

**READ The BIBLE Together**



**Selected Psalms from Book III  
[Psalm 73, 75-77, 80, 84, 87 & 89]**

**15<sup>th</sup> February – 18<sup>th</sup> April 2015**

**SHALOM CHURCH, SINGAPORE  
(Upholding the 1689 Baptist Confession of Faith)**

We read some selected psalms from Book I (Psalm 1-41) for our RTBT in May-June 2012 and some selected psalms from Book II (Psalm 42-72) for our RTBT in Mar-May 2013.

For this current RTBT series, we shall be studying some selected psalms from Book III (Psalm 73-89). As we do so, let us first re-read the **Introduction to the Book of Psalms**:

The Hebrew title of the Book of Psalms is 'praise'. In other words, the Book of Psalms is the book of praise. Now, that's an unusual title. Why do I say that?

Survey the 150 individual psalms and you will see that there are more *sad* psalms than *happy* psalms, more psalms of laments than psalms of praise! That being so, why is the Book of Psalms called the book of praise?

Survey the 150 individual psalms again and you will see this pattern emerging -- you will meet many sad psalms in the beginning, but as you move nearer to the end, the sad psalms decrease while the happy psalms increase!

[Psalm 3 is a psalm of lament, so is Psalm 4, Psalm 6, Psalm 7, Psalm 10, Psalm 12, Psalm 13, to mention just the first few. Psalm 146 is a psalm of praise, and so also is Psalm 147, Psalm 148, Psalm 149 and Psalm 150!]

The Book of Psalms moves from *lamentations* to *praise*, from the chords of sufferings to the choruses of praises. This is also true for almost all the psalms of laments. Almost all the sad psalms start sad, but often end with joy or trust. Take **Psalm 3** as an example. It begins with lament – *LORD, how have they increased who trouble me!* It ends with praise – *Salvation belongs to the LORD, Your blessing is upon Your people.*

Coming back to look at the Book of Psalms, you will also see that the 150 psalms are actually grouped into five different books. Book I consists of Psalm 1-41, Book II consists of Psalm 42-72, Book III consists of Psalm 73-89, Book IV consists of Psalm 90-106 and Book V consists of Psalm 107-150. [Turn to your Bible and verify this for yourself!]

Book I ends with these words in Psalm 41:13 ~ *Blessed be the LORD God of Israel from everlasting to everlasting! Amen and Amen.*

Book II ends with these words in Psalm 72:18-19 ~ *Blessed be the LORD God, the God of Israel, who only does wondrous things! And blessed be His glorious name forever! And let the whole earth be filled with His glory. Amen and Amen.*

Book III ends with these words in Psalm 89:52 ~ *Blessed be the LORD forevermore! Amen and Amen.*

Book IV ends with these words in Psalm 106:48 ~ *Blessed be the LORD God of Israel from everlasting to everlasting! And let all the people say, "Amen!" Praise the Lord!*

So Book I ends with praise, Book II ends with praise, Book III ends with praise and Book IV ends with praise. How does Book V end? Not with praise but with *fireworks of praise!* Not with one or two verses of praise to God but with 5 psalms of praise to God, from Psalm 146–150. And Psalm 150 itself is a psalm where every line begins with the word 'praise' or contains the word 'praise'!

This observed pattern – *from the chords of sufferings to the choruses of praises* – in the Book of Psalms must teach us at least these three things:

[1] They reflect the earthly life of our Lord Jesus!

When Christ first appeared on the scene, He came as a Man of sorrows! Indeed, the Son of Man must suffer many things. But sorrow was not the last word, for Christ must suffer and then enter into His glory. The end of Christ's story was that *'God has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.'* The life of Christ is hence reflected in the pattern and flow of the Psalms -- from laments to praise, from suffering to glory!

[2] They reflect the earthly pilgrimage of Christians!

Christ and His people cannot be separated. So at the first level, the Psalms point us to Christ, and we see Him from laments to glory. At another level, this pattern is also a message for us concerning our life in Christ! Like our Savior, we too move from laments to glory. Like the Psalms, our life here on earth has more than its fair share of laments, but it does not and must not stop there. It must and definitely will move to glory. Did not Christ's apostle say, *"If we suffer with Him, we shall also reign with Him?"* Our life in Christ must not only have sorrows, but it must also have praises! And praise be to God, it will most definitely end with a huge fireworks of praise when we see our Lord face-to-face in His glorious home!

[3] They should also reflect our Christian worship today!

We are made to be worshippers! We must worship! As we worship our God, our songs of worship are mixtures of praises and laments. In our Christian worship, we voice our praises and express our pains. But surely our forefathers were right in that our public worship should end with the

doxology! Isn't this how the Book of Psalms ends: with praise, fireworks of praise? Didn't **Psalm 150** start each line with 'praise God', 'praise Him'? And isn't this what our traditional doxology say: *Praise God from whom all blessings flow, praise Him all creatures here below, praise Him above you heavenly hosts, praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost!*

As we take the next few weeks to study selected psalms from Book III of the Book of Psalms, remember to end each day's Bible reading (study) with praises to our great God!!

Day 1 Read **Introduction to the Book of Psalms**

1. What key points have you learnt from the Introduction?
2. How have these lessons changed your life?
3. Go and share what you've learnt with someone: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name)

Day 2 Read **Psalm 73**

1. After reading the entire psalm, write down your *first* impression of it:
2. Who wrote this psalm and what do you think is his purpose in penning this psalm?
3. Allen P. Ross, in his commentary on **Psalm 73**, summarized this psalm in this way:  
*"Confessing his doubts which nearly overwhelmed him when he compared his life with the prosperity of the wicked, the psalmist declares that he overcame his troubled thoughts in the sanctuary where he realized that their end was their destruction, but his future was glorious."*

Do you think Allen's summary of **Psalm 73** is fair and accurate? What would you add to this summary, or subtract from it?

Day 3 Read **Psalm 73:1-3**

1. **Psalms** is Hebrew poetry. A distinctive feature of Hebrew poetry is *parallelism*. One type of *parallelism* is seen when the second line says the same thing as the first line, but using different words or in a different way.

We see two examples of *parallelism* here:

**Verse 1** ~ Truly God *is* good to Israel,  
to such as are pure in heart.

**Verse 2** ~ But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled;  
my steps had nearly slipped.

- (a) The *parallelism* in **verse 2** is very straightforward: "*my feet had almost stumbled*" means the same thing as "*my steps had nearly slipped*".

The words "*almost/nearly*" convey the message that the psalmist did not fall. It was a situation of *real* danger, but he was *finally* spared.

- (b) Identify the parallelism of **verse 1** and the meaning of it?

2. **Verse 1** states the beliefs (creed/confession) of Asaph. What is it?
3. **Verses 2-3** record an observation made by Asaph that appeared to contradict his beliefs (**verse 1**). What is it?
4. Can you identify with Asaph here? Did you ever feel a deep sense of unhappiness seeing wicked men thriving? Elaborate.

*“Many a precious soul, that shall live for ever, had once a very narrow turn for its life; almost and well-nigh ruined, but a step between it and fatal apostasy, and yet snatched as a brand out of the burning, which will for ever magnify the riches of divine grace in the nations of those that are saved.”*

Matthew Henry

Day 4 Read **Psalm 73:4-9**

The word ‘*prosperity*’ in **verse 3** means ‘*peace, success, soundness, wholeness, ease*’. **Verses 4-9** elaborate on this ‘*prosperity*’ as seen in the life of the wicked during Asaph’s days. What would this ‘*prosperity*’ consist of?

These 6 verses also give us a glimpse into the wickedness of these wicked people. What wicked things did they do?

A quotable quote from Matthew Henry: “*Men may die like lambs, and yet have their place with the goats.*”

Day 5 Read **Psalm 73:10-14**

**Verses 10-12** contain further observations of Asaph concerning the wicked. What did he observe?

**Verses 13-14** contain the first response of Asaph to what he has observed concerning the wicked. What was it?

Day 6 Read **Psalm 73:15-17**

1. “*If I speak thus . . .*” (**verse 15**).

(a) What do you think is the ‘*thus*’? (In other words, what was Asaph going to say?)

(b) However, he refrained from speaking it. Why?

(c) Take some time to ponder the meditations of Matthew Henry on this “*refrain from speaking*”:

*“Though he thought amiss, he took care not to utter that evil thought which he had conceived. Note, It is bad to think ill, but it is worse to speak it, for that is giving the evil thought an imprimatur—a sanction; it is allowing it, giving consent to it, and publishing it for the infection of others. But it is a good sign that we repent of the evil imagination of the heart if we suppress it, and the error remains with ourselves . . . Though his corrupt heart made this inference from the prosperity of the wicked, yet he did not mention it to those whether it were fit to be mentioned or no.*

*We must think twice before we speak once, both because some things may be thought which yet may not be spoken and because the second thoughts may correct the mistakes of the first. The reasons why he would not speak it was for fear of giving offence to those whom God owned for his children:*

*(1) There are a people in the world that are the generation of God’s children, a set of men that hear and love God as their Father.*

*(2) We must be very careful not to say or do any thing which may justly offend any of these little ones (Matthew 18:6), especially which may offend the generation of them, may sadden their hearts, or weaken their hands, or shake their interest.*

*(3) There is nothing that can give more general offence to the generation of God’s children than to say that we have cleansed our heart in vain or that it is vain to serve God; for there is nothing more contrary to their universal sentiment and experience nor any thing that grieves them more than to hear God thus reflected on.*

*(4) Those that wish themselves in the condition of the wicked do in effect quit the tents of God’s children.”*

Matthew Henry

What lessons have you learnt?

2. How was Asaph's perplexity resolved? (**Verse 17**)

Day 7 Read **Psalm 73:18-20**

**Verse 17** ends with "*then I understood their end.*" **Verses 18-20** elaborate on the end of the wicked. Using your own words, write down the end of the wicked:

*"We must judge of persons and things as they appear by the light of divine revelation, and then we shall judge righteous judgment; particularly we must judge by the end. All is well that ends well, everlastingly well; but nothing well that ends ill, everlastingly ill."*

Matthew Henry

**Week 2**

**[22<sup>nd</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> February 2015]**

Day 1 Read **Psalm 73:21-24**

In **verses 1-3**, Asaph began by confessing his belief in God's goodness, but he drew no comfort from this truth then. His observations of life, especially when looking at the life of the wicked person(s) around him caused him to nearly give up his faith.

In **verses 4-9**, he gave a rather detailed description of the prosperity of the wicked, both in life and in death. He also provided a glimpse into the wickedness of the wicked person(s). The reason why these descriptions and glimpses caused him to nearly give up his faith will be clear in the next section.

In **verses 10-14**, Asaph continued to talk about prosperity of the wicked initially, focusing on their popularity and their outright godlessness. Then he moved to contrast his own life with the wicked person(s), and how he looked so foolish to seek to live a holy life.

In **verses 15-17**, Asaph conveyed two things: (a) So troubled, he was very tempted to just say all that was in his heart in the hearing of all people. But he held back, because he was concerned how it would negatively impact others. (b) Yet the mere holding back and keeping inside those perplexing thoughts would not solve the problem. His perplexities only began to be resolved when he turned to God!

In **verses 18-20**, having turned to God, he began to understand things from God's



perspective. He learned to see things from eternity's perspective, and from that perspective, things do not look well at all for the wicked.

In **verses 21-24**, it appeared that Asaph returned to the time before he entered the sanctuary (**verse 17**).

1. During that time, Asaph behaved in a certain way. How did he conduct himself?
2. During that time, while Asaph behaved in such a shameful way, yet something else was also happening. What was it?
3. Ponder over your answers/observations in Q1 and Q2. What lessons can you learn?

Day 2 Read **Psalm 73:25-28**

These 4 verses are Asaph's conclusion of this matter/experience. Write down what you think are the main points of his conclusion.

Day 3 Review **Psalm 73**

1. What truths concerning God have you learnt from **Psalm 73**?
2. What area(s) of your life must change now that you have read **Psalm 73**?

3. What is the single most important thing you have learnt from **Psalm 73**?

4. How can we see Jesus Christ in **Psalm 73**?

Day 4 Read **Psalm 75**

1. After reading **Psalm 75**, write down your *first* impressions of this psalm.

2. How would you classify this psalm?

(a) A psalm of joy

(b) A psalm of sadness

(c) A psalm of no emotions

(d) A psalm of \_\_\_\_\_

3. (a) Who is the human author of this psalm?

(b) Note that most of the psalms written by him are found in Book III (**Psalm 73-89**). Can you locate them? How many of them are there?

The only psalm written by him found outside Book III is **Psalm 50**.

(c) **1 Chronicles 6:31-48** give us some information about the author of **Psalm 75**.

*Which tribe did he come from? What was his job/task in Israel?*

Day 5 Read **Psalm 75:1-3**

**Verse 1** ~ *We give thanks to you, O God; we give thanks, for your name is near. We recount your wondrous deeds.*

Asaph leads the congregation of Israel (“we”) to give thanks to God. What do they give thanks for and how do they carry out their thanksgiving?

What do they give thanks for?

*We give thanks to You, O God . . . for Your name is near.* God’s Name stands for God’s character. When God tells us His Name, He is telling us who He is. When God tells us His Name, He is revealing Himself to us.

Hence, to have God’s Name ‘near’ means to see and experience God in a real and personal manner. The psalmist is here giving thanks to God that they have seen and experienced God in a real and personal way!

How do they carry out their thanksgiving?

*We recount Your wondrous deeds.* First, we note that in this particular case, God reveals Himself to His people through *His wondrous deeds*. In short, God has done some great and marvelous work, and through it God’s people see and experience who God is! Think of the following two examples:

- (a) God led Israel to cross the Red Sea on dry land (**Exodus 14-15**). It is a ‘wondrous deed’ of God, and from it, Israel gets to know the character of God – *He is powerful, He is merciful, He is faithful, He is . . .*
- (b) God enabled Judah to defeat the Assyrians under Hezekiah (**2 Kings 18:17-19:37**). From this ‘wondrous deed’ of God, Judah has a deeper knowledge of who God is.

We do not know what ‘wondrous deed’ of God which Asaph and his peers experienced at that time. But from it, they have come to see and experience God in a real and personal way.

In response, Asaph will ‘recount’ God’s wondrous deed. This is how they will express their thanksgiving – *use their mouth, open it wide, and talk of what God has done, focusing all the attention on God!*

1. What wondrous deed of God have you experienced?

2. From it, what have you learnt about God?

3. Express your thanksgiving to God by recounting God's wondrous deed to someone you know.

Day 6 Read **Psalm 75:1-3**

In **verses 2-3**, Asaph reports a divine word concerning judgment. This judgment is something that has yet to happen. Since God's people had seen God's wondrous deeds and praised God for them (**verse 1**), they can now anticipate (by faith) other wondrous deeds to come, notably divine judgment.

1. (a) When will God's judgment come? (**Verse 2**)  
  
(b) What can we learn from this?
2. What can we say about God's judgment? (**Verse 2**)
3. (a) "*The earth and all its inhabitants are dissolved*" (**verse 3a**) – what do you think this means?  
  
(b) "*I will set its pillars firmly*" (**verse 3b**) – what do you think this means?  
  
(c) What do you think is the message of **verse 3**?

Day 7 Read **Psalm 75:4-8**

1. In light of the divine judgment oracle in **verses 2-3**, Asaph has something to say in **verses 4-5**.

- (a) To whom is Asaph talking?
  - (b) What is Asaph saying to them?
2. What do you think is the message of **verses 6-7**?
  3. What do you think is the message of **verse 8**?
  4. Look over your answers to Q1-3 above. What is Asaph saying in **verses 4-8**?

### **Week 3**

**[1<sup>st</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> March 2015]**

#### **Day 1 Read Psalm 75:9-10**

These two verses can be seen as the conclusion of this psalm. It contains the speech of two different persons.

1. Asaph is the one speaking in **verse 9**.
  - (a) What is he saying?
  - (b) In the context of divine judgment, how is this (what Asaph is saying) significant?
2. God is the One speaking in **verse 10**.
  - (a) What is God saying?

(b) In the context of divine judgment, how is this (what God is saying) significant?

## Day 2 Review **Psalm 75**

1. What truths concerning God have you learnt from **Psalm 75**?
2. What area(s) of your life must change now that you have read **Psalm 75**?
3. What is the single most important thing you have learnt from **Psalm 75**?
4. Allen P. Ross, in his commentary on this psalm, said this in his summary and application of it:

*“In line with these emphases of the psalm, the apostle Paul says, ‘Be not deceived, God is not mocked. For whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap. For he that sows to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption. But he that sows to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap everlasting life. But let us not grow weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap if we faint not’ (Gal. 6:7-9)”*

Ponder over what Allen said. Do you agree/disagree? What would you add/subtract from his summary and application?

5. How can we see Jesus Christ from **Psalm 75**?

## Day 3 Read **Psalm 76**

After reading **Psalm 76** . . .

1. Write down your *first* impressions of this psalm.
2. What do you think is the message of this psalm?

This psalm can be outlined structurally in this way:

<b>Verses 1-3</b>	A hymn praising the LORD
<b>Verses 4-9</b>	The reasons for the praise of the LORD
<b>Verses 10-12</b>	The response to the LORD

We shall study this psalm following this structural outline.

Day 4 Read **Psalm 76:1-3**

1. What do you think is the message of **verse 1**?
2. **Verse 2** states that God resides in Salem/Zion. According to **verse 3**, God did something in Salem/Zion. What did He do?
3. (a) Where is God's dwelling place in the New Testament?  
  
(b) Will God do the same thing for His dwelling place today? Elaborate.  
  
(c) Look over your answers in Q3(a) & (b). What is/should be your response after reading these 3 verses?

Day 5 Read **Psalm 76:4-9**

Recall from the structural outline (above) that these 6 verses give us the reasons for the praise of the LORD. The first reason is given in **verses 4-6**. What is it?

Day 6 Read **Psalm 76:4-9**

Recall from the structural outline (above) that these 6 verses give us the reasons for the praise of the LORD. The second reason is given in **verses 7-9**. What is it?

Day 7 Read **Psalm 76:10-12**

1. What do you think is the meaning of **verse 10**?
  
2. (a) Asaph calls for a certain response to God. What is it? (**Verse 11**)  
  
(b) Why? (**Verse 12**)

**Week 4**

**[8<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> March 2015]**

Day 1 Summary Notes for **Psalm 76**

We are not able to locate this psalm historically, meaning we do not know what event Asaph has in mind when he penned this psalm, but his message is clear.

God has chosen to dwell in Salem (Jerusalem), also known as Zion. Because this is His city, He shall protect it. Enemies have tried to conquer Salem/Zion, but they were utterly routed. **Verse 3** describes it as “*arrows, shield and sword broken*”! The next 6 verses (**verse 4-9**) give us the details:



God caused the enemy to go into a stupor (described as 'sleep' or 'dead sleep'). They don't even know how to use their hands to wield their weapons! Here we see the glory and excellence of God above all!

God rose up to judge, and no one can stand before Him! As He defeated Salem's attackers, He delivered oppressed Salem. This is so typical of God --- as He judges, so He saves!

Men may plot and do their worst, but ultimately even their evil plots and wicked deeds shall end up serving God's purpose and glory. This is the meaning of **verse 10**. In response, God's people should pay their vows to God, praise and trust Him --  
- He who cut off the spirit of princes, who is awesome to the kings of the earth!

How can we apply this psalm to the New Testament church today?

Day 2 & 3      Read **Psalm 77**

After reading **Psalm 77**, write down your *first* impressions of this psalm:

### Brief Introduction and Outline

**Psalm 77** is a psalm of Asaph, a Levite and a leader of David's choir (**1 Chronicles 6:39**). Hence Asaph is a contemporary of David. According to **2 Chronicles 29:30**, Asaph is a seer. Therefore **Psalm 77** is not only a song to be used in the worship of Israel, it is also a prophetic word!

The historical context and occasion for **Psalm 77** remain unknown. **Verses 7-9** depict the anguish of the psalmist as he agonized over the question of whether God has forsaken him. From the Bible's history, we are unable (as yet) to see when such an occasion would have occurred during the time of David/Asaph, if his anxiety was not just personal but also corporate.

**Psalm 77** has three "*Selah*" (**verses 3, 9 & 15**). Hence, it is natural to divide the psalm into four parts (**verses 1-3, 4-9, 10-15, 16-20**). A closer examination shows that **verse 10** is a turning point, although different versions of the Bible have rendered it so differently:

*And I said, "This is my anguish; but I will remember the years of the right hand of the Most High." (NKJV)*

*Then I said, "It is my grief, that the right hand of the Most High has changed." (NASB),*

*Then I said, "What hurts me most is this — that God is no longer powerful." (GNT)*

*Then I said, "I will appeal to this, to the years of the right hand of the Most High." (ESV).*

Before **verse 10**, Asaph's focus was on himself – his grief and sorrow and anxieties. After **verse 10**, his eyes were fixed on God and what God did to deliver His people in the past.

In this study of **Psalm 77**, we will adopt the NJKV and NIV rendering of **verse 1**: "*I cried out to God with my voice --- To God with my voice; and He gave ear to me*"? This means **Psalm 77** can be classified as the psalm of declarative praise. Initially Asaph struggled with his anxieties and sorrows, then by remembering God's past deliverances, he was enabled to trust God and prayed to God. God heard his prayer and the psalmist is here praising God for it.

Since a declarative praise psalm has a teaching purpose, Asaph is here calling upon Israel to remember God's past wondrous acts and trust Him even in dark days.

**Psalm 77** can be outlined in this way:

**Verse 1:** A statement of God's answer to prayer: *I cried and God heard!*

**Verses 2-10a:** A recount of his (past) days of trouble

**Verses 2-4** ~ *Physical anguish*

**Verses 5-10a** ~ *Mental and spiritual anguish*

**V10b-20:** A remedy to such troubles

**Verses 10b-15** ~ remember God's work by recalling who God is

**Verses 16-20** ~ remember God's great act of deliverance in the exodus

Have a look at the title of **Psalm 77**: *To the Chief Musician. To Jeduthun. A Psalm of Asaph*. Having composed this psalm, Asaph handed it to the Chief Musician, implying that the choir will sing it during Temple worship. Jeduthun was a Levite (**1 Chronicles 16:41, 42; 25:1-6**) and the meaning of "Jeduthun" is "*praising*". Hence, "*(According) To Jeduthun*" here could actually mean sing it to the tune of "Jeduthun", which meant sing it to the "praise tune"!

Day 4 Read **Psalm 77:1-4**

1. "*I cried out to God with my voice — to God with my voice; and He gave ear to me*" (**verse 1**).

(a) In describing his prayer, Asaph said he cried out to God. The word 'cry' conveys 'fervency and intensity'. Is this how you pray? Have you ever prayed in such a manner?

(b) Asaph prayed to God, and God heard him. Has God ever heard your prayers? Share with your RTBT group members one answered prayer.

(c) When did Asaph pray to God? (**Verse 2a**)

(d) Take some time to worship God with the hymn below:

*Sweet hour of prayer! Sweet hour of prayer!  
That calls me from a world of care,  
And bids me at my Father's throne,  
Make all my wants and wishes known.  
In seasons of distress and grief,  
My soul has often found relief,  
And oft escaped the tempter's snare,  
By thy return, sweet hour of prayer!*

2. We know that Asaph was undergoing a horrendous time then; he called it "the day of trouble". What was Asaph physically experiencing then? (**Verses 2-4**)

3. As we review our answers to Q1 & 2 above, we see that as Asaph underwent a horrendous time, he turned to God, not away from Him.

(a) What does this tell you about Asaph?

(b) What lessons can you learn from this?

Day 5 Read **Psalm 77:10-20**

In **verse 3**, Asaph said that when he remembered God, he was troubled. **Verses 5-10a** tell us the reason(s) why.

1. What is/are the reason(s)?
2. Have you ever had similar experiences? If yes, share it with your RTBT group members.

Day 6 & 7 Read **Psalm 77:10-20**

**Verse 10** is a turning point in **Psalm 77**. Before **verse 10**, Asaph's focus was on himself – his grief and sorrow and anxieties. After **verse 10**, his eyes were fixed on God and what God did to deliver His people in the past.

1. In **verses 10b-15**, Asaph remembered God's work by recalling who God is. What attributes/facts about God did he call to mind?
2. In **verses 16-20**, Asaph remembered God's great act of deliverance in the exodus. From this great deliverance, Asaph learnt two important lessons:

**Verse 19:**

**Verse 20:**

3. William Cowper has written a wonderful hymn that captures the truth of **Psalm 77:19-20**, entitled *God Works In A Mysterious Way, His Wonders To Perform*. Take time to learn and sing it.

*God moves in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform;  
He plants His footsteps in the sea and rides upon the storm.*

*Deep in unfathomable mines, of never failing skill  
He treasures up His bright designs and works His sovereign will.*

*Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take; the clouds ye so much dread  
Are big with mercy and shall break in blessings on your head.*

*Judge not the Lord by feeble sense, but trust Him for His grace;  
Behind a frowning providence He hides a smiling face.*

*His purposes will ripen fast, unfolding every hour;  
The bud may have a bitter taste, but sweet will be the flower.*

*Blind unbelief is sure to err and scan His work in vain;  
God is His own interpreter, and He will make it plain.*

## Week 5

[15<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> March 2015]

### Day 1 Review **Psalm 77**

What do you think is the message of **Psalm 77** and what is the single most important lesson you've learnt from this psalm?

Go look for someone to share what you have learnt: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name)

### Day 2 & 3 Putting **Psalm 77** in the context of the Psalter and the whole Bible

When the final version of the Psalter was put together, **Psalm 77** was placed in Book III. Recall that the Psalter is made up of five books:

Book I (**Psalm 1-41**)

Book II (**Psalm 42-72**)

Book III (**Psalm 73-89**)

Book IV (**Psalm 90-106**)

Book V (**Psalm 107-150**)

**Psalm 1 & 2** formed the introduction to the Psalter while **Psalms 146-150** ends the Psalter with a firework of praise! **Psalm 2** speaks of the God-appointed king for His people, and this is a theme of the Psalter. With this kingship theme in mind, we start with **2 Samuel 7:2-16** whereby God promised David that after his death, God “*will set up his seed after him, establish his kingdom and the throne of his kingdom forever*” and that “*his house, his kingdom and his throne shall be established forever.*” One thing the Psalter does is to trace how this promise of God is being brought to pass.

In **Psalm 2:6-8** (Book I), we read: “*Yet I have set My King on My holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: The Lord has said to Me, ‘You are My Son, today I have begotten You. Ask of Me, and I will give You The nations for Your inheritance, and the ends of the earth for Your possession.’*” God’s promise to David is here reiterated and despite intense human oppositions, God will do it!

In **Psalm 72:1-2** (Book II), we read: “*Give the king Your judgments, O God, and Your righteousness to the king’s son. He will judge Your people with righteousness, and Your poor with justice.*” The promise to David is beginning to be fulfilled, as Solomon the physical son of David now sits on the throne. Prayer is now offered up to God for Solomon that he would be a godly king.

In Book III, the decline of Israel/Judah and the Davidic kings after Solomon come to the fore, finally reaching the sad state described in **Psalm 89:38-46**: “*But You have cast off and abhorred, You have been furious with Your anointed. You have renounced the covenant of Your servant; You have profaned his crown by casting it to the ground . . . You have made his glory cease, and cast his throne down to the ground. The days of his youth You have shortened; You have covered him with shame. Selah. How long, Lord? Will You hide Yourself forever? Will Your wrath burn like fire?*” The personal cries of Asaph in **Psalm 77:7-9** have now taken on corporate dimension, and his fears that God has cast off forever have become a reality! Historically, this is the time when Judah went into exile in 586 B.C.

Without a king, Israel falls back upon its heritage. So in Book IV, they look to Moses, and Moses directs them to look to God who has been their dwelling place in all generations. God Himself will be their king as depicted by **Psalm 93:1-2** ~ “*The Lord reigns, He is clothed with majesty; The Lord is clothed, He has girded Himself with strength. Surely the world is established, so that it cannot be moved. Your throne is established from of old; You are from everlasting.*” Book IV ends with Israel calling on God their King to save them and gather them from the nations (**Psalm 106:47**).

In Book V, God the King answers their cries when He gathered them from the lands (**Psalm 107:3**). The exile is over, but where is the Davidic king of God? Has His promise to David failed? **Psalm 110** speaks of a king whom God will appoint to rule, and who will be priest as well. **Psalm 118:25-26** shouts with joy concerning the One who comes in the name of the LORD, although the builders rejected him (**Psalm 118:22**). **Psalm 132** tied this coming one with the Davidic king in this way:

- (a) Pleading the promise -- *For Your servant David’s sake, do not turn away the face of Your Anointed. The Lord has sworn in truth to David; He will not turn from it: “I will set upon your throne the fruit of your body. If your sons will keep My covenant and My testimony which I shall teach them, their sons also shall sit upon your throne forevermore.”* (**Verses 10-12**)
- (b) God’s reply to the pleading -- *There I will make the horn of David grow; I will prepare a lamp for My Anointed. His enemies I will clothe with shame, but upon*

*Himself His crown shall flourish.” (Verses 17-18)*

Placing **Psalm 77** in the context of the Psalter, Asaph is no longer crying out in anguish over his own personal troubles but representing Israel in mourning over the loss of God’s favor and presence. There is no mention in **Psalm 77** itself that this was because of Israel’s sin, but the rest of the Psalter and the Old Testament point us to Israel’s rebellion and covenant breaking. When God casts off Israel’s king, then God has cast off Israel, since Israel and her king are inseparable. Prayer for the prosperity of Israel’s king is prayer for the prosperity of Israel (**Psalm 20**). Hence, when Asaph expressed his anxiety in **verses 7-9**, canonically it relates to Israel’s king and by the time we reach **Psalm 89**, it has come to pass!

When Asaph remembers God and His wondrous works in the past (the exodus – a demonstration of God’s covenantal faithfulness), at the canonical level this is to call God’s people to turn back to God, to cast themselves on Him and wait for Him to act in restoring Israel and the Davidic king. He has done a great work in the past (the exodus), surely He can do it again (a hope partly fulfilled in the unbelievable return from the exile, as depicted in **Psalm 126**). Asaph said in **verse 1** that he cried out to God and God gave ear to him. Israel must join Asaph now to cry out to God for the restoration of the Davidic king. At the end of the Psalter, and the Old Testament, God has yet heard their cry. *How long more must the wait be?*

When we come to the New Testament, **Luke 1:68-74** say, “*Blessed is the Lord God of Israel, for He has visited and redeemed His people, and has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of His servant David . . .* The Davidic king has come! He is the son of Mary. **Matthew 1:1-18** confirms that he is indeed a seed of David while **Matthew 21:9** applies **Psalm 118:26** to this son of Mary who comes riding on a donkey. Yet this Davidic king is quite different from what men would perceive. His kingdom of truth is not of this world (**John 18:36-37**) and would include people we don’t expect (**Luke 23:42-43**). In the consummation, He who sits on the throne (**Revelation 21:5-6**) will come and dwell with His people forever (**Revelation 21:3-4**), wiping away all their tears. This would fully answer Asaph’s questions in **verses 7-9** and fittingly correspond to his tears in **verses 2-4**.

Jesus is not just the fulfillment of **Psalm 77** but also the One praying **Psalm 77** (cf. **Hebrews 2:11-13**). The cries of Asaph were ultimately His vehement cries and tears to God who was able to save Him from death in the days of His flesh (**Hebrews 5:7**). On the cross He experienced the abandonment of His Father (the true and ultimate fulfillment **verses 7-9**) because He took His people’s sins upon Himself. While Asaph remembered God’s past wondrous acts of deliverance, Jesus is God’s ultimate and greatest act of deliverance – not from Egypt and the Red Sea, but from the devil and sin! The cross of Jesus looked so strange to us. We cannot understand it, including His first disciples (**Luke 24:19-24**). Yet ultimately we see God leading us like a flock, out of sin’s bondage and into the promised land of His kingdom, by the hand of One greater than Moses and Aaron, and He is none other than David’s Greater Son, our Lord Jesus Christ!

After reading the above . . .

1. What questions do you have?

2. What have you learnt?

Day 4 Read **Psalm 80**

1. After reading **Psalm 80**, write down your *first* impressions of this psalm.

2. How would you classify this psalm?

(a) A psalm of joy

(b) A psalm of sadness

(c) A psalm of no emotions

3. (a) A metaphor is used in this psalm to represent Israel. What is it?  
(Hint: Read **verses 8-13**)

(b) Can you think of a passage in the New Testament where this metaphor was used?

Day 5 Read **Psalm 80:1-3**

1. In **verse 1**, the psalmist prays to God in his laments. He addressed God using different terms/phrases. What are they and what do they mean?



2. What did the psalmist plead with God to do?

**Verse 1:**

**Verse 2:**

3. **Verse 3** is a refrain of this psalm. It is a call to God to restore them. In calling God to restore them, the psalmist elaborates on it by asking God to cause His face to shine on them.

(a) What does it mean for God to cause His face to shine on some people?

(Hint: This is probably an adaptation from **Numbers 6:24-26**. Read those three verses to help you answer this question)

(b) What will be the result when God causes His face to shine on Israel?

(c) Conversely, what do you think will happen if God does not cause His face to shine on Israel?

(d) From your answers above, what lesson(s) can you learn?

Day 6 Read **Psalm 80:4-7**

From **verses 1-3**, we know that the psalmist, representing Israel, pleaded with God to act and save them. He used very intense language, implying that his prayer was very fervent. All these combine to tell us that the situation from which they needed to be saved was a very grim huge disaster.

**Verses 4-7** will start to show us just what this grim situation was.

1. **Verse 5** gives us one glimpse into the grim situation of Israel. What was it?

2. **Verse 6** gives us another glimpse into the grim situation of Israel. What was it?
3. What do you think is the message of **verse 4**?

Day 7 Read **Psalm 80:8-13**

1. **Verses 8-11** is a summary of the history of Israel from the exodus to the time of Joshua, maybe even David/Solomon.

What do you think is the message of the psalmist here?

2. **Verses 12-13** paint the reverse fortunes of Israel.

(a) What happened?

(b) To whom ultimately did the psalmist attribute all that happened?

**Week 6**

**[22<sup>nd</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> March 2015]**

Day 1 Read **Psalm 80:14-19**

1. What did the psalmist plead with God to do in **verses 14-15**?
2. As a support for his plea, the psalmist described the awful situation Israel was experiencing in **verse 16**. What was it?

3. (a) What did the psalmist plea with God to do in **verse 17**?
- (b) What will be the result if God hears this plea? (**Verse 18a**)
- (c) **Verse 18b** is a one-line summary of **verses 17-18a**: *Revive us, and we will call upon Your name*. The reasoning is that if we are not revived, then we will not be able to call upon God.

What do you think the psalmist is saying here? Is he laying the blame on God if Israel fails to call upon God, because God failed to revive them? Is there an alternative (perhaps better) way of understanding his words here?

## Day 2 Review **Psalm 80**

1. What truths concerning God have you learnt from **Psalm 80**?
2. What area(s) of your life must change now that you have read **Psalm 80**?
3. What is the single most important thing you have learnt from **Psalm 80**?
4. (a) In his commentary on **Psalm 80**, Allen P. Ross summarized this psalm in this way: *“Under the figure of a prosperous and growing vine that is suddenly unprotected and ravaged, the psalmist laments the tearful calamity of the nation and repeatedly calls for the LORD to turn to them in mercy so that they might be saved.”*

Why was the vine suddenly unprotected and ravaged? (Get your answer from the psalm itself)

- (b) In the New Testament, Jesus applied the vine metaphor to Himself: *“I am the vine”* (**John 15:5**).

Continuing with this vine metaphor, how can we see Jesus in **Psalm 80**?

Day 3 Read **Psalm 84**

1. After reading **Psalm 84**, write down . . .

(a) Your *first* impressions of this psalm:

(b) Any questions you might have:

2. (a) Who wrote this psalm?

(b) What do you think is the main theme of this psalm?

3. Take a few minutes to read the brief introduction of **Psalm 84** by Derek Kidner below:

*“Longing is written all over this psalm. This eager and home-sick man is one of the Korathite temple singers, and the mood of the psalm is not unlike that of Psalm 42 and 43, which are a product of the same group.*

*Three times he uses the word ‘Blessed’ or ‘Happy’; once wistfully (4), once resolutely (5), once in deep contentment (12). These can guide us in exploring the movement of the psalm.”*

Now we are ready to study **Psalm 84**, starting tomorrow.

Day 4 Read **Psalm 84:1-4**

1. (a) To the psalmist, what is lovely?

- (b) Derek Kidner applies this verse in this way: “*The Christian equivalent is ‘love of the brethren’, who are individually and collectively God’s temple (1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19).*”

Do you agree with Derek’s application? Elaborate.

2. What does the psalmist long for?
3. What do you think is the message of **verse 3**?
4. **Verse 4** contains the first of the three beatitudes in **Psalm 84**.
  - (a) Who is blessed?
  - (b) What is the sentiment being expressed by this beatitude?
  - (c) Do you agree with this sentiment? Why or why not?

Day 5 Read **Psalm 84:5-7**

1. **Verse 5** contains the second of the three beatitudes in **Psalm 84**. What is it?
2. What do you think is the message of **verses 5-6**?
3. How will the pilgrimage end for the pilgrim finally? (**Verse 7**)

4. Ponder the message of these 3 verses. How can they be applied to your Christian life today?

Day 6 Read **Psalm 84:8-9**

1. According to these 2 verses, the goal of undergoing all the hardships and dangers in making the pilgrimage to the Temple is . . . *to pray!*

(a) For whom did he/they pray?

(b) Why?

2. What lessons can you learn from this?

Day 7 Read **Psalm 84:10-12**

1. (a) What do you think the psalmist is saying/expressing in **verse 10**?

(b) Do you share his sentiment? Why or why not?

2. **Verse 11** gives the reason for his sentiment expressed in **verse 10**. What is it?

3. (a) What is the third beatitude of this psalm? (**Verse 12**)

(b) How does it fit in to the message of this psalm?

Day 1 Review **Psalm 84**

1. What truths concerning God have you learnt from **Psalm 84**?
2. What area(s) of your life must change now that you have read **Psalm 84**?
3. What is the single most important thing you have learnt from **Psalm 84**?
4. How can we see Jesus Christ from **Psalm 84**?

Day 2 Read **Psalm 87**

1. Read **Psalm 87** and write down your *first* impressions of it.
2. Who is the author of this psalm? How do you know?
3. Take a few minutes to read the brief introduction of **Psalm 87** by Derek Kidner below:

*“In its enigmatic, staccato phrases this remarkable psalm speaks of Zion as the destined metropolis of Jew and Gentile alike. Nothing is explained with any fullness, yet by the end there remains no doubt of the coming conversion of old enemies and their full incorporation in the city of God. Here (with Isaiah 54) is the vision behind Paul’s phrase, ‘The Jerusalem above . . . is our mother’ (Galatians 4:26). The most memorable commentary on this psalm is John Newton’s masterly hymn . . .”*

Take some time to learn/sing the hymn by John Newton:

*Glorious things of thee are spoken, Zion, city of our God;  
He whose word cannot be broken, formed thee for his own abode;  
On the Rock of Ages founded, what can shake thy sure repose?  
With salvation's walls surrounded, thou may'st smile at all thy foes.*

*See! The streams of living waters, springing from eternal love,  
Well supply thy sons and daughters and all fear of want remove.  
Who can faint, when such a river ever flows their thirst to assuage?  
Grace which, like the Lord, the Giver, never fails from age to age.*

*Round each habitation hovering, see the cloud and fire appear  
For a glory and a covering, showing that the Lord is near.  
Thus they march, their pillar leading, light by night, and shade by day;  
Daily on the manna feeding which he gives them when they pray.*

*Blest inhabitants of Zion, washed in the Redeemer's blood!  
Jesus, whom their souls rely on, makes them kings and priests to God.  
'Tis his love his people raises over self to reign as kings:  
And as priests, his solemn praises each for a thank-offering brings.*

*Savior, if of Zion's city, I through grace a member am,  
Let the world deride or pity, I will glory in thy Name.  
Fading is the worldling's pleasure, all his boasted pomp and show;  
Solid joys and lasting treasure, none but Zion's children know.*

### Day 3 Read **Psalm 87:1-3**

These three verses praise Zion, the city of God. The word “Zion” essentially means “fortification.” The first mention of the word “Zion” in the Bible is **2 Samuel 5:7** ~ “Nevertheless, David captured the fortress of Zion, the City of David.”

Originally, “Zion” was the name of the ancient Jebusite fortress in the city of Jerusalem. Later, “Zion” came to stand not only for the fortress but also for city in which the fortress stood. It was also called “the City of David” (**1 Kings 8:1**).

When Solomon built the temple in Jerusalem, “Zion” expanded in meaning to include the temple and the area surrounding it (**Psalm 2:6, 48:2, 132:13**). “Zion” was eventually used as a name for the city of Jerusalem, the land of Judah, and the people of Israel as a whole (**Isaiah 40:9, Jeremiah 31:12, Zechariah 9:13**).

Theologically, “Zion” is used figuratively of Israel as the people of God (**Isaiah 60:14**). The spiritual meaning of “Zion” continues in the New Testament and is given the Christian meaning of God's spiritual kingdom, the heavenly Jerusalem (**Hebrews**



**12:22, Revelation 14:1).** In **1 Peter 2:6**, Peter refers to Christ as the Cornerstone of Zion: “*See, I lay a stone in Zion, a chosen and precious cornerstone, and the one who trusts in Him will never be put to shame*”.

Here in these three verses, the psalmist praise Zion the city of God in at least two ways. What are they?

**Verse 2:**

**Verse 3:**

Should we understand these verses to be talking about the physical city of Zion or the Christian Church today? Explain your answer.

Day 4 & 5      Read **Psalm 87:4-6**

1. “*I will make mention of Rahab and Babylon to those who know Me*” (**verse 4**).

(a) Who is the ‘I’?

(b) “*Those who know Me*” – who would these people be?

(c) “*Rahab*” is the poetic name of Egypt. Both Egypt and Babylon would be known/remembered in the Old Testament as nation/people who oppressed Israel.

2. Besides Rahab and Babylon, who else are mentioned? (**Verse 4**)





Day 1 & 2    Read **Psalm 89**

1. Who is the author of **Psalm 89**?

Read **1 Kings 4:31, 1 Chronicles 6:44, 15:17-19** for more information about the author of this psalm.

2. After reading this psalm . . .

(a) What is your first impression of it?

(b) What questions do you have?

(c) What do you think was the situation that prompted the writing of this psalm?

Day 3    Read **Psalm 89:1-4**

1. What did Ethan resolve to do in **verses 1-2**?

2. **Verse 3-4** is a record of what God has promised. What did God promise? (The full version of this promise of God can be found in **1 Samuel 7:12ff**)

3. What do you think is the connection between **verses 1-2** and **verses 3-4**? In other words, what has Ethan's resolve got to do with God promise?

Day 4 Read **Psalm 89:5-18**

The painful situation that confronted Ethan then was depicted in **verses 38-51**. However, he does not start talking about it until he first bows in worship of the Lord and reminds himself of who God is. So here in **verses 5-18**, we find Ethan mentioning the *majesty, mastery* and *moral grandeur* of God.

Today, we shall focus on *the majesty of God* (**verses 5-8**).

1. Each verse in these 4 verses say something about God, and together they depict the glorious majesty of God. Write them down, using your own words (if possible).

**Verse 5:**

**Verse 6:**

**Verse 7:**

**Verse 8:**

(a) Have you ever thought of God in this way?

(b) Of all the things said about God in **verses 5-8**, which one is it that you are most unfamiliar?

2. The “*saints*” in **verses 5 & 7** can be better translated as the “*holy ones*”. The “*holy ones*” is a reference to angels.

Hence, the picture here is of God “*in the heavens*” (**verse 5**), surrounded by the angels. The emphasis is not on what God has done on earth for His people. It is purely and plainly a focus on God in His glory in heaven!

3. Take some time now to join the angels in heaven, and worship God using the words of **Psalm 89:5-8**.

Day 5 Read **Psalm 89:5-18**

Recall that in **verses 5-18**, Ethan makes mention of the *majesty, mastery* and *moral grandeur* of God, in his worship of Him. Yesterday, we've looked at *the majesty of God* (**verses 5-8**).

Today, we shall focus on *the mastery of God* (**verses 9-13**).

1. (a) The *mastery of God* is first seen in **verse 9**. What is it?  
  
(b) We find a man in the New Testament showing the same *mastery*. Who is He? (**Mark 4:35-41**)
2. The *mastery of God* is next seen in **verse 10**. What is it? (Note that *Rahab* is a metaphor for Egypt).
3. What do you think is the message of **verses 11-13**?

(Hint: They must have something to do with *the mastery of God*)

Day 6 Read **Psalm 89:5-18**

We have already looked at *the majesty of God* (**verses 5-8**) and *the mastery of God* (**verses 9-13**). Today, we shall move to focus on *the moral grandeur of God* (**verses 14-18**).

1. Looking to **verse 14** . . .
  - (a) What form the foundation of God's throne? What does that mean?
  
  - (b) What go before the face of God? What does that mean?

2. Looking to **verses 15-18** . . .

(a) Who is pronounced as blessed?

(b) How is such a person blessed?

3. Review your answers in Q1 & Q2 above. What do you think is the message of these five verses?

Day 7 Read **1 Samuel 16:1-13**

After bowing in worship of the Lord and reminding himself of who God is, making mention of the *majesty, mastery* and *moral grandeur* of God (**Psalm 89:5-18**), the psalmist Ethan now moves to talk about the choice of David as Israel's king and God's covenant with him (**Psalm 89:19-37**).

Before we look at **Psalm 89:19-37**, take some time to read the historical record concerning the choice of David as Israel's king – **1 Samuel 16:1-13**.

1. Who started the process of choosing David as Israel's next king? (**Verse 1**)

2. Which prophet was involved in the choice of David as king? (**Verse 1**)

3. What was David's position in Jesse's family? (**Verse 11**)

4. Why was David chosen? (**Verse 7**)

5. Using your own words, summarize how David was chosen as Israel's king:

Day 1 Read **Psalm 89:19-29**

1. In his own poetic way, Ethan talked about the choice of David as Israel's king in **verses 19-23**.

(a) Who is the main actor in this event?

(b) To whom must the success of David be attributed?

2. **Verses 24-29** talk about the relationship between God and David. Using your own words, describe this relationship:

3. In **verse 27**, we read that God will make David His firstborn. What does that mean?

Day 2 & 3 Read **2 Samuel 7:1-17** and **Psalm 89:30-37**

*My mercy I will keep for him forever,  
And My covenant shall stand firm with him.  
His seed also I will make to endure forever,  
And his throne as the days of heaven.*

**Psalm 89:28-29**

**2 Samuel 7:1-17** provides us the historical record whereby God made His covenant with David. We note that Nathan the prophet was involved in this entire episode.

1. According to **verses 1-3**, what did David propose to do?

2. In response to David's proposal to build a house for God, God will make David a house (royal dynasty) – **verse 11. Verse 12-16** is an elaboration of God's covenant with David.

(a) What did God promise to do for the seed of David?

**Verse 12:**

**Verse 13b:**

(b) How will God relate to the seed of David? (**Verse 14**)

(c) For how long will this covenant be in effect? (**Verses 15-16**)

3. In his own poetic way, Ethan zeroed in on two aspects of the Davidic covenant in **Psalm 89:30-37**. What are they?

**Verses 30-32:**

**Verses 33-37:**

Day 4 & 5      Read **Psalm 89:38-51**

We finally come to the painful situation that confronted Ethan as depicted in **verses 38-51**.

1. Using your own words, describe the painful situation (**verses 38-45**):



2. In response to this painful situation, what did the psalmist do?

**Verse 46:**

**Verse 49:**

3. What arguments/reasoning did the psalmist use in his pleading with God?

4. (a) How did the psalmist end his psalm?

(b) Why, do you think, did he end his psalm in this way?

Day 6 **Psalm 89** and Jesus Christ

**Psalm 89** paints a very serious situation. The king of Israel has been overthrown, the Davidic monarchy apparently ended, and the nation had to endure humiliation from the taunts of their enemies. In the face of this tragic and painful situation, there can be only one conclusion: *God has spurned the rejected king and his kingdom.*

It is clear from the Davidic kingdom that God would discipline the king of Israel (seed of David) when he goes astray, but what is happening (as depicted in **verses 38-51**) went far beyond that! It looked as if God has torn up the covenant altogether!

In his deep pain and perplexity, note that the psalmist turned to God, and not away from Him. He begins his psalm with a hymn that praises God for His loyal love and faithfulness. He recalls the marvelous acts of God in the past, and most importantly he re-states the promises of God, from the development of the monarchy with the choice of David, until the making of the Davidic covenant whereby God promised to make David a house forever.

On the basis of all these, the psalmist pleads with God to intervene once again and fulfill His promise to David, and hence to Israel. The prayer (**verses 46-51**) is an informed, urgent and passionate prayer to God for mercy and deliverance. It is the focus of **Psalm**

**89.** This conveys a lasting lesson for all God's people down through the age: *Our mouth must persevere in praying for God to fulfill His promises, especially when our eyes tell us that all is lost and hopeless!*

After the defeat of Judah in 586 B.C. and the exile of the Jews to Babylon, the throne of David was empty. It remained empty even after the return of the Jews during the reign of the Persians. In fact, for the next 400 years, the throne of David remained empty as Israel was subject to the rule of foreign powers. This painful situation continued until one day around 30 B.C., a Man walked the streets of Galilee and Judea, and was proclaimed "the Son of David"! His name is Jesus, and His disciples confessed that He is the Christ (God's Anointed One).

While some Jews were hopeful that Jesus would be the One to redeem Israel (**Luke 24:21**) and hence answer the cry of **Psalm 89**, they were disappointed when they witnessed His crucifixion at the hands of the Romans. How would a dead man sit on David's throne and restore the house of David?

Yet at His death, a sign was hung on His cross: *This is the king of the Jews*. Though meant to be a mockery, yet it turned out to be the truth! On the third day, this Jesus was raised from the dead, and forty days later, He ascended into the heavens. Jesus is the true and ultimate Seed of David, and the One who answered the prayer of **Psalm 89** completely. He now sits on the throne of David, and rules over Israel (true Israel who fears and worships God, includes both believing Jews and believing Gentiles); He was dead, and now He is alive forevermore! Since He lives forever, He indeed will sit on the throne of David and reign forever!

The ultimate fulfillment will only come when Jesus returns on the last day. Hence, today we continue to join the psalmist in praying for God's fulfillment of His promise. We pray, "*Come, Lord Jesus, come!*"

#### Day 7    Review **Psalm 89**

We have spent the last 2 weeks looking at **Psalm 89**. Take some time to review your answers from Week 8 Day 1 onwards.

1.    What questions do you still have concerning this psalm?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2.    What is the single most important lesson you have learnt from this psalm?

### **Acknowledgement**

Whatever the weaknesses of this Read-The-Bible-Together guide, they would have been far greater without the kind help of Tjan Swi Tjhing and Stephanie Boik in giving their time and energy to review the entire guide, asking questions all the way and giving many valuable suggestions.

Thank you, sisters!

*Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another!* (Proverbs 27:17, ESV)

=====

Questions or comments concerning this RTBT guide?  
Please contact WEI En Yi (HP: 98340509, email: [weienyi@shalomrb.org](mailto:weienyi@shalomrb.org))