

JULY

**per
seve
ring**
**STRUGGLING
WITH GOD**

JULY 6–12

THE RAGING NATIONS

PSALM 2

Why do the nations conspire
and the peoples plot in vain?
The kings of the earth rise up
and the rulers band together
against the LORD and against his anointed, saying,
“Let us break their chains
and throw off their shackles.”

The One enthroned in heaven laughs;
the Lord scoffs at them.
He rebukes them in his anger
and terrifies them in his wrath, saying,
“I have installed my king
on Zion, my holy mountain.”

I will proclaim the LORD’s decree:

He said to me, “You are my son;
today I have become your father.
Ask me,
and I will make the nations your inheritance,
the ends of the earth your possession.

(vv. 1-8)

DAILY DWELL

**“Ask me, and I will make the nations your
inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession.”**

Psalm 2:8

NOTES

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. What insights do you gain about God's wrath and anger from these verses? How can you apply this understanding to your life?
2. Verse 2 states, "The kings of the earth rise up and the rulers band together against the LORD and against his anointed." Do you see this recurring in today's world or within your community?
3. What comfort and hope does this Psalm provide regarding rebellion against God? How does God respond to such rebellion, and what does his response reveal about his character?
4. Do you identify any references to Jesus in this Psalm? If so, what do these references indicate about the relationship between God the Father and Jesus the Son?

JULY 13–19

THE SLOW RESPONSE

PSALM 70

Hasten, O God, to save me;
come quickly, LORD, to help me.

May those who want to take my life
be put to shame and confusion;
may all who desire my ruin
be turned back in disgrace.

May those who say to me, “Aha! Aha!”
turn back because of their shame.

But may all who seek you
rejoice and be glad in you;
may those who long for your saving help always say,
“The LORD is great!”

But as for me, I am poor and needy;
come quickly to me, O God.
You are my help and my deliverer;
LORD, do not delay.

(vv. 1-5)

DAILY DWELL

“But as for me, I am poor and needy;
come quickly to me, O God....” Psalm 70:5

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. When you feel attacked, how do you turn to God for help? Is seeking his presence and help your first instinct? Why or why not?
2. The Psalmist prays, “may all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you” (v. 4). How do you pray for God’s people and his church worldwide, as well as for future generations?
3. Verse 5 reflects our universal condition: “I am poor and needy.” How can you approach God with honesty and vulnerability about your condition?
4. What does it mean to pray with urgency while waiting for an answer? What insights about God’s timing can you draw from this Psalm?

JULY 20-26

THE CAVE PRISON

PSALM 142

When my spirit grows faint within me,
it is you who watch over my way.
In the path where I walk
people have hidden a snare for me.
Look and see, there is no one at my right hand;
no one is concerned for me.
I have no refuge;
no one cares for my life.

I cry to you, LORD;
I say, "You are my refuge,
my portion in the land of the living."

Listen to my cry,
for I am in desperate need;
rescue me from those who pursue me,
for they are too strong for me.
Set me free from my prison,
that I may praise your name.
Then the righteous will gather about me
because of your goodness to me.

(vv. 3-7)

DAILY DWELL

**"Set me free from my prison,
that I may praise your name...."** Psalm 142:7

NOTES

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. As you read this Psalm, where do you find yourself in David's cry for help? Does his desperation resonate with your own experiences?
2. Who in your life cares for you, watches over you, and walks alongside you in difficult times? How do they do that well, and where might they fall short? How do you walk alongside others?
3. What insights does Psalm 142 provide about the importance of expressing your feelings and struggles to God? How does that change your relationship with him?
4. How does the knowledge that God is your ultimate refuge shape your responses to life's challenges?

JULY 27–AUGUST 2

THE CLOSEST FRIEND

PSALM 88

You have put me in the lowest pit,
in the darkest depths.
Your wrath lies heavily on me;
you have overwhelmed me with all your waves.
You have taken from me my closest friends
and have made me repulsive to them.
I am confined and cannot escape;
my eyes are dim with grief.

I call to you, LORD, every day;
I spread out my hands to you.
Do you show your wonders to the dead?
Do their spirits rise up and praise you?
Is your love declared in the grave,
your faithfulness in Destruction?
Are your wonders known in the place of darkness,
or your righteous deeds in the land of oblivion?

But I cry to you for help, LORD;
in the morning my prayer comes before you.
Why, LORD, do you reject me
and hide your face from me?

From my youth I have suffered and been close to death;
I have borne your terrors and am in despair.
Your wrath has swept over me;
your terrors have destroyed me.
All day long they surround me like a flood;
they have completely engulfed me.
You have taken from me friend and neighbor —
darkness is my closest friend.

(vv. 6–18)

**“Why, LORD, do you reject me
and hide your face from me?”** Psalm 88:14

**“Why, LORD, do you reject me
and hide your face from me?”** Psalm 88:14

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. In Psalm 88, the Psalmist shifts from desperation to anger, questioning God's goodness and feeling rejected. Have you ever questioned God's faithfulness or blamed him for a tragedy in your life? What was that experience like for you?
2. The language in this Psalm is raw, challenging, and vulnerable — emotions typically reserved for our closest relationships. What does this reveal about God and the invitation he offers for an authentic relationship with him?
3. How can you continue to persevere in prayer even when you feel distant from God? Have you experienced comfort from the Holy Spirit during desperate times? How did that feel?
4. Tradition suggests that Jesus prayed this Psalm before going to the cross. In what ways can we find solidarity with the Psalmist's anger, Jesus' suffering, and the pain in our own world?
