

Reading Guide David Week 3

Too often we feel like what we read in the Bible washes over us without ever really sinking in. This series of readings, and their accompanying meditation exercises, is designed to help you connect with God's word in a deeper way. Most of us don't have much practice meditating so you might find yourself frustrated, wishing you could just write down a few answers to some questions and get on with your day. But once you begin to feel a deeper intimacy with God, you will be amazed at how present he is in His word and in your life. You will find that your time with Him makes you feel centered and peaceful. Keep in mind that the purpose of meditation is "to enable us to hear God more clearly." (Richard Foster) To this end, you will get the most out of these readings if you do them regularly in a quiet place when you are not distracted by time pressure (and when you aren't sleepy!)

May God use His word to form His heart in you.

Day 1 **Psalm 37**

As you read through this psalm make two lists, one where you write down what David says about evil men, what they are like and what will happen to them, and the other where you write down what David says about the righteous.

Does what you have seen throughout your life support or differ from what David says? A significant part of our training in trusting God is believing that He does bless the righteous and punish the wicked even when life seems to show something else. Spend some time talking with God about how you feel about this issue. Then choose a verse from this psalm, maybe v. 4 or v. 25, 26 and underline it or write it somewhere so you can refer to it if you ever begin to feel doubt the wisdom of living for God.

Day 2 **Psalm 51**

This psalm is one of the most excellent prayers of confession and repentance. Read it through prayerfully. You may want to kneel facedown on the floor. After you read verses 3, 4 confess your sins specifically, both things you have done that you shouldn't have and things you should have done but didn't.

As you continue reading slowly through the psalm, tell God what you are feeling, ask Him to help you understand and live out these verses in a deeper way. When you have finished reading, quiet your heart before God, giving him the chance to speak to you. If you feel like He is guiding you to do something specific, write it down so you don't forget.

Day 3 **Psalm 131**

After reading this brief psalm once through, imagine that you are a young Israelite who works in the palace of King David. You admire him greatly and want to learn everything you can about him so you try to watch him and listen to him whenever you get the chance. One day you are out in the gardens and you hear his voice. You quietly move towards the voice, straining to hear every word and what you hear him say are the words recorded in Psalm 131.

Spend some time thinking about each phrase of this psalm, asking yourself "What does King David mean when he says....?"

Day 4 **Psalm 143**

Read the psalm through slowly and carefully two times in the morning. Read it again in the middle of the day and before you go to bed. Write down any thoughts that have occurred to you as a result of spending time thinking about these verses.

Day 5 **Psalm 20**

Read the psalm through completely. Think of someone who is struggling and needs God's strength. Pray through this psalm as a prayer for them, putting in their name and specific situation. If you want you may even write it out for them the way you have prayed it for them. This will be a very great encouragement for them if you do.