

# TOPIC NIGHT: PRAYING THE PSALMS

- The Psalms are quite often prayers:

‘Answer me when I call to you, my righteous God.  
Give me relief from my distress;  
have mercy on me and hear my prayer.’ - Psalm 4:1

‘A prayer of David Hear me, Lord, my plea is just;  
listen to my cry. Hear my prayer—  
it does not rise from deceitful lips.’ - Psalm 17:1

‘This concludes the prayers of David son of Jesse.’ - Psalm 72:20



## THE PRAYERS IN THE PSALMS... SHOW WHAT GOD’S PEOPLE BELIEVE

- Praying shows we believe that God exists!
- Praying shows what people believe about certain things.
- You cannot pray one thing, and say you believe something else.
  - “Practice reflects doctrine” - Lee Gatiss (Church Society)
- Prayer is a way of meditating on the law of the Lord day and night.

Read Psalm 32. **What does the Psalm show us that David believes?**

## THE PRAYERS IN THE PSALMS... TEACH US HOW TO PRAY

Whose prayers are these?

- David the King
  - The King is to be the ‘exemplary Israelite’ - Deuteronomy 17
    - Compare Deuteronomy 17 with what is said to Israel in Deuteronomy 6
  - The role of teaching the community how to relate to God.
- David the believer
  - Who knows God’s promises (2 Samuel 7)
- As the Psalms progress, David moves out of the picture...
  - Movement from the leader to everybody (e.g. Psalm 19 -> Psalm 119)



- The New Testament finds believers applying the Psalms to themselves:
  - Psalm 44 in Romans 8:46
  - Psalm 22 in 2 Timothy 4:17
  - Psalm 116 in 2 Corinthians 4:13
  - Psalm 118 in Hebrews 13:6
  - Psalm 34 in 1 Peter
- Hebrews 11:33-34 suggests we ought to emulate David in his faith.

## So pray...

- For the King to come
- For justice to be done
- With a full range of emotion
- That God would judge
- For God's plan to be done
- ...

Read Psalm 34. **How is David teaching people to pray here?**

Of David. When he pretended to be insane before Abimelek, who drove him away, and he left.

<sup>1</sup> I will extol the Lord at all times; his praise will always be on my lips.

<sup>2</sup> I will glory in the Lord; let the afflicted hear and rejoice.

<sup>3</sup> Glorify the Lord with me: let us exalt his name together.

<sup>4</sup> I sought the Lord, and he answered me; he delivered me from all my fears.

<sup>5</sup> Those who look to him are radiant; their faces are never covered with shame.

<sup>6</sup> This poor man called, and the Lord heard him; he saved him out of all his troubles.

<sup>7</sup> The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear him, and he delivers them.

<sup>8</sup> Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the one who takes refuge in him.

<sup>9</sup> Fear the Lord, you his holy people, for those who fear him lack nothing.

<sup>10</sup> The lions may grow weak and hungry, but those who seek the Lord lack no good thing.

<sup>11</sup> Come, my children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord.

<sup>12</sup> Whoever of you loves life and desires to see many good days,

<sup>13</sup> keep your tongue from evil and your lips from telling lies.

<sup>14</sup> Turn from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it.

<sup>15</sup> The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and his ears are attentive to their cry;

<sup>16</sup> but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil, to blot out their name from the earth.

<sup>17</sup> The righteous cry out, and the Lord hears them; he delivers them from all their troubles.

<sup>18</sup> The Lord is close to the broken-hearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.

<sup>19</sup> The righteous person may have many troubles, but the Lord delivers him from them all;

<sup>20</sup> he protects all his bones, not one of them will be broken.

<sup>21</sup> Evil will slay the wicked; the foes of the righteous will be condemned.

<sup>22</sup> The Lord will rescue his servants; no one who takes refuge in him will be condemned.