

Monday 22nd February

Psalm 11

¹ In the LORD I take refuge.

How then can you say to me:

“Flee like a bird to your mountain.

**² For look, the wicked bend their bows;
they set their arrows against the strings
to shoot from the shadows
at the upright in heart.**

³ When the foundations are being destroyed,
what can the righteous do?”

**⁴ The LORD is in his holy temple;
the LORD is on his heavenly throne.
He observes everyone on earth;
his eyes examine them.**

⁵ The LORD examines the righteous,
but the wicked, those who love violence,
he hates with a passion.

**⁶ On the wicked he will rain
fiery coals and burning sulfur;
a scorching wind will be their lot.**

⁷ For the LORD is righteous,
he loves justice;
the upright will see his face.

John 5:1-18

Some time later, Jesus went up to Jerusalem for one of the Jewish festivals. ² Now there is in Jerusalem near the Sheep Gate a pool, which in Aramaic is called Bethesda^[a] and which is surrounded by five covered colonnades. ³ Here a great number of disabled people used to lie—the blind, the lame, the paralyzed. ^[4] ^[b] ⁵ One who was there had been an invalid for thirty-eight years. ⁶ When Jesus saw him lying there and learned that he had been in this condition for a long time, he asked him, “Do you want to get well?”

⁷ “Sir,” the invalid replied, “I have no one to help me into the pool when the water is stirred. While I am trying to get in, someone else goes down ahead of me.”

⁸ Then Jesus said to him, “Get up! Pick up your mat and walk.” ⁹ At once the man was cured; he picked up his mat and walked.

The day on which this took place was a Sabbath, ¹⁰ and so the Jewish leaders said to the man who had been healed, “It is the Sabbath; the law forbids you to carry your mat.”

¹¹ But he replied, “The man who made me well said to me, ‘Pick up your mat and walk.’ ”

¹² So they asked him, “Who is this fellow who told you to pick it up and walk?”

¹³ The man who was healed had no idea who it was, for Jesus had slipped away into the crowd that was there.

¹⁴ Later Jesus found him at the temple and said to him, “See, you are well again. Stop sinning or something worse may happen to you.” ¹⁵ The man went away and told the Jewish leaders that it was Jesus who had made him well.

The Authority of the Son

¹⁶ So, because Jesus was doing these things on the Sabbath, the Jewish leaders began to persecute him. ¹⁷ In his defense Jesus said to them, “My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I too am working.” ¹⁸ For this reason they tried all the more to kill him; not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God.

Tuesday 23rd February

Psalm 44

Surely God is good to Israel, to those who are pure in heart.

² But as for me, my feet had almost slipped; I had nearly lost my foothold.

³ For I envied the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

⁴ They have no struggles; their bodies are healthy and strong.

⁵ They are free from common human burdens; they are not plagued by human ills.

⁶ Therefore pride is their necklace; they clothe themselves with violence.

⁷ From their callous hearts comes iniquity
their evil imaginations have no limits.

⁸ **They scoff, and speak with malice;
with arrogance they threaten oppression.**

⁹ Their mouths lay claim to heaven,
and their tongues take possession of the earth.

¹⁰ **Therefore their people turn to them and drink up waters in abundance**

¹¹ They say, "How would God know? Does the Most High know anything?"

¹² **This is what the wicked are like—
always free of care, they go on amassing wealth.**

¹³ Surely in vain I have kept my heart pure
and have washed my hands in innocence.

¹⁴ **All day long I have been afflicted, and every morning brings new
punishments.**

¹⁵ If I had spoken out like that, I would have betrayed your children.

¹⁶ **When I tried to understand all this, it troubled me deeply**

¹⁷ till I entered the sanctuary of God; then I understood their final destiny.

¹⁸ **Surely you place them on slippery ground; you cast them down to ruin.**

¹⁹ How suddenly are they destroyed, completely swept away by terrors!

²⁰ **They are like a dream when one awakes; when you arise, Lord,
you will despise them as fantasies.**

²¹ When my heart was grieved and my spirit embittered,

²² **I was senseless and ignorant; I was a brute beast before you.**

²³ Yet I am always with you; you hold me by my right hand.

²⁴ **You guide me with your counsel,
and afterward you will take me into glory.**

²⁵ Whom have I in heaven but you?

And earth has nothing I desire besides you.

²⁶ **My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart
and my portion forever.**

²⁷ Those who are far from you will perish; you destroy all who are
unfaithful to you.

²⁸ **But as for me, it is good to be near God. I have made the
Sovereign LORD my refuge; I will tell of all your deeds.**

John 5; 19-29

¹⁹ Jesus gave them this answer: "Very truly I tell you, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does. ²⁰ For the Father loves the Son and shows him all he does. Yes, and he will show him even greater works than these, so that you will be amazed. ²¹ For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son gives life to whom he is pleased to give it. ²² Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son, ²³ that all may honour the Son just as they honour the Father. Whoever does not honour the Son does not honour the Father, who sent him.

²⁴ "Very truly I tell you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life. ²⁵ Very truly I tell you, a time is coming and has now come when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live. ²⁶ For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself. ²⁷ And he has given him authority to judge because he is the Son of Man.

²⁸ "Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice ²⁹ and come out—those who have done what is good will rise to live, and those who have done what is evil will rise to be condemned.

Wednesday 24th February

Psalm 6

¹ LORD, do not rebuke me in your anger
or discipline me in your wrath.

² **Have mercy on me, LORD, for I am faint;
heal me, LORD, for my bones are in agony.**

³ My soul is in deep anguish.
How long, LORD, how long?

⁴ **Turn, LORD, and deliver me;
save me because of your unfailing love.**

⁵ Among the dead no one proclaims your name.
Who praises you from the grave?

**⁶ I am worn out from my groaning.
All night long I flood my bed with weeping
and drench my couch with tears.**

⁷ My eyes grow weak with sorrow;
they fail because of all my foes.

**⁸ Away from me, all you who do evil,
for the LORD has heard my weeping.**

⁹ The LORD has heard my cry for mercy;
the LORD accepts my prayer.

**¹⁰ All my enemies will be overwhelmed with shame and anguish;
they will turn back and suddenly be put to shame.**

John 5:30-end

³⁰ By myself I can do nothing; I judge only as I hear, and my judgment is just, for I seek not to please myself but him who sent me.

Testimonies About Jesus

³¹ “If I testify about myself, my testimony is not true. ³² There is another who testifies in my favour, and I know that his testimony about me is true.

³³ “You have sent to John and he has testified to the truth. ³⁴ Not that I accept human testimony; but I mention it that you may be saved. ³⁵ John was a lamp that burned and gave light, and you chose for a time to enjoy his light.

³⁶ “I have testimony weightier than that of John. For the works that the Father has given me to finish—the very works that I am doing—testify that the Father has sent me. ³⁷ And the Father who sent me has himself testified concerning me. You have never heard his voice nor seen his form, ³⁸ nor does his word dwell in you, for you do not believe the one he sent. ³⁹ You study^[c] the Scriptures diligently because you think that in them you have eternal life. These are the very Scriptures that testify about me, ⁴⁰ yet you refuse to come to me to have life.

⁴¹ “I do not accept glory from human beings, ⁴² but I know you. I know that you do not have the love of God in your hearts. ⁴³ I have come in my Father’s name, and you do not accept me; but if someone else comes in his own name, you will accept him. ⁴⁴ How can you believe since you accept

glory from one another but do not seek the glory that comes from the only God?

⁴⁵ “But do not think I will accuse you before the Father. Your accuser is Moses, on whom your hopes are set. ⁴⁶ If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote about me. ⁴⁷ But since you do not believe what he wrote, how are you going to believe what I say?”

Thursday 25th February

Psalm 42

¹ As the deer pants for streams of water,
so my soul pants for you, my God.

² My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.

When can I go and meet with God?

³ My tears have been my food day and night,
while people say to me all day long, “Where is your God?”

⁴ These things I remember as I pour out my soul:

how I used to go to the house of God under the protection of the Mighty One with shouts of joy and praise among the festive throng.

⁵ Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me?
Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Saviour and my God.

**⁶ My soul is downcast within me; therefore I will remember you
from the land of the Jordan, the heights of Hermon—from Mount Mizar.**

⁷ Deep calls to deep in the roar of your waterfalls;
all your waves and breakers have swept over me.

**⁸ By day the LORD directs his love, at night his song is with me—
a prayer to the God of my life.**

⁹ I say to God my Rock, “Why have you forgotten me?
Why must I go about mourning, oppressed by the enemy?”

**¹⁰ My bones suffer mortal agony as my foes taunt me,
saying to me all day long, “Where is your God?”**

¹¹ Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me?
Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Saviour and my God.

John 6;1-15

Some time after this, Jesus crossed to the far shore of the Sea of Galilee (that is, the Sea of Tiberias), ² and a great crowd of people followed him because they saw the signs he had performed by healing the sick. ³ Then Jesus went up on a mountainside and sat down with his disciples. ⁴ The Jewish Passover Festival was near.

⁵ When Jesus looked up and saw a great crowd coming toward him, he said to Philip, "Where shall we buy bread for these people to eat?" ⁶ He asked this only to test him, for he already had in mind what he was going to do.

⁷ Philip answered him, "It would take more than half a year's wages^[a] to buy enough bread for each one to have a bite!"

⁸ Another of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, spoke up, ⁹ "Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish, but how far will they go among so many?"

¹⁰ Jesus said, "Have the people sit down." There was plenty of grass in that place, and they sat down (about five thousand men were there). ¹¹ Jesus then took the loaves, gave thanks, and distributed to those who were seated as much as they wanted. He did the same with the fish.

¹² When they had all had enough to eat, he said to his disciples, "Gather the pieces that are left over. Let nothing be wasted." ¹³ So they gathered them and filled twelve baskets with the pieces of the five barley loaves left over by those who had eaten.

¹⁴ After the people saw the sign Jesus performed, they began to say, "Surely this is the Prophet who is to come into the world." ¹⁵ Jesus, knowing that they intended to come and make him king by force, withdrew again to a mountain by himself.

Friday 26th February

Psalm 55

¹ Listen to my prayer, O God, do not ignore my plea;

² **hear me and answer me.**

My thoughts trouble me and I am distraught

³ because of what my enemy is saying because of the threats of the wicked; for they bring down suffering on me and assail me in their anger.

⁴ **My heart is in anguish within me;
the terrors of death have fallen on me.**

⁵ Fear and trembling have beset me; horror has overwhelmed me.

⁶ **I said, "Oh, that I had the wings of a dove!**

I would fly away and be at rest.

⁷ I would flee far away and stay in the desert;

⁸ **I would hurry to my place of shelter, far from the tempest and storm."**

⁹ Lord, confuse the wicked, confound their words,
for I see violence and strife in the city.

¹⁰ **Day and night they prowl about on its walls;
malice and abuse are within it.**

¹¹ Destructive forces are at work in the city;
threats and lies never leave its streets.

¹² **If an enemy were insulting me, I could endure it;
if a foe were rising against me, I could hide.**

¹³ But it is you, a man like myself, my companion, my close friend,

¹⁴ **with whom I once enjoyed sweet fellowship at the house of God,
as we walked about among the worshippers.**

¹⁵ Let death take my enemies by surprise;
let them go down alive to the realm of the dead,
for evil finds lodging among them.

¹⁶ **As for me, I call to God, and the LORD saves me.**

¹⁷ Evening, morning and noon I cry out in distress, and he hears my voice.

¹⁸ **He rescues me unharmed from the battle waged against me,
even though many oppose me.**

¹⁹ God, who is enthroned from of old, who does not change—
he will hear them and humble them because they have no fear of God.

²⁰ **My companion attacks his friends; he violates his covenant.**

²¹ His talk is smooth as butter, yet war is in his heart;
his words are more soothing than oil, yet they are drawn swords.

²² **Cast your cares on the LORD and he will sustain you he will never let
the righteous be shaken.**

²³ But you, God, will bring down the wicked into the pit of decay;
the bloodthirsty and deceitful
will not live out half their days. But as for me, I trust in you.

John 6; 16-27

Jesus Walks on the Water

¹⁶ When evening came, his disciples went down to the lake, ¹⁷ where they got into a boat and set off across the lake for Capernaum. By now it was dark, and Jesus had not yet joined them. ¹⁸ A strong wind was blowing and the waters grew rough. ¹⁹ When they had rowed about three or four miles, ^[b] they saw Jesus approaching the boat, walking on the water; and they were frightened. ²⁰ But he said to them, "It is I; don't be afraid." ²¹ Then they were willing to take him into the boat, and immediately the boat reached the shore where they were heading.

²² The next day the crowd that had stayed on the opposite shore of the lake realized that only one boat had been there, and that Jesus had not entered it with his disciples, but that they had gone away alone. ²³ Then some boats from Tiberias landed near the place where the people had eaten the bread after the Lord had given thanks. ²⁴ Once the crowd realized that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, they got into the boats and went to Capernaum in search of Jesus.

Jesus the Bread of Life

²⁵ When they found him on the other side of the lake, they asked him, "Rabbi, when did you get here?"

²⁶ Jesus answered, "Very truly I tell you, you are looking for me, not because you saw the signs I performed but because you ate the loaves and had your fill. ²⁷ Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For on him God the Father has placed his seal of approval."