

Two Year Bible Trek
Week 23
Psalms 7, 17, 18, 27, 31, 34, 35, 52, 54, 56, 63

Key Concepts: The key concepts here are that the Psalms are a complex mix of genres which were composed over an extended period of time. In this and the next lesson we will be focusing on Psalms which are cries for help...

Stories: Many of these Psalms appear to have either been composed during or attributed to the time when David found himself in difficult circumstances.

Psalm Theme: The writers speak from a place of right relationship with God, are beset by enemies, are hurting, cry out for God's help, seek deliverance, see God as a protector and a place of refuge, and are willing to give thanks even in the face of tough times.

Psalm 7 – This is a Psalm of deliverance in which the writer is willing to be punished if he has committed a wrong. The belief however is that because the writer has not injured another, God will deliver.

Psalm 17 – This Psalm follows in the same vein, seeking deliverance because the author has lived according to the precepts of God. However, deliverance will come because of God's steadfast love, not because of the perfection of the writer.

Psalm 18 – We encounter the term Sheol. Sheol is the place of the dead (both good and evil). All people die and go "down" to the pit where there is darkness. This will later be translated as Hades. In this Psalm we also encounter the anger of God focused on those who have done.

Psalm 27 – The opening lines of this Psalm are well known. "The Lord is the light of my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life, of whom shall I be afraid?" Even in the face of persecution the Psalmist is willing to trust in God.

Psalm 31 – The writer is seeking deliverance not only for himself but for God's name. In other words God will be honored by the deliverance because people will see God's steadfast love.

Psalm 34 – The writer encourages people to praise God for the deliverance that God will provide and encourages people to listen, in order to receive advice on how to live a Godly life.

Psalm 35 – The writer offers up an image of God as warrior. God is called upon to take the fight to the enemies of the righteous. In addition there is a request that those who are evil be caught up in their own traps...which is a theme that runs through this section.

Psalm 52 – This Psalm is addressed to the powerful in life who attempt to pervert justice and oppress the poor. It is a warning that God will act and soon the powerful will be brought low. The writer on the other hand will be fruitful. Again this will be done because of the steadfast love of the Lord.

Psalm 54 – The writer desires deliverance, trusts that God will deliver and then pledges that he will make a thankful offering to God for the deliverance which is on its way.

Psalm 56 – In the face of persecution the writer still believes that God is on his side because he has been delivered in the past. There is no fear of "mortal" because God is on the side of the writer who trusts in God's power.

Psalm 63 – The writer is in the midst of deep despair and yet is willing to praise God. Even the act of praying is a rich feast for the soul. There is trust that God will act.

1. How do you relate to these psalms?
2. When in your life have you ever wanted to cry out to the Lord in this way?
3. Do you think that this is an appropriate way to come before God? Why or why not?