

SSP PRAYER and FASTING **2023**



*My word... will not
return to me empty,
but will accomplish
what I desire and
achieve the purpose
for which I sent it.*

Isaiah 55:11

A Devotional on the PSALMS of DAVID
January 9 - 14 (Mon-Sat)



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MESSAGE

from the Rector

I've long related with Psalm 34:8 as the anthem of my life. It has constantly reminded me of God's ability to relieve us from the challenges of life, and to taste the sweetness of finally being delivered from one difficulty after another.

It's no different from David's own experience with all the highs and lows he's experienced. All of his emotions have been captured in the Psalms. Psalm 34:8 in particular, even though written with his early experience in mind, might as well be his final word after all that he's experienced.

Corporately or personally I believe we need this prompting from David—to taste and see that the Lord is good. Whether we are still reeling from the heartaches of the past years or are on the verge of facing new troubles, we need reminding that it is only by seeking God in these moments will we taste and see true blessedness especially when we've come to be delivered.

And so, as you embark on this Prayer and Fasting journey, going through David's own heart through his Psalms as prepared by the Prayer Committee, take each day as an exhortation for your soul to taste and see the Lord's goodness even when you feel like you are at your lowest point right now.

May you have a refreshing week with the Lord.

— Rev. Justin Fung



INTRO

to the Book of Psalms

Come.

Taste.

See.

Feel.

Relish.

This is the invitation of the Psalms. The book is not hard to understand because it speaks of common human emotions and shared experiences. It also paints images of the world we live in using descriptive or symbolic languages that are generally accessible. It's poetry, but does not take a scholar to comprehend.

However it is possible to have a deeper, richer, more textured understanding of the Psalms with a little more effort and some background info for context. And that is what we want to explore here in the next few days.

Each day's devotionals will have the following content:

DAY MARKER	6 days are set aside for Prayer and Fasting.
READING	5 days of readings from the Psalms of David and 1 Epilogue from the Gospel.
RELATED ACCOUNT	A summary of related incidents or context to the "READING". Reference passages are given but not a required reading.
A GUIDED TOUR	A little helping hand to guide you through the Psalm.
YOUR WORD	God's personal message to you — a promise, a command, a distinct revelation where your soul is drawn to linger... to taste and see on a deeper level.
SONG	Allow the song to aid you in giving expression to how you've encountered God.
WHAT NEXT	A plan of action, or a challenge to yourself, in response to your word from God. Write it down as a short declaration or statement. Examples : <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>I am forgiven. I will conduct myself as one forgiven and free. I will always be forgiving.</i>• <i>God sees me. He is able to save. I can surrender my fears and worries to Him. He will take charge.</i>• <i>I feel far from you now, Lord. But I will keep faith, because I know and trust who you are.</i>
PRAYER	A guide, but feel free to make your own especially related to your "WHAT NEXT".

The Promise

NEVER ALONE

Related Account

David's Early Years

1 Samuel 16-17

Runt.

Shepherd.

Psalmist.

Unlikely Hero.

runt = smallest baby animal in a litter. It can also refer to a person, either used as an insult or in good natured teasing. (much like "bansot" in Tagalog)

PSALM 23 | DAY 1

How does it feel to be part of a family so big and busy, you're practically invisible? David probably had an idea. The youngest of 8 brothers, he wasn't even called to be in the line-up when the prophet Samuel asked to see the sons of Jesse.

We can also infer that David was probably small-ish in stature compared to his brothers, some of whom were already recruited into the king's army. He was also given the unenviable task of shepherding their flock. Now, shepherds are important in Jewish culture, but the job is not exactly highly regarded. One clue: unclean.

Sheep smell. Naturally that rubs off on the person tending to them daily. Then there is also the matter of manure, of blood and cuts from scrapes or birthing, the insects that buzzed around them constantly, even the smell of dirt mingled with your own sweat from the long hours outdoors.

And then there's also the responsibility of being charged with the family business, not because he was regarded the most capable, but because he was considered the most delegate-able (pwedeng utusan). And yet, how did David process his life experience? How did his life as a shepherd prepare him for greater things? More importantly, how did he taste and see God through these things? Let's read and find out.

Psalm 23 – NEVER ALONE

DAY 1

A GUIDED TOUR

vv. 1-3

When you read of green pastures, what comes to mind? Usually, a pretty picture of lush greenery accented by a quiet brook running across a wide and even sun-kissed landscape, with mountains on the horizon, yes? The reality is quite different though.

Much of Israel's land is dry and barren with poorly distributed rainfall. It's also hilly, so those mountains in the picture are probably not in the distance, but the location where David had to feed his flock. If there were fertile lands, those were reserved for growing crops — not for sheep to feed on. This meant that shepherds would have to scout far and wide for these green pastures and clean waters that the psalm is talking about; and they would need to find them on a daily basis.

- *Why is David so sure that he (or his sheep) will not experience want?*

- *Does “green pastures and still waters” mean a life of ease and plenty?*

v. 4

There are times when David may have to bring his flock to where there are steep slopes and rocky terrain, where there is danger of falling or accidents. Again, the sheep aren't exactly in an ideal setting, but ...

- *What kept them from harm?*

- *Can you imagine how a sheep would feel being rescued from a cliff by the crook of a shepherd's staff? or being nudged into place by a rod? Is it a pleasant feeling?*

- *Why would David think “they comfort me” — speaking as a sheep, that is?*

v. 5

It is entirely feasible that the places which can adequately feed his flock is situated in enemy territories. (note: the Philistines had control over much of the fertile coastal lowlands at the time.) OR, there is the threat of predatory beasts roaming around. To “anoint with oil” is sometimes done to welcome guests from a long journey (to refresh them) and is a sign of hospitality.

- *What does “a table... in the presence of my enemies” look like in cases as described above?*

- *David did have occasion to encounter lions and bears while tending sheep (1 Sam. 17:34-35). He was able to fight them off. But why didn't God just keep them away in the first place instead of taking the risk?*

v. 6

David ended the Psalm with a vision of him, with God, forever in His dwelling place; and the absolute certainty that while here, he will receive “goodness and mercy”

- *How did David go from shepherd and sheep (his work at the time) to eternity with God (his apparent future)?*

Psalm 23 – NEVER ALONE

Do you feel unseen? Do you fret that your work is insignificant? Do you feel overwhelmed by the weight of responsibility even as your circumstances are less than ideal?

Let Psalm 23 help you unlearn the modern myth of the ideal family or workplace, of unencumbered prosperity or success. Discard the false idol of a god brought about by our own love for comfort and security. Learn to see with new eyes and make room for a vision of God who is ever-present.

YOUR WORD

What is God's personal message to you today through Psalm 23?

SONG

His Eye is on the Sparrow – Joybells Gospel Team Virtual Choir
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ahKoWWjedzA>

WHAT NEXT

A plan of action, or a challenge to yourself, in response to your word from God. (Refer to INTRO for examples)

PRAYER

Father, remind us to take our thoughts captive and remain close to you through prayer. As we meditate on your word, allow our hearts and minds to fully surrender and be filled with you. May we faithfully carve out time for you, so you can prepare us for what we do not know is yet to come. And let the lessons we learn in times of waiting draw us closer to you. In Jesus' name. Amen.

A warrior in a desert landscape, holding a sword and a shield. The warrior is shirtless, wearing a leather arm guard and a loincloth. The background shows a rocky, arid landscape under a clear blue sky.

The Promise

PSALM 18 | DAY 2

NEVER DEFEATED

Related Account

David Fled from Saul

1 Samuel 19-24; 26-27; 29-31;

2 Samuel 1-5

Warrior.

Outlaw.

King.

outlaw = a person declared as outside the protection of the law — whether a criminal or someone who angered a powerful enemy — so that anyone was legally empowered to persecute or kill them.

From hero to outlaw. From fugitive to king. In peril or in victory, do you see God the same way? David did.

Psalm 18 is a victory song and obviously written after a long period of hardships. However, David gave ample illustration of these struggles when he was made an enemy by his own king, who brought the force of his entire army upon him — an individual. David had to stray into enemy territory to seek refuge, constantly weighing who are his allies or his enemies.

Once again, out in the wilderness where he once roamed as a shepherd, he now finds himself seeking refuge in the same terrain. This time to save his own life, and of other outlaws who sought refuge in his leadership. Good thing his shepherd days equipped him with a knowledge of the land where he learned to scout out the places that can give them the best advantage, don't you agree?

But all that is in the past. The Lord finally “... delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul” so says the header of this psalm. He is now king. And David remembered ALL that God had rescued him from, and praise poured out of him. Let us journey with David as he paints a picture of his journey. Fire up your imagination as you walk in his shoes, to taste and see with your mind's eye the mighty deliverance of the Lord.

A GUIDED TOUR

vv. 1-3

With the memory of God's salvation always fresh in his mind, David had to declare not only gratitude, but a deep love for this God whom he called his strength, his rock, his fortress his deliverer, etc...

Out in Israel's wilderness, there are rocks, and there are. ROCKS... big ones, that just happen to be strategically positioned to offer him and his men a vantage point or an excellent defense. By chance?

• *Guess what's in David's mind while running for his life in this harsh landscape, seeing all these rocks and boulders around him, also hills and cliffs, caves and crevices, but also some patch of vegetation and clean water for sustenance... now, match that with the names he call God.*

• *Why so many names for God? And all in quick succession?*

• *Do you have a name you delight in calling God?*

vv. 4-6

Danger is constant in an unfamiliar terrain — be it man, or beast, or the elements.

• *When David longed for his safe place, where does he refer to? (hint: it's not his home)*

vv. 7-15

David witnessed a natural phenomenon here and described it vividly. Can you guess what it was? It was probably from a safe distance but he still felt the earthquake.

• *In the previous passage, David was longing to hear from God and to be heard by Him. How is David now describing this terrible and awesome sight he witnessed?*

• *Can God speak without words? Have you experienced this for yourself?*

vv. 16-19

David remembers his rescue from deep waters (v.16), from much stronger opponents (v.17), and from many a tight spot (v.19).

• *What was God's message to David in all these events he was recounting?*

• *Did David get the message?*

vv. 20-30

Is David perhaps beating his chest with self-righteous pride here? Note that he is simply being conscientious of God's law, even in his ominous situation. When man is in survival mode, or at war, it is easy to forget and discard what is right and just.

Mercy, you say? But I received none from one I had served faithfully.

Purity? Isn't that a luxury for those who live in peace?

Humility? Shall I crush myself into nothingness even as my enemies press upon me?

Are not these valid reasons to waive righteousness? To do away with mercy (25), purity (26), humility (27)?

- *In spite of desperate circumstances, what was it that compelled David to keep on the righteous path with God?... If he is seeking God's protection, what would have been God's requirement? (21-22, 28) If he is seeking a way out from chaos and violence, to whom must he submit? (20, 30)*

vv. 31-45

In the Art of War, Sun Tzu advised that "rough terrain and swift rivers are to be avoided in combat". Both elements are described in this psalm, yet God turned adversity into victory. Even in a place easily described as "godforsaken", David saw God's hand in... (look for the verses that match the following)

- *providing them natural defenses from the landscape* – vv. _____
- *training them to master the rough terrain* – vv. _____
- *building their strength and familiarity* – vv. _____
- *so that eventually no enemy can stand against them.* – vv. _____

vv. 46-50

The journey is now past. David is now victor and king.

- *To whom does he acknowledge this status?*

As the psalm began, so it ends, with praise for his rock and deliverer — for a God who will not quit until he has brought David to victory. Not only him but to his offspring forever.

- *Do you have a personal story of God's deliverance and provision, or a song of praise, as David did with this psalm?*
- *Why should it matter that David retell his story of what happened? What about your story?*

Psalm 18 – NEVER DEFEATED

In victory, David remembered the God who saved him from all his troubles. In peril, he remembered to call upon the God who is mighty to save. Circumstances may shift, fortunes fluctuate, troubles may linger for longer than you'd wish, but God remains the same. He is victorious and with Him, we are never defeated.

Allow yourself to live inside David's head with Psalm 18 and see as he sees. Let your imagination be richer than your readings.

YOUR WORD

What is God's personal message to you today through Psalm 18?

SONG

WARRIOR IS A CHILD (With Lyrics) Gary Valenciano

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MGEbTywKV9Y>

WHAT NEXT

A plan of action, or a challenge to yourself, in response to your word from God. (Refer to INTRO for examples)

PRAYER

Father, allow me to see who you are at all times, and to remember who I am in you. Let me hold fast in faith whatever the circumstances. Teach me to seek your victory, not mine. For only then will it endure. In Jesus' name. Amen

NEVER ABANDONED

Related Account

David's Sin & Nathan's Rebuke

2 Samuel 11-12

A Fall from Grace.

The Great Divide.

Absolute Pardon.

Full Restoration.

Past the point of no return? No second chances? A hopeless case? Not David... if only because God pursued him and brought him back into His grace.

David is now king. His word is law. Under his rule, Israel is enjoying relative stability. There are still wars breaking out, but nothing his army can't handle. Was David bored? Complacent? 2 Sam. 11:1 described him thus: "... at a time when kings go to war, David sent Joab (his trusted general)... But David remained in Jerusalem..."

It was under these circumstances that David saw Bathsheba. And he lusted. He coveted. He took. It did not stop there. The cycle of sin could not stop there. To cover up, David had to resort to trickery, betrayal, and murder. He made his general an accomplice to his crime; his court a mute witness to his sins.

Oh, David, how could you?! Not now when the Lord had given you rest and renewed your strength? When the riches of the land is yours for the taking, your subjects loyal, and your enemies subdued?

God sent the prophet Nathan to rebuke David. Let's just say it wasn't pretty. David had to live with the consequences of his sin.

So what does David have to say to God?

Psalm 51 – NEVER ABANDONED

PSALM 51 | DAY 3

A GUIDED TOUR

vv. 1-2

Mercy. David had nothing to offer. There only exists that great divide between sinful man and holy God. Mercy had to come before grace. Until we realize that, grace becomes cheap.

- *Can you honestly believe you have nothing to offer God?*

vv. 3-4

Sin and guilt has a stubborn sticky quality to it. David acknowledged this. Even when his word was law as king, he remains accountable to God, as all men.

- *Can we hide our sin from other people? From our own conscience? From God?*

- *Is David being honest when he claims “Against you (God), you only, have I sinned...” (v4)? Did he not sin against Uriah, against Bathsheba, their families, his own family, to Joab and his army, the nation of Israel? Or what do you think he meant?*

vv. 5-6

David, in the midst of his terrible sin and guilt, came face to face with a holy and righteous God.

- *Does God delight in punishing sinners? What did God want for David? For us?*

vv. 7-13

Sin is detestable to God, yes, but also to us. It robs our joy. It breaks us from within. It handicaps our soul. David pleads not only for mercy but for restoration and renewal because...

- *vv.7-12 — What does forgiveness look like vs. what remaining in sin look like?*

Can God really give us a clean slate? In David's case, v.13 gives a clue : an unrepentant sinner would hide his sin; but a forgiven sinner would proclaim his deliverance...

- *What will be the outcome of such a testimony from a reformed sinner?*

vv. 14-17

The blood of an innocent man stained his conscience if not his hands, and David made specific mention of “bloodguiltiness” (v.14) to the “God of my salvation”. It was a public confession. Yet David understood that no public show of sacrifice would have pleased God.

- *What is the right sacrifice God demands?*
- *What does a “broken spirit and a contrite heart” look like?... Which is easier — to say sorry or be sorry? to pay for retribution or to make whole the heart you have broken?*
- *How is brokenness before God different from guilt? Which of the two make better use of God’s mercy and grace?*

vv. 18-19

David understood that his sin had affected not only him, or people directly related to him, but also to the nation of Israel, so his appeal for restoration includes them as well.

- *Can you understand why sin, even those done in secret, can affect other people and the greater community?*
- *How can we begin to see the world through God’s eyes and pray for a world groaning in sin?*

Psalm 51 – NEVER ABANDONED

Can these be your words too? Or perhaps you have not had the occasion yet to plumb the depths of David's anguish and guilt? We have become a generation too quick to reach for grace yet unlearned in mercy. Let us put on the cloak of David's words in Psalm 51 and turn the searchlights into our secret heart, where God desires to cleanse and teach.

Let not our reading be without repentance, nor knowledge be without devotion. Our God seeks a heart of flesh and not a heart of stone.

YOUR WORD

What is God's personal message to you today through Psalm 51?

SONG

The God Who Stays – Matthew West (Lyrics)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8wJJeZMSxLs>

WHAT NEXT

A plan of action, or a challenge to yourself, in response to your word from God. (Refer to INTRO for examples)

PRAYER

Father, help me to see me with your light. Break down the altars of worthless sacrifices in me that you may heal my broken pieces and restore me. Then teach me to sing the songs of your mercy and grace, that people may know and marvel at the God who never abandons. In Jesus' name. Amen.

ALWAYS CONFIDENT

Related Account

Absalom's Power Grab

2 Samuel 15-19

A King on the Run.

A Murderous Son at His Heels.

A Kingdom in Chaos.

Not again!?! This time, David is fleeing from his son Absalom, who stole not just power, but the favor of the people. He instigated a coup with such speed and efficiency, the king's only recourse was to flee. David still had men loyal to him such as Zadok and Abiathar, high priests of the temple who came to him bearing the Ark of the Covenant ready to take flight with David, along with his household and fighting men. But the king told them to return the Ark of God, saying that if it pleases God, He will bring him (David) back; and if not, let His will be done. David also instructed the priests to be his eyes and ears in Absalom's court.

Yes. Again. David is running for his life. But this time, not in panic. It was a tactical necessity. He is in dire circumstances but he displays a calm confidence as to its outcome. Could it have been his political savvy? His military maturity? His hold on a core group of loyalists? Could he have been leaning on these strengths to find victory?

Clearly not, as we can see that Psalm 63 is a declaration of David's confidence in God to carry him through. Let us taste and see what unshakeable faith looks like, and learn from him.

(Spoiler Alert: Absalom was roundly defeated, and David was reinstalled as king.)

Psalm 63 – ALWAYS CONFIDENT

PSALM 63 | DAY 4

A GUIDED TOUR

vv. 1-4

At this point, David was a seasoned politician and military veteran. Yet he can still find himself as helpless and powerless as a rookie in certain situations.

- *How would you characterize his tone and attitude here?*

vv. 5-8

The same vein of confidence continued in these verses. David's words show that he understood a kingdom that is "already, but not yet".

Find the words that prove he knew God has all his bases covered...

- *He is actively anticipating God's actions [in the future] —*
- *He sustains a mental image of God on his side [at present] —*
- *He had been in similar situations [in the past] and knew that help would come —*

vv. 9-11

Far from being in denial, nor deluding himself with "positive thinking", David knew dangers exist (those who seek my life...), but...

- *What is the basis of his confidence? (v.11)*

- *Is there a difference between having "confidence in God" and exercising "positive thinking" as endorsed by the secular world? How so?*

Psalm 63 – ALWAYS CONFIDENT

The tone of Psalm 63 is forward-looking. Now, there is weariness. A longing for certain things to be resolved. But not yet. What invigorates the psalmist is this vision of the God he's calling. His very nature is power and glory. And He loves you. He's shown you before. Will you be downcast or find your praise? Will you be ruled by anxiety or put your confidence in Him?

Let the love of a sovereign God inform your confidence. Find affirmation as you stand alongside David's declaration of trust in God.

YOUR WORD

What is God's personal message to you today through Psalm 63?

SONG

Made Me Glad (lyrics) – Hillsong

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=42Y1JRFn4HM>

WHAT NEXT

A plan of action, or a challenge to yourself, in response to your word from God. (Refer to INTRO for examples)

PSALM 63 | DAY 4

PRAYER

Father, embolden my faith. Help me to have confidence that you will never leave me nor forsake me. Teach me that what I may be seeing, or feeling, or going through now will soon pass, and what will matter is how you carry me through. And so I will praise you and bless your name and meditate on the steadfast love of a God who is unchanging and forever. In Jesus' name. Amen.

The Promise

PSALM 139 | DAY 5

ALWAYS AMAZED

Related Account

The Davidic Covenant

2 Samuel 7

A Glorious Promise.

An Eternal Kingdom.

Undfailing Love.

An Heir Forever.

Saul was dead and David is now king. The Lord had given him rest from all his surrounding enemies. Although God had rejected David's proposal to build Him a temple, God responded with his own "one more thing" for David. We can safely say it blew David's mind alright...

Speaking through His prophet Nathan God told David thus: I chose you... I have been with you ever since... I will make your name great! I will establish your house and will raise up your offspring after you. HE shall build a house for my name and I will establish his kingdom forever. My love will never depart from him.

David had never been at a loss for words, but he very nearly did after that. Well, almost anyway. He went in and sat before the Lord, full of wonder and amazement, saying : Who am I... What is my house?... And did I hear you say forever? Really?... What more can David say to you?

He did actually have a lot more to say after that, but everything just came out praises, gratitude, worship.

Psalm 139 is not directly related to this particular incident in David's life, but it reflects a lot of what is in his heart and mind, and how David truly sees God, constantly. Let's walk alongside the psalmist whom God called "a man after my own heart". Savor his words that we too may taste and see for ourselves this God he worships, and be AMAZED.

Psalm 139 – ALWAYS AMAZED

A GUIDED TOUR

vv. 1-6

Where does one start when we try to describe God? This entire psalm feels like an attempt to describe God, yet the psalmist simply trails off in worship and wonder...

(Fill in all the blanks with the word “me”. Then find verses in this passage that corresponds to that character of God)

It's not just that God know everything;

He knows ____ .

It's not just that God is everywhere;

He's everywhere with ____.

It's not just that God created everything;

He created ____.

(from Enduring Word Commentary)

Would you not be amazed at a God so great, yet makes much of you? INDESCRIBABLE.

PSALM 139 | DAY 5

vv. 7-12

There is nowhere David can go where God cannot reach him — in good and safe places or in dreary and dangerous lands.

Again, note the visual imagery of contrasting concepts here...

- *heights of heaven vs. depths of Sheol (v.____)*
- *the shining hopefulness of a new dawn vs the desolation of the unknown far ends of the sea (v.____)*
- *wings and movement vs. immobility of dwelling/settling (v.____)*
- *darkness vs light — darkness does not give enough cover and night that are bright as day. (vv.____)*

David is attempting to use the extreme boundaries of a finite world to describe an infinite God. It's like saying He's that big, that much, that great... and then some. UNCONTAINABLE.

- *Based on your personal experience, with your own words or metaphors, describe God in a similar manner as the psalmist did.*

A GUIDED TOUR

vv. 13-16

If you have ever pondered on the mysteries of a new life. Or had occasion to learn in more detail how the human body works in all its intricate balance and functions. This passage will not be lost on you.

- *Dwell upon how you are “fearfully and wonderfully made” and give praise to our Maker.*

- *Why would the psalmist claim “my soul knows it very well” (v.14) when science is still attempting to understand the human body?*

vv. 17-18

- *Some people would claim that God is an illusion we made up for ourselves. For the psalmist the wonders of God felt like a dream but he is certain of its reality. What do you say?*

vv. 19-22

Here we find a sudden shift in perspective — from God’s world to man’s world. There is also a shift in emotions...

- *What emotions and longing did David express in this passage? (pick out specific passage and words)*
- *How does this contrast with his emotions and longings when he talks about a world where God rules?*

vv. 23-24

David’s prayer continued, this time finding the need to turn the probing onto himself...

- *When David asked God to “search me... try me... see if there is any wicked way in me”, what was the goal? (v.24)*
- *Why should we ask God to do the probing and testing of our hearts?*
- *Do you find the idea of a God who knows you more than you know yourself scary, or reassuring?*

You see the depths of my heart and you loved me the same. You are AMAZING GOD.

Psalm 139 – ALWAYS AMAZED

After this eternal covenant with God, David will yet go on to have that adulterous relationship with Bathsheba. He was yet to commit the sin of hubris when he declared a census that displeased God (2 Chron. 21:7).

So you see, God did not choose David because he was good and perfect. He chose the heart of David as reflected in Psalm 139 — a heart filled with wonder and excitement for new revelations, a deep longing for God and the utmost confidence in His love. May you find the same wonder and newness each day.

YOUR WORD

What is God's personal message to you today through Psalm 139?

SONG

Chris Tomlin – Indescribable (Lyrics)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dLMVqNwypjA>

WHAT NEXT

A plan of action, or a challenge to yourself, in response to your word from God. (Refer to INTRO for examples)

PSALM 139 | DAY 5

PRAYER

Father, let not the world rob me of my praise and wonder of you. You are holy, yet made a way for me to come to you. You laid your hand upon me and I am safe. You uncover the darkness in me and I am free. All-powerful, Ever-present, All-knowing and Ever-loving God, you are mine and I am yours. In Jesus' name. Amen.

SON OF DAVID

Reading

Matthew 5:13-20

One Book.

One Author.

One Message.

THAT is the premise of the Bible... In practical terms, the whole Bible is made up of 66 different books, written by at least 40 human authors, over the course of 1,000 years. But in essence it is one book; inspired by one author — the Holy Spirit; all about one person — Jesus the Son of God Incarnate.

Whatever promise, experience, longing, or assurance of God David (and other authors) wrote in the Psalms are the same promises and revelations Jesus has and will fulfill for you, His Church.

When David declared that with God, he is NEVER ALONE...

| Jesus promised : Behold I am with you always, even to the end of the age (Matt. 28:20)

When David puts his hope in a God who sees to it that he is NEVER DEFEATED...

| Jesus assured his disciples : In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world. (John 16:33)

When David found mercy and grace in a God who NEVER ABANDONED him...

| Jesus reiterated : I will lay down my life for my sheep. The thief comes to steal, kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly. (John 10:10, 15)

When David exults in a God in whom he is ALWAYS CONFIDENT...

| Jesus proclaimed : If the Son has set you free, you will be free indeed. (John 8:36)

When David celebrates a God who inspires him to be ALWAYS AMAZED...

| Jesus asserted : Whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do. Even greater things!... If you ask anything in my name, I will do it." (John 14:12, 14)

Matthew 5:13-20

vv. 13-16

Salt is a unique substance that has many important uses — as preservative, as flavor enhancer, as disinfectant. The presence of light in darkness is unmistakable. It makes clear what was hidden. This is the role we are to fulfill : we are to be salt and light.

- *Identify some practical ways you can fulfill your role as “salt and light” in the world.*

- *What can hinder or prevent you from fulfilling your role as “salt and light” in the world?*

vv. 17-20

Jesus came to fulfill the Law of Moses. He makes it clear that the righteousness sought by the Pharisees (external compliance and approval of men) is not enough. Seeing as only Jesus fulfills the kind of righteousness God demands...

- *How can we comply with this righteousness that is approved by God?*

Jesus was not introducing a new way to get into the Kingdom of God. He meant that we needed to change the way we think about being right with God. We cannot earn our way into it. All must look to the Messiah to provide it for them. Soon, Jesus would pay the price for our sins. All who believe in Him have His righteousness and become citizens of His kingdom. While we wait for His kingdom to come to earth, He has given us much to do.

YOUR WORD

What is God’s personal message to you today?

SONG

Phil Wickham – Reason I Sing (Acoustic Sessions) [Official]
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v8IBuzdUCok>

WHAT NEXT

A plan of action, or a challenge to yourself, in response to your word from God. (Refer to INTRO for examples)

EPILOGUE

PRAYER

Dear Jesus, you have given me all these promises and have called me to walk in your path. I am blessed! Teach me now to be salt and light. Let me abide in the righteousness you have purchased for me with your blood. And most of all, open my eyes to expect great things from you, from this day forth. Amen