



## Daily readings, reflections and prayers

**Monday 6 July - Sunday 12 July**

**2020**

**Monday 6<sup>th</sup> July**

**Texts: Psalms 81:1-7; Acts 25:1-22**

**Focus – Psalms 81:1-7**

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### **Talk to God about the problem**

- Are you in a time of testing? God sometimes allows us to be tested, as he allowed his people to be tested by the waters of Meribah (V7, see also Numbers 20)
- But God does not want you to face the test and challenges of life alone
- You can talk to him about your problems
- God says, "I removed the burden from their shoulders...in your distress you called, and I rescued you (vv6 – 7)
- I took the world off your shoulders, freed you from a life of hard labor
- You called to me in your pain; I got you out of a bad place (vv6 – 7)
- Whatever your situations or difficulties you may face, you can bring them to God in prayer
- God removed their burdens and rescued them in their distress
- The Psalmist starts, therefore, with worship, celebration, and joy:
- Sing for joy to God our strength (V1)

### **Prayer:**

**Lord, I thank you that you are my strength and joy as I face challenges and problems in life. Lord, I call on you today to rescue me from all my worries. Now name what you are praying. Amen**

## Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> July

**Text: Proverbs 16:18-27; Acts 25:23 – 26:23**

**Focus: Proverbs 16:18-27**

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### **What is Humility – the key to success?**

- God wants us to learn to walk in humility and kindness, not arrogance and pride. Pride comes before a fall: First pride, then the crash – the bigger the ego, the harder the fall (v.18)
- We are reminded that its better to live humbly among the poor than to live it up among the rich and famous (v19)
- A lack of power is very frustrating at times when we think we know how best to advance the kingdom of God. However, Jesus had very little power from a human point of view.
- Jesus was lowly in spirit and among the oppressed (v.19)
- Lowliness of spirit, the opposite of pride, brings –
  - Prosperity – Humility means a willingness to learn. Those who give heed to instruction prosper (V.20)
  - Happiness – The humble trust in God: “whoever leans on, trusts in, and is confident in the Lord – happy, blessed and fortunate is he (V.20)
  - Healing – As opposed to the arrogant words of the proud (scoundrels plot evil, and their speech is like a scorching fire, V27),
    - the humble use pleasant words (Pleasant words promote instruction V21).
    - “Pleasant words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones (v.24)

### **Prayer:**

**Lord help me always to stay dependent on you, to trust in you. For the times I have been too proud, forgive me. Today I choose to look to you always. Amen**

## Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> July

**Text: Psalms 81:8-16; Acts 26:24 – 27:12**

**Focus: Psalms 81:8-16**

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### **God does speak to us through the Psalms –**

- We all experience physical hunger, which can only be satisfied by food.
- We also have a spiritual hunger, which can only be satisfied by listening to God. God says, “if you would but listen to me (V.8)
- The words of God satisfy your spiritual hunger. God promises, open wide your mouth and I will fill it (V10)
- If you listen to God. The Lord says, “you would be fed with the finest of wheat; with honey from the rock I would satisfy you (V.16)
- On the one hand he says, “listen, dear ones. God wants the best for you and warn of the perils of ignoring him
- He continues, “but my people would not listen to me; Israel would not submit to me. So, I gave them over to their stubborn hearts to follow their own devices (v11-12)
- The result of not listening to God is that he gives us over to the consequences of our own actions (see. Romans 1:24 – 26)
- On the other hand, he promises that if you do listen to him, he will act on your behalf: “if my people would but listen to me, if Israel would follow my ways, how quickly I would subdue their enemies (Psalms 81:13-14)
- Our enemy is not other people. God’s enemy is Satan, this is the enemy of the church.

### **Prayer:**

**Lord, I thank you that each day I can listen to you and be satisfied as with the finest of wheat. Help me each day to pay attention to what you say, and then to trust you to act on my behalf. Amen**

## Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> July

**Text: Psalms 82:1-8; Acts 27:13-44**

**Focus: Psalms 82:1-8**

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### **In the midst of injustice and oppression – trust God**

- Give justice to the weak and the fatherless; maintain the rights of the afflicted and the destitute!
- The Psalmist is kin to point out that one day, God will make things right (v.8)
- It is great to live under a good system of justice.
- It is a terrible curse to live under corrupt and incompetent judges
- But ultimately, God will call them to account
- God presides over all other expressions of power (gods – V1)
- Trust that God is the President –
- God is in ultimate control
- We are not only to trust God but also, we have a duty to do everything within our power to see that justice is done
- We must act on behalf of the poor:
  - Defend the cause of the weak and fatherless; maintain the rights of the poor and oppressed
  - Rescue the weak and the needy.
  - Deliver them from the hand of the wicked (V3-4)

### **Prayer:**

**Lord, thank you that one day there will be justice for all. You will put all things right. In the meantime, help me to act on behalf of the poor and oppressed in our world. Amen**

## Friday 10<sup>th</sup> July

**Texts: Psalms 83:1-18; Acts 28:1-16**

**Focus: Psalms 83:1-18**

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### **Say prayers of intercession for the seekers**

- This Psalm is a prayer of intercession – interceding for the people to have knowledge of God's final vindication, and for this to result in conversation prior to that final day
- The surrounding nations want to destroy the people of God (V.4)
- Ye, the Psalmist sees this more as an attack on God himself
- He refers to them as your enemies (V.2) who form an alliance against you (v.5)
- This is a reminder that an attack on the people of God is ultimately an attack on God
- The prayer of the Psalm is that God's enemies will be routed (V9 – 15)
- However, it is also intercession for conversion: "cover their faces with shame so that they will seek your name, O Lord!"
- There is an inherent desire that others would seek one true God: "let them know that you whose name is the Lord – that you alone are the Most High over all the earth (V.18)"

### **Prayer:**

**Lord I pray for all those currently on Alpha, that they will seek your name. I pray that you will act; that you will not keep silent; that people know that you alone are the Most High over all the earth. Amen**

## Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> July

**Text: Proverbs 16:28-27:4; Acts 28:17- 31**

**Focus: Proverbs 16:28- 27:4**

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### **You have the power to bring Peace**

- Words are powerful, the words you speak can be either life giving or destructive.
- I remember being on a bus and meeting a friend's dad who said to me that he thought his son was useless that he did not understand what "his mum and I were thinking when we had him." Shocked, I just kept quiet. And guess what? His son became those words
- Watch what you say about your family, yourself, the nation. Use positive words, speak life. When you fall out and you get upset, keep silent, then respond. It is in anger, that we curse. And it is in Joy that we bless
- Today, if you have said something evil about someone, or said something negative whatever it is whether you were laughing, take it back. Cancel it out in Jesus name. Amen. And bless those people. I remember when I was about to exit the military. I was sharing with friends that I was going for training and I want to be a military chaplain. Another soldier turned round and said, on my dead body. You will never be a chaplain in the British Armed Forces. I saw and I felt the power behind his words. And I just laughed. NO, I should not have laughed, I should have said yes, I will be a chaplain if it is God's. It was only a couple of days ago, I was thinking about this, it came to mind. I had a sense, that he cursed my chaplaincy plan, it feels true, I have faced a War ever since. I prayed to refute those words.
- I do not want to spiritualize things. I know God has a plan for me and you. But I prayed about this a couple of days ago and said Lord I cancel the words of that soldier; I know you have a good plan for me.
- I do not want you to be afraid of what people are saying. What I am saying is that – speak life in people's lives. Bless do not curse.

- How you speak and listen at work, with friends, in your homes or on holiday, will affect the whole atmosphere.
- Better a dry crust with peace and quiet than a house full of feasting with strife Verse 1)
- Your words are powerful. Determine today to speak positive, encouraging words of life and blessing everywhere you go

### **Prayer:**

**Lord, help me to avoid the temptations of gossip and malicious talk. Be in the heart of each to whom I speak: in the mouth of each who speak unto me. Amen**

## Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> July

**Text: Psalms 84:1-7; Romans 1:1-17;**

**2 Kings 23:1 – 24:7**

**Focus: Reflection on the week's readings**

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- Read the passages – pick one and focus.
- What do you think God is saying to you?
- Or what comes to mind
- How are you going to do things differently this coming week?
- Have a great week and God bless you

### **Prayer:**

**I thank you, Lord, for all the blessings of your presence with me. Thank you for the way in which you strengthen me daily with your presence. May my presence be a blessing to others and not a stumbling block to people's aspirations and dreams. Amen**