



Saturday May 12th, 14 brothers came together solemnly for Men's Prayer Breakfast or MPB. We could not help but notice the empty chair that our brother John Kvenberg often occupied. It's hard to believe that he will no longer be physically joining us. John brought a lot to MPB, a very active and knowledgeable brother whose words and wisdom were always welcomed. However, we know John would not have wanted the attention, instead he'd expect us to enjoy the time together in food, fun, and fellowship.

Gene Ward had food today but unfortunately he could not attend so Mark Lamboni picked up the football and brought in Gene's dish. What a dish! Again, some kind of breakfast casserole that was outstanding, along with fruit and coffee cake; you missed out if you didn't attend. Good food and fellowship with warm thoughts of John was had before Phil Overholt's devotions. I quickly learned that when you have this many guys together, there is no one topic. There were more side bars than the O.J. Simpson trial! I couldn't keep up with the topics so unfortunately I cannot share. I do know that Lee Shoemaker passed around a Mission Bar-B-Que flyer to let us know when we can get a free sandwich. Seems Mission is honoring veterans.

Phil had devotions and unfortunately, he had it among a bunch of comedians out of work! I don't think he was able to finish with all the open discussions. The devotions were centered on the Psalms. Our focus for this lesson was on psalms, verses 71, 72 and the infamous 23. We read the first 13 verses from the 71st psalm and spoke about its meaning. The 71st psalm is a prayer for help from an elderly person. Verses 1-4 state, "In you, O Lord, I take refuge; let me never be put to shame. In your righteousness deliver me and rescue me; incline your ear to me and save me. Be to me a rock of refuge, a strong fortress, to save me, for you are my rock and my fortress. Rescue me, O my God, from the hand of the wicked, from the grasp of the unjust and cruel." The 72nd psalm is considered a royal psalm asking God's blessings for the king. Verse 1 states, "Give the king your justice, O God and your righteousness. As God's representative, the king is expected to rule in light of God's will, with righteousness and justice. In verses 12-14 it reads, "May he defend the cause of the poor of the people, give deliverance to the needy, and crush the oppressor." God's will for the people include protection for the poor and needy – especially from oppressors.

What types of Psalms are there? This brought some heavy debate from several men, also asking "Who wrote the Psalms?" The Hebrew name for the book of Psalms is Tehillim, which literally means "praises." The book is a collection of material used by individuals, communities, and kings. This includes a wide variety of psalms: Prayers for Help; Hymns of Praise; Liturgies; Instructional; Songs of thanksgiving; Royal; Trust; Acrostic; Festival; Historical. The psalms were composed by many different authors, who are not identified. Some psalms include subscription (writing or printing that appears above or to the side) such as "of David" or "of Asaph." These terms do not mean that David or Asaph wrote these psalms, but that the poem or song is associated with them in some manner. Martin Luther wrote that the book of Psalms "might well be called a little Bible. In it is comprehended most beautifully and briefly everything that is in the entire Bible. Lastly we all decided to recite the 23rd psalm together for our brother John.

In closing I would like to personally say that I will miss looking across the room at John during MPB. I will miss his wise words when speaking of scripture. I know for many MPB to come I will find myself looking for him or expecting him to say something – I will miss John and I will never forget him. Please honor John and consider joining us next month on June 9th for our next MPB; until then may God bless you. Ray