



Praying Through The Psalms

June 4-August 19

Mountain Brook Baptist Church
www.mbbc.org



Psalms

ABOUT PROJECT 119

Project 119 is a Bible reading initiative of Mountain Brook Baptist Church. Our hope is that every member of our church family would be encouraged in his or her relationship with Jesus Christ through the regular reading of God's Word.

This reading plan is a bit different from our normal reading plans, where passages and devotions are assigned to be read Monday through Friday and the weekends are for reading back over the assigned passages. Rather, this summer we will be looking at the book of Psalms together. Each week will begin with a devotional prayer based on Monday's psalm, and each day, psalms will be assigned for morning and evening prayer. The devotional prayer written at the start of the week is meant to be a help or guide for you as you read and pray through the Psalms this summer.

To receive email updates when devotionals are added to the blog, go to www.mbbc.org/blog, click on "Subscribe to Mountain Brook Blog by Email" and follow the instructions. To learn more about Project 119 and to access previous plans, visit www.mbbc.org/project119.

INTRODUCTION

The book of Psalms might be one of the most loved in the Bible; after all, even those unfamiliar with Christianity have probably heard Psalm 23. For over 3,000 years, God's people have been using the book of Psalms for prayer and worship. As you read through the Psalms this summer, you'll notice the themes, authors, and moods change from psalm to psalm - they aren't grouped together by praises and laments, confessions and curses (yes, we'll even be reading and praying through the imprecatory psalms this summer!). Rather, the Psalms are kind of like real life, aren't they? One psalm gives praise, the next mourns, and in a few psalms, the psalmist will woefully confess his sins before God the Father.

Sometimes we don't know what we ought to pray, do we? Praying Scripture can be helpful for this reason. God's own Word directs us on how we ought to interact with Him. We are given a language to use to call out to Him, and the words of the psalmists help shape our prayers while challenging us to pray for and about things we may not have ever considered bringing before the Lord. As we pray through the psalms, we enter into the rich history of God's people praying His own words back to Him. And, we enter into a tradition that leaves room for expression of thought and feeling. The Psalms model honest prayer for us, reminding us that God is big enough to handle our feelings, that He knows the pain and brokenness of our hearts, and that He longs for us to bring our griefs to Him.

This summer, rather than giving you a devotion to read each day, we encourage you to pray through the assigned morning and evening psalms. As you meditate on these psalms, consider how these songs have been prayers for the church for thousands of years. Monday's prayer will help guide you as you pray through the Psalms on your own throughout the week. Our hope is that your faith would be encouraged, challenged, and strengthened as you pray God's Word back to him.

RESOURCES

There are many great resources to aid you in the reading of the Psalms this summer. Our church library has several Psalms commentaries available for your use. Another resource you might consider consulting is Dr. Allen Ross's commentary series on the Psalms from the Kregel Exegetical Library. In addition, I have found it helpful to listen to the Psalms put to music. Sandra McCracken has an excellent album on the Psalms (*Psalms* 2015), as well as The Corner Room (*Psalms vol. 1*, 2015, and *Psalms vol. 2*, 2018).



Psalms

WEEK ONE: JUNE 4-10

Monday, June 4

Morning: Psalm 1

Father,

I praise You because You are a Good Father who has revealed Yourself to me through Your Word and through Your Son, Jesus Christ. You are the Good Shepherd who faithfully leads His sheep, and just like sheep, Your children hear Your voice and follow You.

I want to be like the believer in verses 1-2 of the Psalm, the one whose delight is not in sin, but is in the law of the Lord, who is quick to listen and to follow You. Yet so often, I confess that I am easily distracted by the ways of the world. I linger in the counsel of the wicked. I am tempted to follow others in their sinful ways. It is easy to find myself sitting in the seat of scoffers. Would you forgive me, God, for my fallen ways, for living as though I am not a believer?

God, I know that I don't receive salvation through obeying Your word - that salvation is only by grace through faith in Christ! Yet I also know that You call me to live like I am one of Your children, because I am: Your child who is quick to heed Your law and who chooses to hide Your word in my heart. Help me to be more like You. Help me to find delight in the pages of Scripture, trusting that You have revealed yourself to me through the Bible. Lord, would transform my heart, so that I might be one who is continually pondering, savoring, and trusting in Your Word - in times of joy and sorrow, and in times of peace and strife?

And I pray that, as I grow in love for Your word, I would grow like the tree imagined in verse 3 - that Your Word would sustain me as water sustains a tree's growth, and that the Holy Spirit would cultivate the fruits of the Spirit in my life - love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control - fruit that isn't primarily for my benefit but for the blessing of others! Would You use me to bless others and to point them to You - in my workplace, in my friendships, in my home, in my neighborhood?

I pray for those who don't know You, who do walk in the counsel of the wicked. Lord, would You reveal yourself to them, so that they might come to faith and stand, with me, in the congregation of the righteous? I pray that You might give me opportunities to be Your faithful witness to those who do not believe, that they might come to trust in You and count themselves among the children of God - not because of their good works, but because of their relationship with You.

Lord, I am grateful to be Your child. Help me to live faithfully and to walk in step with my Father, trusting that You know my ways. You are intimately acquainted with me. You promise that the grace that has brought me safe thus far is the same grace that will bring me home. Amen.

Evening: Psalm 2



Psalms

Tuesday, June 5

Morning: Psalm 3

Evening: Psalm 4

Wednesday, June 6

Morning: Psalm 5

Evening: Psalm 6

Thursday, June 7

Morning: Psalm 7

Evening: Psalm 8

Friday, June 8

Morning: Psalm 9

Evening: Psalm 10

Saturday, June 9

Morning: Psalm 11

Evening: Psalm 12

Sunday, June 10

Morning: Psalm 13

Evening: Psalm 14



Psalm

WEEK TWO: JUNE 11-17

Monday, June 11

Morning: Psalm 15

Lord,

You are mighty and full of power. You are worthy of our praise. You are perfect in all of Your ways, and Your love is loyal. Who is holy like You? Who is worthy to enter Your presence?

Certainly I am not, chief of sinners. I do not always walk blamelessly. The words on my mouth are not always pleasing to You. I've used my tongue to tear down others. My hands are guilty of bringing evil against others.

And even if I could come before You with the right outward behavior (which I can't!), the thoughts of my heart would condemn me - and You know them all! You search my heart and You know the sin, brokenness, and shame. You hear every evil intention and every unrighteous notion, the things that I think only I know about myself. You recognize my prejudices. You are acquainted with my frustrations against my loved ones. You see the wicked schemes I play out in my head and are privy to every malicious plot I plan.

I come before You and confess that I am in need of Your forgiveness and grace, Father. I am not worthy to enter Your presence: I fail, time and time again, to meet Your standards for perfection. However, I am reminded, time and time again, that my only hope is also in You. When the odds were stacked against me, when my sin separated me from you like the ocean separates continents, when I could not do anything to make myself right with You through my own paltry obedience (or lack thereof), You sent Christ, Your perfect Son, to die in my place. Christ, who walked blamelessly and did what was right. Christ, who treated others with kindness and justice. Christ, who honored You with every thought and intention.

Because Christ came and died for my sins, I have the privilege of being called Your child. It's a title that is unearned and undeserved. Would You help me, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to live into this calling and title, to walk blamelessly, to honor others, to act justly, and to love mercy? While I find myself unqualified to enter into Your presence on my own merit, You have given the gift of the Holy Spirit dwelling in me - Christ in me, the hope of glory!

I await the day when my faith will be sight, when sin will no longer be present, and when I will see You face to face, dwelling in Your holy city, the New Jerusalem. Thank You for this promise, and for the reassurance that You always keep Your promises. In Christ, every promise of God is Yes (1 Corinthians 1:20)! Amen.

Evening: Psalm 16

Tuesday, June 12

Morning: Psalm 17

Evening: Psalm 18



Psalms

Wednesday, June 13

Morning: Psalm 19

Evening: Psalm 20

Thursday, June 14

Morning: Psalm 21

Evening: Psalm 22

Friday, June 15

Morning: Psalm 23

Evening: Psalm 24

Saturday, June 16

Morning: Psalm 25

Evening: Psalm 26

Sunday, June 17

Morning: Psalm 27

Evening: Psalm 28



Psalms

WEEK THREE: JUNE 18-24

Monday, June 18

Morning: Psalm 29

Lord,

I praise You today for Your greatness. You are mighty and majestic, and worthy of our worship. I join the angels as I bow before You in adoration. I give credit where credit is due: Your strength, Your glory, and Your power are reminders of Your great sovereignty.

I see Your greatness in the summer storms that rise up on hot days. The psalmist pictures a storm suddenly forming north of Israel over Lebanon. Although Baal worshippers claim Baal as the storm god, I know that You alone, Lord, are sovereign over all of the earth, even the storms! All other gods are powerless before You.

I see Your majesty in the boom of Your voice thundering in the storms, flashing like forked lightning across the skies, shaking the land like an earthquake. And I see Your strength as the winds die down, for You are also the same God who calms the storm. Even the winds and the waves obey You.

I also see Your power in judgment. You are the God who sits enthroned over the flood, who once sent great waters to judge the whole world in Genesis. Although the winds and the waves obey You, often we do not. I confess my sin to You, to a God who is holy and lifted up, and who must be worshipped in the splendor of holiness. I am not holy. I sin and continually fall short of Your glory. Like the Baal worshippers, I lift my eyes and my worship to false gods, rather than acknowledging You for who You have revealed Yourself to be. I am in need of Your forgiveness.

Yet I also praise You for Your grace, for You are a God who shows mercy. You took on the storm of judgment I deserved by sending Christ to die for me on the cross for us. You promise that, if I trust in Christ for salvation, I am made right with God the Father, who sits enthroned as king forever!

And You promise that You give Your strength to Your people. In the midst of persecution and pain, in trial and in grief, Your power is made perfect in my weakness. Help me to believe in Your power, despite my doubts! The same God who has control over every bit of the cosmos, including the storms, is also sovereign over every detail of my life. You are the all-powerful God who can give His people peace in the calm and in the storm, the same God whose voice will one day thunder in final judgment over sin, death, and the grave, and the same God who will one day welcome His people home, where we will worship Him in His splendor and majesty. Amen.

Evening: Psalm 30

Tuesday, June 19

Morning: Psalm 31

Evening: Psalm 32



Psalms

Wednesday, June 20

Morning: Psalm 33

Evening: Psalm 34

Thursday, June 21

Morning: Psalm 35

Evening: Psalm 36

Friday, June 22

Morning: Psalm 37:1-19

Evening: Psalm 37:20-40

Saturday, June 23

Morning: Psalm 38

Evening: Psalm 39

Sunday, June 24

Morning: Psalm 40

Evening: Psalm 41



Psalms

WEEK FOUR: JUNE 25-JULY 1

Monday, June 25

Morning: Psalm 42 & 43

Lord,

My soul thirsts for You, and only You can satisfy that longing. Yet I confess that so often I try to fill that thirst with anything but You - seeking to quench my desires with the things of the world, or even with the gifts You have given me. Forgive me for worshipping the gift rather than the Giver. Help me to remember that every good and perfect gift comes from You. Cleanse me from my idolatry, from seeking worth and satisfaction in anyone or anything but You.

As I meditate on today's psalms, while I may not be able to identify with the psalmist's particular situation of being separated from corporate worship, unable to enter the sanctuary, I can identify with the longing of the psalmist as he experiences the brokenness of this life. I too have experienced the mocking of others who do not believe in You. I have heard their taunts, asking "Where is your God?" in the midst of my suffering. I have found myself in situations where I am desperate for You to act and to make all things right. I too have had to wait for You to act and reveal Yourself in Your perfect timing.

Father, in the midst of suffering and distress, help these psalms to guide the way I think about You and to meditate on Your faithfulness. Even now I recall the ways I have seen You work in my life in the past, and I stand certain that You will continue to work and act in due time. I reflect on all of the ways I have seen You command Your steadfast love over me. Even in the darkest of nights, I remember the song You sing over me. I cling to the hope I have in Your love, that You loved me enough to send us Christ, and that You promise that You will never abandon or forsake me.

Lord, help me to preach the truth of the gospel back to myself over and over again, in times of joy and in times of sorrow. Why is my soul cast down? I confess that my hope is in You, even in situations that seem hopeless! Help me to wait patiently and expectantly for You to act, trusting that You are the One who vindicates us, and that You are the living God who is always at work. Even when I can't trace Your hand, I trust Your plan.

And Lord, I do pray for those who find themselves, like the psalmist, separated from corporate worship. I pray for those who are homebound because of sickness. I pray for those who live in remote locations and aren't able to worship with a local body of believers. I pray for those who gather quietly to worship under the threat of persecution. Help me not to take opportunity to participate in corporate worship for granted, that I can easily travel to my local church, where I can study Your word, worship, and fellowship with other believers. What a gift it is!

I thank You for the gift of the Holy Spirit given at Pentecost, that Your Spirit lives inside all who believe in Christ. No matter where we may be on this earth, or what we may face, nothing can separate us from the love of Christ. And yet Your love is a love that understands the feeling of forsakenness, that cried out on the cross, that groans along with me while I wait for the Father to make all things right. I praise You that one day I will live in a place where grief is no more, where I will dwell in Your presence and light, and where You will wipe every one of my tears away. Amen.

Evening: Psalm 44



Psalm

Tuesday, June 26

Morning: Psalm 45

Evening: Psalm 46

Wednesday, June 27

Morning: Psalm 47

Evening: Psalm 48

Thursday, June 28

Morning: Psalm 49

Evening: Psalm 50

Friday, June 29

Morning: Psalm 51

Evening: Psalm 52

Saturday, June 30

Morning: Psalm 53

Evening: Psalm 54

Sunday, July 1

Morning: Psalm 55

Evening: Psalm 56



Psalms

WEEK FIVE: JULY 2-8

Monday, July 2

Morning: Psalm 57

Father,

Would You show Your mercy to me? I trust in You alone. You are my refuge; as a mother bird hides her children in her wings, so I cling to You for shelter in the storms of life. You are God most high, worthy of my worship and praise.

You are a God who promises that His plans for me will come to pass. I confess that so often, I am more worried about my plans coming to pass than Your plans. I relinquish control to You, trusting that You promise to walk with me even in the most harrowing of situations.

I may not be fleeing from Saul like David was, but I can identify with walking through conflict and needing an outside Savior to rescue me from my situation. My adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking to devour me. Help me to resist him and to set my hope in You alone, Lord! I am grateful that You are a God who is merciful and gracious, abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness. I do pray that You would deliver me, that You would swoop in and save the day, and that when others see how You have delivered me, they would give You glory! Let this story of rescue be a story where Your steadfast love is proclaimed among the peoples, Your faithfulness to the nations! Give me opportunities to share with others how You have delivered me from my foes.

And Lord, even if you do not deliver me in this particular situation, I trust that You are with me, and that You promise to walk with me through all things, never forsaking the ones You call Your own. Your love still reaches to the heavens, and Your faithfulness still stretches to the skies. You are still perfectly righteous and full of justice, and one day, You will have the last word against evil as Satan receives his final judgment.

Almighty God, would you also intervene in the lives of those I love who are ensnared in trials? Please strengthen them against the attacks of the enemies and help them to set their eyes on You. Would You deliver them and raise them up, and would You also use their stories as testimonies of Your faithful love and Your kindness in Christ?

You are exalted, God! My prayer is that every knee would bow and every tongue would confess that You are Lord, that every eye would see You as exalted and would turn to praise, that Your glory would be made known to the nations! Amen.

Evening: Psalm 58

Tuesday, July 3

Morning: Psalm 59

Evening: Psalm 60

Wednesday, July 4

Morning: Psalm 61

Evening: Psalm 62



Psalm

Thursday, July 5

Morning: Psalm 63

Evening: Psalm 64

Friday, July 6

Morning: Psalm 65

Evening: Psalm 66

Saturday, July 7

Morning: Psalm 67

Evening: Psalm 68

Sunday, July 8

Morning: Psalm 69

Evening: Psalm 70



Psalms

WEEK SIX: JULY 9-15

Monday, July 9

Morning: Psalm 71

Lord,

I praise You because You are a refuge for those who trust in You. You are the strong rock on which I have continually built my life, the fortress where I find protection. In my times of distress, You have bent down and listened to me. I ask that You would do that again, Father - that You would deliver me from those who are wicked, those who profess that You have forsaken me, those who have ill will against me and seek to hurt me.

In the midst of trial and tribulation, I remember Your faithfulness. You are the God who brought me into being, who took me from my mother's womb. You hold all of my days in Your hands. My mouth declares Your righteous acts; they are so many, I cannot count them all! You have been so faithful to me throughout the years. I will always hope in You and I will praise you more and more.

Father, we trust that, just as you were faithful yesterday, you will be faithful today. You were good and gracious to me in the days of my youth; I will trust You as my days increase; even as I age and lose strength. I will trust You, no matter what tomorrow holds. Forgive me for when I doubt and place my faith in my own strength and abilities. You alone are God and You alone are able to deliver us from evil. Yes, You do allow us to see troubles and calamities, but I am convinced even in the strife that You are always watching over me, and that You promise to use these difficulties for Your glory.

I praise You for the saints You have put in my life who are testimonies of such righteous living; their wisdom is indicated not by graying hair or wrinkles but by their faithful witness to You. Thank You for the mentors You have given me - those on earth and those who have gone on to be with You. Thank You for the ways they have stretched and encouraged me. Thank You for the ways they faithfully poured into me by teaching me Your word and showing me what it means to live as Your servant. Thank You for their gentle rebukes, their kind encouragements, and their fierce love.

Father, would You give me such opportunities to disciple the generation that will come after me? Would You give me relationships where I can mentor and encourage others in their faith, in the same ways that I have been mentored and encouraged? Give me chances to share about Your righteousness and goodness, to proclaim to Your children the many ways You have been faithful to me!

Lord, I praise You because You are a God who never leaves and never forsakes me - who knitted me together in my mother's womb and who will walk beside me until the end of my days when You bring me home. Thank You for your kindness and grace to me. Amen.

Evening: Psalm 72

Tuesday, July 10

Morning: Psalm 73

Evening: Psalm 74



Psalms

Wednesday, July 11

Morning: Psalm 75

Evening: Psalm 76

Thursday, July 12

Morning: Psalm 77

Evening: Psalm 78

Friday, July 13

Morning: Psalm 79

Evening: Psalm 80

Saturday, July 14

Morning: Psalm 81

Evening: Psalm 82

Sunday, July 15

Morning: Psalm 83

Evening: Psalm 84



Psalms

WEEK SEVEN: JULY 16-22

Monday, July 16

Morning: Psalm 85

Father,

As we read this psalm and trace the story of the Israelites, we can see Your faithfulness to them. You called Abraham to Yourself, promising to give him a lineage and a home and to make him a blessing to the nations. You led Your children, the Israelites, out of Egypt. You brought them into the promised land, a land flowing with milk and honey. And You brought them back to that same promised land after exile.

The thing that amazes me is that You were faithful to Your children, despite their sin. In fact, we see Your goodness not primarily in the material blessings You bring, but in the spiritual gift of forgiveness. When the people bowed down to worship the golden calf, You had mercy on them and forgave them, rather than wiping them all out and starting afresh with Moses. When the Israelites were tempted by foreign gods, You continued to woo and pursue their hearts, calling back to them. Even when their sin took them far from home in exile, You promised to be with them and to bring these wicked people, who You call Your treasured possession - back home. You are a God who keeps His covenantal promises!

As I look back on my life, it is also easy for me to see Your faithful hand at work. I give thanks to You for every blessing You have given me, recognizing that they are not gifts I deserve. Thank You for the people You have placed in my life who point me to Christ and show me small glimpses of Your love. Thank You for how You reveal Yourself to me through Your Word. Thank You for the gifts of daily bread, for a place to lay my head, for places of work and study. Thank You for the way You have written my story - it has Your sovereign fingerprints all over it!

Lord, most of all, I praise You for Your mercy. When I was lost and far from home, You called me to You. You pursued me and called me Your child when I deserved to be kept at arm's length as a hired hand. You brought a dead person life eternal in the name of Christ by paying the penalty for my sins. You have led me out of the bondage of sin, breaking its power over me. Your Holy Spirit lives in me, continually working to sanctify me and make me more like Your Son, Jesus. You promise a day is coming when that process will be complete, when I will share in Your glory in the place where You are making all things new.

I call out to you today, broken because of my sin, complacency, selfishness, and shame. I look back and remember the forgiveness I found at the cross. Lord, I am in need of Your mercy time and time again. Would You revive me again, so that I might rejoice in You? Would You guard my heart, that I might not turn back to the same folly? I praise You because You aren't a God who remains far-off and distant, but You are a God who speaks to His people, a God who calls us "His saints," when we've done nothing to deserve such a title, a God who promises that salvation is near to those who fear Him.

I praise You because of the hope of Jesus! The psalmist looked forward to the hope of a Messiah who would bring salvation to God's people. On the other side of history, I have the blessing to be able to look back at the gospels and see where that was accomplished: where God became man and put on flesh, where God's glory really did dwell among His people, where humanity saw God's steadfast love and faithfulness in full display on the cross at Calvary, and where His followers experienced His victory over death that first Easter morning. I look forward to that day when I will stand in glory at Your side, as I experience the hope of Your resurrection through my own resurrection. Amen.

Evening: Psalm 86



Psalms

Tuesday, July 17

Morning: Psalm 87

Evening: Psalm 88

Wednesday, July 18

Morning: Psalm 89

Evening: Psalm 90

Thursday, July 19

Morning: Psalm 91

Evening: Psalm 92

Friday, July 20

Morning: Psalm 93

Evening: Psalm 94

Saturday, July 21

Morning: Psalm 95

Evening: Psalm 96

Sunday, July 22

Morning: Psalm 97

Evening: Psalm 98



Psalms

WEEK EIGHT: JULY 23-29

Monday, July 23

Morning: Psalm 99

God,

The words of this psalm remind us that You are a king unlike any other king. You rule over the heavenly beings - even the angels submit to You! You reign over all of nature; the skies, clouds, and stars are Your creation, the earth Your footstool. And You are sovereign over all people everywhere, for all of history. No one is outside of Your rule. Even the greatest earthly kings pale in comparison to Your majesty and might. I praise You because Your name is great and awesome! You are a God who is holy - You are spotless and pure, set apart from all other gods and earthly rulers, for You are perfect in all of Your ways.

And not only are You all-powerful, but You are also the perfect judge. You love justice and You establish equity. And because You are the only perfectly righteous judge, You are the standard for justice and equity. My eyes are blinded by my own partiality and sin, but You are able to see all things clearly. Oh Lord, as I think over the injustices I see in the world, I do ask for Your perfect justice to be poured out on evil! I trust that You are the only one who can perfectly enact judgment, for not only are You the just judge, but You are also all-powerful. Evil will not have the last word. Come Lord Jesus, and make right all that is wrong. I bow down and worship at Your feet, recognizing that I am not God and confessing that You are.

I praise You for making Yourself known through Your saints of old - for handing down the law through prophets like Moses, Aaron, and Samuel. For revealing Yourself to them and speaking to them, so that Your people might know how to live as Your children. And I praise You because You are still speaking - through Your living word and through the power of Your Holy Spirit living in me.

I confess that sometimes I am not listening to what You have to say. I am distracted by the ways of the world, by the temptations of technology and media, by my own selfish preoccupations. Forgive me for the ways I have failed to hear and heed You and Your word. Because You are a God of justice, You are a God who takes sin seriously. It is in this understanding that I can see the depths of Your mercy and grace; I can't fully understand the good news of forgiveness without really comprehending Your anger against sin. I praise You because You are a God who answers our cries and who shows mercy when we do not deserve it. You are a God who sent Your Son, Christ, who faced the judgment and justice of God for my sin.

And I look forward in hope to the day when I will experience Your rule as king in the new heaven and the new earth, where I will worship You in the splendor of Your holiness in that new city, New Jerusalem. I look forward to the day when all wrongs are made right. You are patient with Your anger and You forgive all who call on You in faith, but on that fateful day, You will rise up against evil and Satan will finally and forever be defeated. Help me wait in faith for that day of righteous judgment, knowing that my faithful Father will avenge all that is wrong. Amen.

Evening: Psalm 100



Psalms

Tuesday, July 24

Morning: Psalm 101

Evening: Psalm 102

Wednesday, July 25

Morning: Psalm 103

Evening: Psalm 104

Thursday, July 26

Morning: Psalm 105

Evening: Psalm 106

Friday, July 27

Morning: Psalm 107

Evening: Psalm 108

Saturday, July 28

Morning: Psalm 109

Evening: Psalm 110

Sunday, July 29

Morning: Psalm 111

Evening: Psalm 112



Psalms

WEEK NINE: JULY 30-AUGUST 5

Monday, July 30

Morning: Psalm 113

Lord,

I praise You and give You glory - You are worthy of all honor and worthy of our worship: You, God Almighty, who call me one of Your servants. What a high calling and what a privilege - to serve the Ruler of the universe and the Creator of the cosmos. Help me see the weightiness and the joy of this responsibility.

Even as I praise You, my heart's desire is to see You praised by all people, at all times, in all places; just as the sun rises in the east and sets in the west, my hope and prayer is that all people everywhere will come to know You and will lift their voices in praise to You. I pray specifically for those in my life who do not profess faith in You, that the eyes of their hearts may be opened to see the hope of the gospel. I lift up prayers for missionaries who serve You faithfully and witness to the lost, that You would give them boldness and favor. And Lord, would You work in my heart, to produce a spirit that offers praise at all times - in grief and in joy, in fear and in jubilation, in peace and in distress? I confess that my praise is easily offered on some days and all too scarce on others.

Father, we magnify Your name and lift You up because You are high above all nations, and Your glory is above the heavens! No one is like You, in heaven or on earth or under the earth. To give my worship to anyone or anything else is false worship. Forgive me, for without You, my heart is a constant idol-making factory. As the hymn says, would you let Your goodness, like a fetter, bind my wandering heart to You?

And Lord, I praise You because, though You were high and lifted up, You chose to come down low and to enter into my human affairs. Scripture testifies that You are a God who breaks into time and space and history to intervene and help His people. This psalm would have traditionally been read before the Israelites commemorated Passover and remembered how You saw them in slavery. You heard their groaning, and You knew their pain. You freed them from bondage in Egypt and brought them to the promised land. You heard Hannah's cries as she longed for a child in her barrenness, and you gave her Samuel.

And You saw me, in bondage to my own sin and shame, and You came down to rescue me through Christ. Christ, who did not consider equality with You a thing to be grasped, but made Himself nothing. Christ, who took on the form of a servant for my sake. Christ, who poured out His life for me. You see me in my brokenness and discontentment. You hear my cries, and You know, and You lift me up. You may not satisfy all of my earthly desires, but You promise to meet me in the midst of those desires, and You promise that every earthly longing will ultimately be fulfilled when I see You face to face.

Father, I pray for those who are discouraged, for my loved ones who have unfulfilled desires, for the poor and needy. Would you encourage them today with the reminder that, just as You saw and heard the cries of the Israelites in slavery, so You also hear our groans? Would You remind them that You came near in Christ, and You took on flesh for our sake? You identify with us in every hurt and in every pain! And Lord, would You intervene, for their good and for Your glory? Would You raise them up and lift them from the ash heap? I trust that You are mighty and can do all things. And, I trust that, if You choose not to intervene, Your purposes are higher than mine. Help me to cling to the great hope that tragedy is not the end of the story for those who love You - that, because You have raised Christ, so You too will raise us up in glory! Amen.

Evening: Psalm 114



Psalm

Tuesday, July 31

Morning: Psalm 115

Evening: Psalm 116

Wednesday, August 1

Morning: Psalm 117

Evening: Psalm 118

Thursday, August 2

Morning: Psalm 119:1-24

Evening: Psalm 119:25-48

Friday, August 3

Morning: Psalm 119:49-72

Evening: Psalm 119:73-96

Saturday, August 4

Morning: Psalm 119:97-120

Evening: Psalm 119:121-144

Sunday, August 5

Morning: Psalm 119:145-160

Evening: Psalm 119:161-176



Psalms

WEEK TEN: AUGUST 6-12

Monday, August 6

Morning: Psalm 120

Father,

I cry out to You today in a situation that seems dark and desperate, without hope. And yet I am reminded that I have called out to You before in distress, in dire circumstances, and You have answered. I am grateful that You hear Your children's cries and You answer them, and so I cry out to You again, trusting that You are faithful to hear me. I know this because I have seen You at work. I have seen You respond to my cries for help, and I have seen the power of God at work to answer my prayers.

I am Your follower, Lord, but I live in a world in opposition to the gospel, filled with enemies with lying lips and deceitful tongues. I may not face physical persecution, like some of my brothers and sisters in other lands, but nonetheless I feel Satan's attacks. The spirit of unrest is very real. The psalmist felt like an exile in a foreign land. He longed to worship with God's people and yet found Himself surrounded by opponents. It can feel that way in 2018 in many ways. As a Christian, I am called to live as Your follower, which often seems incredibly countercultural, and it can be lonely.

Lord, as we look out, we see evil and it seems to reign everywhere. I long for peace and to see You make all things right, but I live in the tension and the waiting of that day, of Your return and that day of judgment. It could be easy to lose faith in such moments, but Father, help me to cling to the hope I have in You - when others shun me, when the decisions I make at work or school are unpopular, when I face the world's rejection.

And Father, I do pray for all people who experience unrest today. I pray for those engaged in conflict and for all who experience the effects of war. I give thanks for our military personnel and for their bravery and courage. I ask that You would give counsel to world leaders who have to make incredibly difficult decisions. I ask for encouragement for Christians who live in places where physical persecution is very real. Would You encourage them in their weariness? Would You protect them from the enemy's advances? And would You use even their suffering as an avenue to proclaim the gospel to the world, especially to their oppressors?

And I pray that I would be a person of righteousness and peace - in my relationships, in my home, in my job, in my school, in my community, and in my church. If it is possible, as far as it depends on me, let me live in peace with others. I confess that this isn't easy, because my sinful tendency is to desire unrest and conflict, to gossip and nag, to practice self-preservation in my smug self-righteousness. But this isn't how it ought to be! Lord, would You let peace begin with me?

And I do pray for those who are enemies of the gospel, that they would come to repentance and faith, and that they would experience peace with God through Christ. Lord, and we pray this with confidence, knowing that unrest and war will not mark the days of eternity. While we can do our best, by the power of Your Spirit, to live at peace with others, we also know that conflict will exist until that day when You will return, when the Rider on the white horse will make war with evil, and the Lamb will overcome! Vengeance belongs to You, not to us. Help us to live at peace in the midst of the waiting.

Evening: Psalm 121



Psalm

Tuesday, August 7

Morning: Psalm 122

Evening: Psalm 123 & 124

Wednesday, August 8

Morning: Psalm 125

Evening: Psalm 126 & 127

Thursday, August 9

Morning: Psalm 128

Evening: Psalm 129

Friday, August 10

Morning: Psalm 130

Evening: Psalm 131

Saturday, August 11

Morning: Psalm 132

Evening: Psalm 133

Sunday, August 12

Morning: Psalm 134 & 135

Evening: Psalm 136



Psalm

WEEK ELEVEN: AUGUST 13-19

Monday, August 13

Morning: Psalm 137

God,

I confess that sometimes it is hard to sing. The Israelites experienced this in Babylon; they had been taken to a foreign land, far from home, in captivity. The Babylonians pillaged their country and their people. They killed their children. They took advantage of their women. They ransacked the promised land that the Israelites held so dear.

I may not be in such a situation today, but I can empathize in some ways with the Israelites. I have seen unspeakable hurt. I have witnessed seemingly insurmountable tragedies. I can testify that evil seems to reign on every corner. I turn on the TV and hear of another atrocity. I read the news and hear another story of a person being taken advantage of - a person made in Your image. I have felt the sting of death as my loved ones leave this earth, and I have wept as I've watched the devastating effects of sin wreak its havoc on so many lives. And in those places, Lord, I confess that I cannot sing. Like the Israelites, I hang my harp on the trees as my tormentors mock me, asking me where my God is. I know where You are, Father, but sometimes I wish You would have intervened before things became so broken. Everything seems beyond repair.

But even though I cannot sing, I will remember. I will remember the hope of Jerusalem, of a place where You dwell with Your people, of a city that will exist in perfect peace. I would rather be mute and paralyzed than forget this hope, for what other hope do I have in this mess except for You?

And Lord, I do cry out against those who do evil. I confess that sometimes it's much easier to bring my praises to You, and more difficult to bring my frustrations, my anger, even my feelings of hate and rage. But as the Israelites came to You in verses 7-9 of this psalm, so I also lay those before You my anger against those who have caused great hurt in my life and in the lives of those I love, and my frustration with the brokenness I see when I look around the world. God, will You intervene? Will You repay them for their evil? Will You have the last word? Will evil overcome?

Just as You promised You would judge Babylon for her harshness against Jerusalem, so You promise that You, by no means, will clear the guilty on their own accord. A day of judgment is coming. And the saints in heaven cry along with me, asking "How long You will wait until You avenge the blood of Your children?" And You tell us all to wait a little longer, but as we wait, we know that we can trust that Your judgments are true and just, and Your timing is perfect.

And even as I wait for that great day of reckoning, I pray for my enemies and for those who persecute me. Lord, I confess that this is exceedingly hard and that my heart is so hardened against them. But I trust that the Holy Spirit is praying and groaning with me in this, and that by praying for them, perhaps You are working too in my heart, to help me to love my enemies just as You loved me when I was Your enemy! You sent Christ for me when I was lost in my sin, far from You. Could You work the same kind of miracle in the lives of these people who have caused such pain in the world? Would You work in their hearts to convict them of their sin and to bring them to repentance and faith? Would You use their stories as a remarkable tale of Your redemptive power? And Lord, even as I see the sins of others so easily, I confess that sometimes my vision is quite off when it comes to my own sin. I repent, Father, of today's evil thoughts, words, and works.



Psalms

Lord, we wait in hope for the day when we will sing of Your songs again in Your city, the New Jerusalem - in a place that will know no captivity, no injustice, no war, and no suffering. Until then, in seasons of singing and in seasons of sorrow, we pledge that we will cling to You. You are our only hope - in life and in death. Amen.

Evening: Psalm 138

Tuesday, August 14

Morning: Psalm 139

Evening: Psalm 140

Wednesday, August 15

Morning: Psalm 141

Evening: Psalm 142

Thursday, August 16

Morning: Psalm 143

Evening: Psalm 144

Friday, August 17

Morning: Psalm 145

Evening: Psalm 146

Saturday, August 18

Morning: Psalm 147

Evening: Psalm 148

Sunday, August 19

Morning: Psalm 149

Evening: Psalm 150