



# FAMILY DEVOTION

WEEK 3

LAWNDALE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

## PSALMS OF ASCENT STUDIES

WE'RE GOING TO WORK THROUGH "THE PSALMS OF ASCENT:" PSALMS 120-134. THESE ARE PSALMS THE JEWISH PILGRIMS FROM ALL OVER PALESTINE WOULD SING AS THEY MADE THEIR JOURNEYS FROM THEIR HOMES TO JERUSALEM FOR THE MAJOR FEASTS. (WE'VE ALREADY REFLECTED ON TWO OF THESE, PSALMS 121 AND 130.)

MONDAY, MARCH 30

**Scripture:** Psalm 120

QUESTIONS:

- How does this psalm begin?  
  
Don't you think it's interesting that the first psalm of a group of psalms about journeying to God's presence starts with distress? One author writes: "Such dissatisfaction with the world as it is is preparation for traveling in the way of Christian discipleship."
- What are some ways you're dissatisfied with the world as it is right now?
- What does v. 1 say the Psalmist does about that? How are you doing that?
- V. 2 gives the Psalmist's cry. What are some of the world's lies you're tired of believing?
- In vv. 3-4 the Psalmist gives God's verdict over the lies of the world. What is it?  
  
In vv. 5-7 the Psalmist is weary from living in this fallen world. "Meshech" and "Kedar" are used metaphorically for enemies of God's people both near and far.
- The Psalmist is saying: "I'm tired of the lies coming at me; I'm tired of the lies I believe. I want God's peace, God's wholeness." So, this Psalm is a repentance psalm. How are you wanting to turn more fully to God?
- Some have called this psalm a Homesick Psalm. How does our present crisis increase your longing for your true home?

**Opening:**

Isaiah 30:15a

**Sing together**

God, Be Merciful to Me

**Closing Prayer**

Father, thank you for showing me my struggle with.... Forgive me for seeking my life in that. Help me find my life in you.

**Closing Song:**

Jesus, I Am Resting, Resting

# T U E S D A Y , M A R C H 3 1

**Scripture:** Psalm 122

## Q U E S T I O N S :

- In Psalm 120 the Spiritual pilgrim begins journeying to God's presence. In Psalm 121 he encounters difficulty and danger, but in the midst of that, he renews his trust in God's keeping, shepherding care over him. Then, in Psalm 122 the psalmist arrives to his goal, Jerusalem, the Temple, the people of God.
- What is the attitude of the pilgrim as he arrives to worship in Jerusalem?
- Why do we rejoice to worship God with his people?
- In what ways does our present crisis make you look forward to worshipping again in person with your church family?
- In vv. 3-5 the psalmist looks upon the city of Jerusalem. The houses and buildings are all unique, yet they fit beautifully together. This is the city to which all the tribes go up! What does the architecture say about this people of God?
- Then, in v. 6 the psalmist calls on us to intercede for God's people. How does vv. 6-8 call us to pray for the Church?
- What does v. 9 encourage us to do for the Church?

### Opening:

2 Corinthians 9:15

### Sing together

All People That on Earth Do Dwell

### Closing Prayer

Each person, pick a family and pray for God's peace to be upon them.

### Closing Song:

Jesus with Thy Church Abide

# W E D N E S D A Y , A P R I L 1

**Scripture:** Psalm 123

## Q U E S T I O N S :

- The psalmist is facing hard circumstances. Where does he look for help?
- How is this similar to Psalm 121? How is this similar to The Lord's Prayer?
- In what manner does v. 2 indicate the psalmist is looking to God? How does a servant look to the hand of his master, or a maidservant look to the hand of her mistress?
- What does the psalmist ask of God?
- What is he enduring that moves him to ask this of God? Have you endured contempt for following Jesus? How might this psalm help you pray for your brothers and sisters who face persecution?

### Opening:

1 Peter 5:6-7

### Sing together

My Worth Is Not in What I Own

### Closing Prayer

Father, help us look to you in humility in the midst of the trials we face. When our souls have had enough of the struggle, may we find your grace more than sufficient.

**Closing Song:** How Sweet the Name of Jesus Sounds

# THURSDAY, APRIL 2

**Scripture:** Psalm 124

## QUESTIONS :

- Do you know the Lord is on your side? What does Romans 8:31 say?
- What does it mean that God is on your side?
- The psalmist has survived a really dangerous time. Now he proclaims: "The Lord is on our side!" And, he calls on Israel, the Church, to proclaim it too: "The Lord is on our side!" When God delivers us, we want God's people to learn from our experience and share in our joy.
- The psalmist pictures his enemies in four graphic ways: An evil monster, a raging flood, a sharp-toothed predator, and a cunning hunter. He would be helpless by himself against these enemies. But he has the Lord on his side to deliver him.
- Can you see your sin patterns as one of these enemies? Can you see our present crisis as one of these enemies?
- What's the psalmist's closing declaration? Can you say that today?

# FRIDAY, APRIL 3

**Scripture:** Psalm 125

## QUESTIONS :

- What does trusting in the Lord result in?
- What would it look like for you to be "un-moved" in our present situation?
- If mountains provide protection for cities, what does it mean that the Lord surrounds his people? How does this make you feel?
- What is the request of the Psalmist in verses 4 and 5? How do you think God answers this request?

# SATURDAY, APRIL 4

**Scripture:** Scripture: Psalm 126

## QUESTIONS :

- There are good times and bad times for those who follow God. Are verses 1-3 describing good times or bad times?
- What does verse 2 say these times are marked by? (Laughter and Joy)
- Jeremiah Burroughs, a Westminster Divine, wrote the following: "Christian contentment is that sweet, inward, quiet, gracious frame of spirit, which freely submits to and delights in God's wise and fatherly disposal in every condition." Is this how you would describe the joy you find in Christ? If not, what is different?
- The Negeb was an arid, dry, desertlike place. If verses 1-3 depict spiritual flourishing, what is the Negeb depicting?
- This Psalm shows there are two ways in which the Lord works in restoring spiritual dryness. What is the way he does it in verse 4? (Streams of water, a flood of God's spirit, powerfully and suddenly)
- Verses 5-6 show a much slower way: "sowing with tears." What does this mean?
- In actual farming, do we see immediate fruit? What does this mean for us?

### Opening:

John 14:18

### Sing together

Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing

### Closing Prayer

Our Father, you who made heaven and earth, thank you for being our help. Please help me.... Please help us....

### Closing Song:

The Sands of Time Are Sinking

### Opening:

1 Corinthians 15:58

### Sing together

O Love That Will Not Let Me Go

### Closing Prayer

Go around the room and pray for all the nurses, doctors, custodial staff, etc. that are providing care for the sick in Tupelo, the State, our Country, and the World.

### Closing Song:

How Firm a Foundation

### Opening:

Amos 9:14

### Sing together

We Will Feast in the House of Zion

### Closing Prayer

Go around the room and pray for our policy makers, the elderly, immune deficient, and nonprofits (like RUF, Parkgate Pregnancy Clinic, etc.)

### Closing Song:

Eternal Weight of Glory by Wendell Kimbrough