

# Read through the Bible



## The Psalms: Book One Week One



**OUR  
SAVIOR  
LIVING  
LOVE**

*Monday, September Twenty-Fifth*

Welcome to our six-week journey through Book One of the Psalms! This booklet is laid out to help you walk through a Psalm each day. Whether you start off your day with this, find some time during your lunch break, or sit down with it before you go to bed, the hope would be for you to engage with the Bible on a consistent basis as God engages you and calls you into His story. May your journey be filled with meaningful worship as you reflect upon both the blessings and challenges of the Christian life. – Vicar Chris

*Read:* Psalm 1

*Reflect:* Use the passage to work through these questions

If you flip through the pages of a hymnal or view a collection of worship songs online, you might have some questions regarding their origination. Who wrote them? When and why were they written? How were they finally assembled into a collection of songs? As we journey through the first few psalms this week, we'll also explore the answers to some of these questions.

- Who are the two types of individuals that the psalmist contrasts in his song? (compare verses 1-3 and 4-5)
- Who and what do the righteous avoid, and what do they seek instead? (see verses 1-2)

You ever heard the phrase, “Show me your friends and I’ll show you your future”? Our psalmist is clear in his distinction: those who surround themselves with the wicked will become like the wicked, but those who fill themselves with the Word of God will be fruitful and prosper (v. 3).

- How does God interact with both the righteous and the wicked? (see verse 6)

*Respond:* Apply what you’ve learned in prayer and action

What do you fill your mind and your time with? Who or what do you go to for counsel and guidance? Take some time in prayer to center your time, energy, and focus on God and His Word.

## Tuesday, September Twenty-Six

Three ninth graders at Boca Ciega High School make their way down the hallway after sneaking out of math class. If they can just make it through the side door and past the 58<sup>th</sup> street gate, they'll be able to book it to the Circle K and spend the rest of the day skipping school. One of the students gives the nod to his two friends, and they quickly make their way through the side door. As they turn the corner to freedom, standing in front of the 58<sup>th</sup> street gate is a truancy officer. He stares right at them with his hands on his hips and a stern look on his face. Realizing they've been caught, the three students turn around as the officer escorts them back to their classroom. Just another day in the life of a truancy officer!

*Read:* Psalm 2

*Reflect:* Use the passage to work through these questions

Who wrote the Psalms? Like most hymnals and collections of songs, the Psalms were written by a variety of individuals. These include David, Moses, Solomon, Asaph, as well as anonymous individuals who did not attach names to their songs. Psalm 2, for example, is not attributed to a specific author, but Acts 4:25-26 identifies it as a psalm of David.

- How do some peoples and nations choose to interact with God? (see verses 1-2) How does God respond to their rebellion? (see verses 4-6)

The psalmist makes it clear that those who try to defy God are fighting a losing battle. God is sovereign over everyone and everything, and those who attempt to rebel against Him should recognize this reality and heed His warnings.

- What are the outcomes for those who defy God and for those who depend on Him? (see verses 10-12)

*Respond:* Apply what you've learned in prayer and action

In what ways do you rebel against God? How does the Gospel change how you interact with Him?

## Wednesday, September Twenty-Seven

When it became clear that Hurricane Irma was headed for Florida, hundreds of people in cars began lining up at parks and rec centers all around the county to pick up sandbags for their homes. While they didn't know what the coming days would bring with this storm, they did hope that the sandbags would protect their homes from the imminent flooding threat. In today's psalm, David pleads with God to protect him from the imminent threat he faced.

*Read:* Psalm 3

*Reflect:* Use the passage to work through these questions

So what do we mean when we say "the Psalms"? The word 'psalm' comes from the Hebrew word *tehillim*, meaning "praises." In this sense, the book of Psalms is a collection of praises used in worship to God. You can also think of it as a hymnal for God's people.

- What do David's friends think will happen to him? (see verse 2) What does David think will happen? (see verse 3)

David wrote this psalm as his son Absalom was attempting to overthrow him as king (see 2 Samuel 15 and 16). Many people around David told him he would lose this fight, but David trusted in the Lord to protect him and deliver him from the hands of his son. Sometimes when the odds are stacked against us, it would serve us well to follow the example and plea of David in this heartfelt psalm.

- Where does David find hope and protection from the enemies surrounding him? (see verses 3 and 7-8)

You may have noticed the word 'Selah' three times in Psalm 3. In fact, it can be found 71 times throughout the Psalms. While we don't know what the term means, scholars are in general agreement that it was likely a musical term used during worship.

*Respond:* Apply what you've learned in prayer and action

Who or what do you typically look to for protection? Take a moment to go to God in prayer and ask Him to protect you from any imminent threats you may face.

## Thursday, September Twenty - Eighth

Many Americans play the Powerball each week in the hopes they will find peace and security in a newfound fortune. In late August, a woman in Massachusetts won the \$758.7 million Powerball grand prize, the largest single lottery prize in US history. When asked what she planned to do to celebrate, she responded, "I'm going to just hide in my bed." Turns out we can't always rely upon material things for peace and security!

*Read:* Psalm 4

*Reflect:* Use the passage to work through these questions

You and I are used to music from the era we grew up in. If you grew up in the '60s and '70s, you're likely used to disco and rock and roll. If you grew up in the '90s, you're familiar with rap and alternative rock. The Psalms, though, are a unique collection in that they span such a large period of time – from about 1400 B.C. to 450 B.C. Imagine putting Mozart in the same collection as Miley Cyrus! With such variation in when they were written, the Psalms offer a rich history and understanding of ancient Israel in the Old Testament.

- Who is David upset with and why? (see verse 2)

David is calling out the human condition that all of us are prone to – seeking meaning and security in the things of this world. The people in David's time were falling for delusions and lies, and looking to false idols for protection. These patterns exist in our culture today, but like David, they don't have to be the story we tell as witnesses to the Gospel. Instead, we can "lie down and sleep in peace" knowing that Jesus has already won the battle for us (v. 8).

- What does David call on them to do? (see verses 4-5)
- In whom does David solely find his safety? What does it bring him? (see verse 8)

*Respond:* Apply what you've learned in prayer and action

Take some time today to praise God for sending Jesus to save us and protect us from eternal separation. May this bring you joy!

## Friday, September Twenty - Ninth

If you ask a farmer in Dade City what her secret is for taking care of such a large piece of land, she might tell you it has to do with starting her day at 4 am. When she gets up early before her neighbors begin their day, she finds she has the time to peacefully and efficiently work through the various chores that need her attention. If you've ever started your day really early, you too know how accomplished you feel by the time 9 am rolls around!

*Read:* Psalm 5

*Reflect:* Use the passage to work through these questions

One interesting aspect of the Psalms is that they are broken up into five books, each ending with a doxology (an expression of praise to God). The Psalms are not ordered chronologically nor are they categorized by author. So how did they become ordered in the way we read them today? While we don't know with certainty, some scholars suggest that Ezra and other religious leaders might have ordered the Psalms in the mid-fourth century B.C.

- When does David present his requests to God? (see verse 3)

How do you start off your day? If you're like most Americans, it probably involves rushing to shower and get dressed, quickly gulping down your breakfast, and then darting out the door to wherever you may be headed. Spending time with God in prayer first thing, though, is a great way to slow down this never-ending pattern. This precious time allows you to center yourself with God as you prepare to face the day's challenges and battles.

- How does God relate to evil and the wicked? (see verses 4-6) What does that tell you about His character?
- What does David want from God in the midst of his trials? (see verse 8)

*Respond:* Apply what you've learned in prayer and action

Consider starting tomorrow morning off in prayer by laying out your praises and requests to God much like David does in Psalm 5.

## Saturday, September Thirtieth

When people say they've cried themselves to sleep, they generally don't mean they had a five-minute cry and then fell asleep.

Instead, they're communicating that they cried so much for so long with such pain and anguish that they eventually fell asleep out of sheer exhaustion. If you've experienced this before, you know that this way of falling asleep is neither easy nor enjoyable. In today's psalm, David has reached the point where he is completely exhausted from constantly pleading with God for deliverance from his current situation.

*Read:* Psalm 6

*Reflect:* Use the passage to work through these questions

The Psalms are not just songs of praise. They also express feelings of frustration, pain, confusion, and concern. Like we do today, people in the Old Testament were going through some rough circumstances that elicited these sorts of feelings. In Psalm 6, for example, we see anguish, groaning, weeping, and even sorrow from David as he waits for a response from the Lord.

- How is David feeling as he writes this psalm? (see verses 2-3 and 6-7) What is he asking for? (see verses 4-5)
- How does the Lord respond to David? (see verses 8-9)

Even though David is exhausted and filled with sorrow, he knows that God hears *and* accepts his prayers. It may not be in the timeframe or even in the way that David is pleading for, but he does not lose sight of the fact that he serves a God who listens and responds to him. The next time you find yourself exhausted and filled with sorrow, may you be reminded that God is listening to your prayers and will respond to them in His time.

*Respond:* Apply what you've learned in prayer and action

The weekend is finally here! If you are able to, take some time to find rest in God and the peace He brings us with the Cross.

## Sunday, October First

If you've ever had to find a babysitter before, you know what a process that can be. Of course, your main concern is whether the person you hire will be a *good* babysitter. And unless you personally know the individual well, you'll probably have to make a decision based on the sitter's reputation and integrity. Do you know someone who has had this sitter before? What was their experience? What personal references does the sitter have? In today's psalm, David attempts to reassure God that he is a *good* person worthy of being delivered from his present circumstance.

*Read:* Psalm 7

*Reflect:* Use the passage to work through these questions

The Psalms rest in the center of the Bible. Whether purposeful or coincidence, it reminds us that worship is a central component of our Christian story. As we continue to reflect upon more psalms in the coming weeks, let us consider how we can grow and mature in our worship to the One who created us and redeemed us.

- How does David take responsibility for his own sins? (see verses 3-5)
- How does David want to be judged by God? (see verse 8)

Notice that David wants to be judged by his own righteousness and integrity. He assumes that he is "good enough" for God to have mercy on him. While God does indeed have mercy upon who He chooses, the reality is that none of us are truly "good enough" according to His standards. The good news of the Gospel is that God judges us instead by Jesus' righteousness and integrity!

- What happens to those who cause trouble and do evil things? (see verses 14-16)

*Respond:* Apply what you've learned in prayer and action

Give thanks to God that He views us through His Son's reputation!

Questions? Comments? Contact Vicar Chris at [chris.futch@oursaviorfl.org](mailto:chris.futch@oursaviorfl.org) or (727) 531-2761.