



Devotional

April 12 - June 27

WEEK SIX (MAY 17–23)

Day 138: May 17, 2020

Full Plan: Psalms 69:1–72:20

Abbreviated Plan: Psalms 94:1–23

The final Psalm of David is a prayer for his son Solomon and his rule over the kingdom. It's a good reminder that our prayers should not all be about ourselves, but for future generations, and for God's grace to be revealed through them.

What God is revealing to me today, and how I will apply it to my life:

Day 139: May 18, 2020

Full Plan: Psalms 73:1–75:10

Abbreviated Plan: Psalms 106:1–23

When the days seem long and the nights seem dark, the Psalmist affirms that the presence of God alone is all that matters. “My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.” (Psalm 73:26) What difference do these words make in your life today?

What God is revealing to me today, and how I will apply it to my life:

Day 140: May 19, 2020

Full Plan: Psalms 76:1–78:72

Abbreviated Plan: Psalms 106:24–48

Psalm 77 is helpful to read when your soul is troubled, your nights are sleepless, and you are reaching for God in the dark. The first half (1-10) names the stirring. The second half (11-20) invokes God's power & presence. Both are necessary.

What God is revealing to me today, and how I will apply it to my life:

Day 141: May 20, 2020

Full Plan: Psalms 79:1–84:12

Abbreviated Plan: Psalms 107:1–22

Psalm 84 is a song of a content soul which has found refuge in the presence of God. It meant the Temple, but could mean for us any condition in which we feel assured that God is with us. To feel that joy and strength is the chief aim of life. How will you find refuge and contentment in God today?

What God is revealing to me today, and how I will apply it to my life:

Day 142: May 21, 2020

Full Plan: Psalms 85:1–89:52

Abbreviated Plan: Psalms 107:23–43

Psalms 88 and 89 couldn't be more different, but both coincide in the Christian life. Prayers of despondency (Ps 88) and praise (Ps 89) aren't contradictory or mutually exclusive. Each allows for the existence of the other; both are necessary. How do you experience both today?

What God is revealing to me today, and how I will apply it to my life:

Day 143: May 22, 2020

Full Plan: Psalms 90:1–95:11

Abbreviated Plan: Psalms 118:1–29

We are not alive forever. That thought is scary, but it is also liberating. Savor each moment, but don't grip it too tightly. Let the river of life carry you, rather than trying to control it. Feel God's presence, power, & protection, and give thanks often.

What God is revealing to me today, and how I will apply it to my life:

Day 144: May 23, 2020

Full Plan: Psalms 96:1–101:8

Abbreviated Plan: Psalms 119:1–40

Praise (Ps 96-100) and integrity (Ps 101) go hand in hand. If we orient our spirit in praise to God, we discover the standard with which we are to live. And if we live a life of integrity, we learn to give thanks for God's power and strength. How will you live with praise and integrity today?

What God is revealing to me today, and how I will apply it to my life:

May 17–23, 2020: Weekly Devotional by Jess Johnson

Psalms 44

For not by their own sword did they win the land, nor did their own arm give them victory; but your right hand, and your arm, and the light of your countenance, for you delighted in them. You are my King and my God; you command victories for Jacob. Through you we push down our foes; through your name we tread down our assailants. For not in my bow do I trust, nor can my sword save me. But you have saved us from our foes, and have put to confusion those who hate us. In God we have boasted continually, and we will give thanks to your name forever. | Psalm 44: 3-8

Reading all of Psalm 44, one can clearly hear its

desperation. A broken Israel cries out for deliverance. I'm sure a Biblical scholar could describe exactly what was going on in Israel politically or militarily at this psalm's writing, and whatever Israel was going through, it wasn't pretty. They cry out to God, "You have rejected us and abased us," "You have made us like sheep for slaughter," "You have made us the taunt of our neighbors."

But, the mistreatment of Israel has had a special effect - Israel has found its faith once again and documented it in this song.

While most of our households haven't been upended by a foreign occupying force, perhaps we can relate with these Israelites a bit. I know for me, when things aren't going so well, it's easy to first look for ways I can work harder or be more creative or more ingenious to fix the situation. I've got a lot of faith in my own abilities, and the confidence, self-reliance and entrepreneurship that come with it aren't bad things. They're just not the best things.

In Psalm 44, the Israelites reawaken to what are the best things: God's promises, his steadfast love, and a life-long, continually renewed reliance on him.

As the psalmist writes "not in my own bow do I trust," he affirms that God himself is the greatest source of hope. Sure, he has given us talents, tools and resources. For us Christians, he has enlisted us as his partners in his great works of salvation. He has equipped us to be productive and successful. But, each of us awakes to real faith when we recognize that God doesn't need us or our tools to accomplish his ends. He was the source of all those gifts anyway. It would be an honor if he were to use them, but he certainly doesn't need them.

The victory is the Lord's.

Prayer focus: Write down several ways that God has acted for you or delivered you from a difficulty. What victories in your life belong to God? What difficulties are you going through now that you want to shout to God, “Why do you sleep, O Lord?”

WEEK SEVEN (MAY 24–30)

Day 145: May 24, 2020

Full Plan: Psalms 102:1–104:35

Abbreviated Plan: Psalms 119:41–88

These Psalms draw a contrast between our finite mortality and the everlasting grandeur of God. Remember that whatever sags your soul is temporary. Once you are drawn into an awareness of God's mighty love & power, all your troubles will seem small and temporary.

What God is revealing to me today, and how I will apply it to my life: