

Bible Reading Notes
Psalms 1~72

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Psalm 1

The first song of the Psalter gives the contrast between the righteous and the wicked. The righteous delight in the law of God and meditate on it (v. 2). Because of that the righteous are firmly planted (v. 3).

1:3-4 – Jeremiah uses the same analogy to contrast the righteous and the wicked in Jeremiah 17:5-8.

Psalm 2

Psalm 2 was written by David (Acts 4:25) and reflects the Lord's promise to make David's descendants kings in a kingdom that will have no end.

2:4 – laughs – The Lord still laughs at those who believe they will be able to overcome the Kingdom of God.

2:7 – In the New Testament this verse is applied to Christ, the descendent of David whose kingdom has no end (Matthew 3:17; 17:5).

Psalm 3

Context of Psalm 3 is the night David spent after fleeing Jerusalem before Absalom's forces attacked (2 Samuel 15-18).

3:1-2 – many – David uses this term 3 times to stress the large numbers of people who had formed the confederacy against him.

3:5 – Yet, David is able to sleep because of his trust in the Lord.

Psalm 4

4:4, 8 – This psalm is an evening psalm. This verse is quoted by Paul in Eph. 4:26.

4:7 – The joy of the people of God is not based on circumstances but upon our relationship with him.

Psalm 5

Psalm 4 was an evening psalm (4:4, 8). **Psalm 5** is a morning psalm (5:3).

5:9 – no truth – His accusers were using falsehoods in their attack against him.

5:9 – Paul quotes this verse in Romans 3:13 in discussing universal sinfulness.

Psalm 6

6:8 is quoted by Jesus in Matthew 7:23 in reference to those who are in the visible church but are not truly saved.

6:2-3 – David is going through physical problems (2) but his soul is also troubled (3). It has been going on for a while (How long? – v. 3).

6:4 – steadfast love – The basis of David's hope is the covenant love of the Lord.

Psalm 7

7 Title – Not sure about this event. Very similar to Shimei in 2 Sam. 16.

7:3-5 – David has been falsely accused of sin by his opponents.

7:12 – does not repent – A failure to repent will result in the judgment of the holy God.

Psalm 8

Psalm 8 focuses on the great majesty of the Lord (vv. 1 & 9).

Psalm 8 is quoted in Matt. 21:16 (v. 2), Heb. 2:6-8 (vv. 4-6) and 1 Cor. 15:27 (v. 6).

8:5 – Human beings are exalted in the creation. We are made in God's image and given dominion over his creation.

Psalm 9

David rejoices in God's salvation over his Gentile enemies and then closes the psalm with a prayer for the Lord to rise up again.

9:3-10 – David recounts the Lord's wonderful deeds, particular the salvation the Lord has given him over his enemies.

9:11-12 – This is the center of the psalm and is an Invitation for people to put their trust in the Lord and praise him.

9:13-20 – After reflecting on the Lord's salvation in the past, David comes with a request for him to do so again.

Psalm 10

There are many similarities to Psalm 9. Some believe that at one time the two psalms were combined into one psalm.

10:1 – There are times that from our human and limited perspective the Lord feels very far away.

10:2-11 – David describes the wicked.

10:7 – This verse is used by Paul in Romans 3:14 to describe the sinfulness of all people.

10:12-15 – This is a prayer for the Lord to provide protection to the psalmist from the wicked.

Psalm 11

We are not certain of the timing of David writing Psalm 11 but he focuses on familiar themes from Psalm 10. The Lord is our refuge (v. 1) and he does bring judgment on the wicked (vv. 5-6).

11:3 – Foundations = either the laws of the Lord or those who see that justice occurs when the law of God is ignored.

11:4 – The Lord is sovereign and in control of all calamities and troubles. This must be the believer's perspective in times of trials or when dealing with the wicked.

11:5 – tests – to prove the genuineness of their faith.

Psalm 12

Psalm 12 is a song about the spread of wickedness and a call for the Lord to act.

12:2-6

Note the contrast between the words of the wicked which are ineffective (vv. 2-4) and the words of the Lord which accomplish his purpose.

Psalm 13

13:1-2 – How long – Four times David uses this phrase.

Whatever the circumstances, David feels like they have been going on forever.

13:5-6 – But he has trusted and will rejoice in the Lord in spite of his current circumstances because of God's past dealings with him.

Psalm 14

Psalm 14 is very similar to Psalm 53.

14:1 – Fool – is characterized by moral deficiency more so than intellectual deficiencies. He refuses to believe and suffers the consequences of his hard heart.

14:1-3 is quoted by Paul in Romans 3:10-12 in discussing the universality of sin.

Psalm 15

15:1 – tent...holy hill = Zion, where the Ark of the Lord had been placed inside a tent until Solomon built the temple.

15:2ff – The ten qualities that are listed are qualities of the heart and character that reflect the fruit of genuine faith.

Psalm 16

16:2 – no good apart from you – The believer recognizes that the Lord is the source of all good which we possess.

16:8, 10 are both quoted by Peter in Acts 2 during his Pentecost sermon.

16:11 – Fullness of joy can only be found through a relationship with the Lord.

Psalms 17

17:1-5 – David is not saying that he is sinless, rather he is professing innocence in terms of specific charges that his enemies have made against him.

17:9-12 – In contrast to David, these verses give a description of his wicked enemies.

17:13-14 – David's prayer for the Lord to deliver him.

Psalm 18

This psalm is also recorded in 2 Samuel 22.

Vv. 1-3 – David piles up terms to describe the Lord – almost as if he can't stop himself in describing the God he loves.

Vv. 4-6 – His great need for rescue is described as a near death experience.

Vv. 7ff – David recounts God's salvation in apocalyptic language

Vv. 20-24 – As he does elsewhere, David is not pretending he has been sinless, but that he has been faithful to the Lord.

Vv. 31ff – Because the Lord has delivered David, David is able to win great victories for the Lord and the people.

V. 49 is quoted by Paul in Romans 15:9.

Psalms 19

Psalm 19 focuses on the glory of God's revelation.

19:1-6 – The glory of God's revelation goes out throughout his creation.

19:8-11 – The Lord's glory is also seen in the perfect law which he has revealed.

19:12-14 – The Lord's revelation in creation and Scripture demands a response from his people.

Psalm 20

Psalm 20 – Many commentators see Ps. 20 and 21 as companion psalms with Psalm 21 revealing the answer to the prayer of Ps. 20.

20:7 – Israel will not trust in their king or his army, but only in the Lord.

Psalms 21

Psalm 21 – King David rejoices in the Lord because he has given David the desires of his heart.

21:2 – The Lord spared David's life .

21:4 – God gave him the joy of the presence of the Lord.

21:8ff – The Lord also has given David deliverance from his enemies.

Psalms 22

Psalm 22 is most often understood to refer to Christ and his sufferings for our salvation. But as you read it, don't forget David wrote this in the context of his own life.

Psalm 22 is quoted often in Matthew's account of the suffering and death of Christ.

22:1-21 – The suffering of the psalmist waiting for God to answer his prayers.

22:22-31 – Praise to the Lord who will answer at the right time.

Psalm 23

Psalm 23 – The Lord is my shepherd – Jesus tells us in John 10:11 that he is the good shepherd to who fulfills this psalm for his people.

23:5 – table – Many commentators see the focus shift to a banquet setting. I understand v. 5-6 as still referring to the work of a shepherd providing for the sheep.

Psalm 24

Psalm 24 – The Lord is the creator of all things and is alone worthy of our worship. This psalm defines those who are able to worship him.

24:7 – The gatekeepers would lift up the gates to allow qualified worshippers to enter in. Our qualification to worship comes in the righteousness of Christ.

Psalm 25

Psalm 25 is a psalm of David when he was experiencing loneliness, affliction, and distress (vv. 16-17), probably due to his own sin (v. 11).

25:6-7 – We want God to remember his mercy and covenant love while not remembering our sins. He does this because in Christ we are loved and in Christ our sins have been dealt with.

25:11 – The center of the psalm and the key theme.

Psalm 26

26:1, 11 – walked in my integrity – The psalm begins and ends with David referring to his integrity. Not a claim that he is sinless, but that he is part of the righteous people of God.

26:8 – habitation of your house – One evidence of David's integrity is that he loves the Lord and the place where the Lord dwells, which in his day was the tabernacle.

Psalm 27

27:2-3 – You can easily imagine David thinking back on the situation in the cave with Saul (1 Samuel 24) and thinking of those who want him to fall and an army encamped against him.

27:10 – my father and my mother – The idea is a contrast. Even if my father and mother forsake me, the Lord never will.

27:14 – Those who wait on the Lord can be strong and courageous.

Psalm 28

28:1-5 – David's prayer

28:6-9 – David's confidence in the Lord

Psalm 29

29:1-2 – The angels (heavenly beings) are called to ascribe glory to the Lord for his mighty acts.

29:3-9 – is a picture of the majesty and greatness of the Lord in the midst of a great storm.

29:3 – the voice of the LORD – is used 7 times in vv. 3-9, sometimes for thunder but also as a synonym for the Lord himself.

29:9-10 – Because the Lord is the powerful king over all, he is the one who is able to strengthen and bless his people.

Psalm 30

Psalm 30 Title – Dedication of the temple – This refers either to the tabernacle David erected in Jerusalem (2 Samuel 6) or he composed it for the temple Solomon would build.

30:5 – joy comes with the morning – This statement is important to remember. Our current sorrows will not last. The believer always has a promise of coming eternal joy.

Psalm 31

31:5 – Was spoken by Christ at his death (Luke 23:46).

31:24 – This psalm ends with the same theme as Psalm 27 – be strong and take courage for the Lord is the one you wait on.

Both psalms refer to the Lord's steadfast love for his people. Because of that we can be certain he will be our refuge in times of trouble.

Psalm 32

32:1-2 – Quoted in Romans 4:7-8.

32:3-5 – David's experience when he did not repent of his sins.

32:6-9 – In light of David's experience, come and repent while there is still the opportunity to do so.

Psalm 33

33:1-3 – Call for joyful praise to the Lord in both voice and instruments.

33:4 – **For** – the following verses give the reasons for the call to praise.

33:5 – **steadfast love** – This is the covenant love God has for his people. It is mentioned again in vv. 18 & 22.

Psalm 34

The context of the psalm is found in 1 Samuel 21:10-15 when the Lord delivered David from Abimelech.

34:6 – Lord saves “out of all his troubles” – This is the theme of the psalm and is seen in vv. 6, 17 and 18.

34:8ff – This is the application to others based on David's own experience.

34:20 – **He keeps all his bones** is applied to Christ in John 19:36.

Psalm 35

35:1-8 – Salvation for David will include the defeat of his enemies, and so he prays for that very thing.

35:11-21 – More detail is given about the enemies of David and gives a context for his prayer that they would be defeated.

35:19 – **hate me without cause** – This is quoted as related to Christ in John 15:25.

35:22-26 – David's final plea for the Lord to come and save him and bring about his vindication (vv. 23, 24).

Psalm 36

36:1-4 – The wicked are depraved and so deny God and engage in wickedness. V. 1 is quoted by Paul in Romans 3:18 as part of his summary of the sinfulness of all people.

36:5-9 – The Lord is faithful to his people in his steadfast love (his unchanging covenant love).

36:10-12 – Prayer for the Lord's steadfast love to continue to protect his people.

Psalm 37

Psalm 37 is a contrast between the righteous and the wicked, both in their life and in their death. The psalmist is struggling with why the ungodly seem to prosper while the righteous appear to suffer.

37:9 – inherit the land – This theme runs through the psalm (vv. 9, 11, 22, 29, 34). It is in line with Jesus' words that the meek will inherit the land (Matthew 5:5). Believers will reign and occupy the new heaven and earth for all eternity.

Psalm 38

38 Title – Memorial Offering – This offering is referred to in Leviticus 2:2

38:1-10 – David is suffering under the hand of the Lord due to his own sin.

38:11-20 – But he is also suffering from both friends and foes

38:18 – He has repented of his sin, but the consequences have continued.

Psalm 39

39:1-3 – David is suffering and wants to be careful to not sin in what he speaks in the company of unbelievers.

39:4-6 – David wants to know more deeply how fleeting his life is so that he will learn to focus on the things of value.

39:7-13 – David prays for relief from his suffering and forgiveness for his sins, which appear to be the cause of the Lord's discipline.

Psalm 40

Psalm 40 focuses on unspecified times that the Lord had brought salvation in the past (vv. 1-10) and based on that, calls for the Lord to act again (vv. 11-17).

40:6-8 is quoted in Hebrews 10:5-7 and ascribed to the Lord.

40:13-17 is almost identical to Psalm 70

Psalm 41

The context of **Psalm 41** is Absalom's revolt (2 Samuel 15).

41:9 – lifted his heel against me - In the context of Absalom's revolt, this is a reference to Ahithophal.

41:9 - Jesus quotes this verse in John 13:18 in reference to Judas Iscariot's betrayal.

Psalm 42

At some point Psalms 42 and 43 were united into one song – note the repetition of 42:8, 11 & 43:5.

42:1-5 – The singer longs to be in the presence of God in worship, because he is far from Jerusalem (v. 6). His longing is intense, like a deer that longs for water.

42:5, 11 – But his sense of being cut off from God will be short lived. He has hope in God and a confidence that he will once again be able to worship him.

Psalm 43

Psalm 43 was probably at one point connected to Psalm 42 as one song.

43:2 – There are times we feel God has rejected or abandoned us. But the believer ultimately responds with faith (hope in God) and praise (v. 5).

Psalm 44

Psalm 44 is written in the context of a faithful people who are suffering. The song asks the question “Why?”

44:1-8 – Recounts past victories that God gave his people.

44:9-22 – We are faithful to you (not a claim of sinlessness), why have you caused us to suffer? Paul quotes v. 22 in Romans 8:36 to describe the suffering of Christians.

44:23-26 – Prayer for the Lord to take note of their situation and come to their aid.

Psalm 45

Psalm 45 is a royal psalm in the setting of a wedding that is first applied to David as king but clearly goes beyond David to focus on Christ.

45:6-7 – These verses are quoted of Christ in Hebrews 1:8-9, and the king is referred to as “God,” which could only apply to Christ.

Psalm 46

46 - Martin Luther was known to have said in the midst of troubles, “Let us sing the 46th.” We know it as *A Mighty Fortress Is Our God*.

46:7, 11 – The refrain of the psalm.

46:10 – **Be still** – In the midst of troubles, the believer finds his rest and peace by trusting in the Lord.

Psalm 47

Psalm 47 is another royal psalm like Psalm 2.

47:1 – Loud songs of joy are appropriate to celebrate the kingship of the Lord.

47:8-9 – God's reign is not just over Israel but over all the nations.

Psalm 48

48:1 – The glory of Mount Zion is that it is the city chosen by God and where he dwells. Mount Zion is used in the New Testament to describe the heavenly kingdom.

48:4-8 – There is not one specific event in mind, but the ongoing rebellion of the pagan nations against the Lord.

48:8 – **Lord of hosts** – The Lord is the one who commands the army of the heavenly hosts who serve to protect his people and defeat his enemies.

Psalm 49

Psalm 49 is a reminder that though the rich may appear to have an enviable life, their riches will fail them.

49:7-8 – Wealth cannot save anyone.

49:10ff – Wealth cannot provide protection from death.

Psalm 50

Psalm 50 celebrates the Lord as judge over his people – both the righteous covenant people as well as the wicked in Israel.

50:3 – **sacrifice** – May be a reference to the blood used in the establishment of the covenant at Sinai (Exodus 24:8).

50:7-15 – God warns his people that merely bringing sacrifices is inadequate. Sacrifices need to be an act of worship from the heart.

50:16-23 – This section deals with covenant breakers – they are members of the covenant people but have proven themselves unfaithful to the Lord.

Psalm 51

51 Title – This is the prayer of confession that David prayed after his sin with Bathsheba and Uriah.

51:1-3 – steadfast love...abundant mercy - The only ground we have for forgiveness is the love and mercy of God in Christ.

51:4 – Against you – David understood that all sin, even sin against others, is primarily sin against the Lord.

51:12 – Restore – Ongoing unrepentant sin saps away our joy. Joy is restored through repentance.

51:13 – teach – David fulfills this promise in Psalm 32.

Psalm 52

52 Title - The setting of this psalm is 1 Samuel 22:6-23.

52:1 – the steadfast love of the Lord will last for all eternity; therefore, David will trust in the Lord forever (v. 8) instead of the abundance of riches (v. 7).

Psalm 53

Psalm 53:1-4 is also found in Psalm 14:1-4.

This psalm is quoted by Paul in Romans 3:10-12 in describing the sinfulness of all men.

Psalm 54

54 Title – The context of this psalm could be either 1 Samuel 23:19 or 26:1.

54 Title – Ziphites – The town of Ziph was southeast of Hebron in the tribal area of Judah.

54:1-3 – David's prayer for salvation.

54:4-7 – David's confidence in the Lord to save him.

Psalm 55

Psalm 55 is the psalm of a man who has been rejected by a close friend he thought was trustworthy.

55:13-14, 20 – David is likely referring to Ahithophel during Absalom's rebellion (2 Samuel 15).

55:22 – Even with the wicked (Absalom's army) bearing him down, David will trust in the Lord, who will sustain him.

Psalms 56

56 Title – The setting is 1 Samuel 21.

56 – Main theme is that David trusts in the Lord (vv. 3, 4, 11).

56:9 – God is for me - When we trust the Lord and his promises, we can live in confidence that the Lord is for us (Romans 8:31).

Psalm 57

57 Title – The psalm was written in the context of 1 Samuel 24.

57:1-3 – When the most powerful man in the land is trying to kill you, your only hope is to turn to almighty God who will save you and be a refuge for you.

57:5, 11 serve as the chorus of David's song.

57:7-11 are also found in Psalm 108:1-5.

Psalm 58

58:1 – gods – is probably a reference to earthly leaders, whose wickedness is the subject of vv. 1-5.

58:3 – This is a clear Old Testament statement on the depravity that flows from our sin natures inherited from Adam.

58:11 – The purpose of the final judgment will be to reveal the glory of God's justice and righteousness.

Psalm 59

59 Title - The context of Psalm 59 is found in 1 Samuel 19:11-17

59:3 – David had done nothing sinful against Saul to arouse Saul's anger.

The language of Psalm 59 is usually used of the Gentile nations, but here it refers to Saul and his soldiers.

Psalm 60

Psalm 60 – Israel has suffered a military defeat and this song is a prayer for the Lord to give them victory and restore them.

60 Title – Refers to events in 2 Samuel 8 and 1 Chronicles 18

60:1 - You – David repeatedly recognizes that the Lord in his providence has done this.

60:5-12 – These verses are also found in Psalm 108:6-13.

60:8 – cast my shoe – Probably done as a sign of contempt.

Psalm 61

61:2 – from the ends of the earth – David is not in Jerusalem. Perhaps this was written when David was fleeing from Absalom.

61:6 – Prolong the life of the king – This too would fit the context of Absalom's rebellion.

61:7 – enthroned forever – This has been fulfilled by Christ.

Psalm 62

62:1 – alone – four times the psalmist indicates his complete trust in the Lord alone (vv. 1, 2, 5, 6), which is the theme of the psalm.

62:12 – according to his works – This same point is made in Romans 2:6.

Psalm 63

63 Title – The context is either found in 1 Samuel 23:14 or 2 Samuel 15:23ff.

63:1 – The language of longing for God reflects the wilderness area that David is in.

Note the personal language of David. His soul thirsts (1), will be satisfied (5), and clings (8) to the Lord.

Psalm 64

The theme of the psalm is the ultimate destruction of the wicked.

64:4 – shooting – The wicked shoot arrows towards the righteous to bring them down, but they ultimately will face the arrows of the Lord (v. 7), which will result in their ruin.

Psalm 65

Psalm 65 is a song of praise for God's salvation, which may have been occasioned by the Lord sending needed rainfall after a drought (vv. 9-13).

65:11 – overflow with abundance – The Lord's abundant goodness is seen in that the wagons of God's people cannot hold the bounty the Lord has given.

Psalm 66

Psalm 66 is a song of praise for the "awesome deeds" of the Lord (vv. 3, 5).

66:8-15 - The Lord sent testing to his people and brought them through it (vv. 8-12). In response, they will now bring their offerings and fulfill the vows they made to the Lord when they were being tested (vv. 13-15).

66:18 – cherish iniquity – Prayer does not require sinlessness, but when we love our sin and continue in it with an unrepentant heart, we have no reason to assume the Lord will hear our prayer.

Psalm 67

In **Psalm 67** God's people pray for the Lord to bless them so that they can be a source of blessing to the nations. Blessings come with responsibility!

67:1 – This verse reflects the Aaronic Blessing of Numbers 6:24.

Psalm 68

Psalm 68 – Many commentators believe David wrote this when the ark was moved to Mt. Zion in 2 Samuel 6.

68:1 – These words were said by Moses whenever the ark was moved (Numbers 10:35).

68:7-18 – These verses recount the Lord's dealings with his people from Sinai to the ark being moved to Mt. Zion.

68:18 – This verse is quoted in Ephesians 4:8-11 about the ascended Christ giving gifts to his people.

68:35 – As the ark is moved into Jerusalem, Israel is reminded that the Lord is the source of their power and strength.

Psalm 69

Psalm 69 is written of an episode in David's life of ongoing suffering, but it is used in the New Testament in several passages to describe the sufferings of Christ.

69:4 – without cause – David has not done what he is accused of doing. Quoted by Jesus in John 15:25.

69:5-8 – When leaders sin it has an impact on many others in addition to themselves, including the glory of God.

69:9 – Quoted in John 2:17 in reference to Jesus cleansing the temple. The last half of v. 9 is quoted by Paul in reference to Christ in Rom. 15:3.

69:21 – Fulfilled in Christ's death according to John 19:28-29.

69:22-33 – David prays for the Lord to deliver him by judging his unjust enemies and vindicating him.

Psalm 70

Psalm 70 is very similar to Psalm 40:13-17.

70 Title – Memorial Offering is described in Leviticus 2:2

70:1-3 – David prays for deliverance from those who seek his life.

70:4-5 – David also prays that those who seek the Lord will find him to be a source of joy and deliverance.

Psalm 71

71:7 – portent = a sign or warning of a calamitous future event.

71:9, 18 – old age – The psalmist is either old or contemplating that development.

71:15 – The psalmist has experienced and witnessed many great righteous acts of the Lord. He commits to vocalizing God's salvation for others to hear.

Psalm 72

Psalm 72 was written by Solomon and is a prayer for the Lord to bless the king in his reign. The psalm looks forward to the ultimate son of David, Christ, who will fulfill all of the psalm.

72:4 – A righteous ruler has a special concern for caring for those who are most helpless – the poor, children, and the oppressed.

72:10 – Tarshish = Spain; **Sheba and Seba** = Southern Arabia

72:18-19 – Each of the five books which make up the Psalms, ends with a doxology in praise of the Lord.

