

Gathering Guide

for Communities and Friends

David and the Stranger

The God who used to turn up.

6/2/2019

Where We Are In The Bible

This week we are in the looking at the cries of a man surrounded by problems. The man is King David and the passage is found in Psalm 69. This passage is one of the psalms referred to as the “imprecatory” psalms. The imprecatory psalms are those that invoke judgment, calamity, or curses upon one's enemies or those perceived as the enemies of God. Here we see David feeling overwhelmed by his enemies. In this cry for help we see the rawness of David's emotions and the role of God in defending his servants.

Lean In

- Read the entire psalm and put yourself in David's shoes. Look more closely at the first four verses of Psalm 69. The circumstances of David at this time seem rather bleak. Have you ever been to the point that you thought “if God does not intervene today” I will not be able to survive? What carried you through those times?
- Time tends to slow down during our trials and suffering. In these cases, answers and resolution can never come soon enough. Fill in the blank in the following sentence: *Waiting sometimes can be a(n) _____ experience.* What word or words did you pick and why did you settle on those words?
- It is clear that David is angry at others who apparently hate him for no reason, and his reaction is to call down God's judgement on them. Was he overreacting? What is generally your initial reaction when someone harms you or treats you in a way you did not deserve?

The Big Idea

In this passage we see an angry king calling out to God who has become a stranger when He is needed the most. The call, however, is both for rescue and vengeance. The lesson from this psalm and from the New Testament passages in which it is quoted, however, reframe the call for vengeance in a way that should challenge our perspective. In the end God will make everything right and only He can pronounce judgement that is righteous and just. As for us - we are to love our enemies and demonstrate the love of God to them so that they may turn to God in repentance.

Where To?

- David is quoted by Jesus in John 15:25. How does this quote help explain the teaching of Jesus in John 15:18 - 16:4? How does this teaching apply to us today? Are we surprised when Christians are victims of hatred and persecution? What input does Jesus give the crowds in Matthew 5:38-48 about responding to being mistreated? What about his statement in Matthew 6:12 as he teaches on prayer?
- David ends this Psalm 69 on a note of praise and hope. Where did his hope come from? Where does our hope come from? David is quoted by Paul in Romans 15:3. What does that passage (15:1-4) teach us about hope?

Prayer Focus

Consider what God may be trying to say to you or to do in your life as you pray for:

- God to reveal his presence to you in the middle of your current circumstances.
- God to forgive your sins as you forgive those who have sinned against you.
- Those individuals who have treated you harmfully or unfairly – or those you just find difficult to love.

