

GRACEPOINT CHURCH

Weekly Devotional

God Where Are You?

When God is on Mute – Ian France –19.4.2026

Scripture

Psalms 136:1-2, 6-9; 22:1-5; 40:1-3

Open your mind and heart as you read the passage of Scripture aloud and then again quietly to yourself. Listen for God's word to you.

Spend some time in worship.

Observation

Psalms 136:1-2, 6-9;

This Psalm repeats the phrase 'His mercy endures forever' in every verse. The Levites would call out a reason to thank God for the blessings He showered upon them and the people responded, worshipping, praising and giving thanks to the Lord. Jewish tradition calls this Psalm the Great *Hallel* – the Great Psalm of Praise.

The people are invited to give thanks to the Lord for His goodness for they had reason to praise God. Goodness is one of the characteristics of God. Just as He is love, so He is good. It is likely this phrase was sung daily as part of the morning and evening sacrifices (1 Chronicles 16:37-41). In their response, the worshippers declared that God's mercy never ends and will always be available to His people. The Hebrew word for mercy is *hesed*, which can also be understood as grace or loyal love as shown through His covenant with them. The next reason for praise is given. God is the God of gods, greater than any other. The people respond with heartfelt worship and the pattern is repeated throughout the psalm.

God is worshipped as Creator of all, with the people responding to each feature of His creation as the priests name the heavens, the sun, moon and stars, and the waters. The whole of creation proclaimed the wisdom, mercy and power of God. God created the perfect place for His people to inhabit, and the people responded with joy at His goodness to them.

Psalm 22:1-5;

David is the author of this psalm which was set to a piece of music entitled The Deer of the Dawn. It was addressed to the Chief Musician. It is a psalm written during a time of great suffering, but it is also a psalm of prophecy. It is a foreshadow of the sufferings of Christ who cried out these words as He hung on the cross.

The psalm thrusts its reader into a disturbing scene with someone who has a trusting relationship with God crying out in agony as he feels he is forsaken. David lived in dangerous,

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difficult times, and he was familiar with conditions that would have made him write such a distressed poem. David's desperation is emphasised in the repetition of the words, 'My God'. He, could not understand why God did not come to his rescue in the challenging situations he faced. He had known God's intervention in previous situations and now, could not understand why God did not help him in the circumstances he was facing. He repeatedly cried out to God, but still he felt unheard and ignored. Yet, in spite of this feeling, David knew that God was still holy and worthy of praise, even in the darkest circumstances – nothing would change that. He remembered how God had answered and delivered his fathers in previous times. This was a memory that offered him comfort; but it also made him despair. God was now so silent and seemed to be so far away.

But David experienced the absence of God as a shadow of what Jesus went through on the cross. He quoted this psalm to express His own agony. He had never experienced separation from the Father before, but now, as He bore the sins of the world upon Himself, He knew that the Father had turned His face away for He could not look at such evil. It seemed as if God did not hear His cries of agony. Yet even then He knew that God did not change. He was holy and nothing would ever change that.

Psalm 40:1-3

This psalm is also addressed to the Chief Musician and was composed by David who had been waiting patiently on the Lord for deliverance from his troubles. He now received an answer. Previous psalms indicate that he had waited for a long time, but now the waiting had come to an end and he had his response from God. The psalmist implies that, at last, God leant forward, coming closer to him, and heard his cry. God delivered him from his current difficult circumstances and set him in a secure place. As a result, David found himself inspired by his Lord, to spontaneously praise God with a new song – perhaps even this psalm. He felt sure that many who saw what had happened and heard his song of praise would be in awe of God and would be inspired to trust Him themselves.

Icebreaker:

Have you ever been ignored by someone? How did it feel? How did you respond? Did the situation change at all as a result of your response?

Application

- How often do you refer to the Psalms – in times when life is going well; or when you are faced with challenges; or when God seems to be silent? Do you find them relevant to your day-to-day life? Why/why not?

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- *Psalms of orientation – when life is going well:* How do you praise God when life is going well? Have you ever experienced your heart welling up with gratitude or joy at the blessings you are receiving in the good times? When has that happened recently for you? How did you respond?
- *Psalms of disorientation – in times of personal, national or natural disaster:* What do you say to God at such times? When you have experienced a disaster of some sort, were you aware of God's presence? How did you respond – to His presence or to His apparent absence? Did it help to think of Him working behind the scenes on your behalf, even when you didn't actually know He was doing so? How has He come through for you at such a time?
- *Psalms of re-orientation – when new life happens:* In the times you have discussed above, as you look back, can you see God at work in your situation? Or are you stuck? How does that affect your relationship with God?
- Looking at the world, at Gracepoint, at your own spiritual journey, can you see God working? Are you aware of His presence? Are you prepared to wait on Him and praise Him anyway? How will you deal with any new opportunities to serve Him that come out of your current circumstances?
- How can the group help you with the struggles you have mentioned during this session?

Prayer

Pray for one another in regard to the issues that have been raised during your discussion time, and in regard to other needs of the group.

Service

This week reach out and encourage those you meet who seem to be struggling in some way. Ask God to tell you what to say and/or do to act on His behalf to bring them comfort and encouragement.

Bibliography

<https://enduringword.com/bible-commentary/psalm-136/>

<https://enduringword.com/bible-commentary/psalm-22/>

<https://enduringword.com/bible-commentary/psalm-40/>

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