



# PSALMS

the songs Jesus prayed

## OVERVIEW FOR PSALMS

Jesus grew up with a Psalter - book of songs (hymnbook) that were sung as prayers. The Psalms were written in response to the composer's experience of God's presence or perceived absence during a specific episode in life. Each Psalm is written with a general form so that others could use the Psalm to address similar experiences through song and prayer. The Psalms provided a means and a template which formed and trained God's people how to approach God with every kind of experience known to man. God wants us to come to him with our whole being.

There are several different genres that provide ways for us to express our hearts to God and provide a means to commune with God. Through praying and singing these Psalms, God will meet us and transform us in the process.

## PART 6: THANKSGIVING SONGS

Read the text: Psalm 30

### Psalm 30

*A Psalm of David. A song at the dedication of the temple.*

I will extol you, O Lord, for you have drawn me up  
and have not let my foes rejoice over me.

O Lord my God, I cried to you for help,  
and you have healed me.

O Lord, you have brought up my soul from Sheol;

you restored me to life from among those who go down to the pit.

Sing praises to the Lord, O you his saints,  
and give thanks to his holy name.

For his anger is but for a moment,  
and his favor is for a lifetime.

Weeping may tarry for the night,  
but joy comes with the morning.

As for me, I said in my prosperity,  
“I shall never be moved.”

By your favor, O Lord,  
you made my mountain stand strong;  
you hid your face;  
I was dismayed.

To you, O Lord, I cry,  
and to the Lord I plead for mercy:

“What profit is there in my death,  
if I go down to the pit?

Will the dust praise you?  
Will it tell of your faithfulness?

Hear, O Lord, and be merciful to me!  
O Lord, be my helper!”

You have turned for me my mourning into dancing;  
you have loosed my sackcloth  
and clothed me with gladness,

that my glory may sing your praise and not be silent.

O Lord my God, I will give thanks to you forever!

Psalm 30 is one of the “Thanksgiving Psalms.” These Psalms highlight the other side of lament. After the Psalmist cries out for help and God intervenes, they now give thanks to God for his rescue and provision. These Psalms are written from the perspective of the mountain top looking down on the valley and giving thanks on the other side of a hard journey. We don’t just need Thanksgiving Psalms when we are standing on the mountain top taking in the view. We also need Thanksgiving

Psalms when we are in the valley and it feels like we can't take another step. On the mountain top, they are the natural response to God's grace and provision. In the valley, they remind us of our resurrection hope.

*If you're processing these questions as a missional community, take time to gauge whether these will best be answered in smaller groups or all together. Feel free to break into smaller "DNA-sized" groups if that's helpful.*

1. Why are Thanksgiving Psalms important even when we're in the valley (in a place of struggle and pain)? (Hint: *Thanksgiving Psalms give us a vision of life beyond the pain, of the dawn after the night. They remind us that God has provided in the past and He will make all things new in the future; that the suffering will not last forever.*) Why are these Psalms important for us on the mountaintop?
2. Are you currently on a mountaintop or in a valley? How might the Thanksgiving Psalms specifically be helpful for you in this current season?
3. Our thanksgiving is a response to who God is and what He has done. Take time for each of you to remember and share some specific ways that God has worked in your life and provided. Be as specific as possible. What has God done in your life that you are thankful for? Together, spend time thanking God.
4. Adam encouraged us to build habits of thanksgiving into the rhythms of our days and years. What are some tangible "thanksgiving" habits you want to build in your life? It may be to pause every day after lunch and give thanks to God for His work and provision. Or, it may be that you commit to

starting your commute home with a time of thanksgiving. It could be that you try to take a day of solitude and spend part of that time giving thanks to God for His provision in your life. Think about what you would like to try and commit to pursuing this with the support of your community.

### **Reading the Psalms This Week**

This week, pick a few of the Thanksgiving Psalms to read and meditate on. If you find your self in a mountaintop season, let these Psalms give words to the feelings of joy and thanksgiving for God's provision and help. If you find your self in the valley, let these Psalms remind you that your suffering has an expiration date and that through Jesus Christ, joy comes in the morning.

**Psalms** 8, 9, 11, 18\*, 30, 32, 33\*, 34, 40, 48, 65, 66, 67, 68\*, 75, 76, 84\*, 87, 92, 95\*, 98\*, 100, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 111\*, 112\*, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 124\*, 134\*, 135, 136, 138, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150