

## Psalms for Adults – Week 1

Psalms is a collection of poems in the Bible that help us learn to pray and to praise God. The Book of Psalms is sometimes called the Psalter, especially when it is published apart from any other book of the Bible. There are 150 psalms in the Psalter. Each of these 150 psalms, just like each person, is unique. Still, there are types of psalms, just as there are types of people. The psalms below all belong to the genre (type) called psalms of lament or complaint. You could also call them “Help me!” prayers.

I encourage you to read one of these psalms each day this week. After you read it once, you may want to try reading it aloud to see if it feels any different. There are only five psalms, so if you read one a day, you will have to repeat some of them. That is intentional. I’ve chosen to use the Contemporary English Version for its simplicity and power. Enjoy! *- Pastor Mike*

### **Psalm 3 - An Early Morning Prayer**

<sup>1</sup> I have a lot of enemies, LORD.  
Many fight against <sup>2</sup> me and say,  
“God won’t rescue you!”

<sup>3</sup> But you are my shield,  
and you give me victory  
and great honor.

<sup>4</sup> I pray to you, and you answer  
from your sacred hill.

<sup>5</sup> I sleep and wake up refreshed  
because you, LORD,  
protect me.

<sup>6</sup> Ten thousand enemies attack  
from every side,  
but I am not afraid.

<sup>7</sup> Come and save me, LORD God!  
Break my enemies' jaws  
and shatter their teeth,  
<sup>8</sup> because you protect  
and bless your people.

### **Psalm 4 - An Evening Prayer**

<sup>1</sup> You are my God and protector.  
Please answer my prayer.  
I was in terrible distress,  
but you set me free.

Now have pity and listen  
as I pray.

<sup>2</sup> How long will you people  
refuse to respect me?  
You love foolish things,  
and you run after  
what is worthless.

<sup>3</sup> The LORD has chosen  
everyone who is faithful  
to be his very own,  
and he answers my prayers.

<sup>4</sup> But each of you  
had better tremble  
and turn from your sins.  
Silently search your heart  
as you lie in bed.

<sup>5</sup> Offer the proper sacrifices  
and trust the LORD.

<sup>6</sup> There are some who ask,  
“Who will be good to us?”  
Let your kindness, LORD,  
shine brightly on us.

<sup>7</sup> You brought me more happiness  
than a rich harvest  
of grain and grapes.

<sup>8</sup> I can lie down  
and sleep soundly  
because you, LORD,  
will keep me safe.

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### Psalm 10 - A Prayer for Help

- <sup>1</sup> Why are you far away, LORD?  
Why do you hide yourself  
when I am in trouble?
- <sup>2</sup> Proud and brutal people  
hunt down the poor.  
But let them get caught  
by their own evil plans!
- <sup>3</sup> The wicked brag about  
their deepest desires.  
Those greedy people hate  
and curse you, LORD.
- <sup>4</sup> The wicked are too proud  
to turn to you  
or even think about you.
- <sup>5</sup> They are always successful,  
though they can't understand  
your teachings,  
and they keep sneering  
at their enemies.
- <sup>6</sup> In their hearts they say,  
"Nothing can hurt us!  
We'll always be happy  
and free from trouble."
- <sup>7</sup> They curse and tell lies,  
and all they talk about  
is how to be cruel  
or how to do wrong.
- <sup>8</sup> They hide outside villages,  
waiting to strike and murder  
some innocent victim.
- <sup>9</sup> They are hungry lions  
hiding in the bushes,  
hoping to catch  
some helpless passerby.  
They trap the poor in nets  
and drag them away.
- <sup>10</sup> They crouch down and wait  
to grab a victim.
- <sup>11</sup> They say, "God can't see!  
He's got on a blindfold."
- <sup>12</sup> Do something, LORD God,  
and use your powerful arm

- to help those in need.
- <sup>13</sup> The wicked don't respect you.  
In their hearts they say,  
"God won't punish us!"
- <sup>14</sup> But you see the trouble  
and the distress,  
and you will do something.  
The poor can count on you,  
and so can orphans.
- <sup>15</sup> Now break the arms  
of all merciless people.  
Punish them for doing wrong  
and make them stop.
- <sup>16</sup> Our LORD, you will always rule,  
but nations will vanish  
from the earth.
- <sup>17</sup> You listen to the longings  
of those who suffer.  
You offer them hope,  
and you pay attention  
to their cries for help.
- <sup>18</sup> You defend orphans  
and everyone else in need,  
so that no one on earth  
can terrify others again.

### Psalm 28 - A Prayer for Help

- <sup>1</sup> Only you, LORD,  
are a mighty rock!  
Don't refuse to help me  
when I pray.  
If you don't answer me,  
I will soon be dead.
- <sup>2</sup> Please listen to my prayer  
and my cry for help,  
as I lift my hands  
toward your holy temple.
- <sup>3</sup> Don't drag me away, LORD,  
with those cruel people,  
who speak kind words,  
while planning trouble.
- <sup>4</sup> Treat them as they deserve!  
Punish them for their sins.
- <sup>5</sup> They don't pay any attention

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to your wonderful deeds.  
Now you will destroy them  
and leave them in ruin.

<sup>6</sup> I praise you, LORD,  
for answering my prayers.  
<sup>7</sup> You are my strong shield,  
and I trust you completely.  
You have helped me,  
and I will celebrate  
and thank you in song.

<sup>8</sup> You give strength  
to your people, LORD,  
and you save and protect  
your chosen ones.

<sup>9</sup> Come save us and bless us.  
Be our shepherd and always  
carry us in your arms.

### **Psalm 77 - In Times of Trouble God Is with His People**

<sup>1</sup> I pray to you, Lord God,  
and I beg you to listen.  
<sup>2</sup> In days filled with trouble,  
I search for you.  
And at night I tirelessly  
lift my hands in prayer,  
refusing comfort.  
<sup>3</sup> When I think of you,  
I feel restless and weak.  
<sup>4</sup> Because of you, Lord God,  
I can't sleep.  
I am restless  
and can't even talk.  
<sup>5</sup> I think of times gone by,  
of those years long ago.  
<sup>6</sup> Each night my mind  
is flooded with questions:  
<sup>7</sup> "Have you rejected me forever?  
Won't you be kind again?"  
<sup>8</sup> Is this the end of your love  
and your promises?  
<sup>9</sup> Have you forgotten  
how to have pity?

Do you refuse to show mercy  
because of your anger?"  
<sup>10</sup> Then I said, "God Most High,  
what hurts me most  
is that you no longer help us  
with your mighty arm."  
<sup>11</sup> Our LORD, I will remember  
the things you have done,  
your miracles of long ago.  
<sup>12</sup> I will think about each one  
of your mighty deeds.  
<sup>13</sup> Everything you do is right,  
and no other god  
compares with you.  
<sup>14</sup> You alone work miracles,  
and you have let nations  
see your mighty power.  
<sup>15</sup> With your own arm you rescued  
your people,  
the descendants  
of Jacob and Joseph.

<sup>16</sup> The ocean looked at you, God,  
and it trembled deep down  
with fear.  
<sup>17</sup> Water flowed from the clouds.  
Thunder was heard above  
as your arrows of lightning  
flashed about.  
<sup>18</sup> Your thunder roared  
like chariot wheels.  
The world was made bright  
by lightning,  
and all the earth trembled.  
<sup>19</sup> You walked through the water  
of the mighty sea,  
but your footprints  
were never seen.  
<sup>20</sup> You guided your people  
like a flock of sheep,  
and you chose Moses and Aaron  
to be their leaders.