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Day 126 – May 6

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## Israel as a Monarchy (1100 – 930 BCE)

### *Psalms Expressing a Variety of Sentiments*

Readings: *Psalm 4, 12, 20, 25, 32, 38*

#### ***Reflections:***

- Psalm 4: Here we see again that a relationship with God is very personal and rooted in communication, trust, joy and peace. He also reminds us that there are “right sacrifices” which implies there are also wrong sacrifices. Right sacrifices are rooted in the condition of one's heart (See Psalm 51) and not in attention to the legalistic details of the Law. This sets the stage for the day when the Law will be set aside and God changes people from the inside out.
- Psalm 12: In this psalm we see the proud (boastful, flattering, lying people) contrasted to the poor and needy. We see God's heart to save and protect the poor and needy from the proud and abusive. Again, this theme of God choosing the weak and broken is central to virtually everything we see in Scripture and its meta-narrative.
- Psalm 20: A psalm expressing complete faith and confidence in God's power to save and his delight to give his people the desires of their hearts. Key verses: “Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the Lord our God.” Their trust is not in what they possess or can do in their own strength. Their trust is solely in God and what he can do. Calling on his name and trusting in his name again refers to trusting in a relationship with him, versus trusting in his Law or in his power. It isn't trusting in religion or trusting in what he can do, it is trusting in my ability to know God's name and to call out to him personally and that he will hear and respond. In this time period, remembering sacrifices and offerings represents God remembering that the people have been faithful to their covenant relationship. In Christ, God remembers the sacrifice of his son, when he looks at our lives and needs. How much more does he desire to respond in love to the ones bought at such a high price?
- Psalm 25: A psalm revealing complete trust and intimacy with God. Hoping in God. Trusting in Him. Turning away from sin. Being open to being taught and led by God. Honestly expressing your need. Seeking his protection and salvation. All of these qualities are expressed as a part of being in close relationship with God. Key verse: “The Lord confides in those who fear (humbly trust in) him.” This psalm is so encouraging for

those that are “lonely and afflicted” to know that God is right there with you and loves you so much as to hear and respond in love and grace and power.

- Psalm 32: Here David expresses his experience of having sinned before God, trying to avoid facing that sin and then finally under conviction turning to God and receiving forgiveness and restoration of relationship. David declares that God is his “hiding place” and God responds back with a wonderful promise: “I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you and watch over you.” The challenge in responding to God's leadership is not being stubborn like a horse or mule that needs to be externally controlled. God doesn't desire to use external control but desires a true, intimate relationship where he can just speak to us and guide us because our hearts are soft and trusting. Key verse: “...the Lord's unfailing loves surrounds the one who trusts in him.”
- Psalm 38: David being honest with God about how bad life has become when he is struggling under his sin. When we blow it we feel terrible and this psalm depicts in graphic detail someone who is really in bad shape. Praise God that in Jesus the complete floodgate of God's mercy, grace and forgiveness has been lavished on us and that we don't have to be buried in the discouragement or depression of our sins. We can turn to God and through Jesus receive immediate and complete restoration of relationship, total forgiveness. Praise God for Jesus!