

# READING PSALMS AND SEEING CHRIST — PSALM 1

## INTRODUCTION

What is the relationship between Jesus and the Book of Psalms?

John 5:39–40

*[39] You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me, [40] yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life.*

Luke 24:44

*Then he said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets **and the Psalms** must be fulfilled.”*

“...a full understanding of the Christ-focus of the Psalms must understand what these 150 poems are—namely, the heart-cries of God’s covenant people. They cry to him for forgiveness (Psalms 32; 51; 130), out of lament (Psalms 12; 13), with praise (Psalms 8; 93; 145), with thanksgiving (Psalms 9; 106; 138), to exult in God’s law (Psalms 19; 119), to express confidence (Psalm 23), and to recount the merciful dealings of God with his people throughout Israel’s history (Psalms 78; 107).

“In all these ways we see the hearts of God’s people laid bare before him in song. Yet as believers on this side of the first coming of Christ, we must understand that Christ fulfilled all such cries to God. *Jesus is God’s definitive answer to the cries of his people.* Jesus provides the forgiveness cried out for. Jesus underwent the ultimate lament, crying out as he was forsaken by the Father on the cross, so that we need not lament separation from God. Jesus’ substitutionary work gives us supreme reason to praise God and to thank him. Jesus perfectly lived out God’s law so that we law-breakers can be exonerated freely and then changed from the inside out so that we can delight in God’s law truly. Looking to Jesus, we have full cause for confidence in God; if God did not spare his own Son, what can we ever possibly lack (Rom. 8:32)? And Jesus is himself the fulfillment of all God’s ways with his people in our space-and-time history.” —**Bruce A. Ware**, *The Gospel in Psalms*

## PSALMS 1 & 2

Although each Psalm was written individually, the Book of Psalms was put together the way it is purposefully.

Psalms 1 and 2 set the tone for the entire Book of Psalms as it depicts the **RIGHTEOUS** (Psalm 1) **KING** (Psalm 2).

- Psalm 1 describes a person who is exceedingly righteous
- Psalm 2 describes a king who will rule over all other kings
- When you put Psalms 1 and 2 together, whom are these Psalms talking about?

Psalms 1 and 2 call us to trust this Righteous King as we seek to pattern our lives after his life.

### PSALM 1:1-3—THE WAY OF THE RIGHTEOUS

*[1] Blessed is the man  
who walks not in the counsel of the wicked,  
nor stands in the way of sinners,  
nor sits in the seat of scoffers;  
[2] but his delight is in the law of the LORD,  
and on his law he meditates day and night.*

*[3] He is like a tree  
planted by streams of water  
that yields its fruit in its season,  
and its leaf does not wither.  
In all that he does, he prospers.*

Psalm 1 is not a recipe to be blessed, but a description of the one who is blessed.

- Way of the righteous, not the way that leads to righteousness
- Blessed = great happiness
- **Luke 6:45**—*The good person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure produces evil, for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.*

Notice the progression in verse 1: walks...stands...sits...

- Downward spiral
- The path of wickedness is often very subtle

The contrast between the righteous and the wicked is related to how the righteous views the law of God.

- Law of God = Torah = The instruction of God
- Delights
- Meditates
- Day and night
- **James 2:10**—*For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it.*
- **Matthew 11:29–30**: [29] *Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. [30] For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.*

In verse 2, the righteous person is described as:

- Firm
- Purposeful
- Prosperous

Jeremiah 17:7–8: [7]

*“Blessed is the man who **trusts** in the LORD, whose trust is the LORD. [8] He is like a tree planted by water, that sends out its roots by the stream, and does not fear when heat comes, for its leaves remain green, and is not anxious in the year of drought, for it does not cease to bear fruit.”*

Psalm 1 calls us to

- **PLACE OUR FAITH** in the Righteous One
- **MODEL OUR LIVES** after the Righteous One

## PSALM 1:4-5—THE WAY OF THE WICKED

*[4] The wicked are not so,  
but are like chaff that the wind drives away.*

*[5] Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment,  
nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous;*

The wicked is compared chaff, the part of a plant that is discarded, unlike the righteous who is like a healthy tree.

The wicked here, ultimately stands as a contrast to Christ

- **Matthew 28:20b**—*And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.*”
- **Hebrews 4:15**—For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.
- **Hebrews 13:8**—*Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.*

The consequences of embracing a wicked lifestyle is:

- Judgment
- Separation
- **Matthew 7:21–23**—*“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. [22] On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’ [23] And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’”*

Psalm 1 calls us to

- **NOT PUT OUR HOPES** in what the wicked offers
- **DISTANCE OURSELVES** from the influence of the wicked

## PSALM 1:6—A PROMISE AND A WARNING

*[6] for the LORD knows the way of the righteous,  
but the way of the wicked will perish.*

There are only two ways to live

Proverbs 8:34–36

*[34] Blessed is the one who listens to me [WISDOM],  
watching daily at my gates,  
waiting beside my doors.*

*[35] For whoever finds me finds life  
and obtains favor from the LORD,*

*[36] but he who fails to find me injures himself;  
all who hate me love death.”*

1 Corinthians 1:22–24

*[22] For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, [23] but we  
preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles,  
[24] but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the  
power of God and the wisdom of God.*

Matthew 7:13–14

*[13] “Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy  
that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. [14] For  
the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who  
find it are few.*

John 10:9a

*[9a] I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved...*