



# ***THE WORD FOR TODAY***

## **PSALM 25, 1-7:**

### **“To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul”**

There's been a growing awareness through the Covid pandemic that there is more to us than body and mind. We can be physically well, and our mental health can seem quite stable, but we can still lack something. Our inmost being, our soul, cries out for comfort. Why have some people coped so much better than others with isolation and loneliness? Some will say they have a soulmate—a special friend who is on the same wavelength, who is there to listen at any time and to whom they can pour out their feelings, someone they can trust implicitly.

On 1st August John's Sunday Reflection was about the first words of another psalm, 103, which are “Praise the Lord, O my soul”. He spoke about God being our true soulmate, always there for us, now and for ever—you can find it on the church website on the Reflections page in Media.

Here, in these few verses from Psalm 25, we can learn from David's trust in God and reliance on him to look after him and lead him on when he was having a tough time.



Follow the words of this short Bible passage on seven panels around the church. The first is just round the corner on the north wall of this little building and the others are on the east wall of the church (right as you look from here) for panels 2 and 3, the north (back) wall (4), and the west wall (5, 6 and 7). The translation of the Bible used is the New International Version, and you can look it up on the internet under Bible Gateway.



**“To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul;  
in you I trust, O my God.”**

**1**

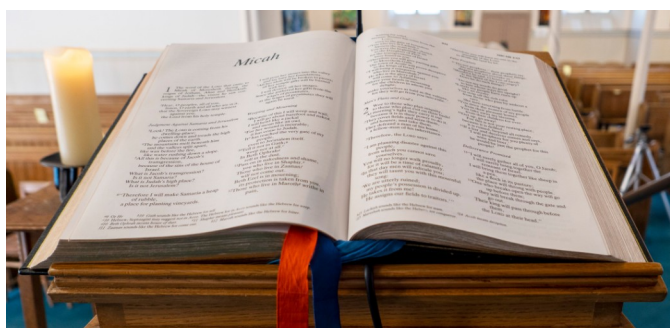
When things are really difficult we need people we can trust. Sometimes we find it difficult to hand over any part of our lives to somebody else. In the pandemic, particularly at the beginning, it was difficult for some of us to admit that we needed the help which was freely offered. So it is with God. We can find it difficult to hand things over to him—to trust that he really is interested and willing to help.

What can we learn from what David says? For me, the clue is in those last words “my God”. God was very real to David—he was close to him; he was indeed David’s God. Why then should David not put everything in his hands?



***Lord, keep me close to you and deepen my faith in you.  
Help me to trust that you do care for me, that you are my God.  
Help me to acknowledge that I need you.***

***Now walk to the right of the church building to find panels 2 and 3***



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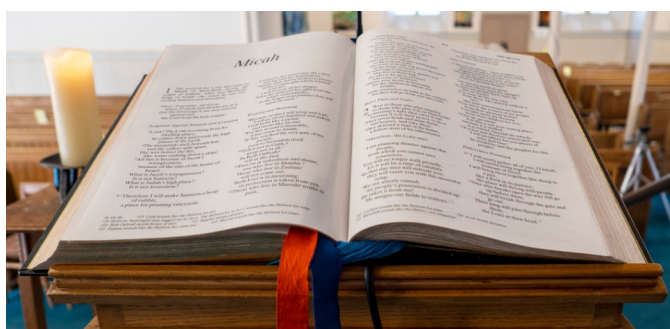
**“Do not let me be put to shame,  
nor let my enemies triumph over me.”**

**2**

How do you stop yourself falling apart? Perhaps you’ve never had such a problem, although many more of us have felt a bit fragile at some point over the last eighteen months. When day-to-day life is a struggle, when the statistics are mind-blowingly bad, and now when everybody seems to be embracing normal life again with abandon. What do you do when you are under pressure to do things you aren’t happy with? When you can’t just go along with everybody else? When everybody seems against you?



***Lord, when I feel out of step with everybody, help me to think clearly;  
when I am overwhelmed, reassure me;  
when I am cowed and helpless, take my hand and lift me up.***



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**“No-one whose hope is in you  
will ever be put to shame,  
but they will be put to shame  
who are treacherous without excuse.”**

**3**

We sing a worship song at Liberton Kirk by Graham Kendrick which uses these first 7 verses of Psalm 25 almost word for word (I’ve been singing it as I write these thoughts!). He does add his own words in the chorus, which goes like this:

**“No-one whose hope is on you will ever be put to shame;  
that’s why my eyes are on you, O Lord.  
Surround me, defend me, Oh, how I need you.  
To you I lift up my soul, to you I lift up my soul.”**

It is an immensely uplifting song—all we need to do is put our hope, our trust, our faith in God. How can we find the strength to do that—it does mean that we are in a way surrendering to him—are we losing control?



***Lord, keep my hope in you.  
Keep me true to you.  
Don’t let me think I can manage without you.***

***Now walk round the back of the church, where panel 4 is on the back door.***



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**“Show me your ways, O Lord,  
teach me your paths;  
guide me in your truth  
and teach me . . . .”**

**4**

Every day we have decisions to make, and many of them have an element of right and wrong in them. We can go one way or the other. We really want to do the right thing but it's sometimes easier not to. Sometimes we don't even pause for thought. Pausing is good—taking time to ask for guidance, asking “What would Jesus do?”

That's why a daily pattern of prayer is so good—it builds pauses into the day, it makes contact with our maker the norm rather than an afterthought. Try it and see - look at the Daily Devotions on the website.



***Lord, imprint your ways on my heart  
so that all my instincts are to go where you would have me go:  
but just in case I fail be with me to guide me every step of the way.***

***Now walk further and turn left round the church to find panels 5, 6 and 7***



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**“... for you are God my Saviour,  
and my hope is in you all day long.”**

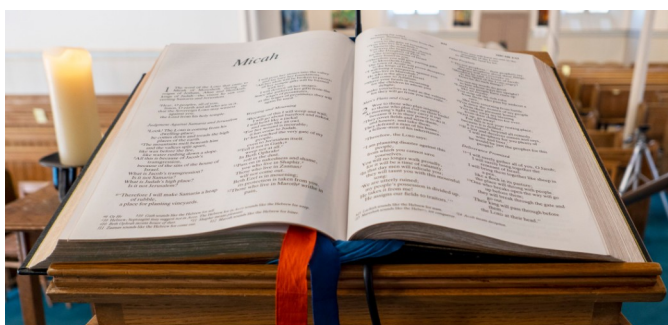
**5**

The reason for wanting to live the sort of life God wants us to is to give something back to an amazing loving God who is there for us always—a God who was prepared to sacrifice his only Son for us. We are not trying to be good loving people just for a feeling of self-satisfaction.

It's good for us to remember to praise God for who he is—our Saviour, no less, who saves us from guilt and sin and promises us eternity. It's good too to keep reminding ourselves of our reliance on his faithful loving presence with us all day, every day.



***Mighty Creator, Lord of all and loving Saviour, we praise you.  
Thank you for being somebody we can trust.  
Thank you for always being there.***



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**“Remember, O Lord,  
your great mercy and love,  
for they are from of old.”**

**6**

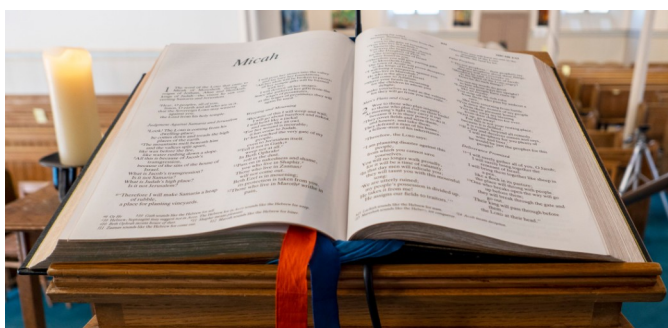
David was well-versed in the scriptures with their stories of Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses. They led him to believe in a God who loved his people and was merciful to them even though they disobeyed his commandments and ignored what he said to them through the prophets. He hoped and prayed for that mercy and love to continue for him.

How much more evidence we have now of God's mercy and love as we read of the coming of Jesus and his sacrifice for us!



***Lord, thank you for Jesus and his sacrifice for us.  
Thank you for the Bible which speaks your truth  
and reminds us of your faithfulness.***

***Panel no. 7 is on the church wall behind the cairn on the right***



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**“Remember not the sins of my youth  
and my rebellious ways;  
according to your love remember me,  
for you are good, O Lord.”**

**7**

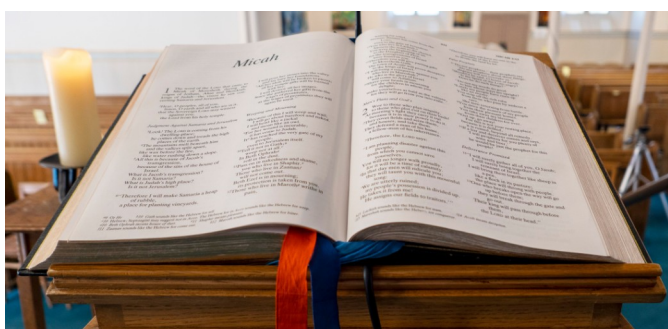
There's always something we are ashamed of, whether it's something from years ago when perhaps we were too young to realise its significance, or whether it's our constant failure to do the right thing today, and our ability to find what we think are good excuses. And yet, God will wipe those sins away, the slate will be clean, we have the chance of a new start, because he loves us with an amazing never-ending love. God is good!



***Lord, thank you for loving me enough to forgive everything I have done.  
Your love lights my life as sunlight brightens our world.  
You are good, O Lord!***

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If you would like to know more about Christianity there are many opportunities within our church life here. Contact John Young, by telephone on 664 3067 or by email on [JYoung@churchofscotland.org.uk](mailto:JYoung@churchofscotland.org.uk) for details or information.



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on a very hot day in July 2021  
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