

Give thanks to the Lord because he is good,
because his faithful love endures forever.
Say: "Save us, God, our savior!
Gather us! Deliver us from among the nations
so we can give thanks to your holy name
and rejoice in your praise."
Bless the Lord, Israel's God,
from forever in the past to forever always.
And let all the people say, "Amen!"
Praise the Lord!

(1 Chronicles 16:34-36 CEB)

Yearly reading of the Scriptures has brought me to the reign of King David today. David spent a lot of time singing songs of praise to God out in the pastures with his father's flocks. He also became a fugitive from mad King Saul back in the day, spending some years with a bounty on his head. He hid out in caves and in forests and in the wilderness. Always, David praised God and composed psalms of complaint and thanksgiving. David's devotion pleased the Lord. And our praise pleases God too.



The song of praise above comes from a longer song sung at the time that David moved from Hebron to Jerusalem and brought the Ark of the Covenant into the city. At that time, King David established the cohorts of priests and skilled musicians and poets to plan and present worship worthy of the God of Israel. David said, "Then let us bring back the ark of our God, for we did not inquire of Him in Saul's days." (1 Chron 13:3) You and I can never "start over," rather we continue with fresh resolve to give our very best to the Lord. Your praise is the finest gift you can offer the Ruler of the universe. The writer of Hebrews encourages us in this: "Through Him (Jesus) then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips give thanks to His name." (Heb 13:15 NASB)



"Now, I've heard there was a secret chord
That David played, and it pleased the Lord
But you don't really care for music, do you?
It goes like this, the fourth, the fifth
The minor fall, the major lift
The baffled king composing Hallelujah"
(Leonard Cohen's "Hallelujah")

If you have some time, you might compose a psalm of complaint and praise to God in these days of covid 19. Complaint is welcome as you share the issues of your heart with the Lord. He knows your pain and anger and frustration, as well as your joy and gratitude. It's good to release it all to Him. You may wish to thank God for the blessings that endure through quarantine, scarcity of things we need, and loneliness: perhaps phone or facetime conversations with family and friends, provision of the job you still have, or compensation for loss of income, the beauty of Spring all around us, projects you have time to complete in these days of rest from the usual busy-ness...make the list as complete as you can.

Gracious and Holy Lord, You have brought us to this time. Your love and provision endure. Help us, Lord to keep the main thing alive and active. Increase our faith in these days of darkness and death for so many. Bless all the helping professionals who keep returning to their work, day after day, to save lives. Send mercy and strength to Your people for continual prayer and praise to You. Thank-You for our dear Savior Jesus Christ. He knew all the pain and discouragement of a human life. Yet, He went all the way to the sacrifice of His life to secure our deliverance. Help us in His name and for His sake to continue praising and honoring You. Amen.