

PSALMS ON THE RUN

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Background

The book of 1 Samuel introduces us to the first king of Israel, Saul, and the one anointed to be his successor, David. As David's success and popularity increase, so does Saul's jealousy. The situation reaches a crisis point in chapter 19, and from that point onwards David is on the run from Saul.

Seven psalms have titles which indicate they were written by David during this time. These psalms are the focus of our studies for the next five weeks.

As we consider the circumstances David finds himself in, and see his responses to those circumstances, we do not only learn more about David. We also come to appreciate the similarities and differences between David, God's anointed king for Israel, and Jesus, God's Anointed King for all.

Study 1: At David's House

**"When Saul had sent men to watch David's house
in order to kill him."**

Context: 1 Samuel 19

How would you expect David to respond to this situation?

Read Psalm 59

1. What does David ask of God? (v.1,2,5)
2. How does he describe those who come for him?
3. Who is God to David?
4. What is the LORD's response to those who oppose him? (v8)

5. Why doesn't David want God to just kill them? (v11)
6. What does David want his enemies to know about God?
7. **Read again vs.6-10 and vs.14-17.** What is the same? What is different?
8. How can David be so confident of God's rescue?

Read Luke 4:28-30, Luke 19:47-48, John 8:59 and John 10:39.

9. What do we see here about how Jesus was delivered from his enemies?

We are not the Lord's anointed one! However, as followers of the Christ we have great promises. **Read Romans 8:31-39.** In the light of this, how can we make Psalm 59 our prayer?

Study 2: Among the Philistines at Gath

“When the Philistines seized him in Gath”

**“When he changed his behavior before Abimelech, so that he drove him out,
and he went away”**

Context: 1 Samuel 21:10-15

How do you think David felt once he was discovered?

Read Psalm 56

1. What does David ask of God?
2. How does he describe the actions of his enemies?
3. What does David do when he is afraid? (v.3) What effect does this have?
(v.4,11)
4. What book or record is David speaking about in v.8? (See also Malachi 3:16-18, Revelation 20:11-14)

5. What core belief does David affirm in verse 9? What changes in the psalm after this?

Read Psalm 34

6. What has happened?

7. What is David's response?

8. What does David want others to learn from his experience?

Read John 19:36

John applies Psalm 34:20 to Jesus in his death. In what other ways does Jesus fulfill these words of David?

Read 1 Peter 3:8-17

How does Peter use this psalm to encourage us as followers of the Christ?

Study 3: In the Cave of Adullam

“When he was in the cave”

“When he fled from Saul, in the cave”

Context: 1 Samuel 22:1-2

How do you think David would have been feeling?

Read Psalm 142

1. How is David feeling (v.4,6)
2. How does he view his situation?
3. What does he do? (v.1,2)
4. What does he want God to do for him?
5. Who is God to David?

6. What does David want as the end result? (v.7)

Read Psalm 57

7. How does David describe his circumstances? (v.4,6)

8. What does David do?

9. What does he expect God to do?

10. How does David describe God? (v.2)

11. How is David able to sing?

12. How does this exalt God?

Read John 16:32. In what ways did Jesus' experience mirror David's?

Like the group who gathered to David, we have attached ourselves to the Lord's anointed one. **Read 1 Corinthians 1:26-31.** What is God's purpose in calling those he has?

Do you know God in the same way David did? What has been your experience of his mercy? How can we make these psalms our prayers?

Study 4: Betrayed by Doeg the Edomite

“When Doeg, the Edomite, came and told Saul, ‘David has come to the house of Ahimelech’”

Context: 1 Samuel 21:1-9, 22:6-23

How do you think David would have been feeling?

Read Psalm 52

1. How is Doeg, the Edomite, described?
2. What does his speech reveal about his heart? (v.7)
3. What does David expect God to do?
4. What is the response of the righteous? Who or what do they fear?
5. David is still on the run, hiding in caves and forests; so how can he describe himself as “like an olive tree in the house of the Lord”?

6. Who brings about the downfall of the enemy?

7. What does David do?

Read Philippians 1:27-2:13

8. What encouragement does Paul have for those being persecuted?

9. How is this similar or different to David's exultation over Doeg?

10. Who has brought about victory for believers?

11. What is the example we are to follow? What does this look like in practice?

12. Why is fear and trembling still appropriate for Christians?

How can we make Psalm 52 our prayer?

Study 5: Betrayed by the Ziphites

“When the Ziphites went and told Saul, ‘Is not David hiding here among us?’”

Context: 1 Samuel 23-26

How do you think David would have been feeling?

Read Psalm 54

1. What does David ask of God?
2. How does he describe his situation?
3. Who is God to David? Do you know God in this way?

4. What is David's expectation for his enemies? How sure is he of this? Why will God do this?

5. What will David's response be once God has acted?

Read John 7:1; 11:45-59; 12:27-28

6. How is Jesus' experience like that of David?

7. Read Psalm 54 again with Jesus in mind. What does that add to your appreciation of the Psalm?

Read 2 Corinthians 4:7-18

8. How is Paul's experience like that of David?

How can we make Psalm 54 our prayer?

MAP 1

