



House of New Beginnings

ShalomAZ Ministries

In Pursuit of Israel's Redemption

"When Darkness Presses In, I Lift My Eyes and My Voice"

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Devotion and Discussion Questions

Key Texts: Psalms 53, 83, 143, 23, 113

We've all walked through moments where it feels like the lights have gone out on our soul. Sometimes, it's the pain of watching the world unravel—violence, injustice, betrayal. Other times, the silence of God feels louder than our prayers. Or maybe the enemy is not "out there" at all—it's inside. Depression, discouragement, doubt. But the Psalms give us a roadmap from the pit to praise. They're brutally honest, deeply human, and anchored in a God who doesn't change. Today we journey through five Psalms that take us from spiritual famine to feasting in His presence. From emptiness to elevation. From darkness... to looking up.

1. THE DARKNESS OF FORGETTING GOD — PSALM 53

Our journey begins in Psalm 53, where the greatest darkness is spiritual amnesia—the world has forgotten God. The psalmist declares that people live as though God isn't there, making decisions from their own understanding, bearing rotten fruit, and consuming others for their own gain. It's easy to point at others, but the question is: do I live like God is truly present in my day-to-day decisions? When we walk in our own wisdom, we disconnect from the Source of life. But even in the middle of such widespread forgetfulness, God is searching for someone—anyone—who will seek Him. And when He finds them, He promises restoration and joy on the other side of repentance.

2. THE DARKNESS OF GOD'S SEEMING SILENCE (PSALM 83)

From forgetfulness, we move to the experience of what feels like silence. Psalm 83 is the cry of a believer who knows God is real, but can't hear Him. Enemies rage, threats rise, and heaven seems still. The psalmist pleads, *"Don't be silent, God! Don't be still!"* It's a desperate and honest prayer, one many of us can relate to when we feel surrounded by spiritual warfare or cultural hostility. But this cry isn't from doubt—it's from trust. It's faith that refuses to stay quiet. Even in silence, the psalmist remembers God's past faithfulness and dares to believe He will move again. This part of the journey teaches us that God welcomes raw prayers—He invites us to pound on the doors of heaven, not out of entitlement, but out of covenant.

3. BATTLING THE DARKNESS WITHIN (PSALM 143)

Now the journey turns inward. In Psalm 143, David is no longer focused on a forgetful world or a silent heaven—his own spirit is failing. *"My heart is desolate... my soul is crushed."* This is the cry of someone emotionally exhausted, spiritually dry, and hanging by a thread. And yet, David does the only thing he knows to do: he remembers. He stretches out his hands. He begs for mercy. He lifts his soul to God like a parched land. In the middle of emotional collapse, David clings to who God has always been—faithful, righteous, merciful. He doesn't ask for a changed circumstance first; he asks for a changed heart, to

be taught, led, and revived by God's Spirit. This psalm reminds us that true healing begins when we stop managing the darkness and start surrendering it.

4. TRUSTING AND REMEMBERING *THROUGH* THE VALLEY (PSALM 23)

Psalm 23 marks the turning point—not because everything is fixed, but because our focus is. Here, David walks *through* the valley of the shadow of death, but he's no longer crushed by it—because he knows he is not alone. "You are with me." When we truly believe God is with us, even the presence of enemies becomes the backdrop for a table prepared, a cup overflowing, and a life pursued by His goodness and mercy. David's confidence is not rooted in escape but in proximity—proximity to the Shepherd who restores, guides, and comforts. In this part of the journey, we don't just cry for deliverance; we begin to rest in the arms of the Deliverer.

5. THE SONG AFTER THE STORM (PSALM 143)

Finally, we reach Psalm 113—a song that bursts forth from the other side of the valley. The God who seemed far off is now exalted in praise, not only because He is enthroned above the heavens, but because He stoops low to lift up the poor, the barren, the forgotten. From sunrise to sunset, His Name is to be praised—not just because He is high, but because He sees. He raises up the lowly and seats them with princes. He gives homes to the barren and hope to the weary. This psalm is an invitation to praise God *before* the breakthrough, to lift our eyes even when we're still waiting, because we trust in the character of the One who stoops down to see us and raise us.

CONCLUSION

Maybe you're still in the fog of Psalm 53—functioning like God is far. Maybe you're crying out in the silence of Psalm 83. Maybe you're exhausted and numb like Psalm 143. Or maybe you're walking with the Shepherd in Psalm 23, learning to rest. Or perhaps you're standing in the sunshine of Psalm 113, ready to sing. Wherever you are—He is near. He lifts. He restores. He revives. Will you lift your eyes today—not because everything is right, but because HE is righteous? Today remember, return, and rest in the One who walks with you through every kind of darkness.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Which Psalm in this journey do you most identify with today—and why?
2. What does it look like to live your life as though God is truly present (Psalm 53)?
3. How do you usually respond when God seems silent (Psalm 83)?
4. What steps can you take when your spirit feels crushed and desolate (Psalm 143)?
5. How can praising God before the miracle shift your heart and perspective (Psalm 113)?

CLOSING PRAYER:

Abba, we lift our eyes to You. In every kind of darkness—whether it's forgetting, silence, despair, fear, or waiting—we declare that You are still good. Thank You for being a God who sees us, who stoops down to lift us, who walks with us through the valley, and who teaches us to sing again. Help us not to wait for the circumstances to change before we lift our praise. You are worthy from sunrise to sunset.

In the Name of Yeshua our Shepherd, Amen.