



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 and experience God meet us and transform us in the process.

PART 1: SONGS OF WISDOM

Read the text: Psalm 1

*Blessed is the man
who walks not in the counsel of the wicked,
nor stands in the way of sinners,
nor sits in the seat of scoffers;
but his delight is in the law of the Lord,
and on his law he meditates day and night.
He is like a tree
planted by streams of water*

*that yields its fruit in its season,
and its leaf does not wither.
In all that he does, he prospers.
The wicked are not so,
but are like chaff that the wind drives away.
Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment,
nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous;
for the Lord knows the way of the righteous,
but the way of the wicked will perish.*

Psalm 1, a wisdom song, calls us to delight in and meditate on the law – the *torah* – day and night. And Psalm 2, a royal song, points us to the future hope of the Messiah King who comes to inaugurate God’s Kingdom on earth. Together, these Psalms are the gateway into the rest of the Psalms; reminding God’s people of who He is, what He has done, what He will do, and that living under His reign was where true life was found.

1. Each Psalm falls into one of three categories: Orientation, Disorientation, or New Orientation. Do you find yourself in a season of orientation, disorientation, or new orientation? In “orientation”, we often feel satisfied and settled, resting in the goodness of God’s call for you. A season of “disorientation” may be marked by hurt, alienation, suffering, or even loss. And in a season of “new orientation”, you may find yourself surprised by God’s grace and provision and experience joy breaking through despair. Share with each other what season you think you are in now.

2. Wisdom tells us how to live life as God designed. But we often look outside of God to define life and how to live it. Where do you most often look for wisdom about life? Share with each other the alternative sources of wisdom you rely on. How has that worked for you?

3. What do you currently need God's wisdom for? Share where you currently need wisdom and take time to pray for God to provide it and lead you in His way. As you pray, remember the words of James: " If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him." (James 1:5)

This week, try taking time to read and meditate on more Wisdom Psalms. Each day, pick one of these Psalms to read and pray, listening to God's wisdom for you. The bold, underlined numbers may be good ones to start with.

Psalm 1, 10, 12, 15, **19**, 32, 34, 36, **37**, 49, 50, 52, 53, **73**, 78, 82, 91, 92, 94, 111, 112, **119**, 127, 128, 139.