

# THE BENEFITS OF WORSHIP

Leader pages on pp. 150-153

**THE POINT:**  
WE FIND ALL WE NEED  
WHEN WE COME TO GOD  
IN WORSHIP.

## PSALM 63:1-11

<sup>1</sup> God, you are my God; I eagerly seek you. I thirst for you; my body faints for you in a land that is dry, desolate, and without water.

<sup>2</sup> So I gaze on you in the sanctuary to see your strength and your glory.

<sup>3</sup> My lips will glorify you because your faithful love is better than life.

<sup>4</sup> So I will bless you as long as I live; at your name, I will lift up my hands.

<sup>5</sup> You satisfy me as with rich food; my mouth will praise you with joyful lips.

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<sup>6</sup> When I think of you as I lie on my bed, I meditate on you during the night watches

<sup>7</sup> because you are my helper; I will rejoice in the shadow of your wings.

### MEMORY VERSE

**<sup>8</sup> I follow close to you; your right hand holds on to me.**

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<sup>9</sup> But those who intend to destroy my life will go into the depths of the earth.

<sup>10</sup> They will be given over to the power of the sword; they will become a meal for jackals.

<sup>11</sup> But the king will rejoice in God; all who swear by him will boast, for the mouths of liars will be shut.

### KEYWORDS

**I eagerly seek (v. 1)**—Derives from the word for seeking “early” or “at dawn,” and the reason the early church designated this psalm to be read each morning.

**In the shadow . . . wings (v. 7)**—A double image: First, that of a bird that protects its young by gathering them under its wings;

second, a reference to the ark of the covenant with the winged cherubim over it reflecting God’s protective presence.

**Your right hand (v. 8)**—Right hand is metaphorical and an anthropomorphism but was commonly used to refer to the stronger hand or arm.

# WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS FOR THOSE WHO WORSHIP GOD?

An “ambiguous image.” This form of artwork refers to an image that can be viewed from two entirely different perspectives. One classic example is a drawing that viewed one way is of a young woman, but viewed another appears to be an elderly woman. Another is known as “Rubin’s Vase,” where from one viewpoint, a vase is seen and from the other, two men are facing each other. It’s a classic trick that our own brain can play on us—we see what we’re expecting to see.

Psalm 63 is a beautiful example of David seeing what he chose to see. From one perspective, the

king could have only seen the desolate wilderness of Judah as he ran from his enemies. But from the perspective of worship, he saw the glory and strength of God in His sanctuary. David could have focused on his isolation and desperation. But instead, he saw God’s rich provision. He could have fixated on his enemies, but David saw his God whose arm would protect him from all harm and bring justice to his accusers.

Look around your life. What’s your perspective? When it comes to worship, it all depends on what—and more importantly who—you see.

## Satisfaction in Our Days //

### Psalm 63:1-5

“It’s not what you know, it’s who you know.” And David knew God. From the barren wilderness of Judah, David looked up to see the one true God who could meet him where he was. The place was dark, dry, desolate, and isolated and the circumstances were dire. David was hungry, thirsty, and alone. Most scholars date this psalm to be during the time his son, Absalom, was in pursuit of the king.

Not only was he facing physical challenges, but he also felt the hurt a father estranged from his son would feel.

The temptation would be to sit and sulk. But David looked higher into the sanctuary of God—beyond what he needed—to who he knew. And what he saw drew him into worship.

David saw:

- God’s strength.
- God’s glory.
- God’s love.

If David only saw the strength of God, he would be impressed, but not necessarily encouraged and helped. God’s strength would mean God could help, but it doesn’t mean God would.



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If David only saw the glory of God, he would be awe-struck and overwhelmed at a God with all strength and sovereignty. Not only does God have the strength to help, but He also has the authority. Again, God would be able, but that alone would not make Him willing to act.

David's lips declared the praise of God because he saw more; he saw the faithful love of the Lord who not only has the strength and authority to help, but also has the affection for His children. And when David experienced the faithful love of God, his heart opened to give glory to his God.

- His praise is audible: "My lips will glorify you because your faithful love is better than life" (v. 3). We don't know what the song sounded like, but we know where it came from. God put this song on the lips of His child (40:3)
- His praise is durable: "So I will bless you as long as I live" (63:4a). This song wasn't a one-time thing. Because of God's goodness, David would offer praise for the rest of his life.
- His praise is visible: "At your name, I will lift up my hands" (v. 4b). The worship from David's heart caused him to respond outwardly and physically to the love of God.

David's example is one for all of us. When we are tempted to collapse in fear because of all we see around us—in our lives and in our world—we can see our God, whose goodness and love awakens our heart in praise. In God and God alone, we find satisfaction.

### WHAT ARE SOME WAYS GOD HAS BROUGHT SATISFACTION TO YOUR LIFE?

#### Safety in Our Nights // Psalm 63:6-8

In 1972, a song titled "Day Dreaming," by Aretha Franklin, was popular among young people. Maybe it was the beautiful melody that made people notice. Or maybe it was many young girls' favorite because of its declaration of love.

King David must have known a great deal about daydreaming. As a young boy, he spent many hours alone watching the family's sheep. Remember where David was when the prophet came to Jesse's house in search of God's choice to be king? (See 1 Sam. 16.) David was tending the sheep as his father had instructed.

Now we find David alone again and daydreaming. But unlike Aretha Franklin, David had better things on his mind. It seems to me that what we think about when we're isolated reveals a great deal about what's in our hearts. My grandmother used to say, "What's down in



### DIGGING DEEPER ANTHROPOMORPHIC

Scripture often attributes human features and characteristics to God so we can better understand who He is and how He acts in our lives. This is called anthropomorphism. Scripture also uses figures of speech, a powerful literary form, because they paint images to which we can relate to emotionally. A figure of speech occurs when a word, phrase, or sentence is used in a sense other than the literal or usual sense it has normally. David said in Psalm 63:7, "I will rejoice in the shadow of your wings." This image is comparing God's protective care to that of a bird with its young. David was rejoicing in the care and protection of the Lord. Know that the use of figures of speech does not diminish the value of divine communication through the scriptures. It enriches the power and beauty of God's Word.

**To what would you compare God's care and protection in your life?**

the well comes up in the bucket.” That is, whatever we cling to in our heart is what will come up when we are off to ourselves.

David’s mind was fixed on God. Perhaps the prophet Isaiah reflected on David’s example found in Psalm 63, when he prophesied four centuries later, “You will keep the mind that is dependent on you in perfect peace, for it is trusting in you” (Isa. 26:3).

## WHAT ARE SOME PRACTICAL WAYS YOU CAN EARNESTLY SEEK GOD?

The more David thought about his God—who had all strength, glory, and love—the more he came to depend on God’s provision. Even in the darkest parts of the night, when one could be tempted to dwell on all that is unseen, David kept his mind on God. It’s very hard to find adequate ways to express how God cares for us. David reaches into the beauty of God’s nature to describe it: he rejoiced in the “shadow of [God’s] wings” (Ps. 63:7).

Do you remember as you were growing up ever being in a crowded place with your family? Maybe a theme park or a college football game? Our family would often go to places like that, and as the youngest member of our family, I usually required the full attention of my dad. He had a way of “directing me” with his hand on my shoulder, as we moved into the stadium or through the line for the next thrill ride. It wasn’t hard and heavy, but it was firm. If asked, I would have probably said I’d rather not have his hand on my shoulder. But if I was honest, I would admit I found comfort in his guiding hand.

As a shepherd, David had seen many creatures covered by the wings of their mother or father, and he no doubt had experienced the “guiding hand” of his father, Jesse. This picture was his best way to describe the safety he felt under the care of his protector, God.

When we forget God’s care for us, we start to feel afraid, alone, and forgotten. When we think about His faithful care for us and come to Him in worship, we find the help we need.

## WHEN HAS GOD BROUGHT YOU OUT OF A DRY AND DESOLATE PLACE?



## Surety Concerning Our Future

// Psalm 63:9-11

As the psalm crescendos to its conclusion, we learn about something that has been underneath the surface the whole time. While David was pouring out his song of praise to God, he was also being pursued by his enemies, which include his own son, Absalom (2 Sam. 15). That alone helps us understand how our focus on God inspires our worship no matter all the potential distractions. David looked outside his circumstances to see his God who transcends it all. Despite the difficulties David was facing, he began the psalm with worship. Only at the end did he even acknowledge the realities of his circumstances—a lesson for all of us.

I heard a preacher say once, “Don’t be so heavenly minded that you’re no earthly good.” It was a warning against living in denial of life’s realities in the name of some spiritual “nirvana.” David demonstrated here that he wasn’t ignoring his challenges, rather, he was keeping them in the right perspective.

David understood that the “faithful love” highlighted in Psalm 63:3 also brings God’s defense and justice for his servant. Notice he didn’t request God to act but had full confidence that He would: “But those who intend to destroy my life will go into the depths of the earth. They will be given over to the power of the sword; they will become a meal for jackals” (vv. 9-10, emphasis added).

David believed these things because he believed God loved him faithfully. This confidence also came from all David saw, as he looked at God and saw the

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strength and glory of the Sovereign Lord of all. It's not what you know—it's Who you know. And David knew God.

This isn't the only time we see the confidence in David's life. His confidence wasn't in himself, but in his God. Consider his faith as he faced Goliath:

- "The LORD who rescued me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will rescue me from the hand of the Philistine" (1 Sam. 17:37b).
- "Today the LORD will hand you over to me. Today, I will strike you down" (v. 46a).

Consider his contrition when confronted by the prophet: "I have sinned against the LORD" (2 Sam. 12:13a). David's confidence remained in God's faithful love.

David's confidence was in the unchanging God who deserved His worship, even in time of loss: "Then David got up from the ground. He washed, anointed himself, changed his clothes, went to the Lord's house, and worshiped" (2 Sam. 12:20a). David didn't assemble his army to defend himself. He didn't plan a secret attack to destroy his pursuers. He didn't build a coalition from his allies to counterattack. He trusted. He rejoiced. He worshiped. David rested with confidence that the God who loved him would be his defender.

### DID YOU KNOW?

God desires a personal and intimate relationship with you. The only way we can possibly know God is if He reveals himself to us (Matt. 11:27). Because God is infinite and we are finite we can never fully understand God but we can truly know Him. We can be confident that everything we know about God through Scripture is true because God's word is truth (Psalm 119:160). More importantly, we know God Himself, not just facts about God. Salvation through Jesus Christ not only gives us eternal life but also the promise to know the only true God (John 17:3). The Christian life includes a personal relationship with God. We speak to God through prayer; He speaks to us through His Word. We worship God in His presence; He makes His presence known to us by dwelling with us and in us (John 14:23).

**Biblical Truth:** The greatest blessing of the Christian life is having a personal relationship with God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

**What would you share about your relationship with Jesus Christ to a person who doesn't know Him?**

## LIVE IT

### How can we live in a way that embraces the benefits of worshipping God?

Our relationship with God is always in the context of our lives. There are good seasons, hard seasons, and sometimes overwhelming seasons, as we move through with the ebb and flow of the here and now. We won't always have sunshine. Psalm 63 is a beautiful picture of worship in the wilderness. Choose one of the following applications:

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- **The Starting Place.** Write your own "psalm" based on the outline of Psalm 63. Begin with a statement of who God is, list ways you want to praise Him, add a testimony of what God is doing in your life, make your own statement of commitment to follow Him, and finish by declaring confidently how you expect God to move in your circumstances.
- **The Growing Place.** Start a "psalm" prayer journal. As you read through the psalms, look for ones whose structure would lend themselves to first-person application.
- **The Sowing Place.** Take the psalm you have composed about your life and share it with a friend or family member. Give this person the context of what it means in your life right now.

# DAILY READINGS

## 1. SEEK GOD, GAIN SATISFACTION // PSALM 63:1-5; MATTHEW 6:33; ISAIAH 58:11

As a leader, I gauge employees' job satisfaction through seeking their feedback in meetings, casual conversations, and surveys. I want to ensure employees have the resources needed for their personal and professional success. Psalms 63:1-5 tells us that David eagerly sought God, thirsting for him, gazing on Him to see His strength and His glory and glorifying God in his worship and David is satisfied. God is concerned about our success and ask that we seek Him first and His righteousness, and all these things will be provided for us, Matthew 6:33. God has our life success already planned, we can meet Him in prayer and worship for our life's guidance.

**Isaiah 58:11 says, "The LORD will always lead you, satisfy you in a parched land and strengthen your bones."**

## 2. GOD - THE HELPER, THE PROTECTOR // PSALM 63:6-8; PSALM 91:4; HEBREWS 13:6

A symptom of my anxiety is overthinking which often shows up the worst at night. I find encouragement in how David mediates on God as he lies in the bed at night as described in Psalms 63:6-8. Keeping his mind on the Lord because He is our helper and David rejoices in the shadow of God's wings. When we are under God's wings, His covering, He shields us. Psalms 91:4 says, He will cover you with his feathers; you will take refuge under his wings. His faithfulness will be a protective shield. In our worship and meditation on Him we find safety in our God and lack nothing we need.

**Hebrews 13:6 reminds us, "The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?"**

## 3. EASY WAS NEVER THE PROMISE, VICTORY WAS // PSALM 63:9-10; JEREMIAH 29:11

Good movie plot has a villain and a victor, full suspense and emotion that draws us in, usually

ending with the victim winning. In Psalms 63:9-10 David let us know what happens to our enemies, But those who intend to destroy my life will go in the depths of the earth. They will become a meal for jackals. In life, we too have a story full of twists and turns, often encountering those who do not have our best interest in mind. This is all a part of God's unique blueprint for our lives as He is sure about our future.

**Jeremiah 29:11 reminds us, "For I know the plans I have for you – plans for your well-being, not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope. Rejoice!"**

## 4. IN MY FATHER'S HAND // PSALM 63:8; ISAIAH 41:13

When my children were little, they wanted me to hold their hand. My son to help him jump over something or my daughter when she wanted to feel safe. Now older, holding my hand isn't the request. David praised God in Psalms 63:8 saying, I follow close to you; your right hand holds on to me. No matter how old we become or how often our needs change, God will hold our hand through any stage and situation. Like my own children who was willing to follow me when holding my hand, we are God's children, and He wants us to do His will.

**Isaiah 41:13 says, "For I am the Lord your God, who holds your right hand, who says to you, "Do not fear, I will help you."**

## 5. DESIGNED TO WORSHIP // PSALM 29:2; 1 CORINTHIANS 10:31

We were created to worship God for all that He is and has done for us. Psalms 29:2 says, "Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; worship the LORD in the splendor of his holiness." Thus far we have learned that our focus should lie on God for His majesty and goodness. Through Him by meditating on God's word and practicing gratefulness He alone is worthy of our praise. You have many things you can focus on to give your attention and energy. Your favorite artist, your job, or material things do not compare to the satisfaction of our Lord.

**Paul instructed in 1 Corinthians 10:31, "So whether you eat, or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God."**