

Day One: Job 24

1. What does Job long for God to do (1)? In his perception that the Lord is slow to judge, how does Job feel (1)? Summarize all the injustices Job wants God to address (2-12). What is his assessment of the Lord's response to these many injustices (12)? Describe the role darkness plays in injustice (13-17). What are the limitations of those who "rebel against the light;" what will ultimately stop them (18-25)?
2. Re-read Job's questions in verse 1. When facing great disappointment, people often ask God, "Why?" Starting in verse 18, Job seems to answer his "why" questions. What do you think of this? How do you think these conclusions help keep him from despairing? What disappointments and shattered dreams have left you asking, "Why"? Ask for faith and hope to remain in your heart even when you don't fully understand.

Day Two: Psalm 17

1. What is David asking God to do (1, 6-9)? How does he try to persuade the Lord (1-5)? In what ways does he esteem God (6-7)? Describe David's transition to the topic of "the wicked" (9). How does he describe them (10-12, 14)? Why does he feel threatened by them (11-12)? What does he want God to do about this (13-14)? How does David conclude this psalm (15)?
2. Meditate on verse 14a, particularly the phrase "whose reward is in this life." Imagine enduring life's disappointments and shattered dreams without the hope of God's coming kingdom. How does this make you feel? Take some time now to praise the Lord that his kingdom come in full is your true home and that you will one day dwell there. Pray that your hope in God's coming kingdom would increase your resiliency in weathering life's disappointments.

Day Three: Psalm 106:6-15

1. How does this excerpt of Psalm 106 begin (6)? While exiled, what did the Israelites think of God (7)? How and where else did they rebel (7)? In spite of their rebellion, what did the Lord do (8-11)? Why (8)? How did the people immediately respond to God's miracles and salvation at the Red Sea (12)? However, what happened later on (13)? What did the Israelites do in the desert (14)? What was God's response (15)?
2. When God powerfully reveals himself, people often respond as the Israelites did in verse 12. But when time passes, one usually ends up in a place like verses 7 or 13. What about you? In the long term, how much does a powerful encounter with the Lord keep doubt and disappointment from crashing down on you? What is more likely to sustain and stabilize you? Ask the Holy Spirit to lead you further into these practices and this mindset.

Day Four: Romans 4

1. Whose faith is Paul discussing (1-3)? How does Paul contrast works with faith (4-5)? How does a psalm of David support his argument (6-8)? What does circumcision have to do with this (9-12)? What is problematic about the law (13-15)? How is the promise received, and who is eligible (16-17)? How is God described in this context (17)? Explain Abraham's hope and faith (18-22). What does his legacy mean for us today (23-25)?
2. In Paul's day, people erroneously depended on the formulas of circumcision and the law for protection from shattered dreams. In pursuit of the same, what formulas do people depend on today? What do you think God desires we do instead? What is he specifically speaking to you regarding this issue? How will you respond? Conclude by re-reading verses 18-22. In what ways do you want to be like Abraham? Ask God to make it so.

Day Five: 2 Corinthians 1:3-11

1. In this moment of praise, how does Paul describe God (3)? In our troubles, what does the Lord do (4)? What is one reason why he does this (4)? Describe the way we share in the things of Jesus and in the experiences of the church (5, 7). How does Paul elaborate on this (6-7)? What does he share regarding his own troubles (8-9)? What about our strong hope and the power of prayer; what does Paul say about those things (10-11)?
2. Deep belief in God's purpose is hard to grasp when life seems full of disappointment and heartbreak. What is the Lord's purpose for you? Do you see it echoed in verses 3-4? Explain. Reflect on your biggest disappointment in life. How did God comfort you when your heartbreak was at its peak? Now, ask him how he wants to use you to bring this comfort to those who are similarly broken. What is the first step you will take to walk this out?