

^{NLT} Psalm 52—For the choir director: A psalm of David, regarding the time Doeg the Edomite told Saul that Ahimelech had given refuge to David.

You call yourself a hero, do you? Why boast about this crime of yours. Don't you realize God's justice continues forever?² All day long you plot destruction. Your tongue cuts like a sharp razor; you're an expert at telling lies.³ You love evil more than good and lies more than truth. Interlude

⁴ You love to say things that harm others, you liar!⁵ But God will strike you down once and for all. He will pull you from your home and drag you from the land of the living. Interlude.

⁶ The righteous will see it and be amazed. They will laugh and say,⁷ "Look what happens to mighty warriors who do not trust in God. They trust their wealth instead and grow more and more bold in their wickedness."⁸ But I am like an olive tree, thriving in the house of God. I trust in God's unending love forever and ever.⁹ I will praise you forever, O God, for what you have done. I will wait for your mercies in the presence of your people.



What did God say to me? *Don't you realize God's justice continues forever? Those who reject Him will not live forever. Some people love evil more than good and lies more than truth. Some people love to destroy others with their words, even some who claim to be Christian. God's justice is that He will strike them down once and for all. They will be uprooted from the land of the living, from the church, from eternal life. The righteous will see it and be amazed. This reminds me of the Book of Mark where many times the people were amazed at the Lord's teaching and miracles. I am like an olive tree thriving in the house of God among His people. I trust in God to protect me from those who love evil and who lie, and who might try to bring me down with their deceptive words.*

What questions do I have? *What is an olive tree like?*

What is God telling me to do? *Trust Him if I must endure someone trying to bring me down with lies and deception. Praise Him in the presence of His people. Love my enemies and let God take care of them. Don't return evil with evil.*

What has God promised to me? *His justice will prevail. His love never fails. He will vindicate me.*

What is the most meaningful verse to me? *V. 8 - I am like an olive tree thriving in the house of God. I will always trust in God's unending love.*

What have I learned about God's character? *God will not tolerate lying and deception among His people. He protects those who love the truth and those who love good. His love will never fail.*

Write a 1 or 2 sentence prayer in response to God: *Thank you Lord Jesus for your loving kindness and your protection from those who might try to bring me down. Help me to trust you and to respond to them in your loving kindness and to allow you to handle the situation your way. In Jesus' Name I pray, Amen.*

Seeking God for the City 2011 is a devotional covering 40 days to Palm Sunday (March 9 to April 17, 2011) that enables believers to seek God's Face and Christ's Kingdom for their communities. Believers will pray God's heart using His Word, offer prayers of Biblical hope, and prayers that will connect God's Word to the needs of their communities. If your church desires to use this devotional, contact Brenda at the E.C. Church Center (717-866-7581 or blong@eccenter.com).

HeartCry

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Dynamic Encounters with God



The last two HeartCry newsletters featured an article on **"MAKING PRAYER MEETINGS INTO DYNAMIC ENCOUNTERS WITH GOD."** Our Prayer Mobilization Team thought it would be helpful to provide an example as to how one might respond to the meditation questions presented again in this month's issue. I have chosen Psalm 52 for my personal encounters with God this week, below you can see my response as an example.

On the first day I read and reread the Psalm and underlined the verses that were the most meaningful to me. On the second day I read and reread the Psalm and wrote down my main points. On the third day I read and reread the Psalm and wrote down what God was telling me to do and what He promised to me. I also wrote down the most meaningful verse in my own words. On the fourth day I read and reread the Psalm and wrote down what I learned about God's character and I wrote my prayer in response to Him. On all four days I included a prayer for understanding before reading and then prayed after completing the reading, meditating and writing activities. Each day it only took about 15 to 20 minutes of my time, but what a blessing it was.

This is how we can have "dynamic encounters with God" not only as individuals during the week, but also as we share our responses with each other on Sunday morning or Wednesday night in our small group meetings. Prayer is a conversation with God, and as we meditate on his Word and listen to the voice of His Spirit then our prayers will be according to His will and they will be answered. Our meetings will be Spirit filled as we share what God is doing in our lives and we will be transformed both individually and corporately.



PRAYER MOBILIZATION TEAM
of the Evangelical Congregational Church



MAKING PRAYER MEETINGS INTO DYNAMIC ENCOUNTERS WITH GOD



Dear Pastor or Prayer Class Leader,

If your prayer meetings or adult Sunday School classes have become poorly attended and kind of boring you may want to consider the following method. Ask your group to read a Scripture passage during the week and ask them to prayerfully answer the questions below before their next class. Each person should get alone with God in silence and solitude and meditate on His Word for about 15-20 minutes per day until all the questions are answered.

At the next class come with your own answers and lead the class in a discussion of everyone's responses. It is helpful to use application Bibles and a commentary to answer some of the tough questions. I have found this method to be so effective that I have used it for all of my small groups. Try this with one of the following readings: Old Testament—**Psalm 52:1-12**; Gospels—**Matthew 23:1-3; 25-28**, or New Testament—**2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1**.

Rev. Robert Brown (Plymouth Meeting)

What did God say to me? List 2-5 main points or summarize the reading:

What is the most meaningful verse to you? Rewrite it as it is, or rewrite it in your own words? _____

What have I learned about God's character? How has the reading uncovered how God thinks, feels, and behaves toward you and others? _____

What questions do I have? What words do I need to look up? _____

What is God telling me to do? _____

Write a 1 or 2 sentence prayer in response to God: _____

What has God promised to me? _____
