

# DAY TWENTY-EIGHT

## “A SONG TO SING”

### PSALM 63:1-8

Sometimes when we read different portions of Scripture, we are reminded of certain songs that have been retained in our memory with vivid clarity. This morning, as I read our Psalm selection for today, a song from years ago that was popular in evangelical Christianity in the 1980s came to mind. For someone who has not been blessed with an exorbitant amount of musical ability or singing skills, I was surprised that not only did some of the lyrics return, but also the melody and beat. The blessing I received as a result of starting to hum this tune *was noticeable*. But before commenting on how my mouth would offer joyful praises, and direct other thoughts toward Him, please consider the following Psalm selections as you sing forth His praises during our Omer Count to the Feast of Weeks:

### PSALM 67:1-7

For the choir director; with stringed instruments. A Psalm. A Song. God be gracious to us and bless us, *and* cause His face to shine upon us—Selah. That Your way may be known on the earth, Your salvation among all nations. Let the peoples praise You, O God; let all the peoples praise You. Let the nations be glad and sing for joy; for You will judge the peoples with uprightness and guide the nations on the earth. Selah. Let the peoples praise You, O God; let all the peoples praise You. The earth has yielded its produce; God, our God, blesses us. God blesses us, that all the ends of the earth may fear Him.

### PSALM 63:1-8

**A Psalm of David, when he was in the wilderness of Judah. O God, You are my God; I shall seek You earnestly; My soul thirsts for You, my flesh yearns for You, in a dry and weary land where there is no water. Thus I have seen You in the sanctuary, to see Your power and Your glory. Because Your lovingkindness is better than life, my lips will praise You. So I will bless You as long as I live; I will lift up my hands in Your name. My soul is satisfied as with marrow and fatness, and my mouth offers praises with joyful lips. When I remember You on my bed, I meditate on You in the night watches, for You have been my help, and in the shadow of Your wings I sing for joy. My soul clings to You; Your right hand upholds me.**

Since I am somewhat deficient in my knowledge of music, this morning I have been led to focus on the life of King David, the attributed author of many of the Psalms we have been

## COUNTING THE OMER

considering during our Counting of the Omer. He was certainly a great man, whose life example is one we need to consider as people of faith (cf. Hebrews 11:32)!

My persistence of the humming tune became a backdrop for my meditations. Somewhere buried in the depths of my soul was a song that seemed to keep repeating itself, without any direct effort on my part. In fact, as I tried to “turn it off,” or at least “turn down the volume” in my brain—the song continued to play. Even though I did not know all of the lyrics, the song persisted. I compared this to the times when I have heard a song that just “sticks” in your head and seems to be on some type of repeat or replay. Sadly, many of those tunes are from music that I listened to during my days in the 1960s and 1970s, when I was not that oriented toward the things of God. Perhaps some of you can relate to similar songs that bring back vivid memories of days and actions you made in the past.

But this morning, the music was instead a song of praise and worship, which was thanking the Lord for His being there all the days of my life. It reminded me of my early days as a young Christian Believer, when I eagerly sought after the Heavenly Father and His ways of righteousness. After some short inquiries, I easily found that the song I had remembered was “Step by Step.” This is undoubtedly a song many of you have heard before:

*O God, You are my God, And I will ever praise You. O, God You are my God, And I will ever praise You. I will seek You in the morning, And I will learn to walk in Your way, And step by step You'll lead me, And I will follow You all of my days.*

This morning, when I began to read Psalm 63 and I got to the phrase, “**O, God You are my God**” (v. 1), this praise song from years ago just popped up. As I continued in my meditation, more and more words seemed to come back into my heart. *I was seeking Him in the morning. Hallelujah! I was learning to walk in His ways. Hallelujah! I was learning to let Him lead me step-by-step and along the way. Hallelujah! Finally, I was confident that heading in this particular direction, I was committed to following Him all of my days.*

Then in my brief glance at some articles about King David,<sup>1</sup> I realized that the pattern he established for Ancient Israel was perhaps one of the greatest legacies he could have left for those after him. The people of David’s century had problems to contend with because they were human beings just like us. David, in particular, had many issues to contend with, because he had been anointed by the Lord to be the king who would ultimately unite Israel and usher in an era of peace and stability. **As a result of his position before the Creator, many of his enemies were directed to attack him.**

When you read more about David’s life, you find that he had been uniquely prepared as a young shepherd boy to handle the many challenges he would later face. Imagine going from the relative anonymity of herding various animals like sheep—to the battlefield of the valley of Elah, where the Philistines were confronting the Israelites with their champion Goliath (1 Samuel 17). What was it like when the Prophet Samuel anointed David to become the king of Israel (1 Samuel 16:13)? In a display of total faith and trust in the ability of God to execute His judgment for those who seek Him, David slayed Goliath, and his destiny was elevated to new heights. Can you imagine the fame and reverence the people of

---

<sup>1</sup> Cf. J. Barton Payne, “David,” in Merrill C. Tenney, ed., *The New International Dictionary of the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1987), pp 256-258; D.F. Payne, “David,” in Geoffrey Bromiley, ed., *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, 4 vols. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 1:870-876.

Israel would have showered upon this young warrior? *Couple this* with the knowledge that you have been anointed to be the future king of Israel, and that through your music ability, you frequently play your harp in the chambers of King Saul, the reigning regent, being made his armor bearer (1 Samuel 16). 1 Samuel 16:14-23 summarizes,

“Now the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the LORD terrorized him. Saul's servants then said to him, ‘Behold now, an evil spirit from God is terrorizing you. Let our lord now command your servants who are before you. Let them seek a man who is a skillful player on the harp; and it shall come about when the evil spirit from God is on you, that he shall play *the harp* with his hand, and you will be well.’ So Saul said to his servants, ‘Provide for me now a man who can play well and bring *him* to me.’ Then one of the young men said, ‘Behold, I have seen a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite who is a skillful musician, a mighty man of valor, a warrior, one prudent in speech, and a handsome man; and the LORD is with him.’ So Saul sent messengers to Jesse and said, ‘Send me your son David who is with the flock.’ Jesse took a donkey *loaded with* bread and a jug of wine and a young goat, and sent *them* to Saul by David his son. Then David came to Saul and attended him; and Saul loved him greatly, and he became his armor bearer. **Saul sent to Jesse, saying, ‘Let David now stand before me, for he has found favor in my sight.’ So it came about whenever the *evil spirit from God* came to Saul, David would take the harp and play *it* with his hand; and Saul would be refreshed and be well, and the evil spirit would depart from him.”**

If you take the time to read the record in Scripture of some of the early exploits of young David before Saul's death, you can see that he was highly favored of the Lord. When you add this early part of his life to his latter years, and reflect upon the wealth of Psalms that ushered forth from his heart, you can see how with the kingship he was given also came many severe trials. Due to his favored position before the Lord, David's detractors constantly attacked him. David even struggled with his own flesh, and some of the choices he made had serious negative consequences on his family, and ultimately on the future of Israel. But regardless of his human frailties, David was doubtlessly able to frequently turn back to the melodies and Psalms that he had composed, not only in his youth, but also throughout the course of his life.

Psalms 63 is attributed to the time when David lived in the Judean wilderness, and dealt with the malicious slander of his countrymen and family (Psalm 63:1). Even when all seemed to be against him, he returned to the singing of psalms and hymns which declared his praise to God, who David intimately knew was the Faithful One. As you read and focus your attention upon David's words, you can understand that he was a person who spent a great deal of time praising and worshipping God with not only his lips, but also with all of his heart. This legacy is one that we can all be thankful for, as his meditations and supplications have been meticulously preserved over the ages for the faithful who have followed after him.

On this twenty-eighth day of our journey to the Feast of Weeks, we can all be thankful for the power of song and music, and how the Holy One can be praised and worshipped through thoughtful reflections from our hearts! We can also be thankful for the step-by-step method of praise He has instructed us to follow as we Count the Omer, and take the time to devote more and more of ourselves to Him for what He has done, what He is doing, and what He will do.

**May we all sing His praises as He promises to be with us always until the end of our days! O God, You are my God, and I will ever praise You!**