

## Israel as a Monarchy (1100 – 930 BCE)

### *Psalms of the Troubled Soul*

Readings: *Psalm 70, 71, 77, 83, 86*

### ***Reflections:***

- The same themes of complete trust in God are continued.
- Psalm 71: We see foreshadowing of resurrection here. “You will restore my life again, from the depths of the earth (the grave) you will again bring me up.” Although there is no real clear expression in Israel about the resurrection until the prophets get on the scene, David alludes to resurrection experiences. It seems his intimacy with God gets him in tune with God’s nature and his power to make dead things come alive again.
- Psalm 77: “Your ways are holy.” What is fascinating is that David is writing out how terrible his life is and how everything is going wrong and everyone is out to get him and he is really honest with his feelings (“In his anger has he withheld his compassion?”). What David doesn’t do is ask the most common questions people ask when things go wrong, “God if you are real, why are bad things happening?” David never doubts the reality of God or the heart of God. He never gets into blaming God or denying God because bad things are happening. He processes his feelings and then states clearly, “You are perfect God and in you find my hope.” Second, David never asks “why me? What did I do to deserve this?” Again, he somehow realizes that stuff can happen in a broken world. He focuses all his attention on expressing his heart and praising God alone. What a great example to us when we are going through tough times on how we can honor God even when we struggle. David’s hope is that God will hear his prayer and answer him with a display of his miraculous power. As we will see over and over again in Scripture, such humble faith and confidence in God opens the way for God to do the miraculous.
- Psalm 86: One of the most wonderfully clear and beautiful psalms that expresses David’s understanding of God and his desire to be intimate with him that God may change his heart. David understands that it is not about religion but an intimate relationship where God changes his heart. Key statements: “You are my God; save your servant who trusts in you (faith)...You are forgiving and good, O Lord, abounding in love to all who call on you...Teach me your way, O Lord and I will walk in your truth; give me

an undivided heart (inside out revolution) that I may fear (or have complete faith) your name...For great is your love toward me...you, O Lord, are a compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness." Again we see that David is expressing and helping others express a heart that is longing for inside out transformation. All of this continues to be used by God to set the stage for the coming of Jesus.