

“For forty years I was angry with them, and I said, ‘They are a people whose hearts turn away from me. They refuse to do what I tell them.’ So in my anger I took an oath: ‘They will never enter my place of rest.’” Psalms 95:10-11 NLT

## lectio // Psalm 95

There is a common phrase for those who know God, trust God. The phrase is, “God is good all the time.” There is also a response from the hearer, that agrees and says, “all the time, God is good.” Why do we do that? Because it is a quick reminder of truth. Honestly, I feel for a people group of several generations that lived, or at least eked out an existence in slavery for 400 years. That’s almost SIX generations living under harsh conditions and the thumb of egomaniacal leaders called pharaohs. Then the day comes when the entire country, babies, teens, adults and senior adults are FREED. This whole generation has the opportunity to be themselves, care for themselves, and pretty much do what they want to do instead of supplying the labor force to build a kingdom for foreign leaders in a land they don’t own. I would guess that most of them do not have the skills necessary to survive on their own IN A DESERT! They needed God to help them. And yes, there’s a catch, they now have to obey God and his ways on his terms! Weren’t they following and obeying God for 400 years? Not so much. We don’t know how much faith or practice of following God they had. They had come from the Abrahamic covenant which promised them a land of their own and growth in their number like they had never seen. It was a simple faith, simple prayers, minimal requirements in this relationship with their God. So now they are free, but with zero sustainable supplies in this journey to a promised land. They were “wealthy” with Egypt’s gold, jewels and expensive linens, but that can’t feed a million plus people. They could also trade for goods when a desert clan might pass by. They were utterly and completely dependent on God. It was God’s job to not only get them out of slavery, but to get slavery out of their mindset! This particular generation just couldn’t pull it off. The less they tried the more frustrated God was with them. God COULD have forced their obedience or just killed the entire group that would not change. But, in his love and mercy, he just let them wander in “slave mode” whining and complaining all the way to their graves - all of them. Then when the last SLAVE died, the entire people group of Jews could move forward into the land that was promised. Reality check, I probably would have been one of the whining slaves who died seeing but never entering that rest!

## oratio

Dad,

I see your point here in Psalms. You are good, but we are still human. You are faithful, but we have a death-wish to hold onto our past. And, not just in memory, but in habits as well. I can understand your anger towards your chosen people as well as humanity in general. We strive and struggle and need your grace and certainly your mercy. We see hope, the promised kingdom of paradise that you have provided, but our wounds and worries keep us tethered to the slavery in our soul. Help us, forgive us and please continue to lead us in trust and faith in who you are, for you are good!

## contemplatio

rest in the presence of God, allowing the words revealed to take root