**PSALMS**

**Emotional Honesty with God**

**What you need to REMEMBER:**

The book of Job introduced the first of the Older Testament’s five books of wisdom and poetry. In Job, the human experience of physical and emotional suffering is on full display. Job’s personal journey is an amplified description of what life is sometimes like in our fallen world. The story of Job lays bare the seeming randomness and injustice of pain and personal loss, revealing that human suffering often happens for inexplicable reasons understood only in the unseen spiritual world. The book is also an honest representation of how difficult it can be, in the midst of tragedy, to hold on to faith in the good and all-powerful God.

**What you need to KNOW:**

The Book of Psalms is the second the Older Testament’s five books of Wisdom and Poetry. A ‘psalm’ is a sacred song or expression. The Psalms are perhaps the greatest literary treasure from Israel’s Golden Era. King David was the most prolific contributor to this collection of 150 prayers, songs, poems and devotions. Other contributors include Moses, King Solomon, Asaph, Ethan, the sons of Korah, as well as, anonymous sources. Measured by both its word-count and its 150 chapters, the Psalms is the largest book in the Bible. The Psalms are organized into five subgroups along the following chapter divisions: 1-41, 42-72, 73-89, 90-106, and 107-150.

There are seven basic types of Psalms including:

**Lament –** prayers for deliverance from times of despair (Psalm 3 and 42);

**Thanksgiving –** praise for God’s blessings (Psalm 8 and 95);

**Enthronement –** expressions and reminders of God’s sovereignty (Psalm 49 and 93);

**Pilgrimage –** songs for ‘road trips’ to celebrate special holidays in Jerusalem (Psalm 121 and 133);

**Royal –** comparisons and descriptions of the relationship between earthly kings and the King of the Universe, often foreshadowing the coming of King Jesus. (Psalm 2 and 20).

**Wisdom –** reminders and instructions for right living (Psalm 1 and 37).

**Imprecatory –** Pleas that the Lord would bring his judgement and wrath upon our enemies (Psalm 7 and 35).

There is real emotional honesty expressed in the Psalms. The psalmists speak unreservedly about their joys and sorrows, exultations and complaints, aspirations and struggles, successes and failures – giving the reader permission to do the same. Yet, all is expressed with an eye toward the Eternal, All-Knowing, All-Powerful Lord before whom nothing is hidden. The bottom line: God is big enough to handle our emotional honesty. In fact, it’s in the lives of the emotionally honest that He is able to craft a growing and prevailing faith.

**GET GOING!**

**Continue your personal Walk Through the Bible by reading the Psalms.**

**Because the Book of Psalms is the longest book in the Bible, you might consider simply reading the ones referenced above from the seven basic types of psalms.**

**Also, don’t miss the Bible’s shortest and longest chapters, Psalms 117 and 119. As you read Psalm 119, note that it is an ‘acrostic poem,’ creatively celebrating God’s Word by beginning each stanza with successive letters from the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet.**