God**] Blessed [is] the man [who] trusts in Him!
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David left Gath and was so alone that he despairs. And now David feels abandoned as moves to a new location that is very foreign to him. David wrote **Psalm 13**—how to overcome the feelings of despair, abandonment and loneliness when we are in a very dark situation that seems hopeless.

5. My life feels like an endless struggle. Psalm 13:1a How long, O Lord?

Will You forget me **forever**? By repeating himself four times he shows how deep this feeling runs. **What David says is, "I just can't go on."**

6. **My life seems to have lost God's blessing.** Psalm 13: 1b **How long will You hide Your face from me?** David saw a lack of the apparent blessing on God. **My family doesn't seem blessed anymore. My work doesn't seem blessed anymore. My ministry doesn't seem blessed anymore. My spiritual life doesn't seem blessed anymore.** **What David says is, "I don't SEE YOU anymore in my home, my work, or my life."**
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1. **LIKE DAVID--REMEMBER GOD'S WORK IN YOUR LIFE.** David first notes the five ways God had worked in his life. Here is God's grace directed towards David—*Psalm 40: 1-3* The first step out of the pits is to remember God's work in our lives. Like David, we need to remember God's work of grace in our lives.
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5. **LIKE DAVID--REJOICE IN GOD EVEN IN THE PITS.** *Psalm 40: 13-17 (=Psalm 70: 2-5)* Like David, we need to rejoice in the Lord.
6. **LIKE DAVID--PRAY FOR OTHERS WHILE YOU GO THROUGH THE PITS.** Psalm 40: 16-17

- **David suffers intense loneliness as he lives and works with a tough crowd.** David wrote more Psalms in this period than at any other time in his life. These **cave Psalms are 4, 57, 141-142**—how to overcome the feelings of loneliness when we are far from home and feel exiled. In First Samuel 22: 1-2 as he moved into a cave at Adullam with an incredibly difficult group of men, David wrote more Psalms than at any other time in his life. These cave Psalms are 4, 57, 141-142.

1. In **Psalm 142** We see David calling on God because of his **unfailing hope God was listening and hearing**.
 2. We find in 1 Sam. 24:16-22 the context for **Psalm 57**. Here we see David rising above discouragement by **applying his great discoveries about God** he learned in Psalm 142.
- **David suffers the intense loneliness of unemployment and unsettled home life.** David takes time to write ***Psalms 17 and 63***—how to overcome the feelings of loneliness when we are insecure. This was a time of no sure place to live, no reliable source of income and provision.
 - In First Samuel 22:5 and 23:14-16 as he was hiding from Saul in the Wilderness of Hareth, David takes time to write Psalms 17 and 63.
 - 1 Sam. 23:13-14 > Ps. 63 We see David seeking God. Why? ABUNDANT SATISFACTION GOD REFRESHED HIM. Psalm 63 may have been in his time of fleeing Absalom as also are Psalms 3, 4, 5, and 63.
 - Some truths from Psalm 63: v.4 worked for God; v. 5 witnessed God; v. 6-7 waited for God; and v. 8 walked with God.
 - **David suffers the intense loneliness when betrayed by friends.** David writes ***Psalms 7, 31, 35-36, and 54*** as he records his heart on how to overcome the feelings of loneliness when we are betrayed by those we trusted as friends. In First Samuel 23:10-13 as he escapes from Saul at Keilah and goes into hiding in the mountains of Ziph, David writes Psalms 31 and 54. 1 Sam. 23:19-25 > Ps. 54 We see David finding refuge in God. Why? CONSTANTLY SETTING GOD BEFORE HIMSELF v. 30. In First Samuel 23:29 as he hides in the cave at En-gedi, David writes Psalms 35-36. In First Samuel 24:1-16 after he spares the life of his mortal enemy King Saul, David records his heart in Psalm 7. Psalm 7 may also refer to other Benjamite adversaries such as Shimei and Sheba both who hated and attacked David.
 - **David suffers the intense loneliness when wronged in a business deal.** David writes ***Psalm 53***—how to overcome the feelings of loneliness when we are in danger of bitterness over being hurt in a business deal. In First Samuel 25 in the Wilderness of Paran as he faces the danger of his anger toward Nabal “the fool” and as God delivers him, David writes Psalm 53. The key to this Psalm is the word fool which in Hebrew is Nabal (15 times in this Psalm and 15 times in the account of 1st Samuel 25).
 - **David suffers the intense loneliness of the complete loss of his family, friends, and finances—and finds hope in the Lord in this dark hour.** David writes ***Psalms 16*** —how to overcome the feelings of loneliness when we suffer the loss of family, or friends, or finances—or even all three at once.
 - Finally in First Samuel 27 as he is grieved and endangered over the raid on his family and city of Ziklag, David writes Psalms 16 and mirrors the wording of his plea to Saul in 1st Samuel 26.19-20. So it seems that Psalm 16 is

written after this event with Saul and the key is seen in 1st Samuel 30.6b when David 'strengthened himself in **the Lord his God**'. That was the One he had entrusted with his life. Psalm 16:11 You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

- **Psalm 16** is a Michtam or an engraved Psalm. Michtam speaks of something so special it can't merely be written on the surface like a pen on paper, it must be engraved like a chisel into stone to preserve it. So these truths were engraved into David's heart and life—he knew that God would show him, lead him, and give him the promises of His Word. There are actually six Michtams (Psalms 16, 56-60) all of which come from the furnace of affliction surrounding Saul's hunting down David to destroy him.

NEXT WE FIND DAVID'S TESTIMONY OF GOD'S CLOSENESS DURING LIFE AS DAVID WAS IN HIS PEAK OR HIS STRONG YEARS

- **Psalm 132** may be David's confession after being anointed King by Samuel and looking back and remembering God's Hand on his life.
- **Psalm 101** was David's pact for purity. He fled to the Lord as his refuge from sins of his youth.
- **David feels the loneliness of those struggling years of unending work in his career.** David writes of his desires to serve the Lord as he enters his career as King David over Israel. He writes **Psalm 15, 24, 68 and 101** in this time. II Samuel 6.
 1. One special note on the Psalms is the usage of the Psalms in the daily Temple worship from Solomon's time through the time of Christ. Here are the Psalms that were sung⁵ each day at the Temple: Sunday—Psalm 24. Monday—Psalm 48. Tuesday—Psalm 82. Wednesday—Psalm 94. Thursday—Psalm 81. Friday—Psalm 93. Saturday—the Sabbath Psalm 92.
 2. Psalm 15 seems to be the outline Jesus used for the Sermon on the Mount. That sermon follows quite closely⁶ the flow of this Psalm.
- **David suffers the intense loneliness of temptation and failure.** David writes **Psalm 32**—how to overcome the feelings of loneliness when we are tempted and fail. From the depths of conviction after his fall into sin with Bathsheba, 2 Samuel 11; David writes Psalm 32. and 38?
- **David suffers the intense loneliness of chastisement and restoration.** David writes **Psalm 51**—how to overcome the feelings of loneliness when we are chastened by the Lord and restored. From the pain of chastisement that leads to repentance and restoration, 2 Samuel 12; David sings of his faithful God in Psalm

⁵ John Phillips, Exploring the Psalms, vol. 1, page 180.

⁶ John Phillips, Exploring the Psalms, vol. 1, page 121.

**FINALLY WE FIND DAVID'S SONGS FROM HIS CLOSING YEARS;
Finally We Find David's Testimony Of God's Closeness
DURING HIS OLD AGE OR HIS WANING YEARS**

- Finally We Find David's Testimony Of God's Closeness During His Old Age or His Waning Years. **David faces the loneliness of old age.** _David writes ***Psalm 71 and 116***—how to overcome the feelings of loneliness when we are old, weak, and leave behind our health, comfort, friends, family, and security. Psalm 70 is the intro to Psalm 71 in the Hebrew Bible and Psalm 70 is the last five verses of Psalm 40. So we conclude that Psalm 71 is David's prayer and testimony of how to be a godly man to the end of life.
- And finally, at the end of his magnificent career. David extolls his Master and King in **Psalm 18**. Especially note his life long praise to God in Psalm 18:46 The Lord lives! Blessed be my Rock! Let the God of my salvation be exalted. 2 Sam. 5:17-25 - 2 Sam. 22 and Ps. 18. We find David triumphing over all enemies! Why? SEEING LIFE FROM GOD'S PERSPECTIVE, And what might that be? Psalm 18 tells us: v.1-3 God is greatest attraction; v. 4-6 We are in desperate condition; v. 7-15 God is awesome; v. 16-24 It is God who rescues; v. 25-29 God is just; v. 30-36 God reveals Himself; v. 37-45 God conquers enemies; v. 46-50 God is to be praised. This Psalm is in God's Word twice. Once at David's coronation and then again at the close of his life—it was like a way of saying that he wanted to start his career right and end it well for the Lord!
- **David suffers the intense loneliness of old age.** And finally, at the end of his magnificent life, David extolls his Master and King in ***Psalm 18***—how to overcome the feelings of loneliness when we are in our last days before death. Especially note his life long praise to God in Psalm 18:46 The Lord lives! Blessed be my Rock! Let the God of my salvation be exalted.