

## INTERVARSITY BIBLE STUDY GUIDE

### *Psalm 63:1-11, A Lament Psalm (60 minutes)*

#### **WELCOME (7 minutes)**

Icebreaker: What is something you like that others tend *not* to like?

We are studying the Bible together because we want to grow in our love for Jesus through Scripture and because we want to grow in our witness to Jesus through Scripture.

Let's pray and ask God to help us as we study today's passage together...

#### **GROUP NORMS (3 minutes)**

Let's remember our group norms as we study together today:

1. Use "I" statements (speak for yourself, not for everyone)
2. Avoid judgmental statements (no shame or blame)
3. Allow space for everyone to share if they choose
4. Practice active listening and give advice only if invited to do so
5. What we share here stays here (confidentiality)

#### **INTRODUCE the Scripture Text (3 minutes)**

For the ancient Hebrew people, the Psalms were songs of worship that captured their reality and guided them to turn their will and their longings toward God. These lyrics were first written in response to events in the lives of the authors, and then later the whole community used them in worship. After the return from exile in Babylon, many of these songs from over the centuries were collected into the book of Psalms. Individuals and communities can pray or sing the Psalms as honest spiritual expressions or as commitments of faithfulness, and at the same time, the book as a whole tells the story of Israel's redemption – monarchy, exile, and return.

Today we will study a psalm of trust.

You may want to reference 2 Samuel 15-17 for more understanding (that the original readers of this text would already have had). This passage tells about David being in the desert of Judah when he was fleeing from his son Absalom, who tried to overthrow him.

#### **SEE the Scripture Text (10 minutes)**

Let's read the passage and talk about what we see.

- Who are the characters? How are they connected?
- What is happening? When? Where?
- Which words are being repeated?
- Is the author comparing or contrasting anything?
- Would you like to point out anything else you notice?

Psalm 63:1-11 NIV –

A psalm of David. When he was in the Desert of Judah.

- 1 You, God, are my God,  
earnestly I seek you;  
I thirst for you,  
my whole being longs for you,  
in a dry and parched land  
where there is no water.
- 2 I have seen you in the sanctuary  
and beheld your power and your glory.
- 3 Because your love is better than life,  
my lips will glorify you.
- 4 I will praise you as long as I live,  
and in your name I will lift up my hands.
- 5 I will be fully satisfied as with the richest of foods;  
with singing lips my mouth will praise you.
- 6 On my bed I remember you;  
I think of you through the watches of the night.
- 7 Because you are my help,  
I sing in the shadow of your wings.
- 8 I cling to you;  
your right hand upholds me.
- 9 Those who want to kill me will be destroyed;  
they will go down to the depths of the earth.
- 10 They will be given over to the sword  
and become food for jackals.
- 11 But the king will rejoice in God;  
all who swear by God will glory in him,  
while the mouths of liars will be silenced.

### **DISCOVER the Scripture Text (25 minutes)**

Let's discuss a few questions that will help us discover and understand the text.

1. How would you describe the emotional state of the psalmist?
2. Why do you think this is considered a psalm of trust? Where do you see trust coming up in the text?
3. There is a tone shift that happens for verses 9-11. How is the message of these verses related to the rest of the psalm?
4. How might this psalm have impacted the ancient Hebrews as they prayed and sang it in worship together?
5. If we could communicate the core message of this text in just one sentence, what would it be? What do we sense God is communicating through this passage?

### **RESPOND to the Scripture Text (10 minutes)**

This psalm expresses David's deep trust of God and close, intimate relationship with God. David's soul is most satisfied by God, so he clings to God. He trusts God's work and God's character. David is fleeing for his life in the desert, yet he expresses his full trust in God.

Trust God and seek God for everything you need.

Let's discern together how we can respond to what God is saying. We will answer one option from below, whichever seems most relevant to our group's discussion of the text.

- A. How would you describe your level of trust in God? What would it take for you to deepen that trust?
- B. What prevents you from fully trusting God? Are there any areas of your life that you hold back from God? Share about those areas, if you are willing.
- C. Share about an experience of someone breaking trust with you. In contrast, God is fully trustworthy and will never let you down, even when life seems to be terrible. Do you believe that about God? Why or why not?
- D. Use the psalm as a guide and write your own poem of trust in God.

#### **CLOSE (2 minutes)**

Let's pray and thank God for our time in Scripture together...

*Tips for leading the group discussion (and more tips are available at [howto.bible](http://howto.bible)):*

- *Participate but keep your comments short to make space for others.*
- *Silence is okay. Encourage further discussion by saying "What else?" instead of commenting on every response.*



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contact [christy.gates@intervarsity.org](mailto:christy.gates@intervarsity.org) or [sara.chang@intervarsity.org](mailto:sara.chang@intervarsity.org) with any questions