

IN
OUT

Psalms

PART 1

THE LORD HEARS
WHEN I CALL
(PSALMS 1–22)

IN & OUT®
PSALMS
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THE LORD HEARS WHEN I CALL
(PSALMS 1–22)

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BEFORE YOU BEGIN WE WANT YOU TO KNOW . . .

We are excited that you have chosen to study *Psalms* with us. It will be such a blessing to your life because it is part of God's Word, His self-revelation, each part of which is essential to understanding the whole purpose of God.

As a book of the Bible, *Psalms* holds a unique place. It's a collection of poetry—prayer, praises, or songs—each psalm with its own message. They're not chapters, each building on the previous, intended to be read sequentially. And unlike prose, with chapters divided into paragraphs, verses in poetry are collected into “stanzas,” each stanza within a poem separated from the previous one by a blank line.

To understand the psalms, it's important to see the flow of thought between stanzas, namely how does one connect with the previous ones? For example:

- Does the stanza contrast with the previous one?
- Does it give the reason or result for what was said previously?
- Is it a request or a call to action due to the psalmist's circumstances spoken previously?
- Is it praise in light of who God is or what He has done mentioned previously?

Unlike English poetry that often emphasizes rhyme and meter (or rhythm), Hebrew poetry's most important element is parallelism, by which authors emphasize ideas. Sometimes that parallelism repeats a thought in other words. Other times, the parallelism adds new information to an original concept. A third type contrasts ideas, showing how they are different. A fourth uses analogies, likening one thing to another, the characteristics of which are similar.

David, who wrote many of the psalms, appointed Levites to serve in the house of the Lord. “They ministered with song before the tabernacle of the tent of meeting, until Solomon had built the house of the LORD in Jerusalem” (1 Chronicles 6:31-32).

We are invited to pour out our hearts to God, to come before Him and present our concerns. We were made to sing, to lift our voices in worship, to speak to God and to others “in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with [our] heart[s] to the Lord” (Ephesians 5:19).

So as you study the psalms with us, use them for prayer and praise of God . . . or as a springboard for your own songs or poetry of prayer and worship to God. Pour out your heart before Him and listen for His response. Grow your intimacy with God in your prayer and worship.

Blessed

Psalms—theology sung. Through Psalms we learn about God—His attributes, what pleases and displeases Him, His relationship to the righteous and the wicked, and His revelation of the future concerning Messiah, salvation, and judgment.

In this course, we’ll begin our journey into the Psalms with Psalms 1–22. What an adventure awaits us!

If you have not yet read the section titled “Before You Begin . . .,” do so now.

TAKING IT IN

Blessed. A word you may have heard many times, used in many ways. But what does it mean to be blessed by God? And who does He bless? We’ll look at this as we begin our study of Psalms this week.

1. Always start your time in God’s Word with prayer. As you study this week, ask Him to teach you by His Spirit and to show you who He blesses and how.
2. Today we’ll look together at **Psalm 1**. There are rich truths in this short psalm.
 - a. Begin by simply reading this psalm using the Observation Worksheet in the Appendix. As you do, look for the main types of people.
 - b. What two types of people are described in this psalm?
 - c. Now read your Observation Worksheet of Psalm 1 again and mark:
 - 1) *righteous*, including pronouns and synonyms such as *man* if referring to a righteous man. You might underline these in blue.
 - 2) *wicked*, including pronouns and synonyms such as *scoffers*. You might underline these in brown.

- d. On the back of your workbook, you'll see marking suggestions for some words often used in the Bible. An asterisk [*] shows words in this workbook with suggested markings.

Read Psalm 1 and this time mark:

- 1) *Lord* (see *God*)* including pronouns
 - 2) *law**
 - 3) *blessed**
- e. In the Appendix, you'll find pages titled "The Lord." List what you learn about Him from Psalm 1. Include scripture references. As we study each psalm, you'll add to this list and discover rich truths about who He is and what He does.
- f. Now use your markings to see what God teaches us about the righteous and the wicked from this psalm. Look at each place you marked the righteous and the wicked and list what you learn.

Righteous

Wicked

- g. Now, it's time to write a short theme for each stanza of this psalm. Look at each stanza. Who and what is it mostly about? Use words from the text to summarize the main thought in each.

Record the themes below or in the margin of your Observation Worksheet.

1) verses 1-3

2) verses 4-6

- h. To conclude our observations we'll identify the theme for Psalm 1. We know the psalm is mostly about two types of people—the righteous and the wicked, so we'll include them in our theme.

Let's think together:

1) What word or phrase describes the righteous?

2) What word or phrase describes the wicked?

3) Using these words from the text, summarize the theme of Psalm 1 on "Psalms 1–22 at a Glance" found in the Appendix. You may want to use a pencil so you can adjust your theme later if needed.

3. Now we'll begin our study of **Psalm 2**.
- a. Read Psalm 2, looking for the main characters as you did with Psalm 1. This is always a good place to begin when studying a psalm.
- b. List below the main characters you observed.
- c. Read Psalm 2 again and mark *nations*, * *peoples*, *kings*, *rulers* all the same way, including pronouns and any synonyms for these.

Remember, an asterisk [*] shows words that have suggested markings on the back cover of your workbook.

d. Now read the psalm and mark:

- 1) *Lord*, * including pronouns
- 2) *Son* (see *Jesus**), including pronouns and synonyms

If you're not sure how to mark *King* and *Anointed*, that's OK. You'll see who they are as we continue our study.

e. It will be beneficial to make a Key Word Bookmark for Psalms. Cut out the bookmark on the back cover of your workbook. On the blank side, list key words from Psalms and mark them the way you will throughout the book.

Now list the following key words on your bookmark:

- 1) *anger, fury, wrath**
- 2) *blessed* (see *bless**)
- 3) *refuge*

f. Now read Psalm 2 again and mark these.

g. Look at your markings.

- 1) Add to your list about the Lord in the Appendix.
- 2) Briefly list what this psalm says about *the nations, peoples*, etc.

We'll get you started.

nations, peoples, kings, rulers
in uproar
devising a vain thing

- h. As you did with Psalm 1, use words from the text to summarize who and what each stanza is mostly about.
- 1) 1-3
 - 2) 4-6
 - 3) 7-9
 - 4) 10-12
- i. Use words from the text to record the theme for Psalm 2 on “Psalms 1–22 at a Glance.” Hint: What do the nations, the peoples, and rulers need to do, to know?
- j. Now let’s reason through our observations to be sure we’ve seen the flow of thought. Answer the following questions.
- 1) How does the second stanza continue from the first?
 - 2) Who is “I” in the *first* line of verse 7? Did you mark Him the same as “Me” and “You”? What do you learn about Him in verses 7-9? What did the LORD decree about Him?

- 3) Based on what you learned from verses 7-9, who is the Lord's Anointed in verse 2 and His King in verse 6?

 - 4) "Now therefore" what do the people of verses 10-12 need to do?

 - 5) In the last line of this psalm, what's the contrast to the kings, judges, and peoples?
4. Go to the Lord and ask Him to give you wisdom as you study **Psalm 3**. God's Spirit gives that wisdom.
 - a. Psalm 3 begins a little differently from Psalms 1 and 2. Just before verse 1 is a superscription. Superscriptions contain information such as the writer, the occasion, who it is for, and/or how it is to be sung. In the Hebrew Bible, the superscription is verse 1.

Sometimes marginal notes or footnotes give cross-references about the occasion (the historical context).

What does the superscription for Psalm 3 tell you?

- b. Begin observing Psalm 3 by identifying the main characters.
- c. Read this short psalm again and mark *David* and *Lord*, including pronouns and synonyms.

When you finish, read it again and mark David's adversaries, including pronouns and synonyms (*enemies, wicked, etc.*).

- d. Now add the following to your Key Word Bookmark.
 - 1) *deliverance, save, salvation* (see *redeem**)

- 2) *crying* when it refers to crying to the Lord (see *pray**)
 - 3) *arise, O LORD*
- e. Add to your list on the Lord in the Appendix.
- f. Use words from the text to summarize the stanzas below or in the margin of your Observation Worksheet. Who and what is each stanza about?
- 1) 1-2

 - 2) 3-6

 - 3) 7-8 (You might include the repeated key word in this stanza.)
- g. When you record a theme for one of the psalms, use words specific to that psalm—rather than something generic like, “Enemies against David”—so that you can distinguish it from the theme of another psalm.
- For example: What do you learn about David’s circumstances in Psalm 3:1, and what does David say about God in verse 3? Pencil in a theme on your **At a Glance** chart. If you realize later you need to make it more specific, you can come back to it.
- h. To make sure you didn’t miss it:
- 1) How do David’s words in the second stanza contrast with what the enemies are saying in the first stanza?

2) How did knowing these things about God affect David according to verses 5 and 6?

3) So what did David ask God to do and why in verses 7 and 8?

5. Have you noticed that we're using a general pattern to study each psalm?

- Read the superscription for any background information about the psalm.
- Read the psalm to observe who the main characters are.
- Read again and mark the main characters. Always mark the Lord, even if His name is not mentioned often in the psalm.
- Read again and mark key words.
- List truths about the Lord.
- Summarize a theme for each stanza from what you've observed, thinking about the flow of thought from stanza to stanza.
- Review your stanza themes, then use a few words from the psalm to summarize the main theme.
- Reason through the psalm stanza by stanza.
- Now consider the following personal application: How does what you learned about God in this psalm impact your life and relationship with Him? What can you learn for your life from the people in this psalm?

6. As we study **Psalm 4**, notice the way we follow the pattern.

-
- a. As it states in the first bullet, begin by reading the superscription. What do you learn about this psalm?

 - b. Now read the psalm to observe who the main characters are (second bullet), and then mark the references to each one (third bullet).

 - c. It's key word time (fourth bullet). Add the following words to your Psalms Key Word Bookmark. Then read and mark key words.
 - 1) *call, prayer** the way you marked *crying*
 - 2) *righteousness* (see *righteous**)
 - 3) *heart*
 - 4) *sin**

 - d. Be sure to add to your ongoing list about the Lord in the Appendix (fifth bullet).

 - e. Record the stanza themes (sixth bullet) below or in the margin of your Observation Worksheet. If a key word and its synonym are repeated in a stanza, you might use that word in your theme.
 - 1) 1

 - 2) 2-3

 - 3) 4-5

 - 4) 6-8

 - f. What is this psalm mainly about? Record the theme on your At a Glance chart.

- g. Now let's reason through the psalm.
- 1) What does David request of God in the first stanza?

 - 2) Verses 2-5.
 - a) Who is David speaking to and what do you learn about them?

 - b) What is David calling them to do?

 - 3) What's the question asked in in verses 6-8 and how does David respond to it?
7. Let's observe our final psalm for the week: **Psalm 5**. As we do, we'll learn more about the Lord's blessing.
- a. How is this superscription different from the one for Psalm 4?

 - b. Read Psalm 5 to see who the main characters are. Then read again and mark them.

c. Add the following to your Key Word Bookmark; then read Psalm 5 and mark key words.

1) *wickedness, evil, transgression, like sin**

2) *lovingkindness*

d. Now add what this psalm says about the Lord to your list in the Appendix.

Also, briefly list below what you learn about David's foes, those involved in various kinds of wickedness.

e. As you evaluate what you marked in each stanza, use the main characters and/or key repeated words to help you write a theme for each.

1) 1-3

2) 4-7

3) 8-10

4) 11-12

- f. Record a theme for Psalm 5 on your At a Glance chart using a few words from the text.
- g. Let's think through the psalm together.
 - 1) Look at the first word in verse 4. How does the second stanza relate to the first?
 - 2) What can you learn from the description of David's foes in verses 4-10 to help you deal with your foes or enemies?
 - 3) Who is the last stanza mostly about?
 - a) What does David want them to do, and what is their relationship to the Lord?
 - b) In verse 12, what do you observe about God that should cause you to exult in Him?

**LIVING
IT OUT**

In the midst of our circumstances there is always the Word of the Lord, the message of truth, for your life. This is the final bullet in our general pattern for studying a psalm.

1. Use the lists you made from Psalm 1 about the righteous and the wicked to examine your life. Which one describes you? Think carefully, precious one.

2. Using your list about the Lord, review what David knew about God. Do you know Him like David?

3. Go back and look at where you marked “blessed” in Psalms 1, 2, 3, and 5. How does your life fit with the descriptions of the one God blesses?

O Beloved, do you exult in the Lord? Do you sing for joy to the one who is your refuge? Take time to exult in Him now for who He is. You’ve learned or been reminded of so much about Him this week!

PSALM 1

Observation Worksheet

Psalm Theme _____

HOW blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked,

Nor stand in the path of sinners,

Nor sit in the seat of scoffers!

2 But his delight is in the law of the LORD,

And in His law he meditates day and night.

3 He will be like a tree *firmly* planted by streams of water,

Which yields its fruit in its season

And its leaf does not wither;

And in whatever he does, he prospers.

4 The wicked are not so,

But they are like chaff which the wind drives away.

5 Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment,

Nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous.

6 For the LORD knows the way of the righteous,

But the way of the wicked will perish.

PSALM 2

Observation Worksheet

Psalm Theme _____

WHY are the nations in an uproar

And the peoples devising a vain thing?

2 The kings of the earth take their stand

And the rulers take counsel together

Against the LORD and against His Anointed, saying,

3 “Let us tear their fetters apart

And cast away their cords from us!”

4 He who sits in the heavens laughs,

The Lord scoffs at them.

5 Then He will speak to them in His anger

And terrify them in His fury, saying,

6 “But as for Me, I have installed My King

Upon Zion, My holy mountain.”

7 “I will surely tell of the decree of the LORD:

He said to Me, ‘You are My Son,

Today I have begotten You.

8 ‘Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Your inheritance,

And the *very* ends of the earth as Your possession.

9 ‘You shall break them with a rod of iron,

You shall shatter them like earthenware.’ ”

10 Now therefore, O kings, show discernment;

Take warning, O judges of the earth.

11 Worship the LORD with reverence

And rejoice with trembling.

- 12 Do homage to the Son, that He not become angry, and you perish *in*
the way,
For His wrath may soon be kindled.
How blessed are all who take refuge in Him!

PSALM 3

Observation Worksheet

Psalm Theme _____

A Psalm of David, when he ¹fled from Absalom his son.

O LORD, how my adversaries have increased!

Many are rising up against me.

2 Many are saying of my soul,

“There is no deliverance for him in God.”

²Selah.

3 But You, O LORD, are a shield about me,
My glory, and the One who lifts my head.

4 I was crying to the LORD with my voice,
And He answered me from His holy mountain.

Selah.

5 I lay down and slept;
I awoke, for the LORD sustains me.

6 I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people
Who have set themselves against me round about.

7 Arise, O LORD; save me, O my God!
For You have smitten all my enemies on the cheek;
You have shattered the teeth of the wicked.

8 Salvation belongs to the LORD;
Your blessing *be* upon Your people!

Selah.

¹2 Samuel 15:13-17, 29

²*Selah* may mean: *Pause, Crescendo or Musical interlude*

PSALM 4

Observation Worksheet

Psalm Theme _____

For the choir director; on stringed instruments. A Psalm of David.

ANSWER me when I call, O God of my righteousness!

You have relieved me in my distress;
Be gracious to me and hear my prayer.

- 2** O sons of men, how long will my honor become a reproach?
How long will you love what is worthless and aim at deception? Selah.
- 3** But know that the LORD has set apart the godly man for Himself;
The LORD hears when I call to Him.
- 4** Tremble, and do not sin;
Meditate in your heart upon your bed, and be still. Selah.
- 5** Offer the sacrifices of righteousness,
And trust in the LORD.
- 6** Many are saying, “Who will show us *any* good?”
Lift up the light of Your countenance upon us, O LORD!
- 7** You have put gladness in my heart,
More than when their grain and new wine abound.
- 8** In peace I will both lie down and sleep,
For You alone, O LORD, make me to dwell in safety.

PSALM 5

Observation Worksheet

Psalm Theme _____

For the choir director; for flute accompaniment. A Psalm of David.

GIVE ear to my words, O LORD,

- Consider my groaning.
- 2 Heed the sound of my cry for help, my King and my God,
For to You I pray.
- 3 In the morning, O LORD, You will hear my voice;
In the morning I will order *my prayer* to You and *eagerly* watch.
- 4 For You are not a God who takes pleasure in wickedness;
No evil dwells with You.
- 5 The boastful shall not stand before Your eyes;
You hate all who do iniquity.
- 6 You destroy those who speak falsehood;
The LORD abhors the man of bloodshed and deceit.
- 7 But as for me, by Your abundant lovingkindness I will enter Your house,
At Your holy temple I will bow in reverence for You.
- 8 O LORD, lead me in Your righteousness because of my foes;
Make Your way straight before me.
- 9 There is nothing reliable in what they say;
Their inward part is destruction *itself*.
Their throat is an open grave;
They flatter with their tongue.

- 10 Hold them guilty, O God;
By their own devices let them fall!
In the multitude of their transgressions thrust them out,
For they are rebellious against You.
- 11 But let all who take refuge in You be glad,
Let them ever sing for joy;
And may You shelter them,
That those who love Your name may exult in You.
- 12 For it is You who blesses the righteous man, O LORD,
You surround him with favor as with a shield.

PSALMS 1–22 AT A GLANCE

Book Theme:

Author:

Psalm Themes

Key Words:

1	
2	
3	
4	
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Psalm Themes

12
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THE LORD

