



# SUMMER in the PSALMS

August 20, 2023

## OUR STRONG SHEPHERD

### || Group Discussion Guide ||

1

The psalmist cries out for mercy--on what basis does he receive mercy? How is he different from the wicked who go into the pit? (See especially verses 2 and 5).

2

What is the pit? Compare the use of the same word in Genesis 37 (Joseph's brothers cast him into a pit); Genesis 41 (Joseph is imprisoned in Egypt); Psalm 40:2 ("He drew me up from the pit of destruction, out of the miry bog, and set my feet upon a rock"); Isaiah 14:14 ("brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit"); Jeremiah 38 (Jeremiah was cast into a cistern [pit]). What does the pit represent in this psalm?

3

What word of warning or encouragement can we bring to a world facing pits of various kinds?

4

Should we wish for the evil and wicked to receive "their due reward"? How do we understand the intersection of mercy, justice, and retribution?

5

The psalmist calls the Lord his strength and shield. What do these terms mean? What do they encompass when taken together?

6

The psalmist moves from a heart that exults to a song that gives thanks. What can we learn from this transition from an inward emotion to an outward expression?

7

In verse 8, we move from the individual to the community. Why is it important to have not only a personal dependence on the Lord, but a corporate dependence as well? Why should we trust in the Lord together?

8

In this psalm, the Lord is rock, strength, shield, refuge, and shepherd. What attributes do these metaphors point to? Which do you feel most strongly in your life?

