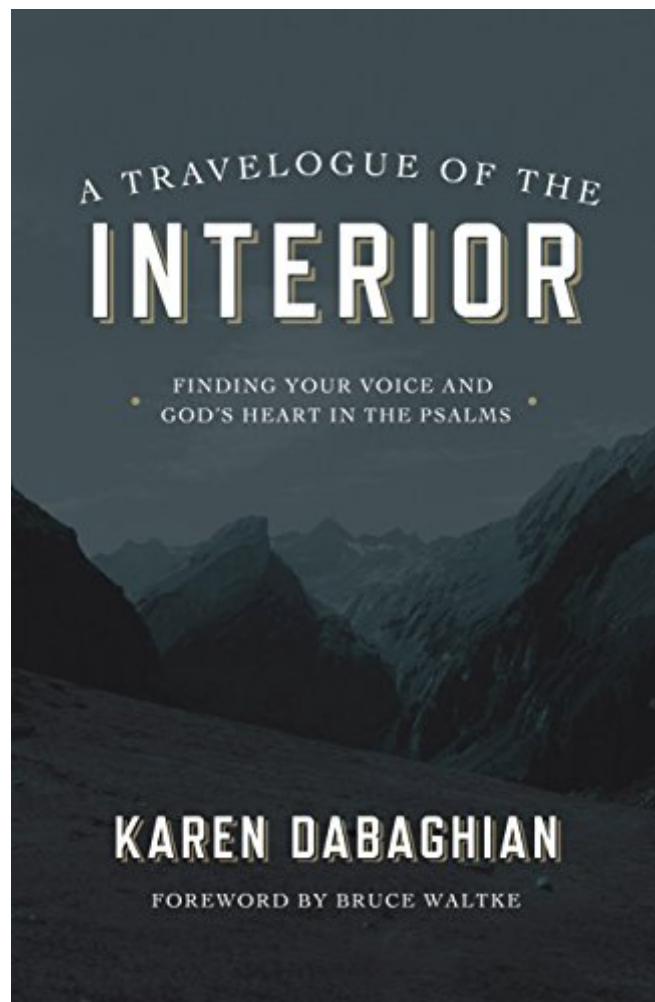


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A Travelogue Of The Interior: Finding Your Voice And God's Heart In The Psalms



Synopsis

Most travel tales begin and end with the book in your hand. Not this one. As Karen Dabaghian shares the adventure of her year in the Psalms, you'll embark on an ancient journey for those hungry to know God more intimately. The Psalms were the hymnbook of the Hebrews, Jesus, and the early church. Today, we tend to pluck a verse here and there for a word of encouragement, but we have lost the Psalms as a guidebook for spiritual formation. You can rediscover the Psalms as a traveler. Explore the terrain where your interior life and the Word of God intersect. Begin speaking to God with raw honesty. Listen as God replies with personal, life-giving words. Above all, discover at the feet of the poet-king how to taste and see that the LORD is good. •Karen Dabaghian has been a follower of Jesus for 35 years. She wears lots of hats – wife and mother, author and blogger, high-tech marketer and bass player. She has a Masters in Rhetoric from Penn State and lives in northern California with her husband and two daughters.

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Customer Reviews

* I received this book from the publisher via NetGalley to review. A Travelogue of the Interior was all that I had hoped for and then some. Not an amazing start to my review but straight forward if I say so myself. From what I gathered from the synopsis this book was something I knew I would glean rich and insightful spiritual gems, I was not disappointed. The author outlines the book in such a way that you are taken along for the ride in her journey but she welcomes the reader to join her in her adventure in the book of Psalms. Right from the start she invites the reader "to read a psalm a day, unpack it and the write a poem in response". An invitation to join her adventure down the river of Psalms and hopefully discover yourself along the way. There are several chapters that explores subjects such as lament, sin, prayer and thirsting after God, among others. I mention these because they spoke to me the most. Oh, and one more which explores gender and how especially women struggle with how we (and the world) view women. I constantly highlighted many sections and even added a few of my own notes. This quote really resounded within me, a section referring to being a parent: "I let them go because it is good for them, and it is good for me. I let them go because that is, after all, part of what parenting is, a daily, sometimes gut wrenching decision to entrust our children to God and teach them that they belong not to us but to God. To instruct them and then give them opportunities to discover on their own that God uniquely made them to reflect God's image in the world, that they are capable of following God wherever He leads.

Some books are best read slowly and reflectively. This is one of them. Karen Dabaghian was invited by her pastor to attend a course he was running on David's Psalms. Participants were to study them along with the corresponding narrative in 1 and 2 Samuel, then write their own poems of lament and praise in response. She expected to feel out of her depth, but it turned out to be an amazing and enlightening time of personal growth. Dabaghian is convincing in her appeal that we should all write poetry. She believes that if she can rise to the challenge, anyone can. She wishes poetry were not the 'exclusive domain of the intellectual elite', because this scares ordinary folk from believing that we too may capture the ebb and flow of our lives, if we only dare try. Each reflective chapter ends with a beautiful and heartfelt poem which almost does encourage me to have a go. Here are just a few of her interesting musings inspired by the Psalms.

- 1) She ponders the chicken and egg conundrum with regards to faith and works; which comes first? We assume that God has a master plan which we need to figure out like clues in a mystery novel, but what if the process is actually more malleable, and our perspectives and desires shape God's heart, as well as the other way around?
- 2) She challenges us to consider our motives to be sure why we even want to worship God. Is it because He gives us good things, or simply because of who He is? And she looks at the

problematic aspects of using exclusively male terminology when referring to God.3) If joy is the sensation we have in the presence of God, then what if the term 'worship' simply covers the spontaneous things we do in response to this. It would follow that these will be way different for everyone.

I appreciated the lessons I learned in "Travelogue of the Interior" • as I have struggled through enhancing my prayer life. This is a debut book written by Karen Dabaghian. What started out as a 12-week class through her church turned into an entire year immersed in the Psalms. By telling readers her story, she encourages us to use the Psalms to help us carry on a real, transparent conversation with God. Isn't that what prayer really is, a conversation with God? œThis book is one such instance, a simple telling of what happens when we take the Psalms seriously, peruse their nuances, and labor to sing them back to God? • (Dabaghian) In her journey, Karen would read one Psalm at a time. She would read it in the context where it was written, often taking her to the biblical books of 1 and 2 Samuel. She would read commentary about a particular Psalm. She'd immerse herself in the emotion of the Psalm. Finally, she'd put pen to paper and pen her own thoughts to God. œI wrote a lot of bad poetry. I wrote some good poetry. But most importantly, I discovered a place of raw intimacy with God. As it turned out, God wasn't a literary critic - God just wanted me to talk to Him honestly, no posturing or posing. • (Dabaghian) Isn't that what prayer really is, talking with God honestly? She wove a story of what she had going on in her life personally with what God was teaching her through the Psalms. Thus the term, travelogue. About her friend, Jim, who fought a mighty battle with ALS before Jesus called him home. About her pastor, the Rabbi, who has learned so much in his own journey through the Psalms.

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