

# The Psalms

March 9, 2025

Welcome to the Beamsville Church of Christ online ministry. This week's message is titled The Psalms. Thank you to Dave, Don, and everyone else involved in the service. The scripture reading is Psalm 23. Happy birthday this week to Violet and happy anniversary to Heather and Paul.

## Scripture Reading

Today I'm reading Psalm 23. The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside quiet waters. He refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me. Your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil, my cup overflows. Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life. And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

## Sermon

Good morning, everyone. Thank you very much for being with us today. You're going to be pleased. This is a brief message. And I just want to talk some, as has already been noted, about the Psalms. It's very much a Bible within the Bible.

Now, there are 66 books in the Bible. However, the Psalms are separate in that they have 150 Psalms, or books, if you will, rather brief. And they're written by a variety of people, a variety of themes. King David wrote 73 Psalms. Asaph wrote 12 Psalms. And I don't know who he is, except his name shows up in the Psalms. Cora, similarly, wrote 10 Psalms. Solomon, you would think, wrote many, many Psalms, but he didn't. He writes two. And several others that we just don't know who wrote them. And some of the Psalms are lengthy. Others are very brief. It's really a Bible within the Bible. And Psalm 23 is just something that we know very well.

If you want, just go ahead and say it with me. The Lord is my shepherd. He does not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul. He guides me in the paths of righteousness for his namesake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for your rod and your staff are with me. And then he talks about this. You anoint my head with oil. And that's something that we do. But back many, many years, the anointing of oil was like a baptism. It was a consecration to the Lord. And so he says, I fear no evil. Your rod and your staff will comfort me. And this anointing of my oil overflows, meaning this wonderful relationship between God and us. It's interesting that here in this time of age, it's very similar to the old time of age, in the sense of God being our father, we being his children in loving one another. Surely goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life. And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

So let's just spend a little bit of time talking about some of these unique things. The main themes of the Psalms is praise. Praising God for who he is and what he has done. The Psalms illuminate the greatness of God, his faithfulness to us in times of trouble. And let's face it, when all of us go through difficult times, we really want to reach out to God as if he hasn't reached out to us already. The absolute truth of his word is always there for us. Psalms help us to learn the importance of prayer, the acknowledgment of pain and

praise. Not just what we can do to take care of the pain, but saying out loud that God knows our pain. And he knows when we praise. So the main messages of the Psalms are unique. Goodness, Psalm 36, 46, 67. Greatness of God, which we would know. Psalm 18, 105.

The praise that we can offer God. And I don't know about you, but have you ever had the occasion to just sit by yourself and talk to God? And praise him. Now, those are different. Talking to God, we're talking to him, we're sharing, we're pouring out. But how do you praise him? Thank you. We just praise you, Lord, that you have created us, that we are here, that we can help others. It's this lovely relationship that we all have. So the greatness of God, repentance in 32 and 38, trusting the Lord in chapter 11 and so forth. These are just little segments to if you ever really want to deeply study the Psalms, there is many, many of them. Many of the themes praise. The Psalms illuminate the greatness of God, even in times of trouble, and the absolute truth of his word. His main messages of goodness and greatness and repentance, trusting the Lord in wisdom, all throughout scripture.

But then there come the wisdom Psalms. Psalm chapter 1. "Blessed is the one who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, or stand in the way of sinners, or sit in the seat of mockers. But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law. He meditates day and night." Many, many years ago when I was in Bible College, we had to memorize and memorize and memorize. Man, it drove me crazy. But now I'm kind of glad of it. I remember some things, and I can remember back these words. I remember when I was able to remember it. Wonderful teachers, wonderful preachers, wonderful congregations of sharing with one another. It's beautiful.

"So blessed is the one who doesn't walk in the counsel of the wicked, or stand in the way of sinners, or sit in the seat of mockers. But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law we do meditate these things, remembering them." And then Psalm 19 talks about God's creation. Wouldn't you like to be there when God created it all? Maybe one day he'll show it to us, how it all started. It says, "The heavens declare the glory of the Lord. The skies that he created proclaim the work of God's hands. Day after day they pour forth speech, not just by talking, but by the reality of what he's created. Night after night they display knowledge. There's no speech or language where their voice is not heard. Their voice goes out to all the earth. Their words to the ends of the world."

And then there are New Testament authors who go back, and they quote the Psalms. For example, in Acts chapter 2, starting in verse 25, this is what King David said about Jesus. "I saw the Lord always before me, because he, my Lord, is at my right hand, and I will not be shaken." Wouldn't that be great to remember that when difficulties come, and it's very, very urgent in certain situations, that God is with us? Many of us have gone through incredible difficulties, worry, anxiety, but wouldn't it be great if we could just remember, I am always with you? I will never forsake you. Easier said than done. But it really is a promise of God. So in Acts chapter 2, here's what King David says about Jesus. "I saw the Lord always before me, because he is at my right hand, and because of that, I will not be shaken." I won't have a full system of anxiety. No, we get rid of all of that. And then it says, "Therefore, my heart is glad, and my tongue rejoices. My body also will live in hope, because you will not abandon me to the grave." Many of us, maybe all of us, have been to a grave. But what he's saying is, the grave is not the end. It never was the end. You will not abandon, nor will you let your holy one ever see decay. You have made known to me the paths of life, and you will fill me with joy in your presence, in the Lord's presence. Someone has passed. A loved one has passed. But we'll see them again.

This is the reality of Jesus. And so in the New Testament, it shares this. In 2 Corinthians 4, 13, it is written, "I believed, therefore I have spoken." With that same spirit of faith, we also believe, and therefore speak,

because we know-- listen-- the one who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead will also raise us with Jesus, and present us with you in his presence. All of this is for your benefit, so that the grace that is reaching more and more people may cause thanksgiving to overflow to the glory of God. It's quite incredible what God does for us. And it's quite incredible that we're still anxious.

But it's the reality of life, and it's a reminder, as we go through our life, that even in the Psalms, there are these beautiful blessings that come out to be with us. And I still love the scripture. I will never leave you. I will never forsake you. I will always be with you. And then Romans, the Apostle Paul, who writes really the majority of the New Testament, says, "Therefore I will praise you among the Gentiles." And then he says, "I will sing hymns to your name." I will sing to your name. And again, it says, "Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people." And again, "Praise the Lord all you Gentiles, and sing praises to him with all the peoples." And again, Isaiah says, "The root of Jesse will spring up one who will arise to rule over the nations. The Gentiles will hope in him, Jesus. And may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."

We mustn't ever forget God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, right from the beginning of Genesis to this year as we stand here. And Peter writes these-- and I love this-- like newborn babes crave pure spiritual milk. How many of you, older ones like myself, remember when our children were born, and remember in the middle of the night getting up because the baby was crying and needed something to eat? And I remember vividly, none of us, Barb or I, ever thought, oh, no, we've got to feed this child again. Never, never, never. But you see, this is what God does for us.

Oh, Don, you've just been bugging me like crazy, the Lord says. No, that's not what he says. For none of us, it's just this reality of his presence in our life. And anxiety can overwhelm us. Psalm 110, I think, is most quoted in the New Testament. The Lord says to my Lord, sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet. The Lord will extend your mighty scepter from Zion. You will rule in the midst of your enemies. Your troops will be willing on your day of battle, a reign in holy majesty. These are war songs, if you will. The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind.

And then this, so cool. You are a priest in the order of Melchizedek. Now, that might not seem like a big deal. But Melchizedek was the prophet of all prophets. No one knew where he was born. No one knew where he was going. No one knew where he left. And all of a sudden, he would show up again. But no one ever knew who he really was. Melchizedek is the glory of the Lord himself. He's at his right hand, Melchizedek, this prophet of prophets who really had nothing to do with himself, but has everything to do with us, even today. He judges the nations. And then he says, he will drink, all of us, from a brook beside the way and lift his head.

And then, of course-- and I'll finish-- the Lord loves praise. So we've just been singing for a while. The Lord loves praise. If you ever have an opportunity, just open up your Bible and notice how often the word praise is used. And it's not a command. It's a praise of thank you for everything. The Lord loves that praise. In Exodus, way back in Exodus, the Lord is my strength, and the Lord is my song. He has become my salvation. He is my God, and I will praise him.

Psalm 8:2. From the lips of children and infants, you have ordained praise. Now, I don't know about you, and I may have shared this on several occasions. But I remember when Carly, our youngest, back then, we were living in the north. And it was a beautiful, beautiful night, a summer, summer night. And it was hot. And I said to Barb, don't get up to feed the baby. I'll feed the baby. The baby is now close to 30 years old, but

the baby that back then. One of those beautiful nights, I didn't realize how many birds sang in the middle of the night. I guess it's because I was sleeping and never heard them. But I was outside, and there was these birds just singing. And Carly wanted her bottle, and it was one of those beautiful, warm nights. And after, I don't know, five minutes or so, she stopped. And she pulled away from the bottle, and she looked up at me, and she just smiled. I'll remember that for the rest of my life. It's not a big deal, except it was here, right in here.

And when you look at the Psalms, they're not just words. They're in here. So for example, Psalm 48, "Great is the Lord and most worthy of praise." But if we don't do that, if we don't praise him, if we don't thank him, we're missing out this wonderful relationship that is among us. So because of that, the writer says, "Praise await you, O God in Zion. You answer us with deeds of righteousness. Enter his gates," like we do today, coming into the church, "enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise. Give thanks and praise his name."

So let me conclude. I know this is rather brief, which I'm sure you won't mind. Psalm 139 says, "I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Your works are wonderful. I know that full well. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be. God knew when we were born. God knew us. God knows us. And we will see him face to face."

Revelation, the last book in the Bible, and rightly so because of these words. "Then I heard everyone in heaven, and I heard everyone on earth, and I heard everyone on the sea and all that is in them, all of us singing to him, to him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb. Be praise and glory and power forever and forever. Amen." Amen.

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