

PSALMS

Over a period of 10 centuries, inspired hymns of worship were composed and compiled to form the anthology known as the Book of Psalms (from a Greek word meaning "a song sung to the accompaniment of a plucked instrument"). Authored by David and six other writers, these heart-stirring pleas and praises capture the essence of what it means to walk daily with God. Each of the five sections bears a topical likeness to a book of the Pentateuch, and each closes with a ringing doxology of praise.

Section	Book 1: Psalms 1-41	Book 2: Psalms 42-72	Book 3: Psalms 73-89	Book 4: Psalms 90-106	Book 5: Psalms 107-150
Main Author(s)	David	David & Korah	Asaph	Anonymous	David
Possible Compiler	David	Hezekiah		Ezra/Nehemiah	
Content	Laments	National Anthems		Praise Anthems	
Topical Likeness to Pentateuch	Genesis (Mankind)	Exodus (Redemption)	Leviticus (Worship)	Numbers (Wandering)	Deuteronomy (Word of God)
Benediction of Praise	41:13	72:18-19	89:52	106:48	150:1-6
Span of Authorship	About 1,000 Years				
Dates of Completion	1020-970 B.C.	970-610 B.C.		Until 430 B.C.	

The Darkest Hour of the Day

I Monday
June

Psalms 1–6
Heart of the Passage:
Psalm 3



Overview: The first six psalms form a fitting introduction to the entire psalter. In them you will learn the importance of meditating on God's Word (1), acknowledging the Lord as King (2), and constantly being devoted to prayer in good times and in bad (3–6).

Psalm	Author	Key Idea	(Verse) Referred to in N.T.
1	Unknown	Portrait of Two Lives	(2) Rom. 7:22
2	David*	The Lord and His Anointed	(1-2) Acts 4:25-26; (7) Acts 13:33
3	David	The Darkest Hour of the Day	(8) Rom. 7:10
4	David	A Bedtime Prayer	(4) Eph. 4:26
5	David	A Morning Prayer	(9) Rom. 3:13
6	David	A Tearful Prayer	(8) Matt. 7:23; 25:41

*See Acts 4:25

*Standing
your
ground is
easier when
you're
grounded
in faith.*



Your Daily Walk: Can you stand your ground when you are in the minority? How about when the minority is shrinking and the opposition is growing?

Psalm 3 is the first of 14 psalms that contain a hint in the title regarding the historical situation that prompted David to write them. The superscription reads: "A psalm of David, when he fled from Absalom his son" (see 2 Samuel 15:16-17). Those 11 words summarize the heartbreak of a father, the humiliation of a deposed monarch, and the overthrow of a great military leader. As David's favorite son, Absalom, usurps the throne, the king enters one of the darkest periods of his life.

But beginning with verse 3, David shifts his focus from his problem to his Problem Solver. He remembers that God is a shield to protect him, glory to adorn him, and a head lifter to encourage him (v. 3). God gives peace in the midst of distress (v. 5) and fearlessness in the face of opposition (v. 6). Truly, without God there is no victory; with God, every foe can be vanquished.

Sleeplessness in the face of mounting problems is a sure sign your focus is in the wrong place. Write out the words of verse 5 and place them where you will see them last thing tonight and first thing tomorrow morning. Remember, your Problem Solver never sleeps!



Insight: And Speaking of the Darkest Hour of the Day . . . The first half of Psalm 3:8 is quoted elsewhere in the Old Testament by someone who was also having a "dark day"—in fact, one of the darkest, loneliest, wettest days anyone has ever experienced. Do you remember who? (Check Jonah 2:9 for the answer.)

Waiting for the Judge

Tuesday

June

2



Overview: All but one of the psalms in today's reading begin with a cry of lament: "O Lord my God," "O Lord," "Lord." These short but potent songs express the psalmist's desire that justice prevail (7), the wicked be brought low (9-10), and God's holy name be exalted (8, 11-12).

Psalms 7-12

Heart of the Passage:

Psalm 7

Psalm	Author	Key Idea	(Verse) Referred to in N.T.
7	-David	Waiting for the Judge	(9) Rev. 2:23
8	David	Crown of Creation	(2) Matt. 21:16; (4-6) Heb. 2:6-8
9	David	Peril of the Wicked	(8) Acts 17:31
10	Unknown	Peril of the Pilgrim	(7) Rom. 3:14
11	David	Trust from the Temple	
12	David	Truth from God's Mouth	



Insight: Cush, the Unknown Benjamite

The Cush referred to in the title of Psalm 7 remains a mystery, since no such contemporary of David's is mentioned in the Bible. Some commentators have suggested Cush might be another name for Shimei (2 Samuel 16:5; 19:16), the Benjamite who cursed David and threw rocks at him during David's hasty retreat from Jerusalem following Absalom's revolt. Now read Psalm 7 again . . . with feeling!

*All things
come to
him who
waits—
even
justice.*



Your Daily Walk: Ponder the following statements and then place a check (✓) next to the ones you agree with:

- _____ 1. God is Judge of all the earth.
- _____ 2. God's justice is perfect and impartial.
- _____ 3. The path of the wicked leads to destruction.
- _____ 4. A wicked response to a wicked man is sin.

If you checked all four statements, you have assented to the fact that God will settle all accounts justly and in His own perfect timing (Psalm 7:8-9). The wicked will be punished; the righteous will be rewarded—but not always as quickly as you might like!

Now take those same four statements and translate them into a real-life situation. For David, that meant saying: "*God is Judge of all the earth . . . including this man Cush, who is hurling rocks and curses at me. God's justice is perfect and impartial . . . and He will vindicate me from Cush's slanderous accusations without my attempting to do so. A wicked response to Cush would be sinful . . . therefore, I will wait upon the Lord.*" Now do the same with a "Cush" in your own life. As you wait for the Judge to settle the injustices in your life, make Psalm 7:1 your patient prayer.

Past Conquests, Future Confidence

3 Wednesday
June

Psalms 13–18
Heart of the Passage:
Psalm 18



Overview: In sharp contrast to the fate of the fool who denies God's existence (14), many blessings accrue to the one who serves God with a whole heart: joyfulness (13), fellowship with God (15), satisfaction (16), preservation (17), and confidence in facing the future (18).

Psalm	Author	Key Idea	(Verse) Referred to In N.T.
13	David	From Sighing to Singing	
14	David	From Folly to Faith	(1-3) Rom. 3:10-12
15	David	A Man After God's Heart	
16	David	Satisfaction from God	(8-11) Acts 2:25-28; 13:35
17	David	Protection from God	(15) 1 John 3:2
18	David	Past Conquests, Future Confidence	(2) Heb. 2:13; (49) Rom. 15:9

*A
complacent
Christian
is a
contradiction
in
terms.*



Your Daily Walk: Living in the glow of yesterday's victories can be (a) helpful, (b) harmful, (c) both helpful and harmful. (Pick one.)

You probably selected (c)—“both helpful and harmful.” As David sits down to write Psalm 18, he has many memories of God's past deliverances in his life. God has been his “strength . . . rock . . . fortress . . . deliverer . . . buckler [shield] . . . high tower” (v. 2). David knows from firsthand experience that God is the One who hears, who avenges, who lifts up, who rescues, who rewards, who girds with strength those who put their trust in Him. And that knowledge gives David confidence to trust God in future days as well: “I *will* love thee. . . . I *will* call upon the LORD. . . . Therefore *will* I give thanks unto thee, O LORD” (vv. 1, 3, 49).

But there is a danger for those who bask in yesterday's victories: COMPLACENCY. Just because God has promised to fight for you does not mean you can sit idly by and do nothing! Look at David's active steps of obedience: “I have kept the ways of the LORD. . . . I did not put away his statutes from me. . . . I kept myself from mine iniquity” (vv. 21-23).

This evening, pull out something that reminds you of God's faithfulness thus far this year (a photo album, appointment calendar, or diary), and spend a few minutes reliving past victories. Now talk to God about what you intend to do during the rest of the year as you walk in confident obedience to Him.



Insight: Haven't I Sung That Somewhere Before? If the words of Psalm 18 seem familiar, it's probably because you read them before . . . in 2 Samuel 22! (Do you recall the occasion that prompted David to compose those verses?)

My Guide and Protector

Thursday

June

4



Overview: The Lord can be seen in many different roles in these six psalms. He is the Creator (19), the Helper (20), the King (21), the Crucified One (22), the Shepherd (23), and the Glorious One (24). For each role there is a corresponding responsibility for the people who would follow Him as their God and King, Shepherd and Sovereign.

Psalms 19–24
Heart of the Passage:
Psalm 23

Psalm	Author	Key Idea	(Verse) Referred to in N.T.
19	David	The Sky and the Scriptures	(4) Rom. 10:18; (9) Rev. 19:2
20	David	Trust In the Midst of Trouble	
21	David	Rejoicing After Rescue	
22	David	A Sob and a Song	(1, 7-8, 16, 18) Matt. 27:35, 39, 43, 46
23	David	My Guide and Protector	(1) John 10:11; Heb. 13:20
24	David	My Creator and King	(1) 1 Cor. 10:26, 28



Insight: A Trinity of Shepherd Psalms

Psalms 22–24 form a trio of songs about the Lord our Shepherd. In Psalm 22 He is the Good Shepherd who gives His life for the sheep (John 10:11); in Psalm 23 He is the Great Shepherd who guides and provides (Hebrews 13:20); and in Psalm 24 He is the Chief Shepherd, the sovereign Lord of the sheep (1 Peter 5:4). By the way, is He *your* Shepherd?



Your Daily Walk: Some of the most noted men in Scripture were shepherds. Can you think of three? _____

_____ . Joseph was a shepherd (Genesis 37:2). He and his 11 brothers tended his father's flocks. Unknown to Joseph, God was preparing him for the day when he would "shepherd" the nation of Egypt through seven years of famine.

Moses was a shepherd. For 40 years he coped with balky sheep in Midian, not knowing that soon he would be putting his "pastoral education" to work leading a balky nation of Israelites.

David was a shepherd. As a young lad he nurtured his father's flocks, unaware that soon he would be anointed to "shepherd" God's people.

For David, likening God to a loving, caring shepherd in Psalm 23 was natural because David knew firsthand the role of a shepherd. Try paraphrasing Psalm 23 in your own words, using a metaphor of which you have firsthand knowledge. For example: "The Lord is my Boss . . . my Teacher . . . my Pastor . . . my Coach . . . my Father." Send us a copy of your creative work! We'd love to read it.

*God
 watches
 and weeds
 us, and
 continues
 His labor
 upon us,
 until He
 brings us
 to the end
 of His
 promise.*

Praying Through the Alphabet

5 Friday
June

Psalms 25–30
Heart of the Passage:
Psalm 25



Overview: As David penned the psalms you read today, he thought of the multifaceted character of the God he served. The Lord is “good and upright” (25:8), “my light” (27:1), “my strength” (28:7), “King for ever” (29:10), and “my God” (30:2, 12).

Psalm	Author	Key Idea	(Verse) Referred to in N.T.
25	David	Praying Through the Alphabet	
26	David	Judging the Accused	
27	David	Fear Swallowed Up by Faith	(1) John 12:46; (12) Matt. 26:60
28	David	Cry of the Downcast	(4) 2 Tim. 4:14; Rev. 22:12
29	David	Voice of the Lord	(3) Rev. 10:3
30	David	Confidence of the Uplifted	(5) John 16:20

*Prayer
is the
mightiest
of all
weapons
that created
natures can
wield.*



Your Daily Walk: Psalm 25 is the first “Alphabetic Psalm” in the Psalter. Here’s why that is an appropriate designation. Write out the letters of the English alphabet vertically in the margin; A, B, C, etc. Now, can you think of one Bible verse that begins with each of those letters? For example, **A**—“All we like sheep have gone astray” (Isaiah 53:6); **B**—“Blessed are the poor in spirit” (Matthew 5:3). See how many of the 26 letters you can match with a Bible verse.

What you just attempted with the English alphabet, David does in Psalm 25 with the Hebrew alphabet. With only minor variations, David proceeds through the entire Hebrew alphabet, capturing his thoughts in alphabetical order. You might think of it as “praying through his problems from A to Z.”

Because of the way David “packaged” his prayer requests, he was able to remember them long after the psalm was written. In that way he could check up and see how God had faithfully answered each request. You can do the same thing by beginning a Prayer Log. Write down your prayer requests, date them, pray daily and systematically for them, and watch God work. (And remember, God answers prayers three ways: “yes,” “no,” and “wait.”) Then you, like David, can make your prayer time as memorable as A, B, C.



Insight: Other Alphabetic Psalms in the Psalter
The Hebrew alphabet has 22 letters. Knowing that fact, how do you suppose the psalmist has organized the following Alphabetic Psalms: Psalm 34? Psalm 145? (One letter is missing.) Psalm 119? (Hint: Divide 176 by 8.)

The Many Faces of the **PSALMS**

Most of us enjoy different types of music, depending on what kind of mood we find ourselves in. Flipping the radio dial back and forth, we tune in the sound that best matches our particular emotional level.

That's something like the variety you will find in the Book of Psalms. As you journey through the psalms day to day, it helps if you can put a label on each one as you go. Then you'll know what kind of mood or feeling to expect in each type of psalm you will encounter.

I. LAMENT PSALMS: These are not as pessimistic as the title may imply. They represent praises offered to the Lord by either a single individual or a community of worshipers in a time when God seems absent. Nevertheless, they are uttered with the reassuring confidence that God can and will deliver His people.

II. THANK PSALMS: The grouping of songs, offered publicly by one or more worshipers, acknowledges God's faithful actions on behalf of His people in a specific time of distress.

III. PRAISE PSALMS: Less specific than thank psalms, these hymns of praise shout joyful adoration for God's greatness. God is extolled as the One who created the universe, guides its history, and lovingly shepherds His people.

IV. ISRAEL PSALMS: This broad category denotes psalms of festive praise that acknowledge God's overall program for His chosen nation. Four different types may be highlighted:

- A. Covenant Psalms**—praising God for His trustworthy covenants with Israel.
- B. Royal Psalms**—praising the coming King.
- C. Jerusalem Psalms**—praising the holy city.
- D. Throne Psalms**—praising God's universal rule.

V. TRUST PSALMS: These psalms embody a deep knowledge of God's presence and power—a comforting thought in any situation.

VI. WISDOM PSALMS: Wisdom is not limited to books. Indeed, the highest path of wisdom may be found in lifting honor and praise to the Holy One.

Praying for Your Persecutors

6/7

Sat.–Sun.

June

Psalms 31–36
Heart of the Passage:
Psalm 35



Overview: A proper perspective can help you face any circumstance and can bring you from gloom to glory (31), from failure to forgiveness (32), from false security to confident trust (33), from affliction to adoration (34), from persecution to praise (35), and from darkness to light (36).

Psalm	Author	Key Idea	(Verse) Referred to in N.T.
31	David	From Gloom to Glory	(5) Luke 23:46
32	David	Praise for God's Pardon	(1-2) Rom. 4:7-8; (5) 1 John 1:9
33	Unknown	My Maker and Monarch	(3) Rev. 5:9; (6) Heb. 11:3
34	David	Looking at Life from the Cave	(12-16) 1 Pet. 3:10-12; (20) John 19:36
35	David	Praying for Persecutors	(19) John 15:25
36	David	Life and Light in the Lord	(1) Rom. 3:18; (9) John 12:46

*In prayer,
while we
seek in
appearance
to bend
God's will
to ours,
we are in
reality
bringing
our will to
His.*



Your Daily Walk: Loving someone who is lovely is easy. Loving someone who is unlovely is difficult. But loving someone who is unlovable? That's what the Christian is called to do! Think back to Christ's words to His disciples: "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you" (Matthew 5:44). How can you pray for people like that?

Psalm 35 will give you part of the answer. Notice how David prayed for those who were pursuing and persecuting him:

David did not condone their actions. While praying for God's deliverance in his own life, David also prayed that God would confound his oppressors to show them the result of their folly.

David did not return evil for evil. He could have attacked his attackers in an attempt to vindicate himself. Instead, David treated them as he would have wanted to be treated (vv. 13-14).

David sought to maintain a proper focus in the midst of his sufferings. The psalm moves through three stanzas, each beginning with David's plight (1-8, 11-17, 19-26), but ending with David's praise that God is still in control (9-10, 18, 27-28).

Are you in the midst of being accused unjustly in your home, office, or school? Using David's prayer as your model, how can you respond in a way that will bring praise out of your plight?



Insight: Psalms 34 and 35—Companions in Misery
Whether or not Psalm 35 was written as a companion to Psalm 34, it is appropriately placed next to it, not only because of similar phrases (34:7; 35:5-6) but because it speaks out of the kind of darkness which has just been dispelled in Psalm 34.

Wounded by a Friend

Monday

June

8



Overview: Psalms is not merely a book of praise; it is also a book of practical counsel. Today you will learn how to deal with fretfulness (37) and failing strength (38–39); how to rest in God’s faithfulness (40) and respond to a friend’s unfaithfulness (41).

Psalms 37–41

Heart of the Passage:

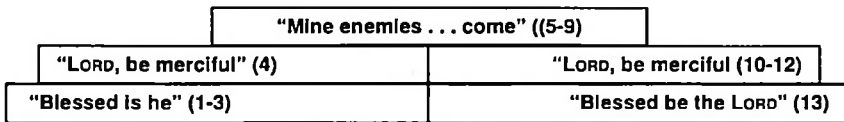
Psalm 41

Psalm	Author	Key Idea	(Verse) Referred to in N.T.
37	David	Well-Being and Well-Doing	(11, 22, 29) Matt. 5:5
38	David	Cry of a Suffering Saint	(11) Luke 23:49
39	David	Faith in the Midst of Family	(12) Heb. 11:13
40	David	From the Mire to the Choir	(6-8) Heb. 10:5-9
41	David	Wounded by a Friend	(9) John 13:18



Your Daily Walk: Psalm 41 marks the end of Book 1 of the Psalter. It concludes the section in the same way Psalm 1 commences it: by talking about the blessed (happy) person who is rightly related to God.

Think of Psalm 41 as a pyramid of praise in the midst of anguish, a sort of “How To Bless the Lord While Bedridden.”



The psalmist is suffering from some physical ailment or injury (v. 3). What begins as a third-person description of the man who takes pity on the poor and needy (vv. 1-3) soon becomes the plea of a discouraged, bedridden saint: “Be merciful unto *me*: heal *my soul*” (v. 4). The longer the psalmist meditates on the Lord, the more confident he becomes of God’s strength in his hour of need.

If you are sick or bedridden today, you can experience God’s blessing even in the midst of your recuperation. Instead of moping about your condition, use the time to meditate on the mercies of God. How has God delivered you . . . preserved you . . . strengthened you . . . upheld you in recent weeks? Share a few of those faith-stretching experiences with a family member or hospital roommate. It may be just the encouragement that person needs to help him praise the Lord with you.



Insight: Dos and Don’ts of Counting on God

Psalm 37 contains 8 *dos* and 4 *don’ts*. Can you find all 12 and give each a modern-day paraphrase? (Example: “Fret not” = Don’t get steamed up! “Trust in” = Lean on totally.)

Praise is more spontaneous when things go right; but it is more precious when things go wrong.

Here Comes the Bridegroom

9

Tuesday

June

Psalms 42-49

Heart of the Passage:

Psalms 45



Overview: Today you read some of the psalms attributed to the sons of Korah, descendants of the man who died for his rebellion against Moses (Numbers 16:1-33; 26:10). One part of this family became the temple doorkeepers (1 Chronicles 9:19); another the singers and musicians in the temple (1 Chronicles 6:31-33, 37).

Psalm	Author	Key Idea	(Verse) Referred to in N.T.
42	Korah	Cast Down but Confident	
43	Unknown	Lonley but Never Alone	
44	Korah	Failure Turned to Success	(22) Rom. 8:36
45	Korah	Here Comes the Bridegroom	(2) Luke 4:22; (6-7) Heb. 1:8-9
46	Korah	A City Unshaken	(4) Rev. 22:1
47	Korah	A Conquering King	
48	Korah	The City of God	(2, 8) Matt. 5:35
49	Korah	The Vanity of Wealth	(16-19) Luke 12:13-21

*Jesus Christ
is the
condescension of
divinity
and the
exaltation
of
humanity.*



Your Daily Walk: Find a newspaper and turn to the society page. Notice the amount of print, pictures, and fanfare devoted to weddings. Psalm 45 was penned by a poet, who, like a sort of heavenly journalist, was trying to capture in word pictures the glory and splendor of a bride and bridegroom on their wedding day. Only this was no mere earthly wedding. Notice how Hebrews 1:8-9 quotes verses 6 and 7 of this psalm and ascribes them to Jesus Christ Himself!

In ancient Near Eastern weddings the man was more important than the woman. All the guests gathered to view *his* apparel and *his* attendants! The wedding processional was for the bridegroom, not the bride! And truly the Groom is worthy of glory and honor. Notice the description of His virtues: "Thy throne . . . is for ever and ever: the scepter of thy kingdom is a right scepter" (v. 6). "Thou art fairer than the children of men: grace is poured into thy lips" (v. 2). With His sword in place to demonstrate strength and justice, and adorned with truth, meekness, and righteousness, the King is indeed majestic.

Close your devotional time today by thoughtfully reading verse 17. Then look for one way you can introduce the next "generation" by word or deed to your King of kings. Here comes the Groom!



Insight: Treating the Psalms Royally
Other "Royal Psalms" (psalms that picture Christ as King) include Psalms 2, 18, 20, 21, 72, 89, 99, 110, and 145.

A King's Cry for Cleansing

Wednesday

June

10



Overview: Sin and confession are prominent themes in the psalms you read today (50). David provides a model of confession after his sin with Bathsheba (51), and goes on to describe the treacherous nature of the tongue (52) and the folly of pursuing evil (53). Only with God as your constant source of help (54) can you counter the daily temptations and pitfalls of life.

Psalms 50–54
Heart of the Passage:
Psalm 51

Psalm	Author	Key Idea	(Verse) Referred to in N.T.
50	Asaph	The Judge Who Is Not Silent	(12) 1 Cor. 10:26, 28
51	David	A King's Cry for Cleansing	(4) Rom. 3:4
52	David	The Treacherous Tongue	
53	David	The Futility of Evil	(1-3) Rom. 3:10-12
54	David	God, My Helper and Upholder	



Your Daily Walk: New “miracle” products emerge all the time, loudly heralded for their ability to clean everything from “tough, ground-in dirt” to “ring-around-the-collar.” But there is still one cleaning job they are powerless to accomplish: the cleansing of a dirty heart.

Psalm 51 was penned during the darkest hour of David's life. For perhaps 20 years, the shepherd-king had ruled in righteous grandeur. But his sin with Bathsheba changed all that. First adultery, then murder inflicted ugly scars on the king's life. Nathan the prophet was sent by God to confront David with the severity of his sin. David responded with a heartfelt prayer for forgiveness: “Wash me . . . cleanse me. . . Create in me a clean heart” (vv. 2, 10).

David knew that forgiveness involves two parties: the offender and the offended. Unless the offended party is willing to put away the wrong that's been done, fellowship cannot be restored. The price of pardon is never cheap, but David knew it must be paid. “The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise” (v. 17).

Has your walk with God been interrupted by a dark stain of sin? Then get up right now and find a place where you can wash your hands. As you do, ask God to wash your heart as well. Confess your specific offenses against God, and experience His cleansing—the kind no soap can produce (1 John 1:9).



Insight: Seven Cries for Cleansing in the Psalms
In addition to Psalm 51, there are six other “psalms of a penitent heart” in the Psalter. Psalms 6, 32, 38, 102, 130, and 143.

If our prayers do not change us, then we do not pray aright.

Diary of REMEMBRANCE

As you spend time reading through the Psalms, certain verses are going to minister to you in a special way. Write down the verses that God uses in your life this month so that in the days and months ahead you can return to them again and again.

<i>Verses that helped me praise the Lord . . .</i>
<i>Verses that encouraged me . . .</i>
<i>Verses that I want to commit to memory . . .</i>

<i>Promises that I want to claim . . .</i>
<i>Commands that I want to obey . . .</i>
<i>(You decide!)</i>

Prayer While Being Pursued

Thursday

June

11



Overview: Today's reading captures the emotions of King David during some of his most difficult days. Notice David's frank petitions and confident trust in God in the wake of being betrayed (55), brokenhearted (56), and pursued (57, 59). Through it all David knows "there is a reward for the righteous . . . [and] God . . . judgeth in the earth" (58:11).

Psalms 55–59
Heart of the Passage:
Psalm 59

Psalm	Author	Key Idea	(Verse) Referred to in N.T.
55	David	Betrayed by a Brother	(22) 1 Pet. 5:7
56	David	A Bottle Full of Tears	(4) Heb. 13:6; (9) Rom. 8:31
57	David	Faith of a Fugitive	
58	David	Welching the Wicked	
59	David	Prayer While Being Pursued	



Your Daily Walk: Psalm 59 is the last in a series of three psalms (57–59) described as *Michtams* (songs of deliverance) sung to the tune of *Altaschith* ("Do Not Destroy"). Go back and refresh your memory about the situation behind Psalm 59 in 1 Samuel 19:11, "when Saul sent, and they watched the house to kill him" (title of Psalm 59). Everyone from time to time finds the need to eat on the run, and occasionally to ask directions on the run, but have you learned to praise on the run?

Psalm 59 describes David as being on the run. Narrowly escaping Saul's murderous pursuit, David fled for his life. He was a fugitive . . . a pursued man . . . a man on the run. Perhaps finding a few minutes to stop and catch his breath, David took pen in hand and composed the words of Psalm 59, a song of confident praise in the midst of being pursued.

It is easy to complain about the circumstances that invade your life bringing anxiety and uncertainty. It is easy to pray for God to judge those enemies and remove those circumstances. But can you, like David, praise God for those circumstances and respond with a joyful attitude of praise while "on the run"? Reread the last two verses of Psalms 57, 58, and 59. Then complete this sentence: "Because God is my defense and refuge (59:16), today I will praise Him 'on the run' by _____."



Insight: The Good Housekeeping "Selah" of Approval
The word *selah*, which occurs 71 times in the Book of Psalms, may have marked a crescendo in the music, the end of a refrain, or a dramatic pause to highlight what had just been said.

Praise is the best of all sacrifices and the true evidence of godliness.

Good News and Bad News

12 Friday
June

Psalms 60–66
Heart of the Passage:
Psalms 60



Overview: Today you read five psalms of lament (60–61, 63–65; watch for the cry, “O God”) in which the psalmist stands upon the promises of God in the face of defeat, discouragement, and deceit. Through it all the psalmist finds that God is a praiseworthy refuge (62, 66).

Psalms	Author	Key Idea	(Verse) Referred to in N.T.
60	David	Good News and Bad News	
61	David	God, My High Rock	
62	David	God, My Immovable Defense	(12) Matt. 16:27; Rev. 2:23; 22:12
63	David	God, My Soul's Satisfaction	
64	David	Preserved from Panic	
65	David	God of Might	(7) Matt. 8:26
66	Unknown	God of Many	

The front page of any newspaper is adequate reason for the necessity of a saving God.



Your Daily Walk: What was the best news you received in the last year? What was the worst news? Have you ever had someone come to you with the bittersweet statement, “I have good news and bad news . . .”? Which did you want to hear first?

Psalm 60 was written in the aftermath of both good news and bad news for King David. At the peak of his power, David enjoyed victory over his foes near and far (2 Samuel 8:3–5). (That’s the good news.) But David’s sweeping success in battle caused his enemies to join forces through alliances. This psalm indicates that Edom attacked Judah from the south, bringing havoc on David’s thinly defended homeland. (That’s the bad news.) After hearing the bleak report, David sat down to capture his emotions in a Spirit-inspired song—Psalm 60.

David clearly recognized the sovereign hand of God in what had transpired. (Notice the pronoun *thou* repeated eight times in the first four verses.) Not only does God move in the affairs of men; He possesses the very nations (vv. 7–8)! Therefore, David could glory in God’s mighty strength, knowing that “through God we shall do valiantly” (v. 12)—a confidence you can echo today.

Find a pencil and complete these two sentences:

1. “As I look at my circumstances, the *bad* news is . . .”
2. “As I look at the resources of God, the *good* news is . . .”



Insight: A Short Course in Israelite Geography (Psalm 60) Verses 6 and 7 describe six points of significant Israelite geography in the time of King David. With the help of a good Bible map, see how many of the six you can locate.

An Earth Full of Glory

Sat.–Sun.

June

13/14



Overview: Just how praiseworthy is the great God of Israel? David and Solomon will show you as you read these psalms today. God is worthy of praise for His judgments (67), His compassion and provision (68), His attentiveness to the cry of His children (69–70), His strength on behalf of the weak (71), and His sovereignty over the nations (72).

Psalms 67–72
Heart of the Passage:
Psalm 72

Psalm	Author	Key Idea	(Verse) Referred to in N.T.
67	Unknown	A Missionary Psalm	
68	David	Majesty on High	(18) Eph. 4:8
69	David	Plea from a Sea of Troubles	(9) John 2:17; (21) Matt. 27:34 (22-23) Rom. 11:9-10; (25) Acts 1:20
70	David	Help in a Hurry	
71	Unknown	A Psalm for the Elderly	
72	Solomon	An Earth Full of Glory	



Your Daily Walk: As you read Psalm 72, watch for the “Job Description of a Righteous Ruler.” That will give you specific points to pray about as you uphold your national, local, and spiritual leaders in prayer. For example, a righteous ruler is to be concerned with:

- ... bringing peace to the people (vv. 3, 7).
- ... assisting the poor, needy, and oppressed (vv. 4, 12-14).
- ... generating a godly fear for the laws of the land (v. 5).
- ... refreshing the people through righteous reform (vv. 6-7).

Compare this psalm with Isaiah 11:1-5, and you will soon see who is prophetically pictured in this psalm: none other than Jesus Christ, the Messiah of Israel! But buried in the heart of the psalm is this statement: “Prayer also shall be made for him continually; and daily shall he be praised” (v. 15). Solomon, the author of Psalm 72, knew that God’s representative in any generation needs and deserves the prayers and praises of his subjects.

Stop right now and thank God for those who serve in positions of authority over you. Pray that God will help them in their difficult roles as servants of the people. You might even want to write a short note to one or more of your elected officials, sharing what you have learned from Psalm 72.



Insight: Modern Songs from an Ancient Psalm
At least two great hymns of the faith were spawned from the reading of Psalm 72: James Montgomery’s “Hail to the Lord’s Anointed,” and Isaac Watts’s well-known “Jesus Shall Reign.”

Prayer is a shield to the soul, a sacrifice to God, and a scourge to Satan.

Thanks for the Memories

15 Monday
June

Psalms 73–77
Heart of the Passage:
Psalm 75



Overview: Those who ignore God will find their path slippery and their prosperity short-lived (73, 75). By contrast, those who order their lives according to God's Word will discover hope in the midst of havoc (74) and resources to face every situation in life victoriously (76–77).

Psalm	Author	Key Idea	(Verse) Referred to in N.T.
73	Asaph	The Slippery Way of the Wicked	(28) James 4:8
74	Asaph	Hope in the Midst of Havoc	(17) Acts 17:26
75	Asaph	Thanks in the Midst of Memories	(8) Rev. 14:10
76	Asaph	Overthrowing the Might	(7) Rev. 6:17
77	Asaph	Battling the Blues	

Praising and adoring God is the noblest part of the saint's work on earth, as it will be his chief employ in heaven.



Your Daily Walk: A famous comedian employs as his theme song, "Thanks for the Memories." It is difficult to hear the strains of that tune without reliving some of the memories spanning more than a half century that have made Leslie Townes Hope (aka Bob Hope) virtually a household word.

In the same way that a melody or favorite song can spark memories, the composer of Psalm 75 realizes that reliving the wondrous works of God can spark thanksgiving. Retelling the great deeds of God is an indispensable part of worshiping God. Thinking about His faithfulness and power in the past can only lead to one inescapable conclusion: He is worthy of praise! "I will declare for ever; I will sing praises to the God of Jacob" (v. 9). There are many ways to recall memories of God's past dealings in your life. As a family, or just by yourself, try one or more of the following Praise Projects this evening:

1. Look at some slides, home movies, or photo albums that remind you of God's faithfulness over the past year.
2. Swap memories with one other person about the most faith-stretching experience you have had so far this year.
3. Thumb back through your checkbook, and let it remind you of doctor's appointments (times of illness), repair bills (unexpected emergencies), and other times when God faithfully met your needs—physical, financial, and spiritual!



Insight: A Fitting Introduction to a New Group of Psalms
Psalm 73 introduces the third section in the Book of Psalms, the "Leviticus Book." Leviticus is the book of worship. When Asaph needed help in sorting out life, he went to "the sanctuary of God," and there learned God's perspective.

What Might Have Been

Tuesday

June

16



Overview: The psalms of Asaph (50, 73–83) conclude with six testimonies to the greatness and faithfulness of the God of Israel. He has kept His promises in the past (78)—a comforting reminder in the face of an uncertain future (79–80). God is there (81) and He is not silent (82–83) when it comes to overthrowing idols and enemies.

Psalms 78–83

Heart of the Passage:

Psalm 81

Psalm	Author	Key Idea	(Verse) Referred to in N.T.
78	Asaph	Listen to the Past	(2) Matt. 13:35; (24) John 6:31
79	Asaph	Wait for God's Help	(2-3) Rev. 16:6
80	Asaph	Turn Back to God	
81	Asaph	What Might Have Been	
82	Asaph	The "Gods" on Trial	(5) 1 John 2:11; (6) John 10:34
83	Asaph	Doom for God's Enemies	



Your Daily Walk: There is nothing quite so sad as recalling what might have been. Unfulfilled potential has a way of drawing you back to the scene of the failure and whispering in your ear, "If only you had . . ."

There were many "should have's" in Israel's long history. They should have waited patiently at the foot of Mount Sinai for Moses to return with the law of God . . . but they didn't. They should have believed the reports of Joshua and Caleb after spying out the Promised Land . . . but they didn't. They should have utterly destroyed the pagan peoples in the land . . . but they didn't. And the Israelites' repeated failure to obey God caused them to forfeit many blessings that God wanted to give them . . . but couldn't.

Reread Psalm 81:13-16. Circle the words *should have* every time you find them. Then ask yourself this question: "Next year, when I look back on this year, what will I say I should have been doing that I am not currently doing? What can I do now to insure that God's blessings are not just things that should have been or could have been in my life, but in fact have been."



Insight: A Song to Be Sung When the Moon Is New
Psalm 81 was most likely sung at the annual Feast of Tabernacles (v. 3; compare Leviticus 23:24), a festive occasion commemorating God's faithfulness during the wilderness wandering. Every seventh year it culminated with the reading of the law of God (Deuteronomy 31:10-13), in order that the families might "hear, and . . . learn, and fear the LORD . . . and observe to do all the words of this law" (v. 12).

The keenest pain comes from remembering what you should do—a day too late to do it.

Revive Us Again

17 Wednesday
June

Psalms 84-89
Heart of the Passage:
Psalms 85



Overview: Each psalm you read today contains a heartfelt petition to God: satisfy us again (84); revive us again (85); hear us again (86); gather us again (87); encourage us again (88); make us to sing again (89). And each psalm concludes with a benediction of confidence that God will do precisely that in response to the prayers of His people.

Psalm	Author	Key Idea	(Verse) Referred to in N.T.
84	Korah	Satisfy Us Again	
85	Korah	Revive Us Again	
86	David	Hear Us Again	(9) Rev. 15:4
87	Korah	Gather Us Again	
88	Heman	Encourage Us Again	(8) Luke 23:49
89	Ethan	Make Us to Sing Again	(9) Matt. 8:26; (20) Acts 13:22

The chief mark of authentic revival is enduring repentance.



Your Daily Walk: One of the hardest things in the world to revive is a revival.

On Mount Carmel Elijah demonstrated to the entire nation that the Lord is God (1 Kings 18); but within a handful of years the people had returned to their worship of Baal. Jonah's preaching turned Nineveh upside down (Jonah 3:1-5). Only 150 years later, however, the city had returned to its pagan ways and was swept away like a flood by the Babylonians (Nahum 1:7-8).

Psalms 85 depicts a nation to which revival had come in the past. Verses 1-3 contain six statements of what God had done, but the revival was short-lived. Old patterns and practices had returned. Lukewarmness had replaced spiritual vitality. What the nation needed now was a *revived revival*. So the psalmist cries out on behalf of his countrymen, "Revive us again!" (v. 6).

Spiritual awakenings and national revivals are well documented in history . . . but what about today? Revival in your country can only come when first there is revival in its citizens . . . and that means it must begin with you and your family.

Tonight before you retire, kneel in a time of prayer for revival and spiritual awakening. Ask God to let it begin with you . . . and your family . . . and your church . . . and your business . . . and your neighborhood . . . and your nation.



Insight: Key to Revival—Tune in, Don't Turn Back
Revival can come when the prayer of your heart is this: "I will hear what God the LORD will speak; for he will speak peace unto his people, and to his saints: but let them not turn again to folly" (85:8).

A Reason for Singing

Thursday

June

18



Overview: Though the authors of most of the psalms you read today are unknown, the Object of their worship is well known: the God of eternity (90), the God of protection (91), the God of greatness (92), the God of majesty (93), the God of vengeance (94), the God of salvation (95), the God of glory (96), and the God of holiness (97).

Psalms 90–97

Heart of the Passage:

Psalm 95

Psalm	Author	Key Idea	(Verse) Referred to in N.T.
90	Moses	The Long and Short of Life	(4) 2 Pet. 3:8
91	Unknown	Under the Shadow of the Almighty	(11-12) Matt. 4:6
92	Unknown	How Great Thou Art	(5) Rom. 9:14; (15) Rom. 11:33
93	Unknown	The Lord Is King	
94	Unknown	Lord, How Long?	(11) 1 Cor. 3:20; (14) Rom. 11:1-2
95	David*	A Reason for Singing	(7-11) Heb. 3:7-11; 4:3, 5, 7
96	Unknown	A Psalm for All the Earth	(13) Acts 17:31
97	Unknown	Coronation of the King	(3) Rev. 11:5; (7) Heb. 1:6

*See Hebrews 4:7



Your Daily Walk: Would you describe your singing ability as . . . (a) fit for Carnegie Hall, (b) fit for the shower, or (c) something that gives other people fits?

Notice the two invitations in Psalm 95: “O come, let us sing” (v. 1), and “O come, let us worship and bow down” (v. 6). There is good reason for both, regardless of the quality of your voice. Why should you want to sing the praises of God? Because He is a great God and great King (v. 3); He is strong (v. 4); He is creative (v. 5). In a word, He is omnipotent!

The psalm has its own built-in application. What should be your response today in the light of that knowledge? “Today if ye will hear his voice [do you?], harden not your heart” (vv. 7-8). While God is omnipotent, He is not impassive. You can grieve Him (v. 10) by ignoring His commands; or you can honor Him by coming before His presence with singing!

Find a hymnbook and spend a few minutes paging through the many familiar songs of the faith, or look in the topical index under adoration or worship. Select one hymn to sing or read as a prayerful act of worship to your great God and King. Then lift up your voice, for He is worthy of your adoration!



Insight: A Psalm for All Ages

From ancient times the Christian church has widely used Psalm 95 (known as the *Venite*, from the Latin for “O come”) as a call and guide to worship. Your church may want to do the same!

*After
silence,
that
which
comes
closest to
express-
ing the
inexpress-
ible is
music.*

Joy in the Court of the King

19

Friday

June

Psalms 98–103

Heart of the Passage:

Psalm 100



Overview: In Psalm 103, the psalmist urges you to count your blessings. And Psalms 98–102 provide plenty of ideas to help you do just that by focusing on the many things for which you should be thankful: your salvation (98), answered prayer (99), God’s mercy and truth (100), God’s justice and holiness (101), God’s care when you are downcast (102).

Psalm	Author	Key Idea	(Verse) Referred to in N.T.
98	Unknown	Celebration of the King	(3) Luke 1:54; (9) Acts 17:31
99	Unknown	Exaltation of the King	
100	Unknown	Joy in the Court of the King	(4) Matt. 7:23 (25-27) Heb. 1:10-12 (8) James 5:11; (17) Luke 1:50
101	David	Living in Integrity	
102	Unknown	Living with Adversity	
103	David	How to Bless the Lord	

Praise is simply letting off esteem.



Your Daily Walk: When the President of the United States appears in public, he is often greeted by a rousing rendition of “Hail to the Chief.” The title is appropriate, for the object of attention is none other than the Commander-in-Chief of the United States. But what do you play when the Lord God, the Commander-in-Chief of the universe, appears? How do you honor Him? What fitting song of tribute can you render Him?

You might want to start with the 100th Psalm! The opening line could well be translated, “Hail to the Chief,” for that is the awesome stature of the Lord God: “For the LORD is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations” (v. 5).

Isaac Watts captured the essence of verse 5 in this stanza of his hymn “Before Jehovah’s Awful Throne.” Read the stanza twice, copy it onto a card or slip of paper, and make it your constant meditation throughout the day as you “serve the Lord with gladness”:

*Wide as the world is Thy command,
Vast as eternity Thy love;
Firm as a rock Thy truth shall stand,
When rolling years shall cease to move.*



Insight: A Breath of Relief from Problems and Cares
Psalms 95–100 form a collection of “Psalms of Worship.” In contrast to the lament and petition that characterize so much of the Psalter, these six psalms contain only worship and adoration as the psalmist fixes his gaze on God.

The God Who Keeps His Word

Sat.–Sun.

June

20/21



Overview: Today you see three snapshots of the great God you serve. He is big enough to create and rule the universe (104); He is small enough to rule in the hearts of His people (105); and He is loving enough to discipline His rebellious children (106).

Psalms 104–106

Heart of the Passage:

Psalms 105

Psalm	Author	Key Idea	(Verse) Referred to In N.T.
104	Unknown	The God Who Rules Creation	(4) Heb. 1:7
105	Unknown	The God Who Rules History	(8-9) Luke 1:72-73
106	Unknown	The God Who Remembers Iniquity	(10, 45, 48) Luke 1:68, 71-72



Your Daily Walk: Opinions may vary, but chances are good that the highest compliment you can pay any cook or chef is the request, “May I have a second helping?” There is something about asking for more of what you found so pleasing to the palate that warms the heart of any aspiring Betty (or Bobby) Crocker. If you’ve never done so, try it on your cook tonight!

Psalm 105 shows that what is true in the kitchen is also true in heaven. God loves to show His strength on behalf of His people. He wants you to sing about it, and to “make known his deeds among the people” (vv. 1-2). Even more, He wants you to show gratitude for past mercies by coming back for more (vv. 3-4)!

The psalmist illustrates his point by rehearsing the lives of Abraham and Moses—two men whose lives were dedicated to following hard after God. Over and over in their lives, God “remembered his holy promise” (v. 42) by bringing protection and provision, guidance, and gladness to His faithful servants.

Pretend for a moment that the psalmist has reserved the last five verses of Psalm 105 to talk about your life. What could he add to what he has already said about the faithfulness of your promise-keeping God? Pen your own personalized “P.S.” to the psalm. If you have trouble thinking of something to write, ask God to make today a special chapter in your life as you walk by faith with Him.



Insight: Reliving the Plagues in Egypt

In Psalm 105:28-36 the psalmist mentions eight of the ten plagues God used to release the Israelites from Egyptian bondage. Can you recall the two he omitted? (If you need help, consult Exodus 7–12).

1. _____
2. _____

The thankfulness of the receiver ought to answer to the benefit of the bestower as the echo answers to the voice.

Charting the PSALMISTS

Of the 150 Psalms, 100 are linked to authors by the superscription (title) that precedes the psalm. The authors of two others (Psalms 2 and 95) can be determined from New Testament passages (Acts 4:25; Hebrews 4:7). Here is a summary of the poets who penned the five books of songs known collectively as the Psalms:

Author	Book 1: Psalms 1-41	Book 2: Psalms 42-72	Book 3: Psalms 73-89	Book 4: Psalms 90-106	Book 5: Psalms 107-150	TOTAL
David	38	18	1	3	15	75
Asaph	-	1	11	-	-	12
Korah	-	7	3	-	-	10
Solomon	-	1	-	-	1	2
Eliam	-	-	1	-	-	1
Heman	-	-	1	-	-	1
Moses	-	-	-	1	-	1
Anonymous	3	4	-	13	28	48
TOTALS	41	31	17	17	44	150

The Lord Is Priest and King

Monday

June

22



Overview: There is plenty to sing about in today's selection of psalms. First comes the song of the redeemed (107); then a song dedicated to the God of might and glory (108); and finally, a song of lament over the slanderous attacks of an enemy (109). But how can you sing when the godless are seemingly getting away with murder? Remember with the Psalmist David that the Lord is King (110)!

Psalms 107-110

Heart of the Passage:

Psalms 110

Psalm	Author	Key Idea	(Verse) Referred to in N.T.
107	Unknown	A Song of the Redeemed	(9) Luke 1:53; (29) Matt. 8:26
108	David	A Song of Praise and Prayer	
109	David	A Song of the Slandered	(8) Acts 1:20; (25) Mark 15:29
110	David	The Lord Is Priest and King	(1) Matt. 22:44; Acts 2:34-35; (4) Heb. 5:6; 7:17, 21



Your Daily Walk: The opening verse of Psalm 110 is one of the most often-quoted verses in the New Testament. Using a good reference Bible or Bible concordance, see how many places you can find Psalm 110:1 quoted or alluded to in the New Testament (there are nearly a dozen!).

After reading the psalm, you'll understand why New Testament authors put such emphasis on this one verse. In it, David the king of Israel, spoke of yet another King as his "Lord." David, ruler of a nation, humbly acknowledged the lordship of the Ruler of all nations: "The Lord [God] said unto my Lord [Christ], Sit thou at my right hand, [a privilege which even angels do not enjoy, Hebrews 1:13] until I make thine enemies thy footstool." A final surrender is yet to take place in which "every knee [shall] bow . . . and . . . every tongue . . . confess that Jesus Christ is Lord" (Philippians 2:10-11).

David, for all his kingly might, learned there was Another in his life deserving of the title "Lord." To that sovereign Priest and King, David responded without hesitation. Is that true in your life as well? Have you enthroned Jesus Christ as King in your heart?

Carry a spare key in your pocket or purse today to remind you that the King of the universe wants to be the undisputed King of your castle. But only you can let Him in!



Insight: In Case You Got Stymied in Your Search . . .

Quotations and allusions to Psalm 110:1 that you might want to mark in your Bible include: Matthew 22:44; Mark 12:36; Luke 20:42; Acts 2:34-35; 1 Corinthians 15:25; Hebrews 1:13; 10:12-13.

*How
divinely
supreme
is our
Lord
above all
others!*

The Praiseworthy Name of God

23

Tuesday

June

Psalms 111–118

Heart of the Passage:

Psalm 113



Overview: Praise permeates nearly every line of the psalms you read today! God is praiseworthy for His care (111), His commandments (112), His name (113), His power (114), His uniqueness (115), His deliverance (116), His truth (117), and His mercy (118). What other response could there be than to “Praise the Lord!”

Psalm	Author	Key Idea	(Verse) Referred to in N.T.
111	Unknown	The Praiseworthy Works of God	(9) Luke 1:49, 68
112	Unknown	The Praiseworthy Man of God	(9) 1 Cor. 9:9; (10) Matt. 8:12
113	Unknown	The Praiseworthy Name of God	
114	Unknown	The Praiseworthy Power of God	
115	Unknown	The Only Praiseworthy God	(13) Rev. 11:18; 19:5
116	Unknown	Praise for God's Deliverance	(10) 2 Cor. 4:13; (11) Rom. 3:4
117	Unknown	Praise for God's Truth	(1) Rom. 15:11
118	Unknown	Praise for God's Mercy	(6) Heb. 13:6; (18) 2 Cor. 6:9; (22-23) Matt. 21:42; (26) Matt. 21:9

Bless the Lord today; He blesses you every day.



Your Daily Walk: Have you ever heard it said of an athlete, “He’s so great at his event that no one can even touch him?” What did the speaker mean by that? Why is greatness sometimes synonymous with remoteness?

Psalm 113 is a majestic proclamation of God’s greatness: “The LORD is high above all nations, and his glory above the heavens. Who is like unto the LORD our God, who dwelleth on high” (vv. 4-5). Sounds pretty remote and untouchable, doesn’t it?

But don’t stop reading, for that exalted, glorious God “humbleth himself to behold the things that are . . . in the earth!” (v. 6). He is vitally concerned about such earthbound problems as poverty (v. 7), politics (v. 8), and families yearning for a child (v. 9). Little wonder the psalmist bursts forth in praise at both ends of the psalm!

God is almighty, but He is not aloof. When Hannah (1 Samuel 2), Mary (Luke 1:46-55), and Zechariah (Luke 1:67-79) got hold of that truth, they had no trouble praising God. Is there an unsaved friend with whom you could share the truth of Psalm 113 and introduce to the God who lives in human hearts?



Insight: A Package of Passover Psalms

Psalms 113–118 are sung yearly by devout Jews at the celebration of Passover, the first two (113–114) before and the last four (115–118) after the Passover meal. Thus it is possible that Psalm 113 was one of the last songs our Lord sang before His crucifixion (Mark 14:26).

God's Multifaceted Word

Wednesday

June

24



Overview: Psalm 119 is the longest psalm and the longest chapter of the longest book in the Bible. As such, it provides a natural spotlight for its subject which it describes: the multifaceted Word of God. Just as the psalm seems to go on endlessly as you read its 176 verses, so let your praise and love for God's Word be endless as you make it the focus of your devotional time today and every day.

Psalm 119

Heart of the Passage:

Psalm 119:1-16, 105-112

Psalm	Author	Key Idea	(Verse) Referred to in N.T.
119	Unknown	God's Multifaceted Word	(3) 1 John 3:9; 5:18; (62) Acts 16:25; (89) 1 Pet. 1:25; (137) Rev. 16:5, 7



Insight: 1 + 19 = 119

In Psalm 1, an anonymous psalmist declares that the blessed man is the one who meditates constantly on the law of the Lord. In Psalm 19, David describes the Word of the Lord in all its many facets. Today you will read Psalm 119 which expands upon Psalms 1 and 19 to produce a majestic testimonial to the power and perfection of God's Word.



Your Daily Walk: A synonym is a word that means the same (or nearly the same) as another word. How many synonyms can you find for the following familiar Bible terms?

Salvation: _____

Psalm: _____

Word of God: _____

It is fitting that the longest psalm should have as its theme the Word of God. But how does a songwriter compose a psalm befitting the powerful, praiseworthy Word of the Lord? How do you do it justice? How do you declare its lifechanging qualities without sounding trite or monotonous?

Answer: You write Psalm 119, an alphabetic psalm in which each of the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet is used 8 times (8 being the number of "superabundance") to begin a two-line couplet describing some facet of the Word of God. It is law (to be obeyed), testimony (to be shared), precept (to be practiced), promise (to be claimed), way (to be followed). In all, 11 synonyms are employed in the psalm. As you find each synonym, use it to complete this sentence: "Since God's Word is _____, today I will respond by _____."

The Bible is as broad as life, having indeed the same Author.

Peace Without and Within

25 Thursday
June

Psalms 120-127
Heart of the Passage:
Psalms 122



Overview: Psalms 120-134 deal with topics dear to the heart of travelers far from home: peace (120, 122); protection (121, 125, 127); and provision (123-124, 126). As you read these “hymns of the highway,” imagine yourself on a long journey, with your destination now in view.

Psalm	Author	Key Idea	(Verse) Referred to in N.T.
120	Unknown	Searching for Peace	(3-4) James 3:6
121	Unknown	The Lord Our Keeper	
122	David	Peace Without and Within	
123	Unknown	Eyes on the Lord	
124	David	The Lord Our Helper	
125	Unknown	The Lord Our Protector	(5) Gal. 6:16
126	Unknown	The Lord Our Restorer	
127	Solomon	The Lord Our Security	

*We sleep
in peace in
the arms of
God when
we yield
ourselves up
to His
providence.*



Your Daily Walk: World peace has always been an elusive commodity. Of the last 3,500 years of human history, fewer than 300 could be called “warless.” More than 8,000 treaties have been made . . . and broken . . . during that time. Little wonder that one cynic has defined peace as “that brief glorious moment in history when everybody stands around reloading.”

As David depicts the end of a long march to the Holy City of Jerusalem (Psalm 122), he contemplates the irony of the name: *Jerusalem, City of Peace*, though it has known so little peace. And so the psalmist exhorts, “Pray for the peace of Jerusalem” (vv. 6-8).

Just as the city of Jerusalem in David’s day housed the very presence of the Lord, so your body today is the “temple [dwelling place] of the Holy Ghost” (1 Corinthians 6:19). You have the very source of peace residing in your life! Drawing upon that resource, how can you be a peacemaker in your world today? How can you work toward resolving conflicts (rather than starting new ones) in your home, office, school, and church? You might begin by praying, as David did, for “peace . . . for my brethren and companions’ sakes” (vv. 7-8).



Insight: Hymns for the Hike to Jerusalem
Psalms 120-134 are identified in the titles as “songs of degrees” or “songs of ascents,” anthems sung by pilgrims on their yearly trips to Jerusalem during the feast days. The psalms describe the progress of the pilgrim as he travels from a distant land (120) to within sight of the Holy City (121) and finally arrives (122) amid great joy (123-134).

Thirteen Moments
from
DAVID'S MEMOIRS

The titles of 13 Psalms pinpoint significant events in the life of David and provide a composite picture of the emotions and inner struggles of this godly songwriter.

1 Samuel 19:11	"Saul's murderous pursuit" (Psalm 59).
1 Samuel 21:11	"My imprisonment by the Philistines in Gath" (Psalm 56).
1 Samuel 21:13	"When I feigned insanity before Abimelech" (Psalm 34).
1 Samuel 22:1	"My lonely exile in the cave of Adullam" (Psalm 142).
1 Samuel 22:9	"My betrayal to Saul by Doeg" (Psalm 52).
1 Samuel 23:19	"My betrayal to Saul by the Ziphites" (Psalm 54).
1 Samuel 24:3	"My flight to the cave of En-gedi" (Psalm 57).
2 Samuel 8:13	"Aftermath of my victory over Edom" (Psalm 60).
2 Samuel 12:13	"Aftermath of my sin with Bathsheba" (Psalm 51).
2 Samuel 15:14	"My flight from my favorite son, Absalom" (Psalm 3).
2 Samuel 15:23	"My escape to the wilderness of Judah" (Psalm 63).
2 Samuel 16:5	"After my shameful treatment by Shimei" (Psalm 7).
2 Samuel 22:1-51	"My summary song of praise for deliverance" (Psalm 18).

Deep Water, Dark Nights

26 Friday
June

Psalms 128-134
Heart of the Passage:
Psalm 130



Overview: Blessing for the righteous (128) and judgment for the wicked (129) are waiting at the journey's end. And though there may be dark nights along the way (130), the quiet soul will find hope in the Lord (131). In the sanctuary of God (132, 134) and among the people of God (133) there is strength to face each new day.

Psalm	Author	Key Idea	(Verse) Referred to in N.T.
128	Unknown	Blessing for the God-Fearer	
129	Unknown	Vindication for the Righteous	
130	Unknown	Deep Water, Dark Nights	(8) Titus 2:14
131	David	Hope for the Quiet Soul	
132	Unknown	Finding a Place for the Lord	(5) Acts 7:46; (17) Luke 1:69
133	David	Getting Along in God's Family	
134	Unknown	Blessing God in His House	(1) Rev. 19:5; (2) 1 Tim. 2:8

Relief from depression is only a praise away.



Your Daily Walk: Which of the following have you experienced during your lifetime? (1) You nearly drowned. (2) You lost a loved one through terminal illness. (3) You spent an entire night without sleep.

If you can identify with one or more of the above situations, you'll have no trouble identifying with the writer of Psalm 130, for all three images are contained in his eight-verse lament.

(1) *The psalmist is drowning in a sea of despair* (v. 1). The riptide of affliction has left him floundering in waters that are over his head. (2) *The psalmist feels like a marked man, in line for judgment* (v. 3). Unless the Lord forgives his iniquity, he knows his case is "terminal." Yet, in spite of his distress, (3) *the psalmist waits patiently for the morning* (vv. 5-6). The night of dark circumstances seems endless, but the psalmist knows the Lord will rescue him as surely as dawn follows night.

In the midst of deep water and dark nights, there is reason to be hopeful—as long as the hope is in the Lord! The psalmist's cure for depression is simple. It's not a pill but a Person, One who is as faithful in the 20th century A.D. as He was in the 10th century B.C.



Insight: Ascending Through a Psalm of Ascents
Here in Psalm 130, one of the psalms of degrees (ascents), the reader is transported with the psalmist from the depths of depression (v. 1) to the heights of hope and confidence (v. 8).

Wholehearted Praise

Sat.–Sun.

June 27/28



Overview: Sometimes it's easy to praise the Lord simply by recalling the past (135–136); at other times memories of the past produce more pain than praise (137). But even times of trouble and tears can be cause for praise (138) as you think about the infinite knowledge and unceasing presence of your omnipotent God (139).

Psalms 135–139
Heart of the Passage:
Psalms 138

Psalms	Author	Key Idea	(Verse) Referred to in N.T.
135	Unknown	Anthology of Praise	
136	Unknown	Antiphony of Praise	
137	Unknown	Tears Shed in Exile	(8) Rev. 18:6
138	David	Wholehearted Praise	(8) Phil. 1:6
139	David	The Everywhere, Everything God	(14) Rev. 15:3



Your Daily Walk: When someone pursues a course of action with reckless abandon, we say that person “put his whole heart into it.” List the goals you pursue wholeheartedly (academic excellence, athletic prowess, business success). Then ask yourself: “Why do I do the things I do with a whole heart?”

Psalms 138 introduces the last eight psalms attributed to King David. In it you will read of David's passion to praise God “with [his] whole heart” (v. 1). And the reasons are easy to find: (1) God answered David's repeated prayer for strength and protection in time of trouble (v. 3); (2) God magnified His Word by keeping His promises to David (v. 2; see 2 Samuel 7:8-16); (3) Though great and glorious in His character, God nonetheless took special note of David (vv. 5-6). Put it all together and you have David's motivation to praise God, even before the kings of the earth (v. 4)

Do you share David's enthusiasm to praise God today? Then why not organize a “Praise Potluck” with a few Christian friends? Have each person bring a favorite dish . . . and an account of something praiseworthy that God has done over the past month. As you eat and fellowship, praise God together with testimony and song. (Caution: This can be habit-forming! Proceed at your own risk.)



Insight: The Lord Will, Because the Lord Is, and He Won't! Notice how the familiar truth of verse 8 (“thy mercy, O LORD, endureth for ever”) is sandwiched between a statement of confidence (“The LORD will . . .”) and a statement of commitment (“forsake not . . .”). All three are essential elements of praise.

The water of saints' praise is drawn out of a deep spring, the heart.

Finding Refuge on the Run

29

Monday

June

Psalms 140–145
Heart of the Passage:
Psalm 142



Overview: Your enemies will either drive you *from* God or drive you *to* God. In David's hour of need he found a sure Refuge (140, 142), a trustworthy Friend (141), a listening Ear (143), a strong Arm (144), a merciful King (145)—and you can, too!

Psalm	Author	Key Idea	(Verse) Referred to in N.T.
140	David	Dwelling in God's Presence	(3) Rom. 3:13
141	David	An Evening Prayer for Purity	(2) Rev. 5:8; 8:3
142	David	Finding Refuge on the Run	
143	David	When All Else Fails	(2) Rom. 3:20; Gal. 2:16
144	David	From Darkness to Dawn	
145	David	An Alphabet of Praise	(3) Rom. 11:33; (17) Rev. 15:3

One live coal may set a whole stack on fire.



Your Daily Walk: For David, life had caved in . . . literally! Pursued by Saul's search-and-destroy party, David fled to the cave of Adullam. There he was joined by 400 rag-tag troops, every one of them "in distress . . . in debt, and . . . discontented" (1 Samuel 22:2). There David's emotions hit bottom. And there he penned Psalm 142—a prayer for those times when life caves in. A prayer, perhaps, that you need to pray today.

In the cave of Adullam, David felt hemmed in, emotionally drained, and without a friend in the world (vv. 3-4, 6). But rather than drifting *from* God, David's problems drove him *toward* God. Notice the object of his plea: "I cried unto the LORD . . . unto the LORD did I make my supplication. I poured out my complaint before him. . . . I cried unto thee, O LORD" (vv. 1-2, 5). Brought low by his pursuers, David found he had nowhere to look but up.

Where do you feel imprisoned today? By the emotional drain of family life? Pressure at work? Uncertain finances? A lingering illness? You, like David, have a choice. You can allow problems to drive a wedge between you and God. Or you can run to the only sure Refuge in time of trouble. David fled to a cave, but found a Fortress. Join your voice with his by making Psalm 142:7 your prayer: "Bring my soul out of prison, that I may praise thy name: the righteous shall compass me about; for thou shalt deal bountifully with me."



Insight: Songs for the Chief

The psalm title "To the chief musician" appears in 55 psalms as well as in the Book of Habakkuk (3:19). Apparently the chief musician (choirmaster) of the temple had his own collection of psalms.

Praise for the Praiseworthy Lord

Tuesday

June 30



Overview: Like the dramatic crescendo of a symphony, the Book of Psalms builds to a climax of praise. Praise God from one generation to the next (146); praise God for His tender care (147); praise God for His creation (148); praise God for His justice (149); praise God for His greatness (150). Praise the praiseworthy Lord!

Psalms 146-150
Heart of the Passage:
Psalm 146

Psalm	Author	Key Idea	(Verse) Referred to in N.T.
146	Unknown	Praise for the Praiseworthy Lord	(6) Acts 4:24; 14-15; Rev. 14:7
147	Unknown	Praise for the God on High	(3) Luke 4:18; (9) Luke 12:24
148	Unknown	A Universal Symphony of Praise	
149	Unknown	Praise from God's People	
150	Unknown	A Fitting Benediction of Praise	



Your Daily Walk: There are at least two good reasons to praise the Lord, according to Psalm 146: (1) God wants you to do it often today (“While I live will I praise the Lord,” v. 2); and (2) you will be doing it throughout eternity (“I will sing praises unto my God while I have any being,” v. 2). With praise, as with any skill, practice makes perfect!

Psalm 146 begins with a ringing call to praise: “Praise ye the Lord.” And the logical question is: “Why? What has He done to warrant my praise?” Notice the psalmist’s ready reply:

God is praiseworthy for what He has done in the past. He made “heaven, and earth, the sea, and all that therein is” (v. 6).

God is praiseworthy for what He is doing in the present. The psalmist uses 10 present-tense verbs in verses 6-9 to describe God’s far-reaching activities today (can you find all 10?).

God is praiseworthy for what He will do in the future. “The Lord shall reign for ever . . . unto all generations” (v. 10).

Close your study of the Book of Psalms by composing your own song of praise, patterned after Psalm 146. Begin with the phrase, “Praise the Lord!” Then praise Him for what He is doing in your life (past, present, and future). Conclude the same way the Book of Psalms concludes: with a climactic shout to all within hearing distance, “Praise the Lord!”

Act out a psalm in your Christian walk today!



Insight: Psalm 150, a Primer for Praise

Praise the Lord (where? v. 1) _____

(why? v. 2) _____

(how? vv. 3-5) _____

(who? v. 6) _____

A Life of PRAISE

Dull. Dry. Weak. Lifeless. Boring. Some would admit those adjectives describe their Christian life. Would you?

The problem may be the result of clogged communication lines between you and God. But God didn't clog them. Have you let unconfessed sin pile up? (Read 1 John 1:9 and Psalm 51:10.)

The Book of Psalms—indeed the whole Bible—exhorts God's children to praise Him. Praise is joyfully expressing your adoration and appreciation for your worthy God.

Who is to be praised? Read Psalms 145:1; 147:1. *Why* is He to be praised? The reasons are innumerable, but start with Psalms 21:13; 89:5; 138:2; 145:4. *Who* is to praise Him? Read Psalms 148 and 150:6. *When* are we to praise Him? Read Psalms 35:28; 71:6; 72:15; 146:2. *How* should we praise God? Here are some ideas:

Let your praise be:

Personal—your own feelings
Reverent—worshipful
Appreciative—full of thanks to God
Illuminating—teaching you about
yourself and God
Sincere—honest and meaningful
Enthusiastic—refreshingly energetic

Show it with . . .

Poetry
Recitation of a psalm
Artwork
Instrumental music
(see Psalm 150)
Singing
Expression in writing

A life of praise will bring delight both to God and to you. Spend some time praising your Lord right now. To help put your feelings into words, review Psalms 8, 19, 29, 33, 36, 103–105, 111, 113, 117, 135–136, 139, 145–150. But don't just tell God how you feel about Him—tell someone you know who needs to hear the Good News about your praiseworthy Savior (Revelation 4:11)!

If you accept Christ's invitation to new life this month, please let us know. It would be a joy to hear from you.