

1. Psalms 42, 43, 73 and 88. Their commonality is that they are all prayers:
 - A. They are intensely personal prayers that somehow came to be prayed publicly.
 - B. These prayers are born out of great trouble - prayers of desperation.
 - C. Job could have prayed all these prayers atop his ash heap.
 - 1) Psalm 42: "...My tears have been my food day and night while men say to me all day long, 'where is your God?'"
 - 2) Psalm 43: "...You are God my stronghold. Why have you rejected me?"
 - 3) Psalm 88: "...my soul is full of trouble and my life draws near the grave..."
 - 4) Psalm 73: "My feet had almost slipped...because I...saw the prosperity of the wicked..."

2. What we learn from these 4 "help me" prayers:
 - A. Godly people get hit with suffering - it is an experience we all share.
 - B. When it happens, we should exercise the freedom to cry out to God.
 - C. Turn to the Psalms when you are too shocked to even frame words yourself.
 - D. Acknowledge what you know to be true about God. "...I will yet praise Him, my Savior and my God."

3. In Psalm 73, the perspective changes:
 - A. 'I took it to the sanctuary - my perspective changed - I saw the end of the wicked - I remembered what God is really like.'
 - B. Declaration: "What have I in heaven but you? And earth has nothing I desire besides you. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever!"
 - C. Like Job - 'I do not know what is going on, but I do know that my Redeemer lives!'

4. For Korah, Asaph, David, Job, Habakkuk, Jeremiah, praying did not always change the situation, but it did change their response in the midst of pain.
 - A. It restored perspective.
 - B. It reconnected them to God.

5. A habit of prayer (help, thanks and wow prayers) is at the root of all spiritual health.

1. Psalms 28, 29 and 31 are all Psalms of David. We do not know their historical setting.
2. Psalm 28 begins as a “help” prayer. It ends as a “thanks” prayer. From “Do not turn a deaf ear to me, for if you remain silent I will be like those who have gone down to the pit” to “Praise be to the Lord for he has heard my cry for mercy...”
3. Psalm 31 has the same structure. From “come quickly to my rescue” to “Praise be to the Lord for He showed His wonderful love to me...” David had lots of enemies and a lot of trouble.
4. In these “help” to “praise” Psalms, we see the Psalmist praying through.
 - A. He starts praying while he is in trouble.
 - B. He keeps on praying until God’s deliverance is at hand.
 - C. He records his request and what he felt while making it.
 - D. He records God’s answer to prayer.
5. Journaling is a good discipline to have.
 - A. Record what you are praying for. Record the answer and the date. Review it from time to time.
 - 1) The focus of your prayers will get sharper.
 - 2) It will help you to develop an attitude of persistence and constancy in prayer.
 - 3) It is a wonderful tool to make you thankful.
6. Praying the Psalms - examples from Psalm 31:
 - A. “In to your hands I commit my Spirit...” - Jesus prayed this on the cross.
 - B. Jonah prayed using verse 6.
 - C. Jeremiah - verse 13
 - D. David - verses 1-3
7. Psalms 28 and 31 - Names of God
 - A. The Rock
 - B. My Shepherd
 - C. My Strength and Shield/Fortress/Refuge
8. Psalm 29 - the “wow” Psalm
 - A. The Psalmist was standing outside in thunderstorm before he wrote this Psalm.
 - B. All of nature was a stimulus for worship.

1. Psalms 38-40 (written by or about David) and 44 (written by or about the sons of Korah)

2. The Psalms are the prayers of several different authors and teach us a great deal about ourselves and about God. Behind the human author stands the Holy Spirit of God who inspired them.

3. These four Psalms are all “help” Psalms. “Oh Lord, help.” They are calling for deliverance.
 - A. Psalm 38 - a clear connection between David’s sin and the deliverance that is needed - David is in trouble and sick because of his sin.
 - B. Psalm 39 - a clear connection between David’s words and the trouble he is in.
 - C. Psalm 40 - “...my sins have overtaken me...O, Lord, come quickly to save me.”
 - D. Psalm 44 - the only one that does not connect “the trouble we are in” with sin.

4. When we do identify our trouble with the sin we have committed, we should confess the sin and ask for forgiveness.

5. The people God used to write Scripture knew the Scripture that was already written and used it in their own lives.
 - A. Psalm 40:6: “Sacrifice and offering you did not desire but my ears you have pierced.” (I Samuel 15:22 and Hebrews 10:5-7)
 - B. Psalm 44:2: “Yet for your sake we face death all day long; we are considered sheep to be slaughtered.” (Romans 8)

6. Psalm 44 sounds like it could have been written by the exiles in Babylon, but it is earlier in origin than that - before they forgot God and were false to the covenant.

7. Psalm 39:6 - “Man is a mere phantom as he goes to and fro; he bustles about, but only in vain; he heaps up wealth not knowing who will get it” - a good summary of the Book of Ecclesiastes.

8. Psalm 38:21, 22 and Psalm 39:7, 8 would be very good prayers to memorize and use.

1. Psalms 55, 61, 62, 64 (only about 40 Psalms left to read)

2. Psalm 55 reflects a time in David's life when a friend turned against him.
 - A. His son Absalom and his adviser Ahithophel tried to overthrow him as king.
 - B. Jesus was betrayed by his friend, Judas Iscariot.
 - C. "If an enemy were insulting me, I could endure it! If a foe were raising himself against me, I could hide from him. But it is you, a man like myself, my close friend with whom I once enjoyed close fellowship as we walked with the throng at the House of God."
 - D. The Psalms provide us with an arsenal of tried-and-true praying for almost every occasion.
 - E. Psalm 55:22 - "Cast your cares on the Lord and He will sustain you. He will never let the righteous fall." (1 Peter 5) "It's okay" - Praise the Lord.

3. Psalms 61, 62, 64 - all "help" Psalms
 - A. Psalm 61 - "Help me Lord, because I am faint...lead me to the Rock that is higher than I."
 - B. Psalm 62 - Dealing with some kind of conspiracy, David writes, "Find rest, O my soul, in God alone. My hope comes from Him. He alone is my Rock and my salvation. He is my fortress. I will not be shaken..."
 - C. Psalm 64 - The Psalmist is facing another enemy and says, "Rejoice in the Lord and take refuge in Him."

4. Some things that stand out in these 4 Psalms:
 - A. David refers to God in very familiar ways: "My place of shelter"(55:8); "The Rock that is higher than I" (61:2, 62:2, 6, 7); "My refuge" (61:3); "My strong tower" (61:3); "The one under whose wings I can find shelter" (61:4); My salvation (62:2, 6); My Fortress (62: 2, 6). They all speak of strength and safety.
 - B. "...that You , Oh God, are strong, and that, O Lord, are loving..." - "At base, theology gets pretty simple. God knows, God cares, God acts."
 - C. David spoke of Jerusalem as a violent city, in which destructive forces were at work. Our cities today are in need of the light of redemption; they need to be reclaimed for God.

1. Psalms 69, 70 and 71 - 3 more “help me”, “save me” Psalms, written when David was being attacked or persecuted.

2. The superscription identifies David as the author (superscriptions are not inspired but are most likely correct.) “Of the lilies” probably refers to the tune to be used to sing this Psalm.

3. Psalm 69 - A Psalm of King David and the circumstances of his life and also a Psalm of the Messiah and the circumstances of His life - A Messianic Psalm
 - A. Quoted by New Testament authors with reference to Jesus more than any other Psalm, except Psalm 22.
 - B. Verse 9 - “The zeal for your house consumes me...” Jesus said this when He cleansed the Temple.
 - C. Verse 8 - “I am a stranger to my brothers, an alien to my mother’s sons...” These words fit both David and Jesus.
 - D. Verse 21 - “They put gall in my food and gave me vinegar for my thirst.” Matthew’s crucifixion account uses these words.
 - E. “May his place be deserted; let there be no one to dwell in it...” This is quoted in Acts 1:20 in reference to Judas the betrayer.
 - F. Psalm 22 “fits” completely the experience of the coming Messiah, but Psalm 69 contains things that apply only to David and not the Messiah.
 - 1) Verse 5 - the admission of guilt - David had guilt but the Messiah did not.
 - 2) The imprecatory prayer at the end of the Psalm - David prayed prayers like that but Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.” (Luke 23:24)
 - G. New Testament writers quote from this Psalm because David, like Joseph, is a ‘type’ of Christ.

4. “Save me, O God.”
 - A. “Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me.”
 - B. The common element in these Psalms is hope.
 - 1) Psalm 69:13
 - 2) Psalm 69:34
 - 3) Psalm 70:4
 - 4) Psalm 71:5, 14

5. Psalm 71 was written when David was an old man and his enemies were trying to exploit his weakness. The bottom line for David: ‘I have all the hope in the world. God has never failed me before so I can believe He will not fail me now!’