

# PSALMS THAT HAVE IMPACTED

## MY LIFE

### Booklet 2

PSALM 23:1

**The Lord Is My Shepherd**  
A PSALM OF DAVID.

23

- The LORD is my <sup>a</sup>shepherd; I shall not <sup>b</sup>want.  
He makes me lie down in green <sup>c</sup>pastures.  
He <sup>d</sup>restores my soul.  
He <sup>e</sup>leads me in <sup>f</sup>paths of righteousness<sup>g</sup>  
for his <sup>h</sup>name's sake.
- Even though I <sup>i</sup>walk through the valley of <sup>j</sup>the shadow of death,<sup>k</sup>  
I will <sup>l</sup>fear no evil,  
for <sup>m</sup>you are with me;  
your <sup>n</sup>rod and your staff,  
they comfort me.
  - You <sup>o</sup>prepare a table before me  
in <sup>p</sup>the presence of my enemies;  
you <sup>q</sup>anoint my head with oil;  
my <sup>r</sup>cup overflows.
  - Surely <sup>s</sup>goodness and mercy<sup>t</sup> shall follow me  
all the days of my life,  
and I shall <sup>u</sup>dwell<sup>v</sup> in the house of the LORD  
<sup>w</sup>forever.

IAN PIKE

## Dedication

I dedicate this booklet to my precious wife of 53 years who has had such a profound effect on me. Since she went to heaven I have been able to more clearly articulate the qualities that made her so special. She was a Godly humble person who had no false opinion of herself and because of this people felt so secure around her for she never criticized anyone and she always listened. She taught me how to forgive for she never carried a grudge, every day was a new day and the past was the past. She was trustworthy and never disclosed anything spoken in confidence to her. She had such an unshakeable faith in God and she expressed it by the way that she lived – not by just being able to talk about it. I am reminded of this as I write this in the unit that in the natural was impossible to buy, but Barbara heard from God and a miracle happened. Today I love the Lord so much because he brought Barbara into my life.

## **Psalms That Have Impacted my life**

All scriptures quoted are New King James  
Version unless otherwise noted

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# Introduction

The book of Psalms is very unique in the Bible, there is no other book like it even though the Psalms were written by many different people we know that all scripture is inspired by God. All the Psalms were written as songs to be sung normally on special occasions and were used to glorify God. I have titled this booklet “Psalms that have impacted my life”, over my lifetime I have been so impacted by the Psalms because God has used several verses from the Psalms to encourage me at various stages of my life. In my 20’s/30’s this verse had such an impact on me it is what David said in **Psalm 27:14** *“I would have lost heart unless I had believed that I would see the goodness of God in the land of the living”*. Not only in my younger years but all my life I have experienced the goodness of God they are too many to write about. In my senior years, I have experienced the truth of **Psalm 92: 13-14** which says: *“Those who are planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of the Lord. They shall bear*

*fruit in old age, they shall be fresh and flourishing".* This is so true in my life, especially after the unexpected loss of my wife of 53 years, and now at the age of 83, I am so thrilled with the Lord and how precious He is to me. I am so encouraged by what the Lord is doing in the church. We must never forget that the word of God is a living word that continues to speak to us. When David was anointed to be king of Israel as a teenager, God said in **1 Samuel 13:14** " *The Lord has sought for Himself a man after His own heart*". We look at the history of David we little evidence of this however when we read the many Psalms that David wrote we get a glimpse of David's love for his Lord and living His way. David writes about the situations that he faced and how his trust in the Lord shines through. This should be normal behaviour for us as we talk to people about how great the Lord is to us. The anointing that is on our lives should be impacting the people with who we are in contact. The purpose of this booklet is to inspire you, as you are impacted by the truth of God's word we are changed and we can be impacted

every time we read it. The wonderful thing about God's word is because it is alive, it will always speak to us. In this first booklet, I have written about Psalm 23, Psalm 1, Psalm 19, Psalm 51 and Psalm 92. It is my desire and prayer that this booklet will inspire you to desire to pursue the Lord with everything that you have. The Lord is certainly worth pursuing and He uses His word to encourage us.



## Chapter 1 Psalm 3

The title of this Psalm is “The Lord helps His troubled people”, we live in a very troubled world, there is so much ungodliness reported worldwide, so it is good to look to God’s word for encouragement. In this psalm, David was facing one of his greatest challengers, his son Absalom was trying to take the throne from him. I am encouraged by the fact that David acknowledged that he was in trouble and that although people had told him that God could not help him, he relied on the Lord. **Verses 1&2** says: *“Lord, how they have increased who trouble me! Many are they who have risen up against me. Many are they who say of me ‘There is no help for him in God’”*. Selah ( Pause and reflect ). The story of Absalom reminds me of the spirit of this age in which people who say that they believe in the Lord have a right to live a life that pleases them and they have a right to disrupt the traffic etc just to promote their point of view. Absalom had no claim to the throne but he tried to take it by

deception. So David comes before the Lord and tells Him of the difficulties that he faced, we should never try to tough it out by ourselves, always come to the Lord and tell Him of all of our troubles. Not only did the people rise against David they also declared that in the situation God could not help him. I have been intrigued over my life when the hand of God was needed the number of people who were quick to comment that God had let you down, is a lie from Satan. David was not put off by the opposition neither should you be! Take note of his response in **verses 3&4** *“But you, O Lord, are a shield for me, My Glory and the one who lifts my head. I cried to the Lord with my voice. And He heard me from His Holy Hill”*. Selah (Pause and reflect). I have found it is in the real tough times that is when I realise that my trust in my Lord is outstandingly strong. David had such unshakeable confidence in His Lord. He declared that the Lord was a shield to him, in those days you could not defend yourself without a shield, it protected you from the arrows and the sword. He went on to declare

that the Lord lifted his head, when you lift your head you can see what is going on in front of you and take the necessary steps to stay out of trouble, when you look down you can quickly be overcome. He went on to say that when he cried to the Lord, the Lord answered him straight away. We must never forget the power of talking to the Lord (Prayer). As we remember the power of praying, it gives us such great confidence to start each day talking to the Lord. I am encouraged by what **David** declared in **Psalm 37:25** *“I have been young, and now am old, yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken, nor His descendants begging bread”*. It is so good to be reminded that we serve a wonderful God.

## Psalm 3 Part 2

In these troubled times, it is good to be reminded that we are not alone and have to fight our battles alone. I am reminded of one of the last words that Jesus said to His disciples *“All authority has been given to me in heaven and in the earth and lo, I am with you always even to the end of the earth.”* (**Matthew 28:18&20**) David understood this for he said in **Verse 5** *“I lay down to sleep; I awoke, for the Lord sustained me”*. This verse is very interesting because we know that David was in danger, he was on the run trying to escape his enemy's army, his life was in danger, and he was in a situation that he had not experienced for a long time. The last time he was attacked was some 40 years previous when he was chased by King Saul. Even though what he was experiencing was so dangerous it did not shake his confidence in his God. In the troubled time, he was able to go to sleep and wake up refreshed in the Lord. This is the hallmark of a person who has a true relationship with the

Lord. It is so easy to say that we love the Lord when life is going well for us, but it is a different story when everything goes wrong then we find out the strength of our relationship with the Lord. David goes on to say that even if ten thousand people are chasing him, he would not be afraid. It is good to take stock of our love for the Lord and be able to reassure ourselves that we truly love the Lord and take the time to tell Him that we know that He is a good God. You cannot spend too much time declaring the greatness of God in your life and how you enjoy being in His presence, this is the only way that we can combat the ungodly ways of the world. In **Verse 7** David says: *“Arise, O Lord, save me, O my God!”* There he declares that the enemy has been defeated and it did not stop him from declaring that God was his personal God, this highlights such an important truth, we must have a strong personal relationship with the Lord. This is what I have experienced, even though I had Godly parents and a Godly wife they were not the source of my love for my Lord. It has been my choice to choose to passionately

follow the Lord with all that I have. Now we come to the final verse, **verse 8** which says: *“Salvation belongs to the Lord, your blessing is upon your people! Selah”* (Pause and think about this). Even though David was a mighty warrior and had achieved many outstanding things, he did rely on his ability, he relied on his God. He declared *“Salvation belongs to the Lord”*, This is something that we should never forget, without the Lord in our lives we are nothing. We cannot take the credit for the hand of the Lord on our lives. He goes on to say that the Lord’s blessing is upon His people. I desire that I continually be aware of the blessing of God that is upon my life. Unfortunately, there is a danger that we can this for granted. David did not so we are encouraged to remind ourselves regularly of the goodness of God in our lives, we have so much to be thankful for!

## Chapter 2 Psalm 46

Two days ago I celebrated 8 years ago that the love of my life went to heaven, while am so glad for her enjoying the presence of her Lord, there have been times when I have missed her so much. There is a song by Bethel Music that has been so helpful to me, the song is “The goodness of God”, the first verse says “I love you, Lord, for your mercies never fail me, all my days I've been held in your hands, from the moment that I wake up until I lay down, I will sing of the goodness of God”. Chorus, “All my life you have been faithful, all my life you have been so, so, good, with every breath that I am able, I will sing of the goodness of God”. As we continue to step into the new year, the goodness of God is something that I do not leave behind but enjoy every day. This is such a good way to look at this new psalm, Psalm 46 which has been such an encouragement to me. It is also important that we do not carry forward any disappointments of the past. I love the way the psalm commences

“God is” this is something that we need now and as we consider this truth it will encourage us. **Genesis 1:1** says: *“In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth”*. **John 1:1&2** says: *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God”*. It is very hard at times to understand this but truth says God was always, so because there is no starting point there is no ending point, “God is “. This is why I enjoy the song “All my life you have been so faithful”, when we retreat to our understanding we start to believe that God is like us, and nothing could be further from the truth. While in the beginning we were made in the image and likeness of God when sin came into the world sin separates us from God. This is why we need to be born again so that we can be “God-like” in the way that we live. Now let us look at in detail what the psalmist is saying when he said “God is”, **Verse 1** says *“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble”*. Over the last two years, we have had a great opportunity to experience this, however, unfortunately, I have observed many people



caught up with miss- information and conspiracy theories which have caused them to fear and trust in themselves instead of turning to the refuge and strength of the Lord. This verse clearly states that “God is” present in the time of trouble, this is the great thing about God, He never changes and we have the opportunity to experience the nature of God in all situations, especially those in which we have not experienced before. This is one of the most exciting things about God – He is eternal while this may be new to us it is not new to God. He knows all about our situation, so we can confidently approach this new year with great confidence.

## Psalm 46 Part 2

As we continue with this truth “God Is” I have realised while we can know a lot about God it is so easy to quote scriptures but deep down we do not expect God to work miraculously. We have become very comfortable in expecting God not to act because we have seen Him do in the last few years which is very little. As I have been preparing myself to write about God I have had to repent for allowing myself not to rely on the Lord instead of just living life comfortably. God has reminded me of His greatness when He sent those plagues on Egypt none of those plagues touched the children of Israel. There was darkness in Egypt but the children of Israel lived in the light. Sometimes it is hard to accept that God wants to be the same today in our lives. The three Hebrew boys in the fiery furnace, Daniel in the lion's den, and Joshua commanding the sun and moon to stand still. People were healed by the shadow of Peter as it touched people. I am so challenged by these examples of the greatness of

God and how easy it is to live a life content where the greatness of God is not seen. Instead of the world, the power of God manifested all the world sees is a group of people arguing over their rights. I believe God has drawn my attention to Psalm 46 so that I can change and allow Him to be the Lord of my life. I feel challenged so much at this moment that I do not know what to write because I do not want anyone to feel condemned but to have a life-changing encounter with God. This psalm is very clear that when we experience things like we are experiencing now God is the answer. How important it is to come to Him and not align ourselves with what the world is saying. God declares that He is available right now we do not have to do anything except turn to Him. In **verses 2&3** the psalmist reminds us of the right time to come to the Lord and that is right now. It does not matter how bleak the situation looks to our natural eyes we are reminded that God is the answer when the world has no answer, over the last two years we have gone from one crisis to another. At the end of **verse 3**,

the psalmist uses the word 'Selah' which has three possible meanings. Firstly, it means "forever" the truth you have just read lasts forever, Secondly, which is the most popular, it means "Pause and contemplate". The third meaning is to "Lift up and exalt"(to praise) which means the previous words are there to encourage us in our walk with the Lord. I am so glad that God is a present God and we do not have to try to find Him because He is always with us.

## Psalm 46 Part3

The next section of Psalm 46 consists of 4 verses and these verses are verse 4 through to verse 7 which have a theme of “God is in the midst of His people”. It continues with the truth that God is always present in us, despite what our external situation is. **Verse 4** says: *“There is a river whose streams shall make glad the City of God, the Holy place of the tabernacle of the most high”*. In biblical times rivers were the source of life and their importance cannot be understated. Rivers bring life everywhere, however, in particular rivers speak of the presence of the Lord. While in the natural you cannot survive without a continual supply of water, the same applies spiritually because you cannot stay spiritually strong without the presence of the Lord. This is one of the ongoing battles we face. We are constantly tempted to get involved in so many things which in themselves are not dangerous but can be used to take us away from the presence of the Lord. At the beginning of the

year, it is good to take stock of our priorities and to see if our major priority is the presence of the Lord. The presence of the Lord is a great source of peace, when we are overshadowed by God there is nothing in the world that make us fearful. The verse also tells us it is being associated with God which is how He wants us to live. Jesus taught His disciples to pray “You will be done on earth as it is in heaven”. God desires us to experience the power and might of heaven while we are living on the earth. There is no substitute for the presence of the Lord. There is another powerful aspect of rivers that Jesus taught. **John 7:38-39** says: *“He who believes in Me, as the scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water, but this He spoke concerning the Spirit, which those who believe in Him would receive, for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified”*. Being filled with the Holy Spirit is a “Rivers” experience. Today the world is looking for the rivers of the presence of the Lord being seen in the believers of Jesus Christ. I know from personal experience that when I am filled with the Holy Spirit, God’s

presence is so powerful you cannot keep it inside but you demonstrate His presence everywhere you go. **Verse 5** reinforces the truth that God, is inside of us. In this season of the Pandemic, we are tempted to move our eyes away from God, there is much doom and gloom that surrounds us that we need to continually take stock of our thoughts and return our thoughts to the presence of the Lord. This psalm repeats over and over again the powerful message that God is in us and that He is in control. **Verse 7** says: *“The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob our refuge”*. This section has so much for us to contemplate on, His truth is forever, and we are strengthened when we pause and remember His goodness which makes it easy for us to exalt Him.

## Psalm 46 Part 4

Now we come to this section of Psalm 46, verses 8 -9 which have a powerful message and flow with the ongoing truth of the Psalm. Psalm 46 has so much truth to reflect on and I am reminded of how easy it is to read God's word but not take the time to allow its truth to impact our spirit and be strengthened by it. **Verse 8** says: *"Come, and behold the works of our Lord, Who has made desolations in the earth"*. **NLT** *"Come, see the glorious works of the Lord, see how He brings destruction upon the earth"*. This verse reminds us that it is our responsibility to see what God is doing in our lives. At times it is so easy just to exist in this fast-changing world. There is a perceived pressure from the world that if unchecked can overtake us. The last two years are a good example of this with the media continually promoting fear and hopelessness. There is a danger that we as Christians can fall into the trap and become overcome by it. This is where a strong choice is needed not to allow the



pressure of the world to overcome us. The psalmist gives good advice for us on what to focus on, *“Come and see”* is very important because we have complete power over what we see. A good example of this is for many years I would as much time as I could watching the news bulletins – because of the fake news and biased reporting, I keep my news watching to a minimum because I do not want to expose myself to fear. The psalmist is very clear about what to look at *“The glorious works of the Lord”*. There is an old song that says: *“Count your blessings, name the one by one and it will surprise you what the Lord has done”*. Unfortunately, there is a danger that we can take the goodness of God for granted. As I look back over my lifetime there is so much I could say, how I got my first job, how I met my wife, etc I could go on and on because my life has been full of the goodness of God. I have been so blessed the last 8 years since the love of my life went to heaven. We cannot spend too much time reflecting on the goodness of God in our lives. **Verse 9** says: *“He makes wars to cease, He breaks*

*the bow, and cuts the spear in two; He burns the chariot in the fire".* The bible is very clear that in the last days' disasters will occur and we need to remind ourselves that God is in control and the time of His return is getting closer. As we look at these verses we take great comfort in the fact that God created the heavens and the earth and that we are His creation. We do not have to fear what is happening around the world because we know that God is in control and we should rejoice in His greatness because He has forewarned us of the calamities that are appearing on the earth. I am so glad that my life is hidden in Him and we always see the goodness of God.

## Psalm 46 Part 5

Now we come to the final two verses of this great Psalm and they say: *“Be still and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted on the earth; the Lord of Hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge”*. These verses are so profound and we mustn't just read them because they have such a powerful message. The verse commences with the word 'be', this is an active now word – it does not apply to yesterday or tomorrow, you can only 'be' now. This is so important to understand and allow the truth of these words to apply to us no matter what is our situation. We should never forget that God is with us. As we look at the word 'still', this is a unique Hebrew word only used in this verse. The word still does not convey the richness of the word – it has two meanings firstly, 'To refresh' and secondly, 'A desert place'. Firstly this could say to us “ calm down and be refreshed by the Lord”, this is something to apply to the way that we live in this world.

Secondly, the thought of a desert place is not what we understand first, in Bible times a desert has two meanings and is described as firstly, “A fertile place without water”. And secondly, it has great relevance to us “A place of preparation”: like what Moses and John the Baptist experienced. This verse is very clear the purpose of “Being Still” is to experience God now! We need to take a step back and see how relevant this is to the way that we are living. Next, we come to another word that has a meaning that is not obvious, the word is ‘Know’ which means “To ascertain (To find out) by seeing”. This places a different aspect on what the bible is saying. It means “Do I see that the Lord is God!” There is a danger that we can be side-tracked and not see that God is in control. There is a great reward when we see God in our everyday living and that He is in control. There comes great peace and confidence in the way that we live when we rest in the fact that God is in control and I desire that you are experiencing it. The first line is all about our responsibility to ‘see God’ because in the verse God goes on to

say *“I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth”*. It is time for us to accept the truth not the lies of satan and those who have been deluded. It is time to repent and start declaring the truth of God’s word. God is greater than any news story, He is overall and waiting for us to believe the truth. I am so glad that the Lord is our refuge and that He is with us all the time. The challenge we face is ‘do I believe God?’ or is my opinion greater than God. I am so glad for the truth of Psalm 46, it is very relevant to the days in which we live and it is so comforting to know that God has the final word.

## Chapter 3 Psalm 27

In my bible, the title of this Psalm is “An exuberant declaration of faith” by David, which gives a glimpse of the character of David. When David was anointed king over Israel as a young person God had said “The Lord had sought for Himself a man after His own heart, and the Lord has commanded him to be commander over His people”. (1 Samuel 13:14) As we look at what David wrote to sing unto the Lord in this psalm we see a man who was passionate about his God. The first verse says: *“The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life, whom shall I be afraid?”* David throughout this Psalm uses the word ‘Lord’ to describe his God. It is extremely important to understand the meaning of the word Lord – it means master and ruler – the one who is in control of one’s life and David unashamedly called his God ‘Lord’. There is a song that I used to sing “He is Lord, He is Lord, He has risen from the dead and He is Lord, every knee shall

bow, every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord". The concept of submitting to someone is foreign to our natural behaviour but this is what we do when we accept Jesus as Lord and Saviour. Jesus warned in **Luke 6:46** "*But why do you call me Lord, Lord, and do not do the things which I say?*" As I look at this Psalm my life has been impacted over and over again by it and as I look a few incidents in David's life I see that his Lord was real to him. David made God Lord of his life when he was young and not in the spotlight, while minding his father's sheep he killed a lion and a bear and did not boast to his brothers because he did it in the strength of his Lord. When he was delivering food for his father to his brothers in Saul's army when he saw Goliath defy his God he went and killed him with God's ability. When Saul tried to kill him he escaped to the cave of Adullam and 400 men who were distressed, discontented and in debt joined him – these unlikely men became David's mighty men who became the best fighting men in Israel because of David's Godly influence. When David had the opportunity to kill Saul

twice he would not touch the Lord's anointed. As I look at this Psalm the phrase 'The Lord is ' has challenged me so much, David lived in a 'now' experience with his God and this is what living with Jesus is. David said, "The Lord is my light and salvation and the strength of my life". When Jesus is Lord of my life then I continually walk in His light and can see where I am going. Also, I am safe with Him for He protects me, and He is my strength so nothing can harm me. In the new different season, we find ourselves in we have nothing to fear



## Psalm 27 Part 2

As I am drawn to this psalm of David I am encouraged by David's boldness in verse 3, where he declares his confidence in the Lord. He was not put off by the circumstances of life which in the natural looked like a major problem. He was not affected by it because his complete trust was in his God. This is such an encouragement to me in this stage of my life where the world is in such despair and such a sense of hopelessness but each day to me is a day of sweet fellowship with my Lord. Now I want to look at verses 4 -6 which give further insight into David's relationship with his Lord. He starts the verse with *"One thing I have desired of the Lord, that will I seek"*. This is one of the greatest truths about how to enjoy living with Jesus - something that is easy to say but life-changing when put into practice. Over the years I have been told by well-meaning people that I take living with Jesus too serious and I consider that a compliment - I am at my happiest when I

am talking about my Lord and encouraging people to do the same. In the world in which we live with modern technology, especially social media, it is so easy to be sidetracked from having one desire and that desire is Jesus. When I put Jesus first and allow Him to shine in me I am a better person in all aspects of my life. Because this is so powerful Satan will try to blind us and convince us that other things are more important. While the starting point is a choice that we make it cannot be maintained unless we allow our spirit to be the dominant factor in the way that we live. The big challenge that we have is for our spirit to be the dominant factor then we must humble ourselves so that I am not important anymore but to allow Jesus to be number one in my life. Now let us look at what David's first desire is, firstly "*That I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life*". This exposes a significant truth about how to find total satisfaction in Jesus – it is not something that we can experience from time to time. It is just like marriage, if we do not have a lifetime commitment to our Wife/Husband then

there is a good chance the marriage will not last. So it is with our relationship with the Lord if it is not the most important thing to us then our relationship will grow cold and most likely it will die. Dwelling in the house of the Lord speaks of practising the presence of the Lord, this is something so easy to learn. When our mind relaxes our thoughts are automatically on the goodness of the Lord and we become aware of how close He is to us. Secondly, *“To behold the beauty of the Lord and enquire at His temple”*. What we see has a tremendous effect on our behaviour, we must be very careful of what we see, looking at ungodly behaviour for entertainment destroys our close relationship with the Lord. Choose to see the beauty of the Lord in our daily living, and when we come to make the decisions of life we have to make our primary source will be from the Lord.

## Psalm 27 Part 3

In this psalm, David confidently expresses his passion and love for his Lord. As I write this blog yesterday was father's day and this has reminded me of the impact that my father had on my life. Although he has been in heaven for over 47 years I am still impacted by his life. After I was married and had a family of my own, we became very close and spent many hours talking about the Lord. His unique relationship with his Lord created such a desire in me to know the Lord and now after all these years later that desire to be close to the Lord only gets stronger and stronger. Because of David's passion for his Lord, this psalm speaks to me every time that I read it. Because of this relationship, he was able to say in **verse 6** *"And now my head shall be lifted up above my enemies all around me; therefore, I will offer sacrifices of joy in His tabernacle; I will sing, yes, I will sing praises to the Lord"*. This verse exposes a great truth, David did not wait for his situation to change before he started praising the

Lord. This verse also clearly states that David was surrounded by his enemies but that did not stop him from worshipping his Lord, because his focus was on the Lord, not his enemies. This is a great encouragement and lesson to me, it does not matter how dark or hopeless the world may look when I focus on the Lord that puts everything in its rightful place. While it is good to think about the Lord, David takes it to the next level when he said that he would sing praises to the Lord. We should never underestimate the power of what we say when we sing, I enjoy having worship songs playing all the time and constantly join with a song that expresses my love for my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. I appreciate the fact that David was honest in saying that there were moments when he felt left alone and forsaken by God but he did allow that wrong thinking to change his love for his Lord. When feeling like this I am encouraged by his response in **Verse 10** which says: *“When my father and mother forsake me then the Lord will take care of me”*. The final verse I want to consider in this blog is **verse 8** which says: *“When you*

*said, ' Seek my face' my heart said to you, ' Your face, Lord, I will seek''".* Here we see David's constant desire for a close relationship with his Lord. It is interesting to note that he was waiting for his Lord to speak to him. This is so important because we can be sidetracked by the circumstances of life we find ourselves in, and it is our choice to be aware of His presence continually. The expression "Seek My face" denotes a close experience - we cannot see a person face to face from a distance, to see someone's face we need to be very close to the person. This was David's declaration that he chose to be close to his Lord. This has impacted and strengthened me for when I am close to my Lord I enjoy His presence.

## Psalm 27 Part 4

As we come to the last 4 verses I have been continually impacted by this psalm. **Verse 10** says: *“Teach me your way, O Lord, and lead me in a smooth path, because of my enemies”*. This verse expresses a significant truth, when David’s enemy came he did not cry out for his enemies to be removed, instead, he asked the Lord to teach him His way. This statement expresses a great truth and warns against relying on past experiences for a ‘now’ solution. The bible warns against relying on our understanding. There is a danger to us when we rely on what we previously experienced in the past. When we look at David’s life there were many times when he experienced the greatness of God in his life but he did not rely on those past experiences to deal with the new situation. He cried out to the Lord *“Teach me your way, O Lord”*. I cannot overemphasize the importance of having a daily time with the Lord so we can hear what He is saying now – at this time of my life we are

experiencing something that I have never experienced before in my lifetime. While I have experienced the greatness of God many times the Lord must teach me His way in this new environment. The next thing that David requested from the Lord was “to be led in a smooth path”, this so astonishing because David did not want his enemy to be removed, all he wanted was that the noise and appearance of the enemy to not affect how he lived his life – he described God’s way as a smooth path, a path on which he could enjoy and relax with his Lord. This is such a wonderful way to live. Now we come to a verse that has had a profound effect on me over the years on the way that I have experienced living with Jesus. **Verse 13** says: *“I would have lost heart unless I believed that I would see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living”*. The truth of this verse has been a foundation on which I have built my confidence in the Lord. The devil goes to great lengths to persuade us that while on earth we have to endure our Christian experience, it is only when we die we will be better off. While it is true being with Jesus



in heaven will be fantastic, this should not be our motivation for living with Jesus today. I am so glad that I can join with David and declare that what I experience day by day is so great and continues to get better. As I look back over my lifetime there have been so many blessings that I have received and continue to receive. It is so important to know and experience that God is the God of the present. It is so good to live with Jesus every day. The final verse says: *“Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart; Wait, I say, on the Lord!”*. It is so important to understand the meaning of the word ‘wait’, it means ‘To bind together’ - when I bind myself to the Lord He gives me the courage to face life’s situations and I can experience regularly His strength in my life. Today choose to bind yourself to the Lord and you will experience His goodness every day.

## Chapter 4 Psalm 84

This Psalm is unique in the fact that it was written by the sons of Korah, the sons of Korah were part of the tribe of Levi who was set apart to be priests and ministers in the Tabernacle. If you were born into the tribe of Levi you had no choice but to do what the Lord had commanded them to do. From the age of 20 years to the age of 50 years they did what the Lord had commanded them to do. Today among certain Christian people there are controversies about what the government can tell what to do, they believe they believe that they have rights and no one can tell them what to do. If the same attitude had been found in the tribe of Levi then there would only be a few priests and the tabernacle could not function. This is why I was taken by surprise by the title of this psalm “The blessings of dwelling in the house of God”, while the sons of Korah could have felt that life was not fair because they had no choice, they discovered the blessings of obedience. This also applies to our

life, there is also a great reward for obedience even if it is not what I want to do. This psalm is so special, now look at **Verse 1** which says “*How lovely is Your Tabernacle O Lord of Hosts!*” The sons of Korah saw it as a privilege to be in the Tabernacle, they saw how it was made and its reason for being there and found it to be a beautiful experience. Interestingly, the word lovely could be translated to the word ‘Loved’, this places a different understanding of the psalm for it is saying not just talking about the temple’s physical appearance even though that was outstanding, it is talking about how the tabernacle affected those who ministered in it. Those people had an appreciation of what God was providing for them. There is a danger that we can only be impacted by superficial things when we come to church instead of our spirits being changed. **Verse 2** reinforces the wonder of the psalmist: “*My soul longs, yes even faints for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God*”. The word could be translated to ‘My whole being’ or ‘My innermost being’ which describes that part of us that determines

the outcome of how we live? This is why we cannot be too passionate about the presence of the Lord. The verse goes on to say 'My soul faints' this is a very challenging statement because in the natural we can faint because of the lack of sustenance or we can faint because of overexertion, I suspect the psalmist is talking about the latter for he is passionate for the presence of the Lord. The verse goes on to say 'My heart and my flesh cry out for the living God '. He wanted a live experience with the Lord and I can say that has sustained me over the years - by having a daily experience with the living Lord.

## Psalm 84 Part 2

As we continue with this psalm I am enthralled and inspired by the psalmist for his passion for the House of the Lord. I am challenged by his desire to experience the presence of the Lord, I believe it is a timely reminder not to allow the pressures of life to wear us down to a point where we believe that the house of the Lord is not important anymore and that could not be further from the truth. **Verse 3** says *“Even the sparrow has found a home, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young – even your altars, O Lord of Hosts, my King and my God”*. When Jesus was on the earth He taught how He looked after the sparrow and how we were more important to Him than the sparrow. This verse reinforces the truth that the House of the Lord and His presence and to those who consider that it is not important then those people need to take stock of themselves. In God’s sight, every person is important to Him and we know this because Jesus died on the cross for the sins of everyone.

We also note that the birds have found a home in the house of the Lord, Church is not a place that we visit from time to time, it is the place where we enjoy His presence and is our resting place. I can speak from personal experience of how much more effective is my relationship with the Lord when I make the House of the Lord a priority. The psalmist highlights those things that we consider unimportant but they are in God's sight important, the swallows made the altar their resting place - this is the place where Lord chose to demonstrate His great love to us. The psalmist goes on to describe his Lord a Saviour as 'My King and My God'. This is so very challenging but also very true, he named his Lord and Saviour " My King and My God". This signifies a basic truth to me, firstly he used the word 'my' this tells me that he saw his relationship with his Lord as personal, he was not influenced by what other people claimed to have experienced. This is a fundamental truth that is so liberating - I am not to compare myself with other people but have a personal relationship with my Lord. Also, he declared

that his Saviour was king and God of his life, when we make Jesus King and Lord of our lives we submit our will to Him I am no longer in charge of my life but have given that authority to Him. **Verse 4** says “Blessed are those who dwell in your house; they will be still praising you” The word blessed used here means ‘To be happy’ – you cannot fake happiness, you are either happy or you are not. The sad thing at times we think we can deceive God this is most alarming for this is deception because He knows the thoughts and intents of our hearts. This is why it is so important from time to time to come before the Lord and allow Him to show us anything that is stopping our close relationship with Him. The verse answers how we can know if people are committed to spending time with the Lord. Take note of what people are talking about, The bible says out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks (**Luke 6:45**) - you cannot hide what kind of person you are, if you love the Lord then your speech will always be glorifying Him, may we be a people who are always praising the Lord!

## Psalm 84 Part 3

The message of this psalm is such encouragement from the Lord and it challenges us to reassess our focus on Godly living. So that we can experience what God desires for us all the time. I realise how easy it is for us to be side-tracked from making the Lord first in our life. **Verse 5** says *“Blessed (happy) is the man whose strength is in You, whose heart is set on pilgrimage (to Zion) “*. This verse highlights the areas of importance in our Christian life and when they are our priority we are blessed. The first area of importance is where my strength comes from. This part of us wants to be in control but that is not God’s way. For it takes great courage to learn to trust in the Lord’s strength. **Philippians 4:13** says *“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me!”* As I look back over my life there are too many things to write about, except to say that I am amazed at what the Lord has done in my lifetime. The spiritual strength that the Lord gives when you humble yourself is so



outstanding. The next area is a little bit harder to understand but what it says is so powerful, the verse says “whose heart is set on pilgrimage”. In old testament times, all people who loved their God would once a year go up to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover Feast, which was a celebration of when the Israelites in Egypt applied the blood to the doorposts and the lintels and the Angel death passed over them and they were safe. The sad thing was that not all the people celebrated Passover because over the years it became not special anymore to them. Today we experience the same temptation because we do not place living with Jesus as our number 1 priority. The psalmist says that you are blessed when you set your heart in rejoicing on God’s goodness in your lives. It is good to remember that the psalmist is talking about people who are passionate about the Lord and we are encouraged to be the same. **Verse 6** says “*As they pass through the valley of Baca (Weeping), they make it a spring; the rain also covers it with pools* “. It is also, good to be reminded that life is not all smooth sailing – the challenge that

we have is how do I react when things do not turn out well. I remember the unexpected death of my youngest daughter and the sudden death of my wife three years later, they were certainly places of extreme sorrow! The psalmist talks about passing through the valley – not making it a place where we stay. **Psalm 23:4** gives the same message that in times of great sorrow the Lord is with us. The psalmist talks about making a spring in the valley – in the Old Testament times everyone depended on water, in the sad times we can give life to people who we contact and this has been my focus. Especially since the passing of my precious wife, while it has been very sad I have chosen to grow in my relationship with my Lord. I have also chosen to be an encouragement to people and challenged them to follow the Lord with everything that they have because when they do that they also bless other people.

## Psalm 84 Part 4

As we continue with this Psalm I am in awe of the Sons of Korah and how they express their experience of living in the Lord's presence. In **Verse 7** the result of being in His presence is reinforced for it says *"They go from strength to strength; every one of them appears before God in Zion."* *NLT says: "They will continue to grow stronger, and each of them will appear before God in Jerusalem"*. Living in the Lord's presence is not a static experience – we must never forget we are either going forward or we are going backwards – there is no such position as standing stationary in God. It is a lie of the devil and we need to be on guard against that lie. As I look back over my life there were times when I thought that I was coasting along when in reality I was backsliding – the sad thing is at times we can talk the talk but not walk the walk. One important lesson I have learned is that God's blessing is not like a tap, it cannot be turned off and on when we feel like it. I have sadly learned that when I backslide I do it

because I have lost trust in God and for trust to be restored it takes time and a lot of perseverance to come back to the place where we once were. The verse very clearly states that people of His presence go from strength to strength or as the NLT says “They continue to grow stronger”; this is so encouraging. The interesting thing about strength is you do not know its greatness until it is tested. I have experienced this over the last 8 years since Barbara unexpectedly went to heaven. There have been so many situations where the Lord has helped me so much and a good example of this is I never thought that I was capable of writing 6 books and doing a weekly blog for my Web page, if this is not going from strength to strength I do not know what is! Now we come to the next part of the verse which says “each of them will appear before God in Jerusalem”. To understand what this means we need to be reminded of the difference between living under the Old Testament and the New Testament. In the Old Testament if you wanted to experience the presence of God then the only place that you

could experience it was at the Temple in Jerusalem. God taught the Children of Israel through His Law that they had to go to Jerusalem several times a year to experience His Presence. It was their choice whether they obeyed God and went to the Temple, and it is interesting to note that when they experience God's presence they became stronger. And because they were stronger they had a greater desire to go to the Temple in Jerusalem. We do not live by the Law because Jesus fulfilled the Law when He died on the cross and rose again on the third day. However, the same principle applies, when I live in the presence of the Lord I grow stronger and because of this strength, I live in His presence continually. Now is not the time to allow the pressures of life to stop us from being aware of His presence and we choose to spend time with the Lord and go from strength to strength!

## Psalm 84 Part 5

It is good to be reminded that “ The entrance of Your words gives light” (Psalm 119:130), Reading God’s word can have such a powerful impact on our lives if we allow God’s inspiration to change us. Psalm 84 is no exception, the words of this ‘song’ are so inspirational and challenging. **Verse 10** has had that effect on me when it says “*For a day in your courts is better than a thousand of my choosing, I would rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God than to dwell in the tents of the wicked*”. **NLT** “*A single day in your courts is better than a thousand anywhere else! I would rather be a gatekeeper in the house of the Lord than live a good life in the homes of the wicked*”. This verse challenges us to the core of what we believe and experience. Is loving God worth it? Do I think at times it is not worth belonging to Jesus? I believe it is so good from time to time to stop and assess the way that we are living, there is a great danger that we can allow loving God to become routine and there is no fresh

experience in the Lord. We are reminded in **Luke 8:14** that if we are not careful the cares, riches and pleasures of life can choke our love for our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. This is not something that happens at once but something that happens to us when other things become more important to us than loving the Lord with all our strength. This verse highlights the value we place on living God's way. The first thing that this verse says is that one day in God's courts is better than a thousand pleasing me. We need to stop and look at the reality of this - one day versus one thousand, for what happens on that day must be so outstanding to be considered. It talks about being the courts of our God - the courts of our God are the place where He has absolute dominion - none can challenge what He says and does. In this season of COVID19, I see so many people being tempted to believe that they have a right and the government cannot tell them what to do. This is a very dangerous thought to harbour because it suggests that I am better off when I am in control. We need to pause and be reminded it is

far better when we are experiencing God in control of our lives. The verse goes on to say that *“I would rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God than to dwell in the tents of wickedness”*. The first thing that this verse suggests is that being a doorkeeper is not a very glamorous job. The key statement is that the door is in the house of my God, this explains the significance of the position - my God is so wonderful, I have such satisfaction and pleasure when I am experiencing a personal relationship with my God. We must realise that the world has nothing to offer us compared with our relationship with our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. May we always be on guard to stop anything from coming into our lives and tricking us into to stop putting Jesus first in our lives.



## Psalm 84 Part 6

I have been so blessed as I have considered the message of this Psalm, how great it is being in the house of the Lord! In recent times there has been a major attack on the church by the god of this world. We have experienced a complete shutdown of the church for a significant time, and when church attendance was permitted it came with major restrictions that a lot of people could not accept so they chose to stay away from the church. Now when the restrictions were lifted they have not returned because they have allowed the circumstances of life to dull their love for the Lord. **Hebrews 10:24-25** says: *“And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much so as you see the Day approaching”*. The signs of the times in which we live suggest that the end of time is approaching. Because of this, we should be very diligent in making certain that we attend church every

week. Now let us look at the last two verses, 11&12 *“For the Lord God is a sun and a shield; the Lord will give grace and glory; no good thing will He withhold from those who walk uprightly, O Lord of Hosts, blessed is the man who trusts in you!” NLT* *“For the Lord is our light and protector, He gives us grace and glory, no good thing the Lord withhold from those who do what is right, O Lord Almighty, happy are those who trust in You!”* I am so encouraged by the way the verse commences “The Lord is “, here is a definite statement, one of certainty – this is what our Lord is, one who can be relied upon, not only that He is predictable, we know exactly what our Lord and Saviour are like. **Hebrews 13:8** declares: *“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever”*. In a world that changes so often, it is reassuring to know that our Lord does not change. Next, the verse says that the Lord is our light, when we are in the light we can see where we are going and we can see every obstacle that may be in the way and so avoid them. Then the verse states that He is our protector, so we do not have to fear the possibility of any danger

that could come into our life – we have the protection of someone who has never been defeated and never will be. What is declared next is so outstanding “He gives us grace and glory” – this means He gives us His favour and likeness as we love His presence and abide there. The verse just gets better, for now, it states that The Lord will not withhold any good thing from our lives when we walk in His ways, this is so good to be reminded of this. Then finally the verse goes on to say that we are happy when we trust in Him, for He supplies all our needs. It has been so good to look at this Psalm and be impacted by the Lord’s favour on our lives because we love His presence!

## Chapter 5 Psalm 100

The title of this psalm is “A song of praise for the Lord’s faithfulness to His people”, and now is a perfect time to remind ourselves of it and turn our focus to it. We live at a time where the god of this world (Satan) has tricked so many of God’s people to be dominated by issues that have taken their focus away from declaring the greatness of our Lord. How this psalm commences excites me for **Verse 1** says: “*Make a joyful shout to the Lord, all you lands*”. I realise that I can only shout when I am excited about something, we can talk about many things but can only shout when I am enthusiastic about something. The first word is ‘make’ which denotes it is a decision that we have to make, a good decision to make each day is to be joyful in our expression to the Lord! This brings such a sense of fulfilment to our daily lives. The next **verse** says: “*Serve the Lord with gladness, come before His presence with singing*”. This exposes another important attribute in the way that we

live, sometimes we can forget that we are being Christlike when we serve. This is so contrary to the spirit of this age which is 'I am important I will not let other people tell me what to do!' When I serve the Lord I am humble which is something that pleases the Lord. Next, we are encouraged to come before His presence by singing. This reminds us that being in the Lord's presence is a choice that we make and not a feeling. I am reminded that it is very difficult to sing when I am feeling sad, so this psalm is very clear about the attitude in which I am to live because it is very difficult to sing when I am feeling sad so this psalm is very clear of the attitude I must have to be able to "make a joyful shout and serve the Lord with gladness". This is such a contrast to the world in which we live which is so negative and full of fake reporting, this is why the bible instructs us not to conform to this world. We have such an opportunity today to stand out because of our Godly attitude to everyone. It is so rewarding to choose to live in the Lord's presence. **Psalm 16:11** says: *"In your presence is fullness of joy; at your right hand are*

*pleasures forevermore*". It is sad when we get too busy to spend time in the Lord's presence. **Nehemiah 8:10** says: "*The joy of the Lord is your strength*". It cannot be overemphasized the importance of making time to spend time in His presence. This psalm is full of encouragement to just do that, we find such pleasure and strength when we do this. As we reflect on the goodness of God we have a never-ending source of reasons to spend time with the Lord. The Lord is so good because He supplies us with new reasons every day to praise Him. We can do this by shouting His praises or singing to the Lord with gladness of heart. It is so good to be reminded of God's goodness and this psalm just does this. I am so glad that I serve such a wonderful Lord.

## Psalm 100 Part 2

While the bible does not record who wrote this song of thanksgiving whoever wrote it was passionate about their Lord. This is a wonderful way to live, to be always reminding ourselves of the many blessings that we receive and experience all the time. There is a danger that if we focus on the darkness that is around us that we can forget the goodness of God. **Verse 3** says: *“Know that the Lord He is God; it is He who has made us, and not ourselves; we are His people and the sheep of His pasture”*. This verse is the key to having a pleasurable life living with Jesus. It also highlights the fact that you cannot be too passionate about our Lord. It is a good thing to decide that my Christian experience is my number one choice and I will guard against anything that could tempt me to put the Lord second in my life. The verse starts with “know that the Lord He is God”, it is not talking about some fact that we could consider along with a lot of other facts. The word ‘know’ is very decisive

- it says that what I believe changes me because the word God means the supreme being the creator. It is important to acknowledge that we love God who is the supreme being - the creator of everything, when we understand this it puts all other aspects of our living in their correct perspective. Another meaning of the word 'know' is to "ascertain by seeing", how we see God determines the influence He has on the way that we live. **Psalm 46:10a** says: "*Be still and know that I am God*" this verse declares that there is peace and calmness in the way that we live when we see God. **Verse 3** goes on to say "*It is He who has made us, and not ourselves*". This exposes the lie that the god of this world (Satan) that the ungodly believe and teach in our schools that God did not create us, because if you believe God created you then you must live God's way. May we never forget that we were created by God in His image and likeness. Today we hear about self-made people and they are put up as an example for us to copy - nothing could be further from the truth. One of the biggest issues we face is the importance of self -



'I am entitled to my opinion' – we see this all the time on social media. When I understand that I am not important this keeps me humble and God uses those people who are humble. The final thing that this verse says: "*We are His people and the sheep of His pasture*". This highlights an area of conflict in our Christian walk, the truth of who is in control of our life. There is an ongoing conflict where we are tempted to be in control of our life. The simple fact is when I choose to be born again I choose to make Jesus Lord of my life and that choice gives me many reasons to be thankful. **1 Corinthians 6:19 & 20** clearly states that we are to glorify God because we belong to Him. Finally, the verse tells us that we belong in His pasture this is where He protects and provides for us all the time. We have so many reasons to praise the Lord because He is worthy of all praise.

## Psalm 100 Part 3

There is nothing more fulfilling than to be a thankful person, being thankful is an attitude of the heart and the choices that we make. The psalmist demonstrates this by the way that he talks and his attitude to living a life of thankfulness. This is an area of living in which you cannot hide – being thankful is always on display everywhere you go. **Verse 4** says: “*Enter His gates with thanksgiving and into His courts with praise, be thankful unto Him and bless His name*”. The first thing that stands out to me is the word ‘enter’ which suggests that sometimes you are away from the closeness of His presence. The verse goes on to say ‘His gates’ and the ‘His courts’ and this suggests that there is a progression in drawing close to the Lord. The gates denote the starting point and the courts the destination. The verse reinforces the truth that the starting point is thanksgiving, this is a great way to start every day. Taking time to be thankful to the Lord –is a choice that we can

always make and making that choice determines the way that we live. To enter the presence of the Lord allows our spirit to rise and allows praise to the Lord to rise to Him. Praise is the adoration of our spirit that comes from our relationship, not knowledge. Just because I can say words that sound like praise does not mean that I am praising the Lord. The next phrase clarifies this “Be thankful unto Him”, this suggests that we can be thankful for many things which in itself is not a bad thing, but our focus must be on Him. The verse concludes with “And bless His name”. Sometimes we can forget the greatness of His name and the many attributes of His name. We are reminded to bless His name, the word ‘bless’ means to consecrate and adore, and this is our attitude to the Lord. **Verse 5** says: “*For the Lord is good, His mercy is everlasting, and His truth endures unto all generations*”. This verse explains why we can be thankful unto the Lord and bless His name. Firstly, the Lord is good, this is one of the most powerful foundational truths when we understand and live by this truth our lives are completely changed, it drives out all doubt and

fear about our everyday living. When we know that God is a good God, we realise everything that He does for us is good because that is His nature and He cannot change. The goodness of God is something that is always under attack but we are not put off by the lies of Satan. Secondly, His mercy is everlasting, I am so glad that this is so true because when I sin and repent He forgives me and forgets the sin that I committed. The word everlasting gives such a sense of security for I know that as long as I live I am covered by His mercy. And thirdly, His truth never changes in all circumstances of life, I can confidently put my trust in Him for I know that as I have experienced His truth in the past it gives me the confidence to expect the same in the future. This psalm has been such an encouragement to me for I have been impacted by the truth of it as I constantly thank the Lord for His goodness in my life.