

....Hanging in with God in The Psalms ...

As we've been studying the Psalms some of them will have encouraged you and strengthened your trust in God. But you may have also noticed that some Psalms seem harsh and vindictive, filled with pleas for God to destroy the writer's enemies. These Psalms used to bother me until I realised that the writers weren't taking personal revenge but rather expressing an understanding of God's holiness, justice and hatred of sin. They saw that all evil actions are actually against God and were asking that He deal with the perpetrators. These Psalms can actually be a great comfort to us during times when we feel under "enemy" attack, whether spiritual, emotional or physical. Like the writers we can find God's presence & protection in our times of trouble.

Q1. READ PSALM 35 This Psalm was written by David, possible while being hunted by king Saul. He knew what it was to have a real enemy & be under physical threat.

1a. In your own words, what does David ask for himself in verses 1-3, 22-24?

1b. In your own words, what does David ask for his enemies in verses 4-8?

<p>WITHOUT HOPE? - READ PSALM 37:1-24, 39-40 For all who commit themselves to God there is hope. He can be trusted to care better than anyone.</p> <p>Q2. What promises are there for those who put their trust in God.</p> <p>a) verse 4</p> <p>b) verse 6</p> <p>c) verse 11</p> <p>d) verses 23-24</p> <p>e) verses 39-40</p>	<p>AFRAID? - READ PSALM 3 Q 3. Why could David sleep peacefully despite being surrounded by his enemies?</p>
<p>You may not be feeling the attack of an enemy. But you may be feeling discouraged, worried or fearful about something. Perhaps you have been feeling God is remote, he's not listening to your prayers and the Bible is irrelevant? You will find expressions of all of these emotions and many more in the Psalms. Let's look at some....</p>	
<p>DISCOURAGED? - READ PSALM 43</p> <p>It's easy to praise the Lord when life is good & we feel great, but not so easy when we feel discouraged. What choices does this writer make despite feeling discouraged?</p> <p>Q4. Look in verses 4 & 5 for the "I will..." statements & write out what the author decides to do.</p>	<p>FEELING ALONE? - READ PSALM 12 Q5. Following God's ways can be a lonely path. Why can we trust God?</p>

READ PSALM 88

Q6. How would you describe the feelings of the writer of this Psalm?

This Psalm contains no answers but clearly shows that no matter how we are feeling we can express our true feelings to God. Even when forsaken by friends, without hope and probably close to death, we can cry out to God and he will hear and understand.

The word "Psalm" comes from a Greek word meaning "a sacred song sung to the accompaniment of a musical instrument". They were originally intended to be sung as prayers, poems, and hymns that focused on God in praise and adoration. Do you use the Psalms as part of your worship and prayer to God? You might like to read a Psalm or a few verses of one each day. Perhaps you could personalise them by inserting your own name where appropriate. You could also use them in praying for others by asking God for those things that the Psalmists asked of him. As you spend time in the Psalms, they will come alive and impart God's comfort, encouragement, peace and love to your soul.