



## How to Read Psalms

### RECAP

**This week's focus: Fining the Voice in the Psalm.**

As we come off our last series in Galatians, we will look to spend the 14 Sundays of summer working through some Psalms. The Psalms are a collection of poems that became an integral part of corporate prayer and worship over many centuries. Nearly half (73) of the 150 Psalms were authored by King David and almost all of them deal with real and raw human emotions. If you can think of an emotion, there is probably a Psalm that deals with it. There are a number of different types of Psalms, but the three primary types are: Praise, Thanksgiving, and Lament.

This Sunday, we spent the majority of our time focusing on Lament Psalms. These Psalms start with a cry out to God. We typically cry out to God when we have a plan for life, reality doesn't align, or when we feel like God has made us a promise. The result is we become disoriented, our worldview is challenged, and we have to wrestle with what our mind once thought and what reality has presented. Therefore, we lament the discrepancy.

The introductory cry is typically followed by a confession of trust or confidence felt by the author. This confession is typically rooted in a historical memory where the author remembers God's past faithfulness.

Based on this confidence, the author then makes a petition to God, a prayer request of sorts. Finally, these Psalms will often end with some kind of public praise and/or the assurance of being heard.

We briefly walked through Psalm 3 which David wrote while he was on the run from his son Absalom, a story we can read about in 2 Samuel 15-16.

David was disoriented in life as a result of his own son coming for his life and he laments this fact in the first two verses of Psalm 3. He follows that introductory cry by highlighting several qualities of God that lead to his confession of trust in his God to deliver him from the situation. Somehow, in a mini miracle of sorts, David finds the ability to sleep! This is a pretty impressive feat while on the run from his son!

Then in verse 7, David calls on the Lord to "rise up" (same verb he used to describe his foes in verse 1) and asks God to "deliver" him (same verb used by David when he described what the mockers were saying in verse 2).

The Psalm comes to a close with David stating his assurance that God is his deliverer. With that the roller coaster comes to a stop. The roller coaster of what must have been a painful experience of fleeing from his own son to arriving at a place of trusting his God to deliver him.

As we navigate our own roller coaster lives, may we be able to arrive to the same spot David did, a place of confidence and assurance that God will indeed deliver us from the trials and hardships of this life. Indeed, he has already done so in the death and resurrection of The Deliverer, Jesus Christ. Amen!



## How to Read Psalms

### SHARE (5-10 min)

Icebreaker Question: What is your favorite Psalm and why?

### STUDY (about 30 min) Read Psalm 3

1. What about the reading or message on Sunday stood out to you? Is there anything that was unclear, or that you have questions about?
2. "There's a Psalm for that" was a line used in the sermon. In this current season of your life, what would you need addressed by a Psalm? Can you find one that matches that current need?
3. Church history suggests Psalm 3 was written while David was on the run from his son, Absalom. Take turns reading through the account of that story in 2 Samuel 15-16. Do you resonate with any feelings you imagine David might have felt in this part of his story? Share with the group.
4. Recall a time in life when you felt disoriented. What led to it? What helped you feel reoriented?
5. If you journal, look back at an older journal and note the emotions you read. Talk through the ways God pulled you through a hard season of life based on what you read in the journals and where you are today in that area of your life you once journaled about.
6. Who is it that you tend to call out to when you feel disoriented in this season of life? Why are they your first instinct?
7. It was mentioned that David's ability to sleep while on the run from his son was relatively 'miraculous' in nature. What 'little miracles' can you see in your life as you take the time to look for them?
8. Retell a story of a time when you trusted God over trusting yourself. What did you learn from that experience?

### SUPPORT (15 min)

Pray for each other in the group.