

KJV

DEVOTIONAL

from the

Psalms

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INTRODUCTION

The book of Psalms is my favorite book in the Bible. There I can find comfort, encouragement, sympathy in times of doubt, and many exhortations to praise God (can praise be mentioned too often? I think not!).

David, of course, wrote many of the psalms, and in doing so he reveals his victories in God but also his doubts, questions, and frustrations. In other words, David was much like us. The other psalmists were also revealing as they put their worship of the Lord into poetry and song.

This centuries-old book has been cherished by readers from ages past. Often sung, the book has stood the test of time, not only among fellow Christians but also among secular readers, who have remarked on its excellence. It has stood the test of time because its words reflect the human condition so well.

On the following pages you'll find at least one devotion from each of the 150 psalms. In some cases, you'll find several devotions based on one psalm—as with Psalm 119, for example, which with its 176 verses offers us multiple days of devotions.

As you read the portion of the psalm, make it your own. Pray it. Internalize it. Make it relevant to you. We know, for instance, that David

wrote Psalm 51 as a prayer of repentance after he murdered Uriah in order to take Bathsheba to satisfy his lust. Though your experience is different, surely you will, like all of us, find cause to petition the Lord:

*Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.
Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.
For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me.
Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest.*

PSALM 51:1-4

As you read the chosen verse and devotional, my fellow psalm lovers, it's my prayer that if you read in the morning, it will encourage you through the day, or it will bring you restful sleep if read at the end of your day.

Come with me now, into our beloved book of Psalms in the classic King James Version.

BLESSED

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

PSALM 1:1-3

Among the many promises in the Bible, some of the best are found in Psalm 1. The promises, though, are to those who avoid the counsel of the ungodly, who do not consort with unbelievers or join their voice to the scornful. Instead, our delight is to be in the law of the Lord day and night. The result? We shall be like a fruitful tree planted by the rivers of water. And whatever we do shall prosper. What a glorious promise!

Lord, my desire is to prosper according to your will for my life. My delight is in you and your law. I do not listen to the naysayers—the mockers and scornful. Neither do I accept the counsel of the ungodly. Your Holy Spirit is my guide, advocate, helper, and counselor. May I have ears to hear and a heart to obey.



Today's Takeaway

A blessed life is a life that delights in the law of the Lord.

THE FATE OF UNBELIEVERS

*The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff
which the wind driveth away.*

*Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment,
nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.*

*For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous:
but the way of the ungodly shall perish.*

PSALM 1:4-6

God sees only two kinds of people, the godly and the ungodly. The former have taken upon themselves the righteousness of Christ, and they are thus free from the penalty and power of their sins. The latter are those who depend on their own righteousness—or feel no need for righteousness at all. The godly have an eternal destiny, gifted to them by God. The ungodly shall perish in their sins, forever lost.

Father, this life is not all there is. You have ordained eternal life for every person. But where that eternity will be spent depends on whether we are clothed with the righteousness of Christ or stand naked due to the rags of our own righteousness. Lord, you know the way of the righteous, but woe to those who shall perish in their sins.

Give me, O God, a heart for the lost!



Today's Takeaway

God knows the way of the righteous. In Christ, I am righteous.

SERVE AND REJOICE

Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling.

PSALM 2:11

We who believe are called to be the Lord's servants—and we do so with godly fear, trembling on the one hand and yet rejoicing on the other for the opportunity to be included among God's servers.

In serving him, we find no reluctance or exhaustion. In truth, we are strengthened and empowered by fulfilling our earthly assignments, looking forward to the day when we shall at last be in the presence of the One we have served. Until then, we have the vital presence of the Holy Spirit within us.

Lord, who am I that you should choose me to be numbered among your servants? I tremble with godly fear at your goodness, even as I rejoice with great happiness that you take note of me and desire to use me in your kingdom, both in this present life and in the life to come.

Father, never let me take for granted the great privilege of being your child—and your servant. When you lead me in a new direction, guide my uncertain steps along the way.

I do long for the day I shall be forever in your presence.



Today's Takeaway

It is a divine privilege to be God's servant.

THE LORD, MY SHIELD

*LORD, how are they increased that trouble me!
many are they that rise up against me.
Many there be which say of my soul, There
is no help for him in God. Selah.
But thou, O LORD, art a shield for me; my
glory, and the lifter up of mine head.*

PSALM 3:1-3

God inserts himself as a shield between us and our adversaries. Though others may aim their arrows at us, God intercepts them. He defies all of those who say there is no help for us with the Lord—that God has forgotten us or doesn't care that we are in trouble.

When tempted to doubt or be brought low by our circumstances or adversaries, he is there to lift our head, to comfort and console us. If dark days lie ahead, we need have no fear. God shall be a shield for us. He is forever our glory and the lifter of our head.

Dear Lord, there are days when trouble seems to surround me, when adversaries assail me, and I don't know where to turn. But even on such days and in the presence of those who mock my trust in you, you are there to shield me from their arrows. You watch over me in trouble, and you even order circumstances to my favor. You lift my head in triumph in the face of apparent defeat.

You, Father, are my true glory. To you belongs all the praise!



Today's Takeaway

God is a shield between me and my troubles.

I AM SET APART

*Know that the LORD hath set apart him that is godly for himself:
the LORD will hear when I call unto him.*

PSALM 4:3

Through one divine action in saving us, God has set us apart both individually and collectively as his church—literally “called-out ones.” His setting us apart was *for himself*.

When we are tempted to doubt our worth, we need only to consider the cross where God spoke loudly in affirming that we are worth the life of his dear Son.

In setting us apart, he has covenanted to hear our prayers. We need only to call out to him. He will hear. He will answer.

O Lord, you have set me apart for yourself. What manner of love is this? There is nothing in me that warrants such lavish affection—and yet your very nature of love has sought me out and has found me, taken me in as your beloved child. You have given ear to my many prayers as only a loving father would do. For this, I worship you.

Dear Father, never let me wander from your love. Never let me forget whose I am.



Today's Takeaway

God has set me apart for himself.

I DWELL IN SAFETY

I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou,

LORD, only makest me dwell in safety...

I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people, that

have set themselves against me round about.

PSALM 4:8; 3:6

Our God is a 24-7 God. He is always there, always *here*. He watches over us, even as we sleep, oblivious to his nightly care. We dwell in safety when we dwell in his presence. We lie down in peace. Our troubles may be many, our foes giants, our hopes as dim as dusk—and yet in the face of the largest problems, our Creator is with us. If we can trust God for one troubling circumstance, we can trust him for ten thousand troubles. The size of a challenge is of no consequence to the Lord—large or small, he is with us.

Father, you are my God in all circumstances, both large and small. So great is your care for me that I'm able to lie down in peace, knowing that as I sleep, you keep watch. Even when my mind temporarily forgets my troubling situation, you are at work formulating the desired end of my problem. Thank you, Lord, for your constant care.



Today's Takeaway

I can trust God in any situation.

SHOUT FOR JOY!

Let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice: let them ever shout for joy, because thou defendest them: let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee.

PSALM 5:11

Though many Christians are consumed with fear and worry, they need not stay there. In this verse we see an admonition to rejoice and a call to shout for joy, concluding with a command that all who love his name should be joyful in him. We may have the same challenges the unsaved world has, but our advantage—our cause to rejoice in our circumstances—is that our joy is found in him. And no adversity on earth can change that.

O Lord, I do put my trust in you and you alone. I rejoice in your watchful eye over me. I shout for joy because you defend me against all charges of the enemy and all the schemes of those who want to see me fail. Above all, I love your name, O Lord. I rejoice in you and all that you are. I have faith, Father, that you will see me through every earthly trial. You are my righteous defender.



Today's Takeaway

It is God's command that I rejoice in him.

THE FAVOR OF THE LORD

*Thou, LORD, wilt bless the righteous; with favor
wilt thou compass him as with a shield.*

PSALM 5:12

We who believe not only have God as our protective shield, but we also enjoy the favor of the Lord. Behind the scenes of daily life, God orchestrates events to our good. His favor acts as a shield surrounding us, guarding us. Because of his benevolence, we are blessed. We have no reason to despair or doubt. After all, we are safely on his path, not that rugged trail of our own misguided choices. And our Creator also gives us favor with others. It's not unusual for him to intervene in a transaction and give us favor with the other party. In evangelism, we may be surprised as God gives us favor with unbelievers.

Thank you, Lord for your blessing on the righteous—those who are righteous by faith, not by works. Thank you for the divine favor that compasses me as a shield. Because of your blessing and your favor, I'm able to step out in faith, reaching for the destiny you have for me while I live for you. Guide my steps, Father. Let your blessing and favor remain on me all my days.



Today's Takeaway

I enjoy the favor of God!

HE HEARS MY GROANS; HE SEES MY TEARS

Have mercy upon me, O LORD; for I am weak:

O LORD, heal me; for my bones are vexed...

I am weary with my groaning; all the night make I my bed to swim;

I water my couch with my tears.

PSALM 6:2, 6

Every Christian has experienced seasons filled with tears. We groan, we cry, we even doubt. In our bed, we fail to sleep for want of peace. And where is God in such times? He is right there with us, hearing our groans, accepting our tears. And just when things are at their lowest, our Creator turns a corner for us and brings peace as we cease our tears and rest in the surety that he is in control—even in this hard situation.

Through it all, God's mercy is upon us. As our deliverer, he heals us in our weakness, and his holy Word makes our vexed bones whole. All our hopes are fully met in him.

God, I am in need of your great mercy. In my weakness, I cry out for your healing touch. My bones ache for lack of strength. My groans spring from my lips to your ears. Though my bed is wet with tears, you bring new life through your comforting Holy Spirit. My trust in you sets all things aright.



Today's Takeaway

At my lowest, I find God is there for me. His mercies are mine.

I WILL SING PRAISE

*I will praise the LORD according to his righteousness:
and will sing praise to the name of the LORD most high.*

PSALM 7:17

Christians are born-again praisers. In sadness, in happiness, we praise him according to his righteousness. No matter how many years of life God grants us, we will never tire of praising him, nor will we run out of words. Our hearts are full of worship, and when we open our mouths, our tongues readily proclaim his praise.

When we are low, we groan and cry out to the Lord for relief. When we see God bring victory into our lives, we are quick to praise him. But the secret to a happy life is to develop the habit of praising God in all things—not *for* all things, but *in* all things. There is no circumstance we will face that does not carry with it God's solution. When trials come, our response is to praise in spite of the trial, and through the trial, as we trust our Creator for the coming solution—his solution—which is often revealed *as* we praise.

Lord, remind me to glorify you in all things. I'm quick to praise when there are no trials, or at the happy end of a trial, but I also see the need to praise you during the trial. I know that your Holy Spirit within me is a spirit of praise, so help me to obey the Spirit's urge to be a person of praise—in all things.



Today's Takeaway

It's in my spiritual DNA to be one of God's praisers.

CROWNED WITH GLORY AND HONOR

When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?

For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor.

Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet.

PSALM 8:3-6

Is it not amazing that God has created all of mankind and each of us with individual care? And after creating us, he remains mindful of us through our entire lives. He visits us with his presence, even when we're unaware. Still more, he crowns us with glory and honor. How can we not love and praise our wonderful Lord?

Father, once again I ponder your greatness and my smallness. And yet even in my insignificance, you find value equal to the life of your Son. He was the perfect lamb sacrificed for my sins, an event of great significance. And indeed, you count all that happens to me as significant. You have turned insignificance into great significance. For this, and for all you are, I praise you.



Today's Takeaway

Though I am small, God is mindful of me.