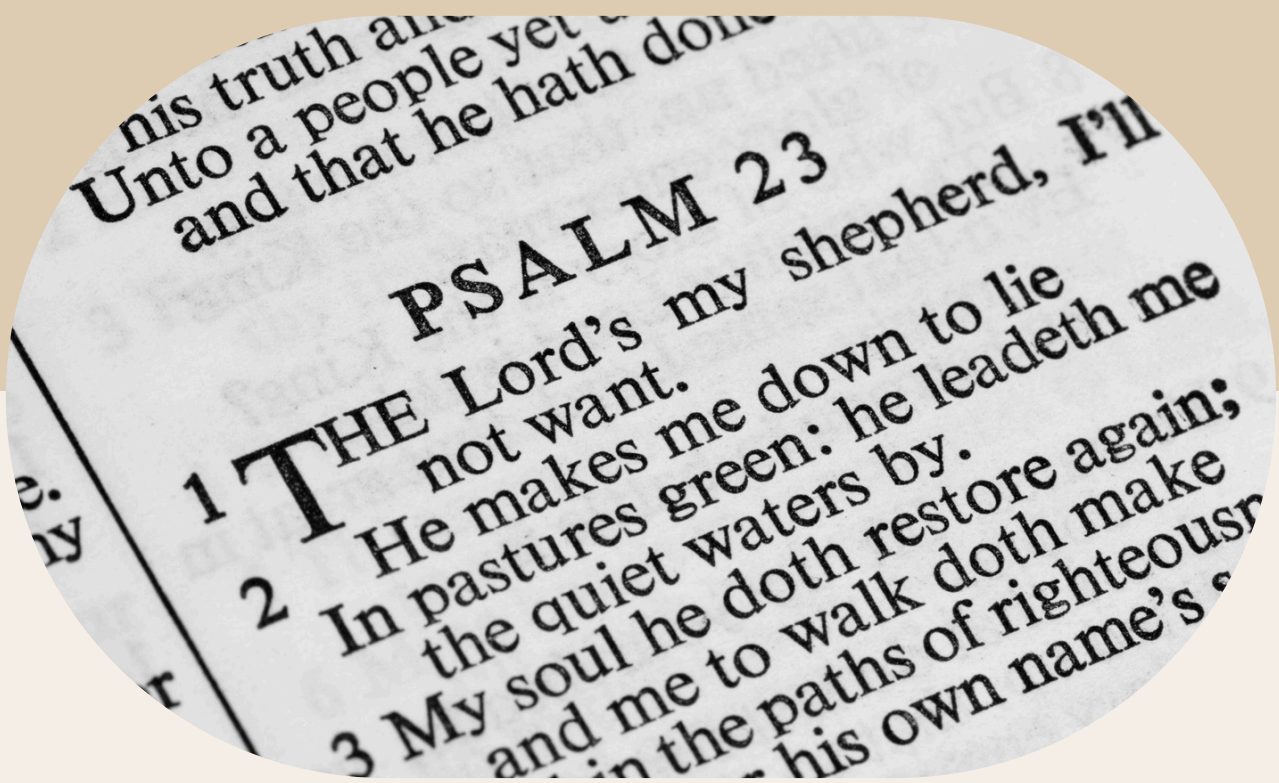


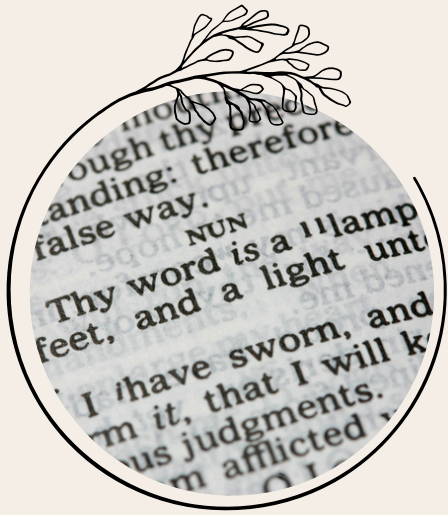


PRAYING THROUGH THE PSALMS

SHAPING OUR PRAYERS ON
THE PSALMISTS



A JOURNEY THROUGH PSALMS



PRAYING THROUGH PSALMS

Welcome to Your Prayer Journey Through Psalms

The Book of Psalms has been called the prayer book of the Bible. For thousands of years, believers have turned to these inspired words to express the full range of human emotions to God—from joy and thanksgiving to lament and petition. This 30-day prayer guide will take you through selected psalms that represent different types of prayer and emotional expressions. Each day includes:

- A selected psalm or psalm excerpt
- A brief reflection on the psalm's meaning and context
- A prayer template based on the psalm's themes
- Space for your personal notes and reflections

As you journey through this guide, allow the ancient words of the psalmists to shape your own prayers. Their honesty, devotion, and faith can teach us much about communicating with God authentically.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

- Begin each day by reading the selected psalm slowly and meditatively.
- Consider the reflection to help understand the psalm's context and meaning.
- Use the prayer template as a starting point for your own prayer.
- Record your thoughts, insights, and prayers in the notes section.

Psalm 8

The Majesty of God

8 O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens.

2 Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger.

3 When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained;

4 What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?

5 For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour.

6 Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet:

7 All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field;

8 The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas.

9 O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!

Reflection:

Psalm 8 is a psalm of praise that marvels at God's majesty as displayed in creation and His care for humanity. David begins and ends with the same declaration of God's majesty, creating a frame for his meditation on the wonders of creation and humanity's place within it.

In this psalm, David expresses awe at the paradox that the God who created the vast cosmos also cares deeply for humans. Despite our relative smallness in the universe, God has given us a place of honour in creation. This reveals both God's greatness and His loving attention to us.

Beginning our prayer journey with praise helps us approach God with the right perspective –recognising His greatness before presenting our concerns.

Prayer Template:

O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! I praise you for.....
When I look at your creation, I am amazed by.....
Thank you for caring for me despite my smallness in your vast universe. I am grateful that you.....
Help me to steward well the responsibilities you have given me over.....
Today, I declare again: O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!



Psalm 19

God's Perfect Revelation

- ⁷ *The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.*
- ⁸ *The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes.*
- ⁹ *The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.*
- ¹⁰ *More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.*
- ¹¹ *Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward.*
- ¹² *Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults.*
- ¹³ *Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression.*
- ¹⁴ *Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer.*

Reflection:

Psalm 19 begins by declaring how God reveals Himself through creation, then transitions to how He reveals Himself more specifically through His Word. The psalmist celebrates the perfection and value of God's instructions, describing them with six different terms: law, testimony, precepts, commandment, fear, and rules.

This psalm teaches us that God's Word is not restrictive but life-giving. It revives the soul, brings wisdom, creates joy, enlightens the eyes, and provides warning and reward. The psalmist recognises that God's guidance is precious—more valuable than gold and sweeter than honey.

The psalm concludes with a prayer for personal holiness and acceptable worship, showing that encountering God's revelation should lead us to self-examination and desire for righteousness.

Prayer Template:

Lord, I thank you for how you reveal yourself through your Word. Specifically, I am grateful that your Word.....

Help me to value your instructions more than.....

Show me my hidden faults, especially.....

Keep me from presumptuous sins, particularly when I.....

Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight today as I.....

O LORD, you are my rock and my redeemer.



Psalm 23

The Divine Shepherd

23 *The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.
2 He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still
waters.
3 He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his
name's sake.
4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil:
for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.
5 Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou
anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.
6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will
dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.*

Reflection:

Perhaps the most beloved psalm, Psalm 23 uses the metaphor of a shepherd caring for his sheep to illustrate God's tender care for His people. In the ancient world, a good shepherd would risk his life to protect his flock, find nourishment for them, and guide them safely through dangerous territory.

Notice how the psalm shifts from speaking about God ("He leads me") to speaking to God ("for you are with me") at the moment when the psalmist mentions walking through the valley of the shadow of death. This intimate conversation reflects how we often turn directly to God in our darkest moments.

The psalm concludes with images of abundance, protection, and permanence. The shepherd becomes a host who prepares a feast, and the sheep becomes an honored guest who will dwell in God's house forever.

Prayer Template:

Lord, you are my shepherd. Today I need you to provide for my needs in.....
Lead me beside still waters when I feel anxious about.....
Restore my soul, especially in the area of.....
Guide me in paths of righteousness as I make decisions about.....
I am walking through a valley of shadow in regard to..... but I will fear no evil
because you are with me.
Thank you for preparing abundance for me even when facing opposition in.....
I trust that your goodness and mercy will follow me today as I.....



Psalm 51

A Prayer of Repentance

51 Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.
2 Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.
3 For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me.
4 Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest.
5 Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.
6 Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom.
7 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.
8 Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice.
9 Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities.
10 Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.
11 Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me.
12 Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit.

Reflection:

Psalm 51 is David's prayer of repentance after he committed adultery with Bathsheba and arranged for her husband's death. It is one of the most profound expressions of confession and repentance in Scripture, teaching us how to approach God when we have sinned.

David does not minimise his sin or make excuses. Instead, he acknowledges the depth of his transgressions and appeals to God's mercy. He recognises that his sin is fundamentally against God, even though others were harmed.

Notice that David asks not only for forgiveness of past sins but for transformation—a clean heart and a right spirit. He desires restoration not just of his standing before God but of his joy in relationship with God.

Prayer Template:

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love. I confess that I have...
I acknowledge my transgressions, especially.....
I recognise that my sin is against you, though it has also affected.....
Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity. I particularly feel unclean about.....
Create in me a clean heart, O God, especially regarding my attitudes toward.....
Renew a right spirit within me when I am tempted to.....
Restore to me the joy of your salvation that I lost when.....
Uphold me with a willing spirit so that I can.....



Psalm 42

Longing for God in Trouble

*42 As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God.
2 My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before
God?
3 My tears have been my meat day and night, while they continually say unto me, Where
is thy God?
4 When I remember these things, I pour out my soul in me: for I had gone with the
multitude, I went with them to the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise, with a
multitude that kept holyday.
5 Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? hope thou in
God: for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance.
6 O my God, my soul is cast down within me: therefore will I remember thee from the
land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites, from the hill Mizar.
7 Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts: all thy waves and thy billows
are gone over me.
8 Yet the Lord will command his lovingkindness in the day time, and in the night his song
shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life.
9 I will say unto God my rock, Why hast thou forgotten me? why go I mourning because
of the oppression of the enemy?
10 As with a sword in my bones, mine enemies reproach me; while they say daily unto
me, Where is thy God?
11 Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope
thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my
God.*

Reflection:

Psalm 42 gives voice to the experience of spiritual drought and depression. The psalmist expresses deep longing for God's presence while feeling distant from Him. This psalm teaches us that it's permissible to express our spiritual desperation to God. Notice how the psalmist speaks to his own soul, challenging his negative emotions with the truth about God. This practice of self-talk grounded in truth is a vital spiritual discipline when facing discouragement. Even while expressing despair, the psalmist remembers better days and holds onto hope. He recalls God's past faithfulness and anchors his expectation of future deliverance in God's character, not his present circumstances.

Prayer Template:

O God, my soul thirsts for you because.....
I feel distant from you when.....
My tears have been my food day and night as I've struggled with.....
I remember times when I felt closer to you, especially when.....
My soul is cast down within me because.....
I feel overwhelmed by circumstances that.....
Yet I choose to remember your steadfast love, particularly how you've shown it by...
Why are you cast down, O my soul? Hope in God, for I shall again praise him when...



Psalm 103

The Blessings of God

*103 Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name.
2 Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits:
3 Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases;
4 Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and
tender mercies;
5 Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the
eagle's.
6 The Lord executeth righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed.
7 He made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel.
8 The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy.
9 He will not always chide: neither will he keep his anger for ever.
10 He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.
11 For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear
him.
12 As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.
13 Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him.
14 For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust.*

Reflection:

Psalm 103 is a psalm of thanksgiving that calls us to remember and enumerate God's benefits. David begins by commanding his own soul to praise God—showing that gratitude sometimes requires intentional self-direction rather than spontaneous feeling.

The psalm lists specific reasons to thank God: forgiveness, healing, redemption, love, satisfaction, justice, and more. This teaches us to be specific in our thanksgiving rather than general.

David also highlights God's compassion, comparing Him to a father who understands his children's weaknesses. This reminds us that God's grace toward us takes into account our humanity and limitations.

Prayer Template:

Bless the LORD, O my soul! Today I specifically praise you for.....
Thank you for forgiving my iniquity, especially.....
I praise you for healing in the area of.....
You have redeemed my life from the pit when.....
You have crowned me with steadfast love and mercy by.....
You have satisfied me with good things such as.....
Thank you for being slow to anger when I...
I am grateful that you have removed my transgressions as far as the east is from the west,
particularly.....
Thank you for showing compassion to me, knowing my weaknesses in.....



Psalm 91

Divine Protection

- ⁹ Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation;*
- ¹⁰ There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.*
- ¹¹ For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.*
- ¹² They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.*
- ¹³ Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder: the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet.*
- ¹⁴ Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known my name.*
- ¹⁵ He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him.*
- ¹⁶ With long life will I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation.*

Reflection:

Psalm 91 is a powerful psalm of protection that assures those who trust in God of His care in times of danger. It uses rich imagery—a shelter, a shadow, wings, a shield—to describe how God protects His people.

The psalm doesn't promise that believers will never face dangers or difficulties, but rather that God will be present with them through these times. It emphasizes that spiritual protection comes from making God your dwelling place—living in consistent relationship with Him.

The conclusion of the psalm presents God's own voice promising to rescue, protect, answer, deliver, honor, and satisfy those who love Him and acknowledge His name. This reminds us that our protection is rooted in relationship, not ritual. ward us takes into account our humanity and limitations.

Prayer Template:

LORD, you are my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust. Today I particularly seek your protection from.....

Save me from hidden dangers such as.....

I find refuge under your wings when I face.....

Help me not to fear..... (name specific fears)

I make you my dwelling place by...

I ask for your angelic protection as I.....

I call on you today regarding..... and I trust you will answer.

Be with me in the trouble I face with.....

Show me your salvation in the situation of.....



Psalm 82

God's Judgment on Unjust Rulers

*82 God standeth in the congregation of the mighty; he judgeth among the gods.
2 How long will ye judge unjustly, and accept the persons of the wicked? Selah.
3 Defend the poor and fatherless: do justice to the afflicted and needy.
4 Deliver the poor and needy: rid them out of the hand of the wicked.
5 They know not, neither will they understand; they walk on in darkness: all the foundations of the earth are out of course.
6 I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High.
7 But ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes.
8 Arise, O God, judge the earth: for thou shalt inherit all nations.*

Reflection:

Psalm 82 is a powerful prayer for justice that portrays God holding court and calling earthly authorities to account. The "gods" mentioned are likely human judges and rulers who were given authority to represent God's justice but failed to do so.

This psalm reminds us that God is deeply concerned with how the vulnerable—the weak, fatherless, afflicted, destitute, and needy—are treated. He expects those with power to use it to protect those without power.

The psalm concludes with a plea for God himself to arise and judge the earth, recognising that when human justice fails, divine justice remains our hope. This teaches us to pray not only for specific injustices but for God's ultimate judgment to set all things right.

Prayer Template:

O God who judges justly, I pray about the injustice of.....
I see the weak and fatherless suffering through.....
The afflicted and destitute need your help with.....
Please rescue the weak and needy from.....
I pray for those in authority who.....
Show me where I have been unjust or partial in.....
Give me courage to stand for justice in the situation of.....
Arise, O God, and judge the earth, especially regarding.....



Remaining Days in your Prayer Journey through the Psalms

The following days will guide you through other important types of prayers found in the Psalms. Each of these days follows the same format as Days 1-8, with the selected psalm, reflection, prayer template, and space for your notes.

Day 9: Waiting on God - Psalm 27

Day 10: Praising God's Creation - Psalm 104

Day 11: Finding Joy in God - Psalm 16

Day 12: Confessing National Sins - Psalm 106

Day 13: Meditating on God's Word - Psalm 119:1-24

Day 14: Expressing Deep Lament - Psalm 88

Day 15: Celebrating God's Salvation - Psalm 118

Day 16: Declaring God's Faithfulness - Psalm 136

Day 17: Seeking God's Wisdom - Psalm 73

Day 18: Recognising God's Omnipresence - Psalm 139

Day 19: Expressing Confidence in God - Psalm 46

Day 20: Longing for God's Presence - Psalm 84

Day 21: Praying in Persecution - Psalm 56

Day 22: Seeking God's Face - Psalm 63

Day 23: Celebrating God's Kingdom - Psalm 145



Remaining Days in your Prayer Journey through the Psalms

Each of these days follows the same format as Days 1-8, with the selected psalm, reflection, prayer template, and space for your notes.

Day 24: Praying with Tears - Psalm 6

Day 25: Worshiping God's Holiness - Psalm 99

Day 26: Thirsting for God - Psalm 63

Day 27: Crying Out for Mercy - Psalm 130

Day 28: Praising God in Community - Psalm 122

Day 29: Acknowledging God's Sovereignty - Psalm 93

Day 30: Final Praise - Psalm 150

Concluding Your Prayer Journey

As you complete this 30-day journey through the Psalms, take time to reflect on how your prayer life has been enriched. The Psalms teach us that prayer can be honest, emotional, reverent, and intimate all at once.

Consider which psalm types resonated most with you. Was it the psalms of praise, lament, thanksgiving, or petition? This may indicate the prayer language that feels most natural to you, though we should cultivate all these aspects of prayer.

Remember that this journey doesn't need to end after 30 days.

You might choose to:

- Return to favourite psalms for deeper exploration
- Continue working through more psalms beyond those included here
- Incorporate psalmic language into your regular prayers
- Memorise portions of psalms that particularly spoke to you

The goal of this prayer journey has been not just to pray through the psalms but to learn from them how to pray—with honesty, faith, and a deep awareness of God's character and presence.

