

Israel as a Monarchy (1100 – 930 BCE)

Psalms of the Troubled Soul

Readings: *Psalm 35, 41, 43, 46, 55*

Reflections:

- Many of the themes and ideas in these psalms have already identified in this section. Here are few specific thoughts about these particular psalms:
- Psalm 35 “Who is like you, O Lord? You rescue the poor from those too strong for them...” Here we see one of our recurrent themes again in focus (1 Corinthians 1:27). “But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong.”
- Psalm 41 “Blessed is he who has regard for the weak; the Lord delivers him in times of trouble.” We see that those who have God's heart of caring for those who are weak and poor, are blessed by God. Again this is recurrent throughout Scripture.
- Psalm 46 - This is a rich psalm. It begins with great declarations of what it means to live by faith and not by fear, by trusting in who God is rather than what your eyes see. We see a reference here to a city of God with a river flowing through it that brings joy. This city of God with a river of life will reoccur numerous times in the times of the prophets and in the New Testament as well (see Ezekiel 47; Revelations 22). It is a beautiful image to give us hope and assurance of God's presence providing all we need. The psalm also goes on to declare that God's purpose is to make wars cease. Again, we will see this revealed as the coming Messiah or anointed King will bring peace on earth. In Jesus God will reveal his command to love our enemies and how the Kingdom of the Messiah is a kingdom of peace.
- Psalm 55 - A beautiful promise “Cast your cares on the Lord and he will sustain you; he will never let the righteous fall.”
- It is striking how care for the weak and poor is so central in the songs of Israel. Also, in virtually every passage these songs seek to nurture what it means to walk by faith and not by fear as we wait for the Lord to work. The songs of Israel not only called her worshippers to abandon themselves to God in complete trust but also respond to his

heart by seeking to care for the most vulnerable within their community as well as those they would encounter from outside their community.