

Psalms: Psalm 13

? When was a time you were far away from others (figuratively or literally)?

The book of Psalms is a collection of song lyrics. Like many songs, they were first written in response to events in the lives of their authors. Later, the whole community used them in worship. When Israel returned from exile in Babylon many of the songs from over the centuries were collected in the book of Psalms. The book of Psalms thus operates at two levels: individually the songs explore a wide variety of honest spiritual responses to God, while the overall collection tells, and celebrates, the work of God in history to save his people. (The Holy Bible, New International Version, Psalms Intro)

There are a multitude of resources available to us. Here are a few options if you're looking for a different way to interact with the Psalm this week:

Streetlights Bible App/website

Bible Project

SpokenGospel.com

The Psalms Project

Consider a variety of ways you could read the Psalm outloud. One voice. A different voice for each verse. Call and response style line by line with two groups of voices. All out loud together. Start with a whisper, grow to a reasonable shout.

Psalm 13 (NIV)

¹ How long, Lord? Will you forget me forever?

How long will you hide your face from me?

² How long must I wrestle with my thoughts
and day after day have sorrow in my heart?

How long will my enemy triumph over me?

³ Look on me and answer, Lord my God.

Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep in death,

⁴ and my enemy will say, "I have overcome him,"
and my foes will rejoice when I fall.

⁵ But I trust in your unfailing love;
my heart rejoices in your salvation.

⁶ I will sing the Lord's praise,
for he has been good to me.

? What initial observations do you have of this Psalm?

? What are some of the feelings the author may have been feeling when writing this Psalm?

Possible answers: loneliness, abandonment, desperation, hope, adoration

? Verse 2 talks about the enemy triumphing (NIV) or being exalted (ESV) or having the upper hand (NLT). When have you experienced this and pleaded with God to look on you and answer you? (vs 3)?

Possible answers: Answers will vary. Take some time to wrestle with those hard things. And then be encouraged! You are not alone. You are seen. God does hear your voice.

? Verse 5 makes the pivot toward confidence and joy. How does your heart personally embrace the hard and pivot to the good?

Ephesians 1: 15-23 (NIV)

¹⁵ Ever since I first heard of your strong faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for God's people everywhere, ¹⁶ I have not stopped thanking God for you. I pray for you constantly, ¹⁷ asking God, the glorious Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, to give you spiritual wisdom and insight so that you might grow in your knowledge of God. ¹⁸ I pray that your hearts will be flooded with light so that you can understand the confident hope he has given to those he called—his holy people who are his rich and glorious inheritance.

¹⁹ I also pray that you will understand the incredible greatness of God's power for us who believe him. This is the same mighty power ²⁰ that raised Christ from the dead and seated him in the place of honor at God's right hand in the heavenly realms. ²¹ Now he is far above any ruler or authority or power or leader or anything else—not only in this world but also in the world to come. ²² God has put all things under the authority of Christ and has made him head over all things for the benefit of the church. ²³ And the church is his body; it is made full and complete by Christ, who fills all things everywhere with himself.

? Paul is writing to faithful followers of Jesus in the book of Ephesians (vs 1). What are some of the things he is praying for them in this passage?

Possible answers: For spiritual wisdom, to grow in your knowledge of God, understand the inheritance given by God, understand the greatness of God's power, etc.

? Verse 19 tells of the incredible greatness of God's power for us who believe him. Considering the reality of this power in the verses that follow, what is most encouraging to you?

Possible answers: It's the same power that raised Christ from the dead - his power is beyond our limits or understanding; he sits at the right hand - this position of honor and authority; he is far above any ruler or authority or power – encouraging as our earthly rulers change often; fills all things everywhere - he is with us & we can rest confidently in him.

Romans 8:38-39 (NIV)

And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love. ³⁹ No power in the sky above or in the earth below—indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Take some time to remind each other of this promise. Fill in the blank with fears, anxieties, real life hardships, etc. and pray together:

God - remind us today that _____ cannot separate us from your love.

For Discussion and Accountability

? Where are the places in your daily life when feelings overshadow the trusted loyalty of God & his promises to you? How can we come alongside you in those moments this week?

? Where has God been faithful to you in your life? What reminders of his trusted love can we reflect on and be encouraged by? Praise God together for his faithfulness!