

Book One

THE "GENESIS" PSALMS

Psalm 1

The Tree of Life^a



¹Overflowing joy comes to those
 Who follow God's ways!^b
 They won't walk in step with the wicked
 Nor share the sinner's way,
 Or be found sitting in the scorner's seat.
²Their pleasure and passion is remaining true
 To the Word of "I Am,"
 Meditating each and every moment
 In the revelation of light.
³They will be standing firm
 Like a flourishing tree planted by God's design,
 Deeply rooted by the brooks of bliss,
 Bearing fruit in every season of their lives.
 They are never dry, never fainting,
 Ever blessed, ever plentiful.
 What indescribable joy!
⁴But how different are the wicked.
 All they are is dust blown in the wind—
 Driven away to destruction!
⁵The wicked will not endure on the day of judgment,
 For God will not defend them.
 Nothing they do will succeed or endure for long.
 For they have no part with those who walk in truth,
⁶But how different it is for the lovers of God!
 The Lord watches over them as they move forward
 While the paths of the godless lead only to doom.

a. 1:1 Title Although we cannot be for sure, it is possible that Ezra compiled the Psalms and wrote Psalm 1 as an "introduction" to the Psalter. Some believe it was written by David, or even Jeremiah.

b. 1:1 The Hebrew text is actually "that One," and refers prophetically to the Lord Jesus Christ, our Tree of Life. Every one of us who belong to "that One" can also walk in the light of this psalm.

Psalm 2

The Drama of the Nations



Act I: The Nations Speak

¹How dare the nations plan a rebellion,
Ranting and raging against the Lord Most High?
Their foolish plots are futile!

²Look at how the kings of the earth^a
Rise up to hold their summit,
Scheming and conferring together

Against God and His Anointed King, saying:

³“Let’s come together and break away from the Creator,
Once and for all let’s cast off these controlling chains
Of God and His Christ!”^b

Act II: God Speaks

⁴God-Enthroned merely laughs at them;
Amused at all their puny plans, mocking their madness!
⁵Then with the fierceness of His fiery anger He settles the issue,
And terrifies them to death with these words:

⁶“I have poured out My King on Zion, My Holy Mountain.^c
You had better listen to the One that I have chosen!”

Act III: The Son Speaks

⁷“I will reveal the eternal purpose of God.
For He has decreed over Me, ‘You are My favored Son.
And as Your Father I have crowned You as My King Eternal.
Today I have given You glory!

⁸Ask Me to give You the nations and I will do it,
And they shall become Your legacy.

Your domain will stretch to the ends of the earth.
⁹And You will rule over them with unlimited authority,
Crushing their rebellion like
An iron rod smashing jars of clay!”

a. 2:2 Or “kings.”

b. 2:3 The word found here for “Christ” is the Hebrew word for “Messiah,” or “anointed one.”

c. 2:6 For the believer today, Zion is not only a place, but also a realm where Christ is enthroned. Jesus was “poured out” as an offering on our behalf.

Act IV – The Holy Spirit Speaks

¹⁰“Listen to Me, all you rebel-kings
And all you upstart rulers of this earth!
Learn your lesson while there’s still time.
¹¹Serve and worship the awe-inspiring God.
Recognize His greatness and bow before Him,
Trembling with reverence in His presence.
¹²Fall face down before Him and kiss the feet of His Son
Before His anger is roused against you.
Remember that His wrath can be quickly kindled!
But many blessings are waiting for all
Who turn aside to hide themselves in Him!”

Psalm 3

Covered by the Glory



*King David's song when he was forced to flee from Absalom,
his own son.*

¹Lord, I have so many enemies;
So many who are against me.

²Listen to how they whisper their slander against me, saying:
"Look! He's hopeless! Even God can't save him from this!"

Pause in His presence^a

³But in the depths of my heart I truly know
That You have become my Shield;
You take me and surround me with Yourself.^b
Your glory covers me continually. You alone restore my courage;
For You lift high my head when I bow low in shame.

⁴I have cried out to You
And from Your holy presence
You send me a Father's help.

Pause in His presence

⁵So now I'll lie down and go to sleep—
And I'll awake in safety, for You surround me with Your glory.

⁶Even though dark powers prowl around me,
With their words like sharp arrows, yet I won't be afraid.

⁷I simply cry out to You:
"Rise up and help me, Lord! Come and save me!"
And You will slap them in the face,
Breaking the power of their words to harm me!

⁸My true Hero comes to my rescue, for the Lord alone is my Savior.^c
What a feast of favor and bliss He gives His people!

Pause in His presence

a. 3:2 This is the Hebrew word *Selah*, a puzzling word to translate. Most scholars believe it is a musical term for pause or rest. It is used a total of seventy-one times in the Psalms as an instruction to the music leader to pause and ponder in God's presence. An almost identical word, *Sela*, means "a massive rock cliff." It is said that when *Selah* is spoken, the words are carved in stone in the throne room of the heavens.

b. 3:3 Many translations render this: "You are a shield around me." The ancient Hebrew can be translated: "You, O Lord, are my Taker." The implication is that God shields us by taking us into Himself. Jesus Christ is the "Taker" of humanity, the One who was made flesh. He not only took our nature but He took also our sins.

c. 3:8 The Hebrew word used in this verse for deliverance is actually *Yeshuah*, a variant form of the name "Jesus." This is pointing us to where our salvation is found.

Psalm 4

An Evening Prayer for Help



*For the Pure and Shining One.^a
For the end,^b a melody by King David.*

¹God, You're my righteousness, my Champion Defender,
Why aren't You answering me when I cry for help?
Whenever I was in distress, You've always inspired me.
I'm being squeezed again—I need Your kindness right away.
Hear my prayer and set me free!

²Listen to me, all of you who think you are great—
How long will you obscure my glory
And drag it down into shame? Will you ever stop insulting me?
How long will you set your heart on shadows,
Chasing your lies and delusions?

Pause in His presence

³May you never forget that the Lord works wonders
For every one of His chosen lovers.

And this is how I know that He will answer my every prayer.

⁴Tremble in awe before the Lord and you will not sin against Him.
Be still upon your bed and look deep into your heart.

Pause in His presence

⁵Bring your gifts just as you are and put your trust in Him.

⁶Lord, prove them wrong when they say, "God can't help you!"

Let the light of Your radiant face
Break through and shine down upon us!

⁷The intense pleasure You give me
Surpasses the gladness of harvest time
Even more than when the harvesters gaze upon their ripened grain,
And when their new wine overflows!

⁸Now I can lay down in peace and sleep comes at once,
For no matter what happens,
I will live unafraid!

a. 4:Title The Hebrew word used here, usually rendered as "choirmaster," is actually taken from the root word for "shining," or "brilliant" (i.e. purity, holiness).

b. 4:Title As translated from the Septuagint. The Hebrew is "stringed instruments," "smiting," or "striking."

Psalm 5

Song of the Clouded Dawn



*For the Pure and Shining One,
for her who receives the inheritance.^a
By King David.*

¹Listen to my passionate prayer!
Can't You hear my groaning?
²Don't You hear how I'm crying out to You?
My King and my God, consider my every word,
For I am calling out to You.
³At each and every sunrise You will hear my voice
As I prepare my sacrifice of prayer to You.
Every morning I lay out the pieces of my life on the altar
And wait for Your fire to fall upon my heart.^b
⁴I know that You, God,
Are never pleased with lawlessness,
And evil ones will never be invited
As guests in Your house.
⁵Boasters collapse, unable to survive Your scrutiny,
For Your hatred of evildoers is clear.
⁶You will make an end of all those who lie.
How You hate their hypocrisy
And despise all who love violence!
⁷But I know the way back home,
And I know that You will welcome me
Into Your house,
For I am covered by
Your covenant of mercy and love.
So I come to Your sanctuary with deepest awe,
To bow in worship and adore You.
⁸Lord, lead me in the pathways of Your pleasure,

a. 5: Title The Hebrew word used here is *Neliloth*, or "flutes." It can also be translated "inheritances." The early church father, Augustine, translated this: "For her who receives the inheritance," meaning the church of Jesus Christ. God the Father told the Son in Psalm 2 to ask for His inheritance; here we see it is the church that receives what Jesus asks for. We receive our inheritance of eternal life through the cross and resurrection of the Son of God. The Septuagint reads "For the end," also found in numerous inscriptions of the Psalms.

b. 5:3 Implied in the concept of preparing the morning sacrifice. The Aramaic text states, "At dawn I shall be ready and shall appear before You."

Just like You promised me You would,
Or else my enemies will conquer me.
Smooth out Your road in front of me,
Straight and level so that I will know where to walk.
⁹For you can't trust anything they say.
Their hearts are nothing but deep pits of destruction,
Drawing people into their darkness with their speeches.
They are smooth-tongued deceivers
Who flatter with their words!
¹⁰Declare them guilty, O God!
Let their own schemes be their downfall!
Let the guilt of their sins collapse on top of them,
For they rebel against You.
¹¹But let them all be glad,
Those who turn aside to hide themselves in You,
May they keep shouting for joy forever!
Overshadow them in Your presence
As they sing and rejoice,
Then every lover of Your name
Will burst forth with endless joy.
¹²Lord, how wonderfully You bless the righteous.
Your favor wraps around each one and
Covers them
Under Your canopy of kindness and joy.