

## Why Read the Psalms?

In the One Year Bible there is a Psalm for the day included in each day's reading. Since it is placed at the end of the daily section, sadly we might be tempted to read it quickly and move on with our day. So the question is....."why read the Psalms?" How do we read the Psalms? How can they speak to your heart? Why did God record someone else's inner thoughts and struggles in His Bible? Questions drive us to discovery. Let's explore the answers.

1. They teach us how to praise God, how to revere Him. They teach us to be in awe of our great God, the one who made the heavens and the earth. Psalm 19:1 exclaims, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork." Maybe you have vaguely thought this was true, but Psalm 19 gives us words to express this.  
Psalm 111:1-10, Psalm 104, Psalm 92 and so many more take us to places of praise and thankfulness that we don't normally travel----the Psalms expand our horizons of God. Each time you read.....let your heart and mind form pictures, fall on your knees and speak the words as your own.
2. David was a man after God's own heart. The Psalms that he wrote take us *inside* his thoughts and emotions as he struggled with fear and discouragement and loneliness. David did not live in a Holy Bubble. He lived in an unfair, confusing, broken world ----just like us. Just like us he sometimes failed. He was sometimes overwhelmed. He sometimes had to wait for answers and solutions. If you think you are the only one with inner struggles, you are not. But then, David also teaches us that we do not need to struggle alone. He honestly took his thoughts to God. And so should we.
3. The Psalms teach us about the secret, "*you alone with God*" relationship. "He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." <sup>2</sup>I will say of the LORD, "*He is my refuge and my fortress; My God, in Him I will trust.*" Psalm 91. Psalm 84:10 "For a day in Your courts is better than a thousand. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of wickedness." There are Psalms that talk about God, and there are some that talk *to Him*.
4. Trust, trust, trust is a reoccurring theme. Faith and fear are opposites. Psalm 37:8b "Do not fret---it only causes harm." Psalm 33:20 "Our soul waits for the LORD; He is our help and our shield." Psalm 55:22 "Cast your burden on the Lord, and He shall sustain you; He shall never permit the righteous to be moved." "Yea, though I walk in the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil for You are with me:" Psalm 23:4a
5. Do you truly know how important you are to God? You are not an orphan. He loves you with an everlasting love, "*How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God! How great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they would be more in number than the sand; when I awake, I am still with YOU.*" Ps. 139:17-18. "*Who (the Lord) redeems your life from destruction, who crowns you with loving kindness and tender mercies, who satisfies your mouth with good things so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.*" Ps. 103:4-5
6. The Psalms are instructional, they teach us to be right with God and to walk straight in this life. Psalm 86:11, "Teach me Your way, O Lord; I will walk in Your truth; unite my heart to fear Your name."  
Psalm 1: "Blessed is the man  
Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly,  
Nor stands in the path of sinners,  
Nor sits in the seat of the scornful;  
<sup>2</sup> But his delight is in the law of the LORD,

And in His law he meditates day and night.

<sup>3</sup>He shall be like a tree

Planted by the rivers of water,

That brings forth its fruit in its season,

Whose leaf also shall not wither;

And whatever he does shall prosper.

Why should we read the Psalms? They teach to speak the language of Heaven. If you were learning French, you would learn by reading, listening and then speaking. Listen, you will hear God's voice. Let the words form pictures that expand your horizons and take you higher and deeper. Then speak, use new words---spiritual words---to pour out your heart, seeking His wisdom and comfort and help. Lastly, use your new vocabulary to thank Him and praise Him for all that He is and does. "As the deer pants for the water brook, so pants my soul for **You**, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God?"

Psalm 42:1-2