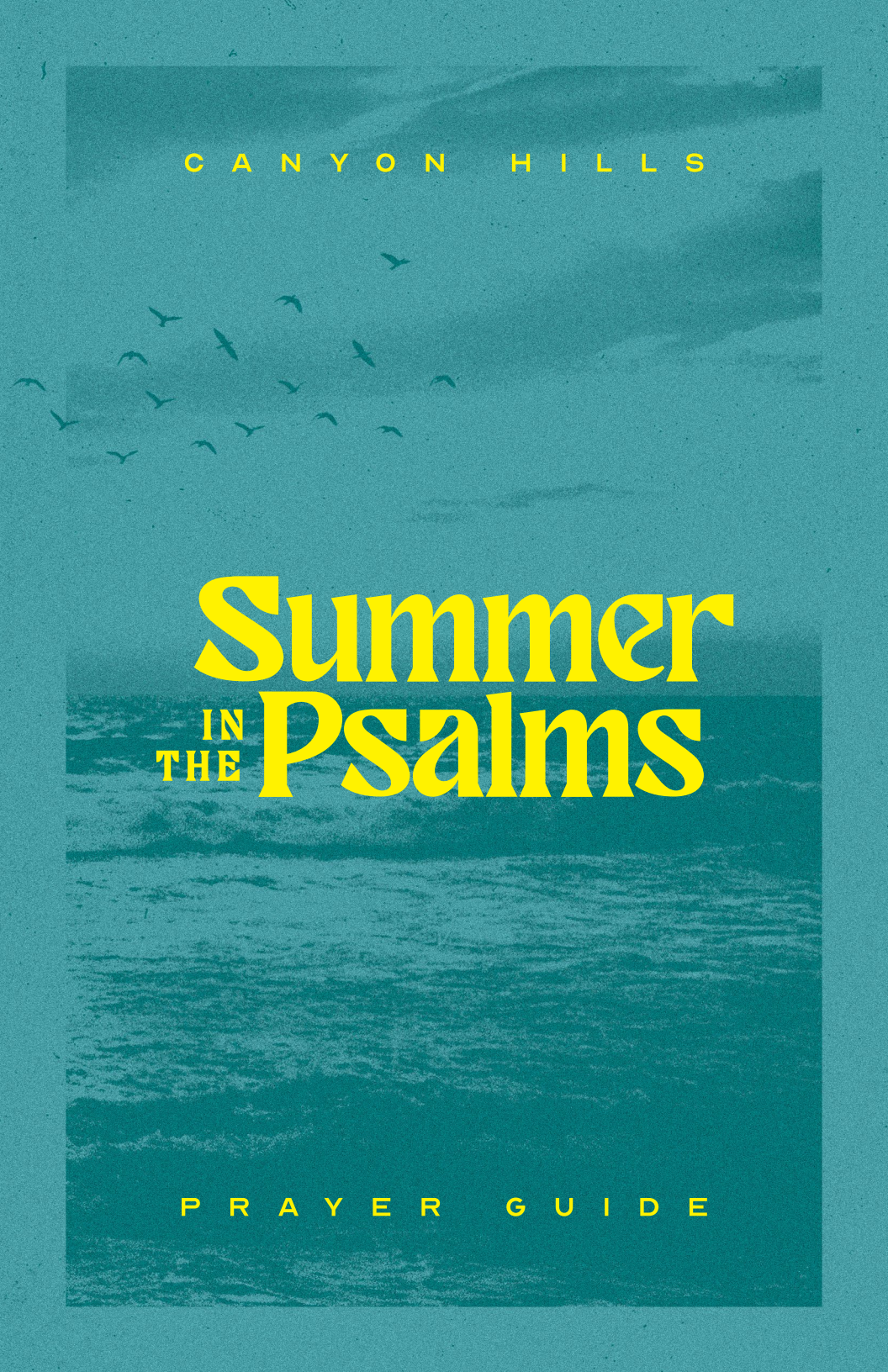




C A N Y O N H I L L S

Summer IN THE Psalms

P R A Y E R G U I D E

THE CONTENT OF THIS BOOK IS ADAPTED FROM:

Praying the Psalms

Experiencing Scripture-Fed, Spirit-Led, Worship-Based Prayer.
Volumes 1-5 (Psalms 1-150)

by Daniel Henderson (General Editor) and 6:4PRESS.

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Summer IN THE Psalms

P R A Y E R G U I D E

Welcome to Summer in the Psalms. Throughout this series, we will journey through selected psalms together as a church, discovering how these ancient songs continue to shape our worship, deepen our faith, and guide our relationship with God today.

To help extend our time in Scripture beyond Sunday mornings, we have created this prayer guide using selected psalms and commentary from Daniel Henderson's *Praying the Psalms*. Each week of our nine-week series corresponds with a featured psalm, providing an opportunity to reflect more deeply on the themes explored in the sermon and engage with God's Word through prayer throughout the week.

Following the series, you will also find several additional psalms selected for personal reflection and continued spiritual growth. While these readings are not directly connected to the weekly messages, they offer further opportunities to encounter God through the richness of the Psalms. Our prayer is that this guide helps you cultivate a deeper love for Scripture, a more vibrant prayer life, and a closer walk with Christ throughout the summer and beyond.

A teal-toned photograph of a flock of birds flying over a body of water with waves. The birds are silhouetted against a lighter sky, and the water shows white foam from the waves. The overall image has a grainy, vintage aesthetic.

Table of Contents

4

INTRO

How to Use this Prayer Guide

SUNDAY PSALMS

8

WEEK 1 | Wisdom

Psalm 1

10

WEEK 2 | Wisdom

Psalm 73

12

WEEK 3 | Lament

Psalm 51

14

WEEK 4 | Wisdom

Psalm 78

16

WEEK 5 | Lament

Psalm 126

18

WEEK 6 | Praise

Psalm 103

20

WEEK 7 | Confidence/Trust

Psalm 139

22

WEEK 8 | Lament

Psalm 71

24

WEEK 9 | Lament

Psalm 130

ADDITIONAL PSALMS FOR REFLECTION

28

Lament

Psalm 3

30

Prophecy

Psalm 16

32

Confidence

Psalm 23

34

Praise

Psalm 34

36

Trust

Psalm 62

38

Thanksgiving

Psalm 116

How to Use this Prayer Guide

Prayer begins in Scripture, for it is in the Bible that our Lord shows His disciples how to pray. In Matthew 6:9-13 – often known as "the Lord's Prayer" – Jesus provides a pattern for prayer and commands that His disciples "pray in this way."

There are four "movements" that compose this divine symphony modeled in Christ's prayer: Reverence. Response. Requests. Readiness. Praying through each of these sequentially follows the pattern Christ Himself established. In obedience, when we pray in this way, we are praying God's way. Note the intent of each of the four movements:

"Our Father in Heaven, hallowed be your name." Reverence (upward) begins with acknowledging the wonder, majesty, and character of God. With an open Bible in front of us, we ask: "Who are you, Lord God? What have you revealed about Yourself in this section of Scripture? How do I honor You?"

"Your Kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven." Response (downward) arises from the worshipping human heart. All I am, surrendering to the revelation of all He is. In this movement we yield our will to His and our mind and agenda to Him. Often this response can be guided by the passage in front of us and by asking, "Given what these verses say about You, how do You want me to respond to You today, Father?"

"Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors." Requests (inward) emerge as the simple answers to the question, "What should I pray about?" Allow the verses you are considering in the moment to guide your requests in connection to both resources and relationships.

"And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil (or 'the evil one')." This is a cry for Readiness, (outward) to be made ready for spiritual battle. What will we face today in a sinful and hostile world? Strong encouragement can be gleaned from the text we have been considering in this moment of prayer. That is why "praying the Scriptures" is so vital and why Jesus commanded we follow this pattern. It is God's way to best overcome the attacks of the enemy. And in this way, we are energized all the more when reading – or memorizing even – God's Word (*Matthew 4:1-10; Ephesians 6:17*).

When we "pray in this way" we are following Jesus' clear pattern for His disciples. That is why the Lord's Prayer remains a model and pattern for all future prayer, pray-ers, and praying.

Did those disciples, in the early chapters of Matthew, understand what Jesus was getting at with this prayer pattern? Did they employ this model in their subsequent prayers? It seems so. Found in Acts 4:24-31 is the first recorded prayer of the disciples. It occurs upon the release of Peter and John from trial and confinement by the religious leaders of their day.

THIS IS HOW THEY PRAYED:

REVERENCE

And when they heard it, they lifted their voices together to God and said, "Sovereign Lord, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and everything in them,

RESPONSE

who through the mouth of our father David, your servant, said by the Holy Spirit, 'Why did the Gentiles rage, and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers were gathered together, against the Lord and against his Anointed' – for truly in this city there were gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel to do whatever your hand and your plan had predestined to take place.

REQUESTS

And now, Lord, look upon their threats and grant to your servants to continue to speak your word with all boldness while you stretch out your hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus.

READINESS

And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness.

In *Praying the Psalms*, we invite you to experience Scripture-fed, Spirit-led, Worship-based prayer.

It is designed to guide you through each of the four model prayer movements, using the individual psalms to provoke your prayers. The psalms are individually set apart for you to encounter God personally and speak with Him. Supplemental commentary by 6:4 Fellowship pastors is provided for additional insight. The variety of approaches and interactions with each psalm reflects the variety of gifts, viewpoints, and experiences of the contributors, which itself mirrors the multifaceted Body of Christ. You may choose to meditate on and pray through a single psalm for several days using the multiple Prayer Prompts provided.

SUGGESTED METHOD

There are two pages set aside for you to interact with each psalm – a "left-hand page" and a "right-hand page." The following is a suggested method for praying the psalms. We invite you to "pray in this way."

1

Select a psalm you wish to pray through (in any order you may choose). Read it from your preferred translation or version of the Bible. (Perhaps read it more than once.)

2

Read the brief comments section found on the "left-hand page."

- * As you read, highlight or take note of any themes, truths, or verses that especially stand out to you.

3

On the "right-hand page" under the **Reverence** (*upward*) heading you will see several thoughts about God that are in that particular psalm: His character, His attributes, His Holy Person. Ponder those. Celebrate Him.

- * Next, you will see various prompts for how you might declare back to the Lord the characteristics this particular psalm has revealed about Him. Pick one or two and rejoice in Him, for He is worthy of our praise.

4

Similarly, as you move down that page and come to the **Response** (*downward*) section, there are several prompts that may stimulate your soul's reflection. Pick one or two that reflect your heart of surrender, confession, yieldedness, and alignment with His will.

5

As you arrive at the **Requests** (*inward*) portion of your prayer time, remember He already knows your needs. (He knows how many hairs you have on your head! — *Matthew 10:30; Luke 12:7*) Here, use one or two of the suggested prompts to align your heart with His purposes, asking Him for His help and His outcomes in your life.

6

Readiness, (*outward*) is the final movement of prayer. Spiritual war is real, and prayer is our most effective weapon against the diversions, distractions, and divisions of the adversary (*2 Corinthians 10:3-5, Ephesians 6:18*). Pray through one or two of the prompts, inviting God's mercy and protection for yourself and His empowering for resistance against the enemy in the battle for our lives.

We trust you will enjoy and appreciate Praying the Psalms as you encounter our wonderful Lord. It is our prayer that you flourish in a lifetime of praying God's way, following the example of Jesus, serving others in and by the Holy Spirit, and glorifying the Father (*Matthew 5:14-16*). Blessings to you in the journey and in the delight of prayer that awaits you.

Week 1

Psalm 1

SUMMARY: This gateway to the Book of Psalms reveals two contrasting paths to life. They lead to two different outcomes. Only one can be chosen.

CATEGORY: Wisdom

AUTHOR: Unknown

As a wisdom psalm, this song lays the foundation for the entire Book of Psalms and contains a microcosm of the entirety of the book's teaching. The author displays the kind of person who is wise and blessed and the kind of person who embodies wickedness. They are set alongside one another in stark contrast. Vivid imagery describes the divergent outcomes of the "way of the righteous" and the "way of the wicked."

Psalm 1 opens with a benediction, declaring and describing the one who is blessed. The blessed person does not succumb to the destructive progression of sin, which leads from bad to worse. Rather, the blessed finds delight in the Word of God and thinks deeply about it ("meditates on it day and night"). Since the blessed one is rooted and nourished in the soil of God's Word, the Lord Himself watches over him or her with intimate favor and protection. The outcome of this chosen path is described as a life that is "planted," "fruitful," and "prosperous" no matter what the circumstances may be.

Conversely, the ways of the wicked are rootless, wind-tossed, and have no footing or place of welcome among God's covenant people. This path will not prosper them, but instead it leads to judgment and death.

Psalm 1 anticipates Jesus' Sermon on the Mount (*Matthew 5-7*), which also begins with a benediction describing the blessed person in His Kingdom and ends with two contrasting scenarios of those who wisely obey Christ's Word or foolishly disobey. Will you build your house upon the solid unchanging rock or upon the shifting sands of current culture or emotion?

Will you choose the path of the righteous or succumb to the way of the wicked? There is no greater way to delight in and meditate upon the law of the Lord than to pray through it. Prayer unlocks the wisdom of obedience and guards against the foolishness of disobedience. Praying this and other psalms grows deep roots in the soil of God's sustaining Word. Praying over God's Word "day and night" cultivates our appetite for the ways of God.

Just as the people of ancient Israel prayerfully sang this song of wisdom to remind them of the foundation of their lives and their final destiny, so we can pray it in our day, reminding ourselves that Jesus is our cornerstone and pathway to abundant life.

Prayer Guide

REVERENCE

Identify and celebrate God's praiseworthy attributes

Identify

- * He is a God of blessing; the source of truth and delight (v. 1-2).
- * He is our sustainer and the source of our fruitfulness (v. 3).
- * He is the all-knowing Judge of the wicked and the righteous (v. 4-6).

Celebrate

- * Thank You that You have been my source of blessing in...
- * I delight in Your Law because...
- * Like a tree firmly planted by water You have given me...

RESPONSE

Surrender to Him and His ways

- * I confess I have sat, walked, and stood in the paths of the ungodly when...
- * I surrender my heart afresh that I may meditate more faithfully on Your truth.

REQUESTS

Ask the Spirit to guide your prayer over concerns, resources, and relationships

- * Help me to delight in Your Law when I am tempted to...
- * I am trusting You to sustain me and allow me to bear fruit as I...
- * Give me an urgency to graciously share Your truth with the "wicked" when I...

READINESS

Encouragement and strength for spiritual battle

- * When I am prone to doubt, remind me that You know my way when...
- * Memorize and meditate on v. 2.

Psalm 73

SUMMARY: Godly wisdom concerning our perspective on the destinies of the wicked and the righteous.

CATEGORY: Wisdom

AUTHOR: Asaph

It's an age-old question – why is it that the wicked seem to prosper while the godly suffer?

Like Asaph, when we focus on the prosperity, success, and seemingly easy life of those who don't acknowledge God at all, we may wonder if faithful obedience is worth the struggle and the suffering.

Asaph voiced out loud "surely in vain I have kept my heart pure" (v. 13). What good is it? It's gotten me nowhere in this world. When we have this perspective, when we look at those who pay no attention to God and everything is seemingly great, it is our own attitude and perception that is the cause of the problem.

But the light comes on at the point when Asaph understands the bigger picture as he encounters God in worship (v. 17). Then he realizes and understands the whole picture: their eternal destiny. Life is fleeting. Without warning, their charmed life is gone. And what do they have to show for it?

Even though Asaph lost sight of God, God has not and will not ever let us go. God's leading and guiding will be through the pitfalls of life. Even though Asaph was envious of the ease of the wealthy, he realized there really is nothing more desirable than knowing God.

It's important to see not only the anonymous people who live on easy street, but also our family, friends, and neighbors, that though they have physical wealth they are spiritually poor. Without God they will perish. So we say with Asaph, "I will tell of all your deeds" (v. 28).

"But when I thought how to understand this, it seemed to me a wearisome task, until I went into the sanctuary of God; then I discerned their end."

PSALM 73:16-17

Prayer Guide

REVERENCE

Identify and celebrate God's praiseworthy attributes

Identify

- * God is good to His people (v. 1).
- * God is eternal and has an eternal perspective (v. 17).
- * God holds us (v. 23).
- * God guides us on earth and to glory (v. 24).
- * God is all we need; He is our strength and refuge (v. 25-27).

Celebrate

- * God, I praise You for Your provision in...
- * Thank You for helping me see Your perspective when...
- * Thank You that through worship I recognize Your...

RESPONSE

Surrender to Him and His ways

- * God, I confess that I failed to recognize Your care when...
- * Forgive me for losing my perspective when I envy...

REQUESTS

Ask the Spirit to guide your prayer over concerns, resources, and relationships

- * When I compare my situation to others, I miss Your goodness to me. Help me to see Your goodness in...
- * God, renew my faith and perspective about...
- * Help me to have a humble reliance on You for...

READINESS

Encouragement and strength for spiritual battle

- * I will trust You to guide me with Your counsel when the enemy tries to confuse me about...
- * Thank you that I can make You my refuge and tell of all Your works when the enemy tries to...
- * Memorize and meditate on v. 26.

Psalm 51

SUMMARY: Seeking God when you have failed miserably.

CATEGORY: Lament

AUTHOR: David

This psalm was written after David had sinned, committing adultery with Bathsheba and murdering her husband, Uriah, in attempts to cover up his sin. I know. That is really messed up. In 2 Samuel 12, God brings Nathan to confront David, and eventually David confesses that he has sinned against God. In 2 Samuel 12:13, Nathan affirms God's merciful forgiveness for the repentant sinner. Psalm 51 is an account of David's return to the Lord in a prayer of confession and repentance.

The psalm begins with expressions of deep desperation for God's mercy and forgiveness (v. 1-7). David appeals to God's "unfailing love" and "great compassion" in his requests. The depth of his anguish is felt in his recognition that his sin ultimately comes down to his rebellion against God (v. 3-4). He is at the mercy of God. But David understands that God is merciful, loving, compassionate, and will reconcile to Himself those who truly repent. So, having confessed his sin, David seeks the Lord for personal restoration and renewal.

"Spirit" is a keyword, used three times in verses 10-12 and once more in verse 17. In asking God to renew in him a "right spirit," David was acknowledging he had been driven by a wrong spirit – one that was not fully surrendered to God (v. 10). We know from the story in 2 Samuel 11 that David was living in disobedience to God before he ever saw Bathsheba. David then acknowledges that his only hope in overcoming sin is the very presence of the Holy Spirit (v. 17). That said, without a "willing spirit," David knows he is prone to once again wander from the Holy Spirit right back into sin (v. 12). Finally, in verse 17, David admits that humility before God is the posture in which he needs to remain – the posture of the heart that pleases God.

"Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me."

PSALM 51:10

Prayer Guide

REVERENCE

Identify and celebrate God's praiseworthy attributes

Identify

- * He is a God of mercy, unfailing love, and great compassion (v. 1).
- * He washes/cleanses our sin (v. 2, 7).
- * He is a just judge, a God of truth and wisdom (v. 4, 6).
- * He is a God of joy, gladness, renewal, and restoration (v. 8-12).
- * He is good – He builds up and delights in His people (v. 17-18).

Celebrate

- * God, I praise You for showing me mercy when...
- * Thank You, Lord, for cleansing me from...
- * I praise You for teaching me the truth about... that has changed me from the inside out.

RESPONSE

Surrender to Him and His ways

- * Lord, I confess I have sinned against You by...
- * Lord, because of Your unfailing love, I'm asking You to forgive me for...
- * Lord, I admit that... often threatens the joy of my salvation.

REQUESTS

Ask the Spirit to guide your prayer over concerns, resources, and relationships

- * Lord, I know I need to deal truthfully in my inmost being about the issue of... so that...
- * God, create in me a pure heart that will...
- * Because of the mercy I have experienced, open my lips to explain to others that...
- * God, restore to (name) the joy of Your salvation!
- * Because You are forgiving and good, I know I can trust You to build up...

READINESS

Encouragement and strength for spiritual battle

- * Save us, O God, from the temptation to...
- * In Your good pleasure make us prosper in our battle(s) against...
- * God of my salvation, deliver me from... so that I will sing aloud of Your righteousness.
- * Memorize and meditate on v. 6.

Psalm 78

SUMMARY: This longest of the historic psalms gives the encouragement for each generation to put their hope in God by not forgetting what He has done.

CATEGORY: Wisdom

AUTHOR: Asaph

Asaph, one of the main worship leaders during the time of David, uses this psalm to demonstrate the fatal nature of forgetting. The term *maskil* is used in the title. It is an uncertain musical term whose root means to be prudent or meditative. In other words, "Contemplate this!" Asaph begins the psalm by saying, "I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings from of old" (v. 2).

Parables are stories brought alongside to illustrate. And dark sayings speak of complex questions or baffling outcomes or riddles. Asaph goes on to tell the story of Israel's history as the illustration. From its inception, God told the Israelites to teach the next generation about Him by sharing His commands and telling of His mighty works on their behalf. The baffling reality is that despite all God's goodness to them, they rebelled and failed to believe or trust Him.

Asaph concludes the psalm by pointing out that in his day God had raised up David to lead Israel with a heart that was in stark contrast to their rebellious fathers. He is encouraging the reader to choose wisely and to make sure that each succeeding generation never forgets the goodness of God.

"So that they should set their hope in God and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments."

PSALM 78:7

Prayer Guide

REVERENCE

Identify and celebrate God's praiseworthy attributes

Identify

- * He is the Lord of great deeds, might, and wonders (v. 4).
- * He is their Rock and their Redeemer (v. 35).
- * He is the God of compassion who atoned for iniquity (v. 38).

Celebrate

- * Thank You that You have demonstrated Your power in my life by...
- * I praise You for being my Rock and Redeemer when...
- * Thank You for showing me compassion when I sinned by...

RESPONSE

Surrender to Him and His ways

- * Forgive me for failing to teach (name) about Your ways so they would put their hope in You.
- * Lord, I repent of my sin of unbelief by not trusting You with...

REQUESTS

Ask the Spirit to guide your prayer over concerns, resources, and relationships

- * Lord, help me never to forget what You have done, especially...
- * Lord, give me the vision and skills to teach (name) about Your wonders and might.
- * Lord, give me a heart of integrity and skillful hands like David to lead (name) in following You.

READINESS

Encouragement and strength for spiritual battle

- * Let me never forget Your works and wonders, especially when the enemy tempts me to...
- * Memorize and meditate on v. 39.

Psalm 126

SUMMARY: Recalling God's help in the past in order to regain hope for today.

CATEGORY: Lament

AUTHOR: Unknown

One of the great treasures of having walked with God for a number of years is the ability to reflect on the incredible ways God has sustained us through dark times and eventually restored our hope and joy. This psalm is a prayer coming from a heart lamenting the loss of prosperity, such that all hope and joy has been stripped away (v. 6).

Notice, however, the way this prayer begins. Before expressing his lament to God, the writer remembered a past experience when God saw him in desperation and restored what had been lost (v. 1). More important than whatever the lost "fortunes" might have been was the restoration of laughter and joy (v. 2), resulting in reignited worship of God for the amazing things He has done (v. 2-3).

When worship precedes requests, we are then able to bring our requests to God with greater clarity and conviction that, as He has done before, He certainly can and will do again (v. 5-6). Do you need restoration of hope and joy, or anything else, today? Seek God's face, remembering times He has restored us before, then pray with confidence for His restorative work again today.

"The LORD has done great things for us; we are glad."

PSALM 126:3

Prayer Guide

REVERENCE

Identify and celebrate God's praiseworthy attributes

Identify

- * God has restored our hope and joy (v. 1-2).
- * He has done great things for us (v. 3).
- * He will do it all again (v. 4-6).

Celebrate

- * When you restored... my heart was filled with...
- * You do great things, and today my heart is joyful because You have...

RESPONSE

Surrender to Him and His ways

- * I confess that I have sought the renewal of my hope in... rather than You.
- * Today I choose to entrust my hopes and dreams to You even if...

REQUESTS

Ask the Spirit to guide your prayer over concerns, resources, and relationships

- * God, please restore my... so that I may tell of Your amazing deeds.
- * LORD, let Your joy return to... so that they may sing of Your greatness.

READINESS

Encouragement and strength for spiritual battle

- * Even when I am discouraged by... I will trust Your joy and the hope of Your future blessing.
- * Memorize and meditate on v. 6.

Week 6

Psalm 103

SUMMARY: In wholehearted devotion, David expresses all the myriad reasons to exalt the Lord and bless His name.

CATEGORY: Praise

AUTHOR: David

David's heart is overwhelmed with praise and adoration toward the Lord. In fact, he wants to make sure that his soul does not forget all the benefits that have come from Him (v. 2). How often we forget all that the Lord has done for us. Praise should be a continuously stirred up theme within the heart and soul of every believer. Look at what He has personally done for us: He forgives, He heals, He redeems, He crowns us, He satisfies us with good things.

David continues to praise God's work in justice and for the cause of the oppressed. He then explores the multifaceted way God handles forgiveness. He makes His ways known. He is faithful to His covenant love. He does not treat us as our sins deserve but separates them from us as far as the east is from the west. He shows us compassion because He remembers we are dust. And He places His steadfast love and righteousness on us. What an amazing God!

He concludes by imploring all the heavenly angels and hosts, as well as all creation, to join him in lifting praise and blessing to the Lord.

"Bless the Lord, O my soul, and do not forget all His benefits!"

PSALM 103:2

Prayer Guide

REVERENCE

Identify and celebrate God's praiseworthy attributes

Identify

- * God forgives and heals (v. 3).
- * He redeems and crowns us with mercy (v. 4).
- * He satisfies and renews (v. 5).
- * The Lord works righteousness and justice (v. 6).
- * He is merciful, forgiving, and compassionate (v. 7-14).

Celebrate

- * I bless You, Lord, because...
- * I praise You, Lord, for satisfying me with...
- * I praise You, Lord, for not treating me as my sin deserved even when I...
- * I praise You that You rule over...

RESPONSE

Surrender to Him and His ways

- * By Your grace, please remove my transgression of... far from me.
- * I confess that I am "but dust," especially when I...

REQUESTS

Ask the Spirit to guide your prayer over concerns, resources, and relationships

- * Lord, I pray for You to work righteousness and justice for...
- * Please show Your compassion to... as they...
- * I pray that we will show Your love and righteousness to our children and grandchildren as we...

READINESS

Encouragement and strength for spiritual battle

- * Assure me of Your steadfast love, especially when I...
- * Memorize and meditate on v. 11.

Week 7

Psalm 139

SUMMARY: Reassurance of God's intimate and inescapable knowledge of His people.

CATEGORY: Confidence/Trust

AUTHOR: David

In a world in which we often feel lost and lonely, it is powerful to remember that we are known, seen, and valued by God our Maker. David begins the psalm by praising God for His exhaustive firsthand knowledge of everything about David, inside and out (v. 1-6). God knows everything there is to know about us, and He still chooses to be with us.

Praise continues as David sings about the inescapable presence of God (v. 7-12). It is incredibly comforting to know there is no place and no circumstance where we end up hidden from God. Even in our mother's womb, we were seen and valued, being personally handcrafted and loved by God (v. 13-18). Knowing God cares so deeply for him, David asks God to fight their mutual enemies, confirming that he is on God's side in the battle (v. 19-22).

David closes this psalm inviting God to do what God has already done before (v. 1). David then fully examines his attitudes, thoughts, and actions so that he can experience the best life ever. Let's join David in worship and surrender to these powerful truths about God.

"O LORD, you have searched me and known me!"

PSALM 139:1

Prayer Guide

REVERENCE

Identify and celebrate God's praiseworthy attributes

Identify

- * God knows everything about us (v. 1-6).
- * He is always with us (v. 7-12).
- * He made us just the way we are (v. 13-16).
- * He loves us more than we can comprehend (v. 17-18).

Celebrate

- * God, I love that You made me...
- * Thank You for seeing me when I was...
- * I praise You for always being with me in my...

RESPONSE

Surrender to Him and His ways

- * I confess that I have tried to hide from You in my (area of my life).
- * I will admit that I have doubted Your plan for my life when...

REQUESTS

Ask the Spirit to guide your prayer over concerns, resources, and relationships

- * Search my heart today, O Lord, and show me if I am...
- * Give me the assurance of Your presence today as I...
- * Help (name) to know today that You see and love him/her and have a purpose for their life.

READINESS

Encouragement and strength for spiritual battle

- * Lord, when I embrace... that could be grievous to You, please convict me and lead me into the way everlasting.
- * Memorize and meditate on v. 24.

Psalm 71

SUMMARY: An aging David acknowledges that God has been and will continue to be his refuge.

CATEGORY: Lament

AUTHOR: David

Psalm 71 is a continuation of Psalm 70. They are meant to be read together. Psalm 70 was David's cry to God. In Psalm 71, David requests that God would be his refuge (v. 1, 3, 5, 7). In crying out, David is putting his hope in God for his deliverance, that God would rescue, deliver, and save him.

David acknowledges in his old age (v. 5) that his hope and confidence in God has sustained him since birth (v. 6). Though some people perceive David's suffering throughout his lifetime as God's displeasure in him (v. 7), he acknowledges that God Himself remained his refuge when the troubles of life were overwhelming. This is evident when David's enemies continue to try to shame him (Ps. 70:2-3) and justify their behavior against him, believing that God has forsaken him (v. 11). David continues to lean into God for deliverance (v. 12-13).

Once again, he expresses confidence and hope in God. David will tell of this hope even in his old age, declaring it to the next generation (v. 14-18, 24) so that they may know God's righteousness (v. 19), faithfulness (v. 20, 22), and redemption (v. 23).

David confesses a lifetime of God's grace and deliverance, from birth (v. 6) to gray hair (v. 18). And even when he is weak with old age, he will attest to and declare the strength and power of God, his refuge and strength.

"For you, O Lord, are my hope, my trust, O LORD, from my youth."

PSALM 71:5

Prayer Guide

REVERENCE

Identify and celebrate God's praiseworthy attributes

Identify

- * God is our refuge (v. 1, 3, 5, 7).
- * God rescues and delivers us from our enemies (v. 2-3).
- * He is righteous and our source of hope (v. 14-16, 19, 24).
- * God is faithful, the One who redeems (v. 22).

Celebrate

- * I praise You that You are my confidence even if...
- * Thank You for being my rock and fortress when...
- * I praise You for Your faithfulness to me when...
- * Because I have hope, I praise You more and more for...

RESPONSE

Surrender to Him and His ways

- * When things seem to be going against me, help me to turn to You and not to...
- * Lord, I confess that when I hit hard times, I seek refuge in... rather than in You.

REQUESTS

Ask the Spirit to guide your prayer over concerns, resources, and relationships

- * Deliver me from the hand of the wicked when... (v. 4)
- * Help me declare Your marvelous deeds to the next generation as I commit myself to... (v. 17-18)
- * When I am advancing in age and in deteriorating health, give me continued strength to glorify You, especially when... (v. 18)

READINESS

Encouragement and strength for spiritual battle

- * Although I am troubled about... may it be evident to all that You are my refuge.
- * Lord, even when I face... empower me tell of Your righteousness to...
- * Memorize and meditate on v. 18.

Psalm 130

SUMMARY: A lament over sin that ends with great hope in the redemptive love of God.

CATEGORY: Lament

AUTHOR: Unknown

Psalm 130 is number eleven of fifteen "Songs of Ascent." The vertical movement of the psalm is powerfully and beautifully seen as the psalmist moves from despondency to hopeful exhilaration.

"Out of the depths I cry to You, O Lord!" (v. 1) The psalmist can be no lower, no lonelier, no more desperate to be heard. This is a place of longing for mercy and forgiveness, of crying for a word of hope from the Lord. "O Lord, hear my voice!" (v. 2)

In verses 3-6, as he prays, we see the effect of the writer's entry into God's holy presence. The psalmist recognizes the kind, forgiving nature of God. It fills him with reverence and willingness to wait and watch for what God will do and for how He will answer.

So now (v. 7-8), he finds himself no longer in the depths of separation but hovering in the highest of heights, filled with the greatest confidence and faith in the Lord. He speaks factually and experientially of the Lord's steadfast love and abundant redemption. He then prophetically projects God's great and promised hope for Israel's redemption.

***"For with the Lord there is steadfast love,
and with Him is plentiful redemption."***

PSALM 130:7

Prayer Guide

REVERENCE

Identify and celebrate God's praiseworthy attributes

Identify

- * God hears our cry (v. 1-2).
- * He is our loving forgiver (v. 3-4).
- * He is worthy of our fear/awe (v. 4).
- * God's Word gives us hope, so He is worthy of our waiting (v. 5-6).
- * He is the God of steadfast love and redemption (v. 7).
- * God will redeem Israel (v. 8).

Celebrate

- * I praise You, Father, for the gift of Your complete forgiveness when...
- * Lord, thank You that I can hope in Your Word because it promises that...

RESPONSE

Surrender to Him and His ways

- * I confess, Lord, when I... I choose to trust myself rather than to cry out to You.
- * I confess that I have grown impatient as I have been waiting on You for...

REQUESTS

Ask the Spirit to guide your prayer over concerns, resources, and relationships

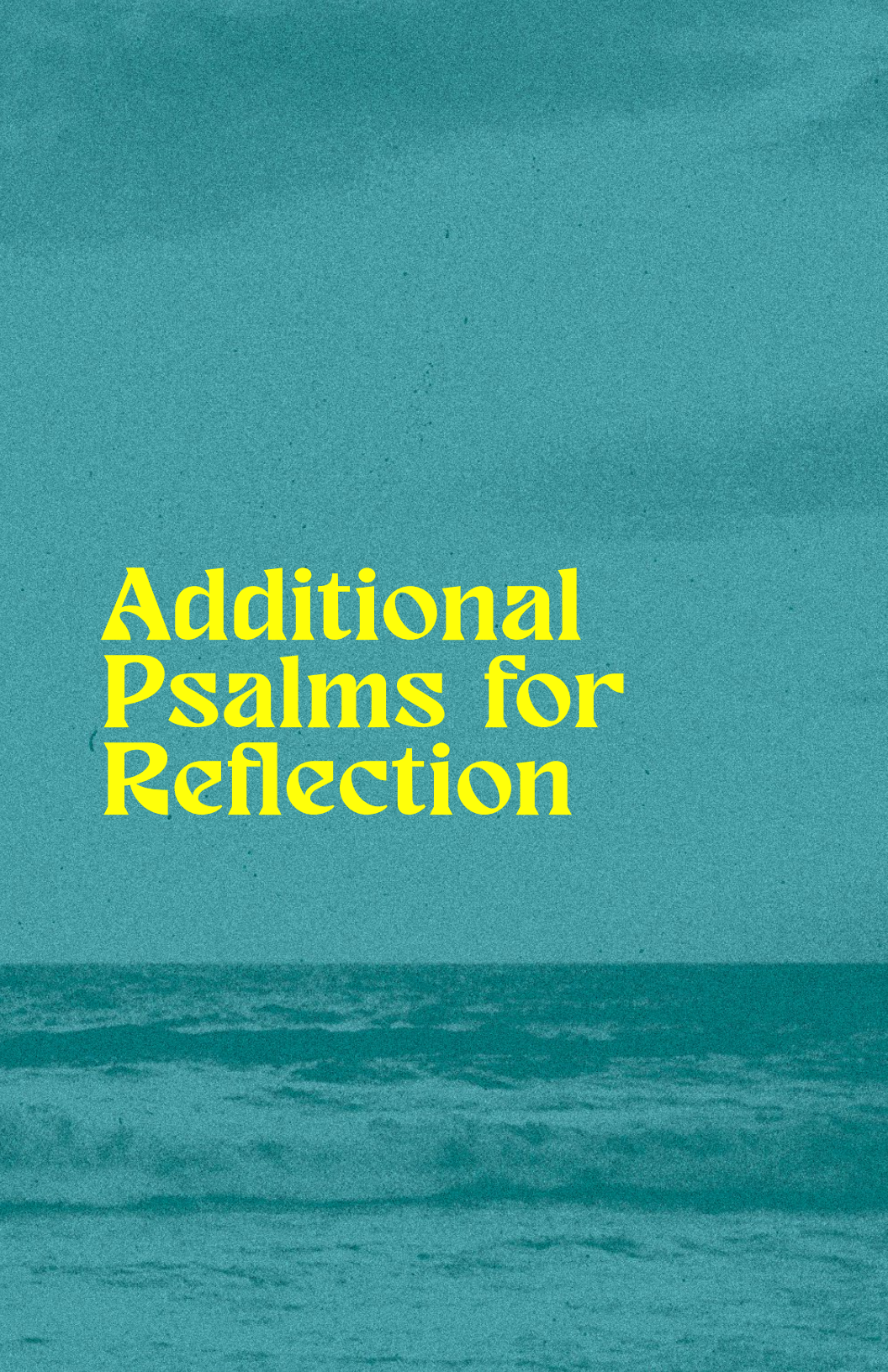
- * Lord, (name) is stuck in the pit. Please hear their cry and lift them out.
- * When I am... remind me that You are my hope.
- * Help me to wait expectantly for You when...

READINESS

Encouragement and strength for spiritual battle

- * Lord, I trust Your grace to hope in Your Word, especially in my challenge with...
- * I praise You that You will redeem me, even in my sin struggle with...
- * Memorize and meditate on v. 5.



The background is a solid teal color. At the bottom of the image, there is a horizontal band showing the texture of ocean waves, also in shades of teal, creating a subtle gradient effect.

Additional Psalms for Reflection

Psalm 3

SUMMARY: While he deals with the rebellion of his son Absalom, David is encouraged by God's protection.

CATEGORY: Lament

AUTHOR: David

Clearly linked to an historical event, Psalm 3 is one of fourteen others connected to a major event in David's life. The detailed look at David fleeing his rebellious and vengeful son is recorded in 2 Samuel 15:13ff.

This psalm has a simple outline with each point containing two verses:

1. **Complaint (v. 1-2):** He listens to the wrong voice and wonders, does God care?
2. **Confidence (v. 3-4):** He is refreshed in the knowledge of answered prayer.
3. **Cover (v. 5-6):** He sings of safety in the midst of danger.
4. **Consolation (v. 7-8):** He strengthens himself in the Lord.

David begins with a passionate expression of grief over his son's rebellion and disloyalty. Unfortunately, we all understand the pain of someone being disloyal. The experience of betrayal is always a test: Will we lose heart? Will we push on? David's enemies had even questioned his faith and his God. That being said, with a heart full of pain, mingled with confidence, David looks up (v. 3). He has absolute confidence in the ability of a sovereign God to provide and protect. His confidence rested in the very nature of God; He is a "shield about me," David says. God's imminent protection is just one of the many praiseworthy attributes we see in this psalm that can cause our hearts to rejoice as we look up to Him!

Despite David's weary heart, he worships God. Immediately his focus is transferred from his detractors to his glorious redeemer (v. 4). Rather than relying on himself, David finds consolation and life-giving refreshment in God (v. 5). David's request in verse 7 is urgent and compelling: "Arise, Oh Lord, Save me, Oh my God." David's confidence is so strong that he is certain his enemies would run away. Why? Because victory is a done deal! We may have this same confidence as we navigate life. As the Apostle Paul reminds believers in Romans, "We are more than conquerors." It is enough for the Lord to "stand up," and all will be well. The psalm concludes with a glorious, triumphant note of praise (v. 8). Let us praise Him, as victory in my life and yours belongs to the Lord.

Prayer Guide

REVERENCE

Identify and celebrate God's praiseworthy attributes

Identify

- * Our God is in the midst of difficulties (v. 1).
- * He is a shield/protector during trouble (v. 3).
- * We glory in Him who lifts our head/gives us hope (v. 3).
- * He is holy and He hears and answers our cries for help (v. 4).
- * He sustains us and gives us rest (v. 5).
- * He dispels our fears and saves/delivers us from our enemies (v. 6-7).
- * He is the God of salvation and source of blessing for His people (v. 8).

Celebrate

- * Even though I am facing (opposition), I know You are my shield.
- * Thank You that You lifted my head and gave me hope when...
- * Thank You that You have blessed me already with...

RESPONSE

Surrender to Him and His ways

- * I confess that I have listened to doubts and accusations about...
- * I surrender these and look to You alone.
- * I surrender my fears about... trusting You to deliver me.

REQUESTS

Ask the Spirit to guide your prayer over concerns, resources, and relationships

- * I trust You to be my shield today as I encounter...
- * Because You are my sustainer, I will not be afraid of...
- * Help (name) to glory in You today, finding hope and deliverance in You.
- * Because You are a God who blesses Your people, I am asking You to bless (name).

READINESS

Encouragement and strength for spiritual battle

- * Today, I trust You to save me from the enemies of...
- * Memorize and meditate on v. 3.
- * Salvation belongs to You!

Psalm 16

SUMMARY: There is no substitute for His presence.

CATEGORY: Prophecy

AUTHOR: David

How would you fill in the blank, "I would be content if I had _____"? You might answer... A good job. A better marriage. Financial security. Successful ministry. Peace of mind. Good health. Someone to share my life with. The list is endless. Ask David to fill in the blank, and we know from this psalm and several others that his response would be this: "I would be content if I had the Presence of God" (*Ps. 27:4, 8, Ps. 51:11*).

David concludes Psalm 16 on this life-affirming note: "It's your presence that fills me with joy" (*v. 11*). David is not alone in his pursuit of God's presence. Moses, the emancipator of the children of Israel, boldly appeals to God, "If your presence does not go with us, do not bring us up from here" (*Ex. 33:15*).

Hymn writer Frances Brook penned these God-pursuing words: "My goal is God Himself, not joy, nor peace, nor even blessing, but Himself, my God; 'Tis His to lead me there—not mine, but His—at any cost, dear Lord, by any road. So faith bounds forward to its goal in God, and love can trust her Lord to lead her there; Upheld by Him, my soul is following hard, till God hath fulfilled my deepest prayer."

In Luke 9:57, a potential Christ follower impetuously declares, "Lord, I will follow You wherever You go." Jesus responds, "Foxes have holes, birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." He was effectively asking that man and all who would follow Him: "Am I sufficient? Will you be satisfied with Me alone and not just for what I can give you or do for you?"

Pastor Tripp calls what many want from God a "Prozac Jesus." That is, someone who will make us feel good, someone who will make us happy and give us a little comfort and a bit of pleasure. That someone is not the God of the Bible.

If Christ is your Lord and Savior, God is not far from you. He dwells within your heart by His Spirit (*1 Cor. 6:19*). Find contentment in Him. Enjoy His presence now and forevermore!

"You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore."

PSALM 16:11

Prayer Guide

REVERENCE

Identify and celebrate God's praiseworthy attributes

Identify

- * He preserves/keeps us safe; He is our refuge (v. 1).
- * He is our Lord/ruler and the source of goodness (v. 2).
- * He makes us His people/saints (v. 3).
- * He is our destiny and guarantee; He promises and provides inheritance (v. 5-6).
- * He counsels/instructs; He is ever present and always near (v. 7-8).
- * He is our stability/security and our joy (v. 8-9).
- * He is our resurrection and the source of all pleasure (v. 10).

Celebrate

- * I praise You that You are my (attribute) when (situation).
- * I praise You that You recently revealed to me (attribute).
- * Because You are (attribute) I am able to...

RESPONSE

Surrender to Him and His ways

- * Because You preserve me and keep me safe, I surrender my fears about...
- * Because You are my Lord, I confess my disobedience and rebellion about...
- * I confess that I did not listen to Your counsel/instruction this week when...
- * I confess that I settled for less than Your will/pleasure when...

REQUESTS

Ask the Spirit to guide your prayer over concerns, resources, and relationships

- * Be my... as I face...
- * I pray that You will show (name) that You are their... in their trials.
- * Help us as a church to trust You to... as we face...

READINESS

Encouragement and strength for spiritual battle

- * Because You are (attribute), we trust You to help us live in victory over...
- * Memorize and meditate on v. 11.

Psalm 23

SUMMARY: The Great Shepherd provides for and protects His sheep.

CATEGORY: Confidence

AUTHOR: David

Psalm 23 is one of the best-known passages in all of Scripture, perhaps because it is so commonly read at funerals. The Lord has used David's words to comfort those mourning the loss of a loved one through the ages.

He has done so for me, and He most likely has done so for you too. However, we must never forget that the LORD gave us Psalm 23 for our day-to-day lives. In it He reminds us that amid our daily toils and struggles, He is providing, restoring, leading, comforting, anointing, and blessing us all day, every day.

The foundational truth that gives Psalm 23 such power is expressed in the heart of verse 4: "for You are with me." The LORD is with me whether I am resting in green pastures or among my enemies, in the house of the Lord or in the shadow of death. He wants me to remember His presence is with me all my days (and He has great purpose for every day).

So, wherever you are right now, even in the valley of the shadow of death itself – lie down and rest easy in the great Shepherd's watchful care. God's goodness and mercy are all around you today because He is all around you today. Just open your eyes and look for Him, today.

***LORD, open my eyes to see Your goodness and mercy,
Your provisions and protection, Your anointing and
blessings in the midst of my day.***

Prayer Guide

REVERENCE

Identify and celebrate God's praiseworthy attributes

Identify

- * He is our Shepherd, Provider, and Peace Giver (v. 1-2).
- * He is our glorious Restorer and Comforter (v. 3-4).
- * He is our abundant Giver, good and merciful Promise Keeper (v. 4-6).

Celebrate

- * I praise You, Good Shepherd, that You cared for me when...
- * I praise You that You led me to... when I...
- * You give me peace even when...

RESPONSE

Surrender to Him and His ways

- * Lord, I surrender my desire to have... realizing that You provide all I need.
- * You are the leader, so I surrender my self-made plans for...
- * Though I will be with You forever, I confess I often try to find value in...

REQUESTS

Ask the Spirit to guide your prayer over concerns, resources, and relationships

- * I pray that (name) will find satisfaction in You and not in...
- * Lord, I am trusting You to restore...
- * Lord, I call on Your name to lead as I...
- * I pray that I will have a firm assurance of Your goodness as I...

READINESS

Encouragement and strength for spiritual battle

- * Even though we walk through (difficulty), we will fear no evil.
- * You are our provision, even in the presence of (various forms of evil).
- * Memorize and meditate on v. 6.
- * Our cup overflows! You are with us!

Psalm 34

SUMMARY: God is worthy to be praised because He cares for us and answers our prayers.

CATEGORY: Praise

AUTHOR: David

In the first two verses of this psalm, David establishes his intentions to continually praise God and lift high His name for all to hear, especially those who are suffering, that they might also rejoice (v. 1-2). David then extends the invitation for all God's people to join in making known the greatness of God (v. 3). Praising is something God's people do both individually and corporately.

David continues by explaining why his heart is so full of praise for God. He tells of his experience in seeking God for help and how God answered his prayers and delivered him from those who wanted him dead (v. 4-7). He reminds his fellow worshippers that what God has done for him God will also do for all who look to Him (v. 5) and fear Him (v. 7). Thus David invites us all to experience God's goodness by taking refuge in Him (v. 8) and choosing to fear Him. In doing so we will never lack anything we need to do God's will (v. 9-10). To fear the Lord, David explains, looks like pure and honest speech, repentance, good works, and the pursuit of peace, presumably with God and others (v. 11-14).

The final section of this psalm highlights the truth that God sees, hears, responds to, and cares for His faithful ones (v. 15-22). He is careful to note that those who belong to God will face trouble and foes (v. 19, 21), but God hears their cries and responds with deliverance. So, whether a believer is experiencing safety or struggle, he or she has reason to worship because God has delivered His people before, and He will do it again!

As you pray Psalm 34, praise God for ways you have experienced Him answering your cries for help. Praise Him for how such experiences have deepened your trust in Him. Praise Him that He can and will deliver you. As you continue to worship God and wait upon Him, examine your heart and surrender to Him any fear, discouragement, or unbelief warring against you. Surrender to His presence as your refuge, strength, and sustenance. Surrender to a deeper fear of Him. Then, ask Him once again (or for the first time) to deliver you from your oppression.

***"Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good!
Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him!"***

PSALM 34:8

Prayer Guide

REVERENCE

Identify and celebrate God's praiseworthy attributes

Identify

- * He is worthy of blessing, praise, and exaltation (v. 1-3).
- * He hears our prayers and delivers us from fear (v. 4, 6, 15, 17).
- * He makes us radiant and free from shame (v. 5).
- * He rescues the brokenhearted from trouble/affliction; He is good (v. 6-10, 17-20, 22).
- * He judges evil (v. 16, 21-22).

Celebrate

- * I boast in You, Lord, because You are...
- * I praise You, Lord, because You have delivered me from...
- * Lord, I thank You that I tasted of Your goodness when...

RESPONSE

Surrender to Him and His ways

- * I confess I have recently spoken evil when I... Cleanse and restore me, Lord.
- * I confess my temptation to act deceitfully especially when...
- * I confess my need to seek and pursue peace in my relationship with (name). Help me obey You in seeking reconciliation with them today.

REQUESTS

Ask the Spirit to guide your prayer over concerns, resources, and relationships

- * Because You encamp around me, deliver me from...
- * Give me the conviction and power to speak truthfully this week as I...
- * Because You are good, I seek You for refuge today from...
- * I pray that (name) will sense Your nearness today as they are brokenhearted over...

READINESS

Encouragement and strength for spiritual battle

- * Lord, today, I will trust You to condemn unrighteousness in the culture, specifically... as I take refuge in You.
- * Lord, give me grace to not speak deceitfully especially when...
- * Memorize and meditate on v. 8.

Psalm 62

SUMMARY: God is ready to speak to us, but we must choose to listen.

CATEGORY: Trust

AUTHOR: David

How long can you sit still before getting restless? Our world today is anything but conducive to moments of quiet, peaceful contemplation. But as Christians, sometimes that is what our souls need most!

Look at how David begins this psalm: "For God alone my soul waits in silence; from Him comes my salvation." Yet just two verses later, his thoughts had shifted to enemies who were seeking to do him harm. So in verse 5, he says it again: "For God alone, O my soul, wait in silence, for my hope is from Him." Having forced himself to once again give the Lord his full attention, his view of those enemies was radically transformed (v. 8-10).

There is no Scriptural guarantee that God will speak directly to you if you try to sit quietly in His presence for a couple of minutes. But sitting quietly in His presence for a couple of minutes (or more!) can certainly prepare you to hear from Him, whether through His Word, a Holy Spirit prompting, or a truth about Himself that He brings to your mind. Look closely at verses 11-12, and you'll see that's what happened with David.

Take some time right now and try it yourself: sit down, sit still, ask the Spirit to quiet your heart, and *wait in silence for God alone*. Who knows what He might want to tell you today?

It takes a quiet heart to truly hear the Lord.

Prayer Guide

REVERENCE

Identify and celebrate God's praiseworthy attributes

Identify

- * He alone is our salvation, rock, and fortress when we are feeling insecure (v. 1-2, 6-7).
- * He is our hope (v. 5).
- * He is our trustworthy God who welcomes the outpouring of our hearts (v. 8).
- * He is a God of power, steadfast love, and ultimate judgment (v. 12).

Celebrate

- * I praise You that You have been my salvation when...
- * Thank You, because You are my rock and fortress, I do not have to be shaken when...
- * I praise You that You are my true hope when I encounter...
- * Because You are trustworthy, I know I can pour out my heart over...
- * Because power belongs to You, you are able to...

RESPONSE

Surrender to Him and His ways

- * I admit that it is hard for me to be silent and wait on You alone, especially when...
- * I confess that I sometimes tend to trust... rather than waiting on You.

REQUESTS

Ask the Spirit to guide your prayer over concerns, resources, and relationships

- * Lord, help me to wait on You alone in silence as I deal with...
- * Because You are my rock and my salvation, I trust You for the burden of...
- * Be a fortress today for (name) so they will not be shaken by...
- * Because power belongs to You, give me faith to know that You can...

READINESS

Encouragement and strength for spiritual battle

- * Because You are my mighty rock and fortress, I will trust You to protect me from the enemy when he tries to...
- * Fix my eyes on You today when my heart is tempted to...
- * Memorize and meditate on v. 8.

Psalm 116

SUMMARY: This song of thanksgiving gives public praise to the Lord for hearing the cries of the writer and preserving his life from destruction and death.

CATEGORY: Thanksgiving

AUTHOR: Unknown

Known in the time of Jesus as part of the Egyptian Hallel psalms (113-118), this may have been one of the "hymns" sung by Jesus and the disciples before they went out to the Mount of Olives the night of His arrest (*Matthew 26:30*). The author expresses thanksgiving, loyalty, and absolute trust in the Lord because of His deliverance. Let's look at the foundation for this thanksgiving.

The author is thankful because he has been heard by God (v. 1-4). He is encouraged because in the midst of trouble that felt like the weight of death itself was drowning him, the Lord was gracious and compassionate (v. 5). Because of the Lord's grace, he commits to trusting the Lord in all circumstances for the rest of his life (v. 2b).

He then experiences the benefits of this trust. The Lord gives his soul rest (v. 7), rescues him from death, dries his tears, and keeps him from stumbling (v. 8).

Now he wants to demonstrate his thanksgiving to the Lord. What he has experienced personally, he wants to express publicly.

Twice he states he wants to do this in the presence of all His people (v. 14, 18). He will make and keep vows, indicative of special thanksgiving offerings and/or fellowship offerings that he will offer to the Lord. Twice he also states that he will continue to call on the name of the Lord (v. 13, 17). This heart of thanksgiving and commitment to call on the Lord carries him all the way into eternity as he celebrates that the death of a saint is a precious experience for the Lord (v. 15). He welcomes His child into His presence.

In contrast to his trustworthy Lord, he expresses the untrustworthiness of men (v. 11). His security and his confidence are in relationship with the Lord. In that relationship he lives in freedom (v. 16).

He ends his song with deep thanksgiving, exclaiming, "Hallelujah!" May our experience be the same.

"I love the LORD, because he has heard my voice and my pleas for mercy. Because he inclined his ear to me, therefore I will call on him as long as I live."

PSALM 116:1-2

Prayer Guide

REVERENCE

Identify and celebrate God's praiseworthy attributes

Identify

- * He is the Lord who hears our supplications (v. 1).
- * He is gracious, righteous, and compassionate (v. 5).
- * He is good to us (v. 12).
- * He frees us from our chains (v. 16).

Celebrate

- * I love You, Lord, because...
- * Thank You that You heard me when I cried for mercy about...
- * I call on Your name because Your name is...
- * Thank You for delivering me when...

RESPONSE

Surrender to Him and His ways

- * Lord, I surrender to You my sense of distress and anguish over...

REQUESTS

Ask the Spirit to guide your prayer over concerns, resources, and relationships

- * Lord, keep me from stumbling as I shed tears over...
- * Help me to fulfill my commitments to You before others by...
- * Give me grace to respond when I experience people lying about...

READINESS

Encouragement and strength for spiritual battle

- * Lord, I will call on Your name when I feel overwhelmed by... Hear me!
- * Memorize and meditate on v. 9.



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