



MONDAY 12 SEPTEMBER 2016

SERIES: PSALMS 1 -8

Read: Psalm 7

Plug In...

David has a situation going down, but he is able to look at it from different perspectives. First, verses 1-2, he describes enemies out to get him and he calls on the LORD to do something. Next, David becomes aware of the magnitude of what he is asking. That is, if God is powerful enough and has the authority to judge everyone, David, suddenly, feels exposed himself before the judge of all the earth. Verses 3-5, David understands that if there is sin in his life he's a goner too.

Lastly, David moves onto something more which can be said. If his attitude is towards God, an attitude of repentance and trust (vv. 10, 12), then he has *confidence* that the LORD will vindicate him. It is not personal perfection that David claims when he describes himself as 'righteous' and 'one of integrity' (v.8); this description is correct of anyone who is turned towards God.

[NB: V.12, "repent" is a clearer translation than "relent".]

Chew It Over...

To pull up a bit and make sure that we have taken the log out of our own eye is the principle that David does here. Jesus said we are to do the same (Matthew 7:1-6). It would be utter madness to call God out to act in His capacity as judge if we have not first sought for ourselves shelter from that very judgement.

Given Jesus is our shield; under what circumstances would you use this psalm today as a basis of prayer?

Prayer Suggestion

Pray that God will bring justice to the earth; that God's enemies, our enemies will be stopped and destroyed. But first, pray that we are no longer God's enemies; then pray that before that judgement day, present-day enemies and evil-doers will likewise have found shelter in the gospel of Jesus too!



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TUESDAY 13 SEPTEMBER 2016

SERIES: PSALMS 1 -8

Read: Psalm 7:7

Plug In...

David calls on the Judge of all the earth to take His seat. David is aware a fixed day of judgement is coming, where all will be called to account and the justice of God enforced. But for David to call God to take His seat, indicates that at David's present time God has not yet put on the judge's robes and wig, has not yet crossed the threshold to sit at the bench with gavel in hand.

Chew It Over...

Are there any indications within the psalm that explain what God is waiting for before taking His seat at the bench?

How are you going to use the delaying of that fixed day today?

Prayer Suggestion

Thank God for His merciful delay. Ask Jesus by his Spirit to help you make the most of every opportunity.



WEDNESDAY 14 SEPTEMBER 2016

SERIES: PSALMS 1-8

Read: Psalm 7:12-13

Plug In...

God's delays in taking His rightful seat as Judge is because He waits for people to repent. A vivid motivation in the psalm which drives its hearers to consider repenting today, is the image of God with prepared deadly weapons and flaming arrows at the ready.

Chew It Over...

What things around you indicate this world stands within the cross-hairs of God's judgment?

How does Jesus' death on the cross show us that God is dead-set ready to judge this world? How does Jesus' death on the cross motivate us to repent and call others to repentance *today*?

Prayer Suggestion

May we not forget the reality of a fixed judgment day for the world. Thank God that our judgement has been exhausted at the cross through Jesus' death. Pray for someone, whom you want to begin realising the urgency of repentance today.



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THURSDAY 15 SEPTEMBER 2016

SERIES: PSALMS 1 -8

Read: Psalm 8

Plug In...

Here, David slows down and pauses to observe the work of God (v.3). It *de-centres* him: "*what is man that you remember him?*"(v.4).

Chew It Over...

We default to living our life as though we are the centre of the universe. If we watch what people do and say closely, they are always leaking what they believe. You and I keep displaying through our actions, posts, tweets, conversations, that we are in love with ourselves; we are enraptured at the wonder of our self-made little universe.

What's something we could do as Christians to diagnose who we hold is at the centre? The way we pray can reveal. The diagnostic is not so much what we include in our prayers, but what we leave out. De-centre yourself. Reflect on how you've been praying lately, do you – like the psalmist – regularly rehearse who God is and what He has done as you address your Lord?

Prayer Suggestion

Observe stuff, observe the details; observe the world around, observe people – ask what does it say about the truths of God; let this wonder inspire your prayer throughout the day.



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FRIDAY 16 SEPTEMBER 2016

SERIES: PSALMS 1 -8

Read: Psalm 8:6

Plug In...

While this psalm challenges our view of who might be at the centre of the universe (i.e., we are not). There is still something profound said about the position of human beings. Verse 6 says, that God has made humans as (little) lords over *all* of creation.

This psalm connects us, as humans, to the creation of the world and its purpose. Next time, watch how Genesis 1 rapidly moves through the creation but then slows down when it comes to the creating of man. If you read it out loud you are slowed down by the shift to a more poetical language and the repetition of ideas (Genesis 1:26-28). Further, the verb 'create' is mentioned in Genesis 1:1 to say God created the entire heavens and earth, but then the verb doesn't appear again until the act of creating human beings. Psalm 8 has got this! The psalmist has picked up what Genesis 1 displays. All of creation, the whole environment of the heavens and the earth was created by God for humans. Human beings are the crown of creation. While not the centre of reality, they are the high point of all of creation.

Chew It Over...

Think of yourself within everything created. Understand the significance with which you have been given. Understand the significance of other people. Many people walk around thinking they are just a bunch of matter on this planet; no more than an animal.

How can you say or do something today that recaptures for another their profound worth and significance? When you receive the banal formulaic and mono-tonal greeting from the Coles checkout person, what as a response can you say that brings back to them that the fact that they matter and are worthy. Just a little more interest in them put the humanity back into these interactions.

Living this way, with this perspective, is helpful for opening up opportunities for the gospel. For Psalm 8, on the one hand, is not fully experienced. However, those powerful words of identity, "in Christ" mean we can reach that experience through Jesus in the renewed creation (1 Corinthians 15:20-28).

Prayer Suggestion

Ask God for help to see who craves the breath of life sparked within them again. Ask God to help you get them to wonder with a hope they may come to part of the fully restored and revived creation to come through Christ.



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WEEKEND 17-18 SEPTEMBER 2016

SERIES: PSALMS 1 -8

Read: Psalm 9

Plug In...

We did say we're covering Psalms 1-8, but we're loving it. Why not, one more!

The perspective of David toggles between present and future in this Psalm. There is a sense where David recognises that enemies are against him and it seems like God is not on the throne (vv.13-14). Then there is a future perspective given, God is enthroned and enemies are retreating, being destroyed (vv.3-4, 7).

David is very aware of God's past dealings. The past dealings give David a paradigm for the future. All the historical judgements that occurred against Israel's enemies in the past (e.g., the Egyptians; Ammonites, etc.) have proven God to always be faithful to His people. So in the present, while under duress, David can express confidence. The confidence is expressed as a *fait accompli* (a thing already decided to be so guaranteed that it is spoken of as having happened before the ones to whom it effects experience it).

Chew It Over...

God gives us His Word, the many recordings of His past dealings so we know who He is, what He does – that He is always faithful. Immersing yourself in the accounts recalling God always has come through for His people is what allows us to realise that the present successes of the wicked are only ever short-lived.

Jesus' death (the triumph of evil and Satan) was only short-lived. There was a resurrection. There is a resurrection for us.

Prayer Suggestion

Pray for the resurrection: verse 13, "Lift me up from the gates of death".