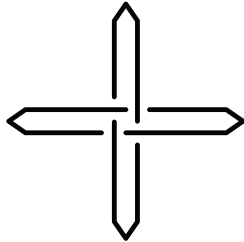


PRAYING THE PSALMS



EXPERIENCING
SCRIPTURE-FED
SPIRIT-LED
WORSHIP-BASED PRAYER

Volume 1 Psalms 1–41

Daniel Henderson
General Editor



6:4PRESS

Praying the Psalms: Experiencing Scripture-Fed, Spirit-Led, Worship-Based Prayer
Volume 1 (1 - 41)

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Requests for information should be addressed to:

6:4PRESS, PO Box 370233, Denver, CO 80237

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface	5
Contributors	7
Introduction	9
A Call to Corporate Prayer	14
How to Use this Prayer Guide	15
Psalms 1-41	
Comments and Prayer Guides	20-101
Appendices	
A. Psalms by Category	103
B. Historical Context and	106
Structure of the Psalms	
Strategic Renewal & The 6:4 Fellowship	110

PREFACE

For almost two decades I met with a small group of faithful church members every Sunday morning, typically at 6:30 a.m. Each week we would read a Psalm at the outset of our gathering. We would reflect on the truths we observed about God and His character. Then uniting prayers of praise and spontaneous song, we would spend the next 20 minutes worshiping from the word of God.

After a few moments of quiet surrender to the will and kingdom concerns of our Father, we would disperse throughout the church campus, praying with heartfelt requests for the needs of the day. Some would prayer walk in the area of the children's ministry, others would intercede for the youth in their section of the campus. Some would remain in the auditorium, walking among the rows, praying for receptive hearts during the upcoming service. I would often pray in the area of the choir loft and, of course, the pulpit.

At a designated time, we would re-gather in the front of the worship center as these faithful intercessors gathered around the worship pastor and me, asking for the Lord's favor on our leadership of the services. I often noted that the two of us were no more important in that moment, just more desperate.

Over the years, we went through the Psalms five times, simply praying from the next Psalm each week. I can testify that I learned how to pray in those weekly gatherings. Those 60-minute prayer experiences each Sunday ministered to my soul and prepared me to preach in ways that I still cannot fully articulate. It seemed that each Psalm was perfectly timed for the needs of the day and fueled our prayers of faith for the work of the Lord.

We would interact with each Psalm through the lens of the model prayer commanded by Jesus in Matthew 6:9-13 and Luke 11:2-4. The beautiful convergence of the truths in each Psalm with the rhythm of prayer taught by Christ was fresh and instructive every Sunday.

This guide will invite you to also experience the power of praying the Psalms, just as we did over those many years. I pray you will fully maximize this resource personally, in your family, and even in your church or broader ministry endeavors. I believe it will show you fresh pathways of transforming prayer.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer stated that “The Psalter is the great school of prayer” and that “We learn from the prayer of the Psalms what we should pray.”¹ So, enter in to this school of prayer. Learn to pray more biblically, more honestly, and more faithfully.

Not long ago, I posted this thought on social media: “The great privilege of prayer is to open your Bible to experience a conversation with the Author who lives in you to explain what He meant by what He said and then inspire your heart to apply that truth in an intimate engagement that will transform your life – and empower you as an agent of gospel transformation in the world.”

The author of the Psalms, ultimately the Holy Spirit, awaits your pursuit of the Lord in prayer. He will illumine, guide, comfort, convict, and change you. I truly pray, your journey through the Psalms in prayer will do as much for you as it has done for me – and even more.

For His glory,

Daniel Henderson

Founder and President of Strategic Renewal

Global Director, *The 6:4 Fellowship*

¹ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together: The Classic Exploration of Christian Community* (New York: Harper & Row, 1954), 47

CONTRIBUTORS

Daniel Henderson
GENERAL EDITOR

President, Strategic Renewal, Global Director, The 6:4 Fellowship
(www.strategicrenewal.com) (www.64fellowship.com)

Psalms 10, 38, 39, 40, 41

Justin Jeppesen—*Director of
Spiritual Formation and
Adjunct Professor, University
of Northwestern, St. Paul, MN*
(www.unwsp.edu)

Introduction, Appendix B,
Psalms 1, 11, 12, 13

Dennis Henderson—*Pastor, Fu-
sion Bible Church, Durant, OK*
(www.fusiondurant.com)
Psalms 9, 35, 36, 37

Jon Hoekema—*Pastor, Horizon
Community Church, Downers
Grove, IL* (www.Horizoncc.org)
Psalms 6, 26, 27, 28

Mike Mitchener—*Pastor,
Riverview Baptist Church,
Ripplemead, VA* (www.riverviewtoday.org)
Psalms 5, 23, 24, 25

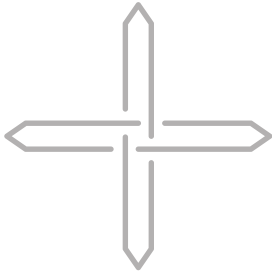
Mike Moran—*Pastor,
Creekside Evangelical Free
Church, Merced, CA* (www.creeksidemerced.org)
Psalms 4, 20, 21, 22

Jeremiah Porter—*Pastor, Christ's
Community Church, Granite
Falls, WA* (www.cfccchurch.org)
Psalms 4, 20, 21, 22

Sandy Robertson—*Pastor, New
Covenant Fellowship, Titusville,
FL* (www.ncftitusville.org)
Psalms 2, 14, 15, 16

S. Lindsay Taylor—*President,
Strategic Renewal, Canada,*
(www.strategicrenewal.ca)
Psalms 3, 17, 18, 19

Aaron Telecky—*Pastor,
Maranatha Bible Church,
Cedar Rapids, IA* (www.maranathabible.org)
Psalms 7, 29, 30, 31



INTRODUCTION

By Justin Jeppesen

Music is one of the most powerful mediums of communication. It resonates in our core, eliciting emotion and longing. It calls forth transcendent thoughts and sometimes it even generates movement that alters the trajectory of our lives. Also, music draws out memories.

Have you ever heard a song on the radio or on a playlist that suddenly brings to the surface a memory that you had forgotten? Songs are often attached to memories, and memories bring alive past experiences, both the bad and the good. Imagine if you could go back through your life and write a song for each defining moment – every heartache, every celebration, trial, battle, victory. God already has. *For you*. It's called the Book of Psalms.

Music was a vital component of ancient Hebrew worship. In fact, the Book of Psalms could rightly be considered the original Old Testament “hymnal.” Chapters were written in poetic form and most often sung as a part of Israel's worship and celebration. And like much music written through the centuries, it is no wonder that God, the divine musician, has wonderfully woven themes of joy and remembrance into His songs too.

Each Psalm “song” evokes memories of God's gracious dealings with His people, the nation of Israel. All collectively tell how God worked for His glory and their good throughout the multitude of their generations. Today, it could be said, Psalms is the “soundtrack” of God's redemptive history.

Just as songs, when we hear them, draw us back to reflect again on significant events in our personal lives, so too God sang songs over His nation calling them to remember Him and His ways. Yet these songs or Psalms were not only written *to* ancient Israel, they were also divinely composed *for* us. God has arranged divinely inspired songs for every season of our lives. Each Psalm has a unique way of giving breath and language to our life of prayer with our Creator. In the same way song lyrics or melodies enable us to articulate the deepest emotions of our hearts or clarify or even simplify puzzling concepts, so too the Psalms engage us at deep levels, especially when drawing us into the broad vocal register of prayer.

It would not be an overstatement to say that Psalms is one of the most popular and beloved books of the Bible. It is the “go to” book for many seeking encouragement and renewal of perspective. It draws from

a wealth of experiences that apply to every aspect of human life. But the Psalms are not laid out in a neat and tidy order. Rather they appear unpredictable and dynamic as they flow from one theme to the next. This sense of random order seems to be strangely intentional. Individual Psalms often depict the reality and the dynamic unpredictability of life. Just as life may flow from a joyous occasion one moment, then – even suddenly – into a sorrowful moment the next, the Psalms meet us with a sincere and honest relevancy no matter our circumstances. In reading and thinking about the Psalms many have found refuge and strength, encouragement in tough times and especially, abiding joy.

This reality includes you! Even now, as you read this introduction the Lord is inviting you to encounter Him as you prayerfully engage in His divine songbook. The God of the Psalms desires to sing over you wherever you are in your journey and to bring you into a place of deeper trust and intimacy with Him.

THE PATHWAY TO JOYFUL PRAYER

While the 150 songs that compose the Book of Psalms display a striking diversity of themes they also present a unified focus. The original Hebrew title for Psalms is “*Tehillim*,” which translates into “Songs of Joy,” or even more concisely, “Praises.”¹ This is true even though the Psalms of lament, expressing sorrow, outnumber Psalms of praise, accompanied by celebrations of joy. And their order, sequence, and emphasis present a curious, yet insightful surprise. More times lament is the theme of early Psalms (there are 16 in the first 41 chapters). But only 4 are found in the final 43 chapters. Inversely, Psalms of joy are few at the beginning (only 7 in the first 41 chapters). Yet 13 erupt near the end of the entire collection, traveling an increasing crescendo of praise.

The point is this: Lament, sorrow, difficulty are eventually eclipsed by praise, joy, and gratitude at the end. One cannot help but wonder if this order intentionally models our life of faith as traveling pilgrims in this foreign land journeying toward our heavenly home. It is clear that songs of lament and praise go hand in hand to sustain a Godward focus in our praying.

Even now, human sorrows here on earth forge a trajectory toward a heavenly joy that can invade present circumstances. Learning to pray the Psalms as God’s *Songs of Joy* equips His people to lay hold of the stunning

1. *An Introduction to the Old Testament*. Longman III, Tremper and Dillard B. Raymond. Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI. 2006.

truths, strengths, and the multitude of comforts He designed to be tangibly experienced in everyday lives.

PRAYING LIKE JESUS

Of all the Scriptures cited in the New Testament, Psalms tops the list. The Lord Jesus himself quotes this joy-filled book over 50 times, often during occasions of great personal turmoil. They were, for Him, the songs of God, reminding Him of His Father and of Home. As a poignant example, Jesus quotes from the Psalms at the time of His greatest suffering on the cross. And what empowered Jesus to endure the agony of Calvary? According to Hebrews 12:2, it was “the joy that was set before him.” Jesus was “a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief” (Isaiah 53:3), and yet, we powerfully see lament and joy converge at the cross. No wonder Jesus uses the Psalms in His dying breaths to extol His firm reliance upon and ultimate trust in His Heavenly Father (Psalm 22:1; Psalm 31:5). Even for Jesus the Psalms gave voice to His conversations with His Father and the Scriptures have been recorded to give us His example to emulate.

It’s been said that if we can learn to pray as Jesus prayed we will have the power to live as Jesus lived. The good news is that Jesus did not leave His disciples guessing when it came to understanding *how* He prayed. He gave them the very rhythm of prayer modeled by His life and His words, especially found in what is commonly referred to as “The Lord’s Prayer” (Matthew 6:9-13 – also Luke 11:2-4). The kind of prayer that Jesus’ life exemplified was Scripture-fed, Spirit-led, and Worship-based. To the degree that we pray Scripture will be to the degree that we pray like Jesus. While more about Jesus’ rhythm of prayer that He commanded us to follow is expounded upon in the next section (*see How to use this Guide*), suffice it to say that the Psalms provide an invaluable entry point to begin praying the way Jesus prayed.

A PERSONAL STORY OF TRANSFORMATION

It was the book of Psalms that the Holy Spirit used to teach me how to pray like Jesus prayed by engaging the Scriptures. When I was first introduced to Strategic Renewal and the 6:4 Fellowship, my life of prayer was transformed as I re-learned how to pray after Jesus’ own pattern. The first place I applied this new way of praying was with the Psalms. As I began to practice worship-based prayer in God’s songbook it opened be-

fore me a whole new realm of conversation with my Creator. It was like I was beginning to participate in the conversation that God had already initiated with me. Rather than coming to the Lord with a list of needs or feeling puzzled about what I should say, I began coming to Him with fresh eyes of faith, beholding His beauty, and with eager ears to listen to His voice. It was as if the Holy Spirit, as the divine conductor, began leading me through the sheet music of the Psalms to pray according to the diverse, yet unified melody of joy. When I allowed the Spirit-inspired words in the Psalms to shape the way I prayed, I began conversing with Jesus like He may have with His heavenly Father.

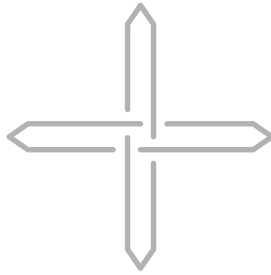
Praying the Psalms has cultivated, for me, a deep intimacy with God, established authentic connection with others, and has further equipped me for fruitful service within the local church. No matter what circumstance I have been in the Lord has met me time and again by animating my soul with songs of lament *and* joyful praise.

I referenced earlier the inverse, yet complementary relationship that is found between songs of lament and songs of praise. In 2020 I experienced this dynamic in a powerful and deeply personal way. After battling cancer for several months, the Lord brought my grandmother to her heavenly home. During my final conversation with her I read Psalms 145 through 150. As I read I often felt compelled to pause, praying a particular passage over her again. As I neared the end I was profoundly struck with the repetition of a single phrase, "Praise the Lord!" In those last moments with my grandmother, lament and sadness were overcome with a supernatural joy and peace. I realized that her faint and final breaths were, nonetheless, exclamations of the strongest praise as she was preparing to meet her Savior face to face. The final moments of my grandma's life on earth were matching the crescendo of praise we find in Psalms 145-150.

Just days later I awoke early in the morning to find a message on my phone saying that she had departed for heaven. My knees hit the floor. The first words that passed through my lips were, I believe, the same words my grandmother was then saying at that very moment, "Praise the Lord!" The Lord used the Psalms not only to shape the last conversation I had with her, but also to further fuel a lasting joy and praise that sustains my soul.

BEGINNING YOUR JOURNEY

Taking the cue from the original purpose of Psalms as a book of promise and joyful remembrance for ancient Israel, it has been my desire in recent years to regularly read and pray through the Psalms for the rest of my life. It is my prayer that this guide, and those that follow, combined with the recording of your own personal prayer journey in the “Journal for Experiencing Scripture-fed, Spirit-led, Worship-based Prayer” will mobilize you and other members of the Body of Christ to engage in transforming conversations with God that will have life-long and multi-generational impact.



A CALL TO CORPORATE PRAYER

Pray alone or with others?

People often ask, “Which is more important, private prayer or corporate prayer?” Our answer is a resounding, “Yes!” This is like asking which leg do we need to walk, the right or the left. Sadly, in Western culture we have essentially amputated our corporate prayer leg and are often lame on our private prayer leg. A healthy and biblical balance in prayer requires diligence in both.

Theologian D.A. Carson affirmed this principle, “Many facets of Christian discipleship, not the least prayer, are more effectively passed on by modeling than from teaching. Good praying is more easily caught than taught. We should choose models from whom we can learn.”²

As Albert Mohler has aptly noted about the model prayer commanded by Jesus,

There is no first-person singular pronoun in the entire prayer... One of the besetting sins of evangelicalism is our obsession with individualism. This obsession with individualism chronically besets us as evangelicals. The first-person singular pronoun reigns in our thinking. We tend to think about nearly everything (including the truths of God’s Word) only as they relate to me. This is why when Jesus teaches his disciples to pray, He emphasizes from the very outset that we are part of a corporate people called the church.³

We learn best to pray by breaking the chains of rugged individualism and consistently gathering with others to learn to pray, to grow more effective in prayer, and to enjoy the richness of a fellowship only experienced together in prayer – especially Scripture-fed, Spirit-led, worship-based prayer.

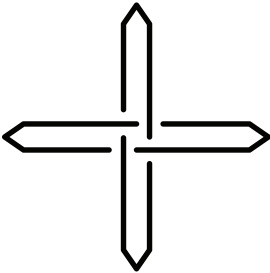
While we know this experience of praying the Psalms will enrich your personal prayer life we also encourage you to join others on a very regular basis to practice this biblical approach to prayer. Of course, we trust this tool will be helpful in your marriage, family, and close friendships. If you do not already participate in a group at your church – start one, utilizing this resource. In this way, you can play an essential role in helping your faith community become “a house of prayer for all nations.”

2. D. A. Carson, *A Call to Spiritual Reformation* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1992), 35.

3. Albert Mohler from <https://albertmohler.com/2018/08/20/danger-christian-prayer/>.

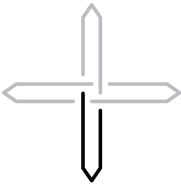
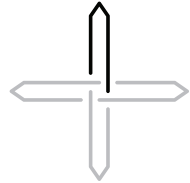
HOW TO USE THIS PRAYER GUIDE

Prayer begins in Scripture. For it is in the Bible that our Lord shows His disciples how to pray. In Matthew 6:9-13 – often known as “the Lord’s Prayer” – Jesus provides a pattern for prayer and commands that His disciples “pray in this way” (v. 9).



There are four “movements” that compose this divine symphony modeled in Christ’s prayer. *Reverence. Response. Requests. Readiness.* Praying through each of these sequentially follows the pattern Christ Himself established. In obedience, when we pray in this way, we are praying God’s way. Note the intent of each of the four movements:

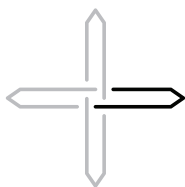
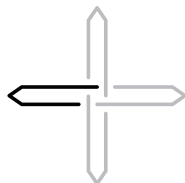
“Our Father in Heaven, hallowed be your name.” *Reverence (Upward)* begins with acknowledging the wonder, majesty, and character of God. With an open Bible in front of us, we ask: “Who are you Lord God? What have you revealed about Yourself in this section of Scripture? How do I honor You?”



“Your Kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” *Response (Downward)* arises from the worshiping human heart. All I am surrendering to the revelation of all He is. In this movement we yield our will to His, our mind and agenda to Him. Often this response can be guided by the passage in front of us and by asking, “Given what these verses say about You, How do You want me to respond to You today, Father?”

“Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors.”

Requests (Inward) emerge as the simple answers to the question, “What should I pray about?” Allow the verses you are considering in the moment to guide your *requests* in connection to both resources and relationships.



“And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil (or ‘the evil one’).” This is a cry for *Readiness, (Outward)* to be made ready for spiritual battle. What will we face today in a sinful and hostile world? Strong encouragement can be gleaned from the text we have been considering in

this moment of prayer. That is why “praying the Scriptures” is so vital, and why Jesus commanded we follow this pattern. It is God’s way to best overcome the attacks of the enemy. And in this way we are energized all the more when reading – or memorizing even – God’s Word (Matthew 4:1-10; Ephesians 6:17).

When we “pray in this way” we are following Jesus’ clear pattern for His disciples. That is why “the Lord’s Prayer” remains a model and pattern for all future prayer, pray-ers, and praying.

Did those disciples, in the early chapters of Matthew understand what Jesus was getting at with this prayer pattern? Did they employ this model in their subsequent prayers? It seems so. Found in Acts 4:24-31 is the first recorded prayer of the disciples. It occurs upon the release of Peter and John from trial and confinement by the religious leaders of their day. This is how they prayed:

And when they heard it, they lifted their voices together to God and said, “Sovereign Lord, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and everything in them,

– REVERENCE

who through the mouth of our father David, your servant, said by the Holy Spirit, “Why did the Gentiles rage, and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers were gathered together, against the Lord and against his

Anointed’— for truly in this city there were gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, to do whatever your hand and your plan had predestined to take place.

– **RESPONSE**

And now, Lord, look upon their threats and grant to your servants to continue to speak your word with all boldness while you stretch out your hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus.

– **REQUESTS**

And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness.

– **READINESS**

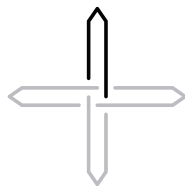
In this first volume of *Praying the Psalms* (Psalms 1-41) we invite you to experience *Scripture-Fed, Spirit-Led, Worship-based Prayer*. It is designed to guide you through each of the four model prayer movements, using the individual Psalms to provoke your prayers.

The Psalms are individually set apart for you to encounter God personally and speak with Him. Supplemental commentary by 6:4 Fellowship pastors is provided for additional insight. The variety of approaches and interactions with each Psalm reflects the variety of gifts, viewpoints, and experiences of the contributors, which itself mirrors the multi-faceted Body of Christ. You may choose to meditate on and pray through a single Psalm for several days using the multiple prayer prompts provided.

There are two pages set aside for you to interact with each Psalm – a “left-hand page” and a “right-hand page.” The following is a suggested method for *Praying the Psalms*. We invite you to “pray in this way.”

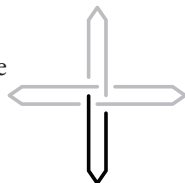
- Select a Psalm you wish to pray through (in any order you may choose). Read it from your preferred translation or version of the Bible. (Perhaps, read it more than once.)
- Read the brief comments section found on the “left-hand page.” There is room in the margins of that page for any personal notes you might wish to record.

- On the “right-hand page,” under the *Reverence (Upward)* heading you will see several thoughts about God that are in that particular Psalm, His character, His attributes, His Holy Person. Ponder those. Celebrate Him.

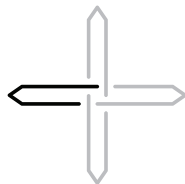


- Next, you will see various suggestions (“prompts”) for how you might declare back to the Lord the characteristics this particular Psalm has revealed about Him. Pick one or two and rejoice in Him, for He is worthy of our praise.

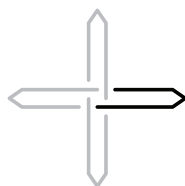
- Similarly, as you move down that page and come to the *Response (Downward)* section, there are several prompts that may stimulate your soul’s reflection. Pick one or two and thank God for Who He is and how He has delighted your heart.



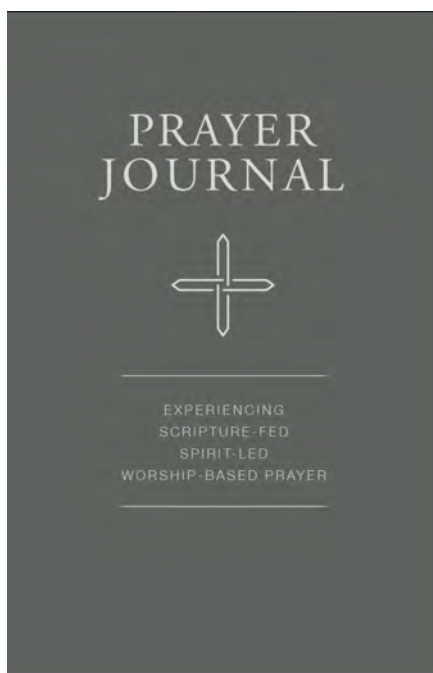
- As you arrive at the *Requests (Inward)* portion of your prayer time, remember He already knows your needs. (He knows how many hairs you have on your head! – Matthew 10:30, Luke 12:7). Here use one or two of the suggested prompts to align your heart with His purposes, asking Him for His help and His outcomes in your life.



- *Readiness, (Outward)* is the final movement of prayer. Spiritual war is real and prayer is our most effective weapon against the diversions, distractions, and divisions of the adversary (2 Corinthians 10:3-5, Ephesians 6:18). Pray through one or two of the prompts inviting God’s mercy and protection for yourself and His empowering for resistance against the enemy in the battle for our lives.



We trust you will enjoy and appreciate *Praying the Psalms* as you encounter our wonderful Lord. It is our prayer that you flourish in a lifetime of praying God’s way, following the example of Jesus, serving others in and by the Holy Spirit, and glorifying the Father (Matthew 5:14-16). Blessings to you in the journey and in the delight of prayer that awaits you.



**A separate and companion book,
*Prayer Journal for Experiencing Scripture-Fed,
Spirit-Led, Worship-Based Prayer*,
is also available. We encourage its use in
recording your ongoing encounters with God,
both as you are in the midst of prayer and as you
reflect back on how He has made Himself known to
you and answered your prayers.**

(store.strategicrenewal.com)

PSALM 1

Comments by Justin Jeppesen

Author Unknown

Category Wisdom

In Brief This Gateway to the Book of Psalms reveals two contrasting paths to life. They lead to two different outcomes. Only one can be chosen.

As a wisdom Psalm, this song lays the foundation for the entire Book of Psalms and contains a microcosm of the entirety of the Book's teaching. The author displays the kind of person who is wise and blessed and the kind of person who embodies wickedness. They are set alongside one another in stark contrast. Vivid imagery describes the divergent outcomes of the "way of the righteous" and the "way of the wicked."

Psalm 1 opens with a benediction, declaring and describing the one who is blessed. The blessed person does not succumb to the destructive progression of sin, which leads from bad to worse. Rather, the blessed finds delight in the word of God and thinks deeply about it ("meditates on it day and night"). Since the blessed one is rooted and nourished in the soil of God's word, the Lord Himself watches over him or her with intimate favor and protection. The outcome of this chosen path is described as a life that is "planted," "fruitful," and "prosperous" no matter what the circumstances may be.

Conversely, the ways of the wicked are rootless, wind tossed, and have no footing or place of welcome among God's covenant people. This path will not prosper them, but instead it leads to judgment and death.

Psalm 1 anticipates Jesus' Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7), which also begins with a benediction describing the blessed person in His kingdom and ends with two contrasting scenarios of those who wisely obey Christ's word or foolishly disobey. Will you build your house upon the solid unchanging rock or upon the shifting sands of current culture or emotion?

Will you choose the path of the righteous or succumb to the way of the wicked? There is no greater way to delight in and meditate upon the law of the Lord than to pray through it. Prayer unlocks the wisdom of obedience and guards against the foolishness of disobedience. Praying this and other Psalms grows deep roots in the soil of God's sustaining word. Praying over God's word "day and night" cultivates our appetite for the ways of God.

Just as the people of ancient Israel prayerfully sang this song of wisdom to remind them of the foundation of their lives and their final destiny, so we too can pray it in our day, reminding ourselves that Jesus is our cornerstone and pathway to abundant life.

PSALM 1 – GUIDE

REVERENCE – *Identify and celebrate God’s praiseworthy attributes*

- He is a God of blessing; the source of truth and delight – vv. 1-2
- He is our sustainer and the source of our fruitfulness – v. 3
- He is the all knowing Judge of the wicked and the righteous – vv. 4-6

Prayer Prompts

- Thank You that You have been my source of blessing in ...
- I delight in Your Law because ...
- Like a tree firmly planted by water You have given me ...

RESPONSE – *Surrender to Him and His ways*

- I confess I have sat, walked, and stood in the paths of the ungodly when ...
- I surrender my heart afresh that I may meditate more faithfully on Your truth.

REQUESTS – *Ask the Spirit to guide your prayer over concerns, resources, and relationships*

- Help me to delight in Your Law when I am tempted to ...
- I am trusting You to sustain me and allow me to bear fruit as I...
- Give me an urgency to graciously share Your truth with the “wicked” when I ...

READINESS – *Encouragement and strength for spiritual battle*

- When I am prone to doubt, remind me that You know my way when ...

PSALM 2

Comments by Sandy Robertson

Author David

Category Royal/Prophetic

In Brief Describes the foolishness of any nation that rebels against the supreme authority of God and His Son.

A wise pastor once said, “If you are going to preach from the Old Testament, you better get to Jesus in a hurry.” Psalm 2 gets to Jesus in a hurry. You can’t miss the prophetic references to the Son of God in the Psalm (v. 2 “His Anointed”; v. 6 “My King”; v. 7 “My Son . . . I have begotten You”; v. 12 “Kiss the Son . . . Trust in Him”). In the New Testament, the apostles quote Psalm 2 directly (Acts 4:25-26; Acts 13:33) regarding the divine purposes of God in sending His Son into the world and allowing him to be crucified by the religious and political rulers of his day.

The Son of God appears in the Psalms as either a Suffering Savior (i.e. Ps. 22) or, as here, a Triumphant King. Psalm 2 celebrates the victory of God’s chosen King and His ultimate rule over all nations. He is the coming King who will establish His reign “on earth as it is in heaven.”

The Psalm falls naturally into four parts . . .

1. The Nations Raging (vv. 1-3) . . . the folly of fighting against God.
2. The Lord Laughing (vv. 4-6) . . . the fate of the enemies to God.
3. The Lord Declaring (vv. 7-9) . . . the favor upon the Son of God.
4. The Nations Choosing (vv. 10-12) . . . the forewarning and judgment of God.

Psalm One begins with the word “Blessed” and teaches us what a blessed man looks like. Psalm Two ends with the word “Blessed” and teaches us what a blessed nation looks like. It will be populated by people “whose God is the Lord.” (cf. Ps. 33:12)

“A fool has said in his heart there is no God” (Ps. 14:1). Likewise, it is a foolish nation whose leaders and people say, “We will not have this Man to reign over us” (Luke 19:14).

PSALM 2 – GUIDE

REVERENCE – *Identify and celebrate God's praiseworthy attributes*

- Christ is Lord and the Anointed One – v. 2
- He sits enthroned in the Heavens; Jesus is King; He is Holy – vv. 4-6
- The nations of the earth belong to Him – v. 8
- Christ will judge and rule the nations – v. 9
- He is Worthy of our service, reverence, and affection – vv. 11-12
- He is both Judge and the source of blessing and refuge – v. 12

Prayer Prompts

- I praise You Jesus because You are King over ...
- Because the whole earth is Your possession, You are Lord over ...
- Thank You that You were my refuge when ...

RESPONSE – *Surrender to Him and His ways*

- Holy King, I surrender my ... to Your rule.

REQUESTS – *Ask the Spirit to guide your prayer over concerns, resources, and relationships*

- King Jesus, even though ... I know that You will someday rule the nations.
- I know that ... (*name*) is in rebellion against You. Use me to call them to serve and worship You.
- Help me to serve and worship You today as I ...

READINESS – *Encouragement and strength for spiritual battle*

- As I encounter ... help me to trust You as my refuge.

PSALM 3

Comments by S. Lindsay Taylor

Author David

Category Lament

In Brief While he deals with the rebellion of his son Absalom, David is encouraged by God's protection.

Clearly linked to an historical event, Psalm 3 is one of 14 others connected to a major event in David's life. The detailed look at David fleeing his rebellious and vengeful son is recorded in 2 Samuel 15:13ff.

This Psalm has a simple outline with each point containing two verses:

1. Complaint (vv. 1-2) – He listens to the wrong voice and wonders, does God care?
2. Confidence (vv. 3-4) – He is refreshed in the knowledge of answered prayer
3. Cover (vv. 5-6) – He sings of safety in the midst of danger.
4. Consolation (vv. 7-8) – He strengthens himself in the Lord.

David begins with a passionate expression of grief over his son's rebellion and disloyalty. Unfortunately, we all understand the pain of someone being disloyal. The experience of betrayal is always a test. Will we lose heart? Will we push on? David's enemies had even questioned his faith and his God. That being said, with a heart full of pain, mingled with confidence, David looks up (v. 3). He has absolute confidence in the ability of a sovereign God to provide and protect. His confidence rested in the very nature of God; He is a "shield about me," David says. God's imminent protection is just one of the many praiseworthy attributes we see in this Psalm that can cause our hearts to rejoice as we look up to Him!

Despite David's weary heart, he worships God. Immediately his focus is transferred from his detractors to his glorious redeemer (v. 4). Rather than relying on himself, David finds consolation and life-giving refreshment in God (v. 5). David's request in verse 7 is urgent and compelling. "Arise, Oh Lord, Save me, Oh my God." David's confidence is so strong that he is certain his enemies would run away. Why? Because victory is a done deal! We may have this same confidence as we navigate life. As the Apostle Paul reminds believers in Romans, "We are more than conquerors." It is enough for the Lord to "stand up," and all will be well. The Psalm concludes with a glorious, triumphant note of praise (v. 8). Let us praise Him, as victory in my life and yours belongs to the Lord.

PSALM 3 – GUIDE

REVERENCE – *Identify and celebrate God’s praiseworthy attributes*

- Our God is in the midst of difficulties – v. 1
- He is a shield/protector during trouble – v. 3
- We glory in Him who lifts our head/gives us hope – v. 3
- He is Holy and He hears and answers our cries for help – v. 4
- Sustains us and gives us rest – v. 5
- Dispels our fears and saves/delivers us from our enemies – vv. 6-7
- God of salvation and source of blessing for His people – vv. 8-9

Prayer Prompts

- Even though I am facing ... (*opposition*) I know You are my shield
- Thank You that You lifted my head and gave me hope when ...
- Thank You that You have blessed me already with ...

RESPONSE – *Surrender to Him and His ways*

- I confess that I have listened to doubts and accusations about ...
- I surrender these and look to You alone.
- I surrender my fears about ... trusting You to deliver me.

REQUESTS – *Ask the Spirit to guide your prayer over concerns, resources, and relationships*

- I trust You to be my shield today as I encounter ...
- Because You are my sustainer, I will not be afraid of ...
- Help ... (*name*) to glory in You today, finding hope and deliverance in You.
- Because You are a God who blesses Your people, I am asking You to bless ... (*name*).

READINESS – *Encouragement and strength for spiritual battle*

- “Today, I trust You to save me from the enemies of ...”

Salvation belongs to you!

PSALM 4

Comments by Mike Moran

Author David

Category Lament

In Brief Based on his knowledge of God and according to His character, David cries out for help against his enemies, who oppose him at every turn.

David faces seemingly non-stop opposition from those who sought his destruction. Some came from those within his own household (Absalom, his son) along with some from within the community. As is his practice, when facing all kinds of challenges, David cries out to God for help. David's long and intimate personal relationship with God and his understanding of His Creator's character form the basis of his requests. David appeals to God because he knows God answers prayer. He asks God for mercy because he knows God is merciful. He asks God for relief because he knows and has experienced this relief on other occasions during his life. David then goes on to speak to his opponents. He expresses bewilderment with their continual resistance to God's truth. He then assures them that God will hear his cry and answer his prayer. David directs his enemies to, therefore, repent, to begin to live differently in three ways:

- 1) Do not let your anger lead you to sin
- 2) Quietly reflect upon the condition of your heart
- 3) Start offering right sacrifices to God

David addresses what many were asking, "Who can show us any good?" He immediately provides an answer, asking God to take action. "Let the light of your face shine upon us, O LORD." For David had experienced the light of the LORD'S face throughout his life journey. He knew God desired people to know Him and that experiencing His light would provide answers to their questions.

David concludes with a moment of praise. God has "filled my heart with greater joy" and "I will lie down and sleep in peace, for you alone, O LORD, make me dwell in safety." Like David, take a few minutes to recount the ways you have experienced the Lord's "shining face," both in facing opposition and in experiencing a heart-filled joy that has enabled you to "sleep in peace and safety."

PSALM 4 – GUIDE

REVERENCE – *Identify and celebrate God's praiseworthy attributes*

- Hears our prayers and answers when we call in our distress – v. 1
- Gracious and Righteous and the source of our righteousness – v. 1
- Good, trustworthy and worthy of our sacrifices – vv. 5-6
- Is the source of surpassing joy, peace and safety – vv. 7-8

Prayer Prompts

- I praise You that You heard my prayer when ...
- I praise You that You are righteous, and make me righteous, even though ...
- I praise You that You provided relief in my distress when ...

RESPONSE – *Surrender to Him and His ways*

- When the world seeks to ... set my heart apart to You alone.
- When I struggle with anger over ... let me trust You in a spirit of quiet surrender.

REQUESTS – *Ask the Spirit to guide your prayer over concerns, resources, and relationships*

- Lord, I give myself to You and trust You today for ...
- Even though the world doubts You, let me see and seek Your goodness in ...
- I trust You for Your surpassing joy today, even though ...

READINESS – *Encouragement and strength for spiritual battle*

- Even though I continue to encounter ... (*spiritual battles*) give me Your peace.

PSALM 5

Comments by Mike Mitchener

Author David

Category Lament

In Brief God uses David's adversaries to chasten him, yet he trusts in God's deliverance

Psalm 5 is a morning Psalm designed by God to get our hearts and souls prepared for the day ahead. It seems as if the world around us is becoming altogether unscrupulous. Many in today's culture feel free to put their godlessness on display. And it causes us to groan. Psalm 5 is a reminder that humanity is no more corrupt today than he has always been. King David looked around and groaned about the wicked, rebellious evildoers, the boastful liars, the bloodthirsty, deceitful men, and the false flatterers with no truth in their mouths. They seemingly surrounded him.

Perhaps he was exhausted and discouraged from fighting the wicked for the soul of his nation the previous day, and he saw no end in sight. So, early in the morning, King David took his lament over the condition of his nation to his King. King David reminds himself, "My God gets the final word." The Lord will judge the wicked. The Lord will reward the righteous. King David reminds the righteous that God is our refuge, our shelter and protection when we are in danger or distress. And we can rejoice in the midst of difficulty even calamity, knowing the Lord will bless the righteous and God's favor will cover us. So, the enemy may *seem to be* winning, but take refuge in Him. Rejoice knowing He is your shield. You do not have to be dismayed or discouraged, your hope is in Him!

Lord, I lift my voice to worship and exalt You early in the morning. It brings me joy knowing You are my refuge. Help me stay faithful to Your straight path as I walk in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation.

PSALM 5 – GUIDE

REVERENCE – *Identify and celebrate God’s praiseworthy attributes*

- God hears our prayer and considers our groanings/laments – v. 1
- He is God and King – v. 2
- Holy and pure, He meets us morning by morning – vv. 3-4
- He resists the proud and evil heart and judges lies and deception – vv. 5-6
- Is abundant in steadfast love – v. 7
- He leads and directs us and is righteous – v. 8
- Judges transgressors and rebels – vv. 9-10
- He is our refuge, our joy and our protection, worthy of exaltation – v. 11
- He blesses the righteous; He is our shield – v. 12

Prayer Prompts

- I praise You Lord that You heard my cry for help when ...
- Because You are King, I know that You can ...
- Thank You that I have experienced Your steadfast love when ...
- Holy One, I bow down before You in fear because You are ...

RESPONSE – *Surrender to Him and His ways*

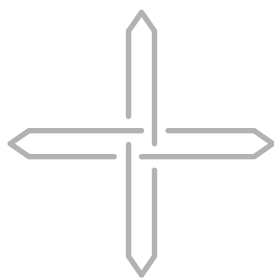
- Lord, You know that right now my groanings and cries are the result of ... I come in full surrender, giving these things to You.
- Because You do not delight in wickedness, I confess ...

REQUESTS – *Ask the Spirit to guide your prayer over concerns, resources, and relationships*

- In the spiritual battle I face, I am trusting in You to lead me as I ...
- I ask for Your joy as I trust in You to be my refuge when ...
- Because ... (*names*) love Your name, spread Your protection over them as they ...

READINESS – *Encouragement and strength for spiritual battle*

- Lord, may Your favor be my shield today as I encounter... (*area of spiritual battle*).





STRATEGIC RENEWAL

Our greatest need is Jesus Christ living through a revived church.

Strategic Renewal's vision is to see praying Christians supporting praying pastors who lead praying churches into supernatural gospel impact. Every revival in history that resulted in a spiritual awakening in society always began in movements of extraordinary prayer.

Strategic Renewal is igniting the heart of the church through practical resources, extraordinary events, and equipping pastors for a renewed emphasis on Scripture-Fed, Spirit-Led, Worship-Based Prayer.



The 6:4 Fellowship, a ministry of Strategic Renewal, exists to facilitate a Christ-exalting reawakening of pastors to the sufficiency of *prayer and the ministry of the Word of God* as their leadership priorities.

The priorities declared in Acts 6:4 define New Testament leadership. These clear, God-ordained priorities gave early church leaders the courage to say “no” to the distractions of lesser demands in order to focus on the core of supernatural ministry.

The 6:4 Fellowship is a diverse, international pastor-to-pastor community. It is not oriented around a single ministry or personality. It is cross-denominational in make-up and led by a team of pastors who exemplify the values of Acts 6:4 and is focused as much on what pastors are becoming as on what they are doing.

The Fellowship unites hearts around a vision for a church committed to prayer and the ministry of the Word and through the power of God’s Spirit. When Christ is honored and His mission for this world is pursued His way, things will change.

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