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SUMMER  
MEDITATIONS ON THE  
PSALMS

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2024



# TRINITY

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

## **SONGS OF JESUS: SUMMER MEDITATIONS ON THE PSALMS**

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## **TRINITY VISION**

*We exist to show how grace changes everything in Jesus Christ  
by equipping you to  
rest in worship,  
grow in community,  
and rediscover your calling.*

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## **TRINITY CORE VALUES**

### **THE GOSPEL**

The gospel is the good news that you are more broken and sinful than you ever dared imagine but—by faith in Jesus Christ—you are more loved and accepted than you ever dared to dream, at the same time. God loves His people; what Jesus did *for* them proves this. This good news radically changed the way you view yourself, others, and the world.

### **REST IN WORSHIP**

We are created to worship. In the worship of the Triune God we find our fullest enjoyment, life, love, satisfaction, purpose and identity. We therefore are committed to the primacy of worship and regard weekly gathered worship to be the heartbeat of our life together.

### **GROW IN COMMUNITY**

In a world of disconnection we seek to be a place of unusual devotion to one another. The end of God's saving work in Christ is the rescuing of individuals to a new community called the church. The purpose of His saving work is the formation of a new body of people with diverse backgrounds for His glory.

### **REDISCOVER YOUR CALLING**

Gospel restores our sense of calling in the world for the good all people. Whether you are an engineer, accountant, officer, doctor, teacher, stay-at-home parent or missionary, the gospel empowers us to extend the Kingdom of God through our individual spheres of responsibility and relationships.



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## The Songs of Jesus & Our Soul's Need to Sing Them

The Psalms are the poetry of the passions, the prayers of Israel, the songs of the Jesus. For nearly three thousand years God's people have used the Psalms as daily devotionals; these one hundred and fifty poetic stories are replete with meaning to shape our loves, voice our cries, mold our desires, and reveal the beauty of Jesus' work for us. Each psalm points us to Him!

Until the late 19th century memorization of the Psalms was a requirement for monastic life and ordained ministry. They were a fixed part of the curriculum of the Latin grammar school; in fact, the phrase "*psalteriam dicere*" (to say the psalms) became a synonym for early education. Augustine quoted the Psalms as he died. Jesus did too.

Join us in meditating on the truth of God through these Songs of Jesus. This summer we continue to explore the Psalms together in corporate worship, a journey we started in the summer of 2015. Many of us read the Psalms but rarely do we meditate on them. Practicing prayerful meditation on God's Word prepares us to respond in faith and repentance. Jesus joins his people in gathered worship to that end, and the Psalms give us words to voice.

Grace changes everything,



Pastor Blake

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## Words for Every Season

As a young pastor the thoughts of how to pray for people in all their various needs and desires overwhelmed me. Visiting folks in their grief and feeling like I should be able to speak or pray words of comfort kept me from seeking out those hurting and suffering. However, there was in our church at that time an older pastor whose prayers during the worship services always blessed me. I couldn't figure out what made the difference. When asked, he told me that he meditated on the psalms and memorized many of them, they gave him the words and thoughts concerning God, suffering, worship, and praise that helped fuel and direct his prayers. Think of Jonah in the belly of the fish; his prayers are an amalgamation of scripture mostly from the psalms (3, 31, 42, 50, 118, 120), and they were his companion and counselor for three days in darkness. I encourage you to dive into them this summer and see how God blesses your soul and enriches your fellowship with him and prayers for each other.

Grace changes everything,



Pastor Mark

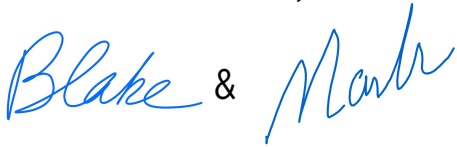
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## How to Use this Devotional

We will be using the Psalms to learn an ancient way of prayer in the church called *lectio divina*. Each day you will pray through a Psalm using eight steps of meditation that ground in you in the authoritative Word of God. As you pray in this way, my chief prayer is that you will enjoy the fellowship of your Savior who loves you.

We look forward to meditating on the Songs of Jesus with you.

Yours in Christ Jesus,



Pastor Blake and Pastor Mark

## Introducing *Lectio Divina*

Christians throughout the ages have prayed using a technique called *lectio divina*—a slow, contemplative praying of the Scriptures. *Lectio divina* is a latin phrase that literally means “divine reading”. This ancient practice has been kept alive in the Christian monastic tradition. It is not a mystical reading of Scripture; it is rather an extremely practical way of praying God’s Word as you read it. *Lectio divina* is *not* a way of emptying your mind but rather *filling* your mind with Scripture and meditating on the objective truth of God in its original context. Remember, Scripture is not interpreted by what you feel. Rather, it is interpreted by the *Holy Spirit, confirmed* by the community of God’s people and *points* to the work of Jesus Christ. You may find that as you pray using *lectio divina*, you memorize passages with less effort.

You will be trying it yourself. Read and follow the directions carefully. Resist the temptation to rush through these devotionals. Go slow. Let the Psalms soak into your soul and offer comfort. Let them regulate you back to spiritual health. Share what you’ve learned with your community group or one-another group. These rhythms of grace and beauty, death and sadness, struggle and hope give us a framework of dealing with these realities in our own lives.

Let us walk you through how it works.



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### **Step one: establish the right time & place**

Selecting a time for *lectio divina* is very important in order to regulate you. You need to teach yourself when to expect to pray. Committing to this time is a critical part of developing a rhythm and habit of communing with God. To begin, set aside a minimum of 10 minutes. As you get used to the practice, you may want to increase the time.

The place to pray free from excessive noise and distractions. This means it should be isolated from other people, cell phones, visual distractions, etc. For those of you who do not have this luxury, feel free to listen to non-distractive music (e.g. instrumental music, certain worship songs). The same place should be used if possible, especially at first. Familiarity with a location reduces the possibility of distraction. One may wish to pray at the office or in a room with the door closed. You can even do this in your car, but be sure to leave it running with the A/C on: don't confuse visions of heaven with a heat stroke!

### **Step two: pick the passage**

*Lectio divina* begins with meditatively reading out loud and slowly a short passage of Scripture. We've picked your passage each day using a Psalm from our summer sermon series. Once you're comfortable with this practice, you can choose other passages of Scripture. Narratives and Psalms work particularly well because they are vivid. Choose no more than ten verses at first, and explore longer passages of Scripture as you grow more comfortable.

### **Step three: study the context**

Using a study Bible like the ESV Study Bible, read about the context. Consider where this passage falls in redemptive history and what the original audience may have been feeling and experiencing as God's people at that time.

### **Step four: transition into the right attitude**

Before you to pray using the Psalm, it is important to transition from a busy, frenetic state to be ready to hear God's Word. Sit silently. Take a few deep breaths. Ask the Holy Spirit to guard and guide your meditation. Ask God to open your senses to the beauty of Jesus's work for His people.

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### **Step five: read the text three times**

This step is where *lectio divina* technically begins. Read the passage at a slow pace three times. During this time consider one word or phrase that stands out to you from the text. Pause for a few seconds of silence between each reading. Again, your focus is on one word or phrase, not the entire passage. After you read the passages the third time, allow yourself one minute of silent reflection before God. Focus on that one word. Say that word audibly. “Blessed,” “counsel,” “walk,” “way of the righteous,” for example. Say it out loud. It will feel weird at first, but saying it out loud is intentional to engage your whole body in prayer, not just your mind.

### **Step six: read the text one more time**

Read the text another time (the fourth reading). After you read the text again, allow yourself one minute of silent reflection before God. Put yourself into the setting of the text. Imagine what the writer is experiencing. Imagine Jesus saying these words. Focus on something you sense (see, hear, feel, taste,

smell). Say what you sense audibly. For example with Psalm 1 you might say, “I hear the sound of the bubbling stream next to the fruit-bearing tree,” or “I see the leaves of the tree glimmer in the sun,” etc.

### **Step seven: read the text a final time**

Read the text one final time (the fifth reading). After you read the text again, allow yourself at least a minute of silent reflection before God. Focus on something God is calling you to do in light of this text (e.g., a command to obey, an area of repentance, a relationship to heal, an aspect of God’s holiness, what Jesus has accomplished for you, etc.). How does this verse speak to your life circumstance today? Say out loud what God is calling you to do or become in light of Jesus’ finished work for you.

### **Step eight: contemplation**

This final rhythm moment is a simple, focus on how when and where Jesus would have prayed this Psalm. In stillness and silence, imagine when and where Jesus prayed this prayer for himself, for His people, and for you. Imagine if you were one of His disciples on the road to Emmaus, how Jesus would apply this Psalm to your life. Rest in his presence. Lay your burdens down. Cast your anxieties onto Him. Consider journaling what you have gleaned from this time of prayer. Thank Jesus

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for living the life you could not live and dying in your place, becoming sin for us that we might be the righteousness of God.

**Try this with a group:**

You may choose to do this exercise in a group. For the first time, one person can lead the exercise and read the selected Scripture. As the group grows more comfortable with one another, consider having a different person read the passage each of the five readings. Give everyone permission to be silent together; resist the temptation to break the silence too early. Follow the seven steps and encourage everyone to share their words, sense experience and calls to obedience. Hearing how the Holy Spirit directs each member by God's Word is one of the beauties of this practice. Discuss the way in which this passages points us to Christ. Close the time by praying for each other.

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## June 2 - Psalm 61

**Lectio Divina** (follow the instructions on pages 10-14)

*Psalm 61: Lead Me to the Rock*

*To the choirmaster: with stringed instruments. Of David.*

[1] Hear my cry, O God,

listen to my prayer;

[2] from the end of the earth I call to you

when my heart is faint.

Lead me to the rock

that is higher than I,

[3] for you have been my refuge,

a strong tower against the enemy.

[4] Let me dwell in your tent forever!

Let me take refuge under the shelter of your wings! Selah

[5] For you, O God, have heard my vows;

you have given me the heritage of those who fear your name.

[6] Prolong the life of the king;

may his years endure to all generations!

[7] May he be enthroned forever before God;

appoint steadfast love and faithfulness to watch over him!

[8] So will I ever sing praises to your name,

as I perform my vows day after day.

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## June 9 - Psalm 62

**Lectio Divina** (follow the instructions on pages 10-14)

*Psalm 62: My Soul Waits for God Alone*

*To the choirmaster: according to Jeduthun. A Psalm of David.*

[1] For God alone my soul waits in silence;  
from him comes my salvation.

[2] He alone is my rock and my salvation,  
my fortress; I shall not be greatly shaken.

[3] How long will all of you attack a man  
to batter him,  
like a leaning wall, a tottering fence?

[4] They only plan to thrust him down from his high position.  
They take pleasure in falsehood.

They bless with their mouths,  
but inwardly they curse. Selah

[5] For God alone, O my soul, wait in silence,  
for my hope is from him.

[6] He only is my rock and my salvation,  
my fortress; I shall not be shaken.

[7] On God rests my salvation and my glory;  
my mighty rock, my refuge is God.

[8] Trust in him at all times, O people;  
pour out your heart before him;  
God is a refuge for us. Selah

[9] Those of low estate are but a breath;  
those of high estate are a delusion;  
in the balances they go up;  
they are together lighter than a breath.

[10] Put no trust in extortion;  
set no vain hopes on robbery;

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if riches increase, set not your heart on them.  
[11] Once God has spoken;  
twice have I heard this:  
that power belongs to God,  
[12] and that to you, O Lord, belongs steadfast love.  
For you will render to a man  
according to his work.

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## June 16 - Psalm 64

**Lectio Divina** (follow the instructions on pages 7-9)

*Psalm 64: Hide Me from the Wicked*

*To the choirmaster. A Psalm of David.*

[1] Hear my voice, O God, in my complaint;  
preserve my life from dread of the enemy.

[2] Hide me from the secret plots of the wicked,  
from the throng of evildoers,

[3] who whet their tongues like swords,  
who aim bitter words like arrows,

[4] shooting from ambush at the blameless,  
shooting at him suddenly and without fear.

[5] They hold fast to their evil purpose;  
they talk of laying snares secretly,

thinking, "Who can see them?"

[6] They search out injustice,  
saying, "We have accomplished a diligent search."

For the inward mind and heart of a man are deep.

[7] But God shoots his arrow at them;  
they are wounded suddenly.

[8] They are brought to ruin, with their own tongues turned against them;  
all who see them will wag their heads.

[9] Then all mankind fears;  
they tell what God has brought about  
and ponder what he has done.

[10] Let the righteous one rejoice in the LORD  
and take refuge in him!

Let all the upright in heart exult!

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## June 23 - Psalm 66

**Lectio Divina** (follow the instructions on pages 10-14)

*Psalm 66: How Awesome Are Your Deeds*

*To the choirmaster. A Song. A Psalm.*

- [1] Shout for joy to God, all the earth;  
[2] sing the glory of his name;  
give to him glorious praise!
- [3] Say to God, "How awesome are your deeds!  
So great is your power that your enemies come cringing to you.
- [4] All the earth worships you  
and sings praises to you;  
they sing praises to your name." *Selah*
- [5] Come and see what God has done:  
he is awesome in his deeds toward the children of man.
- [6] He turned the sea into dry land;  
they passed through the river on foot.  
There did we rejoice in him,
- [7] who rules by his might forever,  
whose eyes keep watch on the nations—  
let not the rebellious exalt themselves. *Selah*
- [8] Bless our God, O peoples;  
let the sound of his praise be heard,  
[9] who has kept our soul among the living  
and has not let our feet slip.
- [10] For you, O God, have tested us;  
you have tried us as silver is tried.
- [11] You brought us into the net;  
you laid a crushing burden on our backs;  
[12] you let men ride over our heads;  
we went through fire and through water;  
yet you have brought us out to a place of abundance.



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[13] I will come into your house with burnt offerings;  
I will perform my vows to you,  
[14] that which my lips uttered  
and my mouth promised when I was in trouble.  
[15] I will offer to you burnt offerings of fattened animals,  
with the smoke of the sacrifice of rams;  
I will make an offering of bulls and goats. *Selah*

[16] Come and hear, all you who fear God,  
and I will tell what he has done for my soul.

[17] I cried to him with my mouth,  
and high praise was on my tongue.

[18] If I had cherished iniquity in my heart,  
the Lord would not have listened.

[19] But truly God has listened;  
he has attended to the voice of my prayer.

[20] Blessed be God,  
because he has not rejected my prayer  
or removed his steadfast love from me!

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## July 30 - Psalm 67

**Lectio Divina** (follow the instructions on pages 7-9)

*Psalm 67: Make Your Face Shine upon Us*

*To the choirmaster: with stringed instruments. A Psalm. A Song.*

[1] May God be gracious to us and bless us  
and make his face to shine upon us, Selah

[2] that your way may be known on earth,  
your saving power among all nations.

[3] Let the peoples praise you, O God;  
let all the peoples praise you!

[4] Let the nations be glad and sing for joy,  
for you judge the peoples with equity  
and guide the nations upon earth. Selah

[5] Let the peoples praise you, O God;  
let all the peoples praise you!

[6] The earth has yielded its increase;  
God, our God, shall bless us.

[7] God shall bless us;  
let all the ends of the earth fear him!

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## July 7 - Psalm 68

**Lectio Divina** (follow the instructions on pages 10-14)

*Psalm 68: God Shall Scatter His Enemies*

*To the choirmaster. A Psalm of David. A Song.*

- [1] God shall arise, his enemies shall be scattered;  
and those who hate him shall flee before him!
- [2] As smoke is driven away, so you shall drive them away;  
as wax melts before fire,  
so the wicked shall perish before God!
- [3] But the righteous shall be glad;  
they shall exult before God;  
they shall be jubilant with joy!
- [4] Sing to God, sing praises to his name;  
lift up a song to him who rides through the deserts;  
his name is the LORD;  
exult before him!
- [5] Father of the fatherless and protector of widows  
is God in his holy habitation.
- [6] God settles the solitary in a home;  
he leads out the prisoners to prosperity,  
but the rebellious dwell in a parched land.
- [7] O God, when you went out before your people,  
when you marched through the wilderness, Selah
- [8] the earth quaked, the heavens poured down rain,  
before God, the One of Sinai,  
before God, the God of Israel.
- [9] Rain in abundance, O God, you shed abroad;  
you restored your inheritance as it languished;
- [10] your flock found a dwelling in it;  
in your goodness, O God, you provided for the needy.

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[11] The Lord gives the word;  
the women who announce the news are a great host:

[12] “The kings of the armies—they flee, they flee!”

The women at home divide the spoil—

[13] though you men lie among the sheepfolds—  
the wings of a dove covered with silver,  
its pinions with shimmering gold.

[14] When the Almighty scatters kings there,  
let snow fall on Zalmon.

[15] O mountain of God, mountain of Bashan;  
O many-peaked mountain, mountain of Bashan!

[16] Why do you look with hatred, O many-peaked mountain,  
at the mount that God desired for his abode,  
yes, where the LORD will dwell forever?

[17] The chariots of God are twice ten thousand,  
thousands upon thousands;  
the Lord is among them; Sinai is now in the sanctuary.

[18] You ascended on high,  
leading a host of captives in your train  
and receiving gifts among men,  
even among the rebellious, that the LORD God may dwell there.

[19] Blessed be the Lord,  
who daily bears us up;  
God is our salvation. Selah

[20] Our God is a God of salvation,  
and to GOD, the Lord, belong deliverances from death.

[21] But God will strike the heads of his enemies,  
the hairy crown of him who walks in his guilty ways.

[22] The Lord said,

“I will bring them back from Bashan,  
I will bring them back from the depths of the sea,

[23] that you may strike your feet in their blood,  
that the tongues of your dogs may have their portion from the foe.”

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[24] Your procession is seen, O God,  
the procession of my God, my King, into the sanctuary—

[25] the singers in front, the musicians last,  
between them virgins playing tambourines:

[26] “Bless God in the great congregation,  
the LORD, O you who are of Israel’s fountain!”

[27] There is Benjamin, the least of them, in the lead,  
the princes of Judah in their throng,  
the princes of Zebulun, the princes of Naphtali.

[28] Summon your power, O God,  
the power, O God, by which you have worked for us.

[29] Because of your temple at Jerusalem  
kings shall bear gifts to you.

[30] Rebuke the beasts that dwell among the reeds,  
the herd of bulls with the calves of the peoples.  
Trample underfoot those who lust after tribute;  
scatter the peoples who delight in war.

[31] Nobles shall come from Egypt;  
Cush shall hasten to stretch out her hands to God.

[32] O kingdoms of the earth, sing to God;  
sing praises to the Lord, Selah

[33] to him who rides in the heavens, the ancient heavens;  
behold, he sends out his voice, his mighty voice.

[34] Ascribe power to God,  
whose majesty is over Israel,  
and whose power is in the skies.

[35] Awesome is God from his sanctuary;  
the God of Israel—he is the one who gives power and strength to  
his people.  
Blessed be God!

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## July 14 - Psalm 69

**Lectio Divina** (follow the instructions on pages 10-14)

*Psalm 69: Save Me, O God*

*To the choirmaster: according to Lilies. Of David.*

[1] Save me, O God!

For the waters have come up to my neck.

[2] I sink in deep mire,

where there is no foothold;

I have come into deep waters,

and the flood sweeps over me.

[3] I am weary with my crying out;

my throat is parched.

My eyes grow dim

with waiting for my God.

[4] More in number than the hairs of my head

are those who hate me without cause;

mighty are those who would destroy me,

those who attack me with lies.

What I did not steal

must I now restore?

[5] O God, you know my folly;

the wrongs I have done are not hidden from you.

[6] Let not those who hope in you be put to shame through me,

O Lord GOD of hosts;

let not those who seek you be brought to dishonor through me,

O God of Israel.

[7] For it is for your sake that I have borne reproach,

that dishonor has covered my face.

[8] I have become a stranger to my brothers,

an alien to my mother's sons.

[9] For zeal for your house has consumed me,

and the reproaches of those who reproach you have fallen on me.

[10] When I wept and humbled my soul with fasting,

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it became my reproach.

[11] When I made sackcloth my clothing,  
I became a byword to them.

[12] I am the talk of those who sit in the gate,  
and the drunkards make songs about me.

[13] But as for me, my prayer is to you, O LORD.  
At an acceptable time, O God,  
in the abundance of your steadfast love answer me in your saving  
faithfulness.

[14] Deliver me  
from sinking in the mire;  
let me be delivered from my enemies  
and from the deep waters.

[15] Let not the flood sweep over me,  
or the deep swallow me up,  
or the pit close its mouth over me.

[16] Answer me, O LORD, for your steadfast love is good;  
according to your abundant mercy, turn to me.

[17] Hide not your face from your servant,  
for I am in distress; make haste to answer me.

[18] Draw near to my soul, redeem me;  
ransom me because of my enemies!

[19] You know my reproach,  
and my shame and my dishonor;  
my foes are all known to you.

[20] Reproaches have broken my heart,  
so that I am in despair.

I looked for pity, but there was none,  
and for comforters, but I found none.

[21] They gave me poison for food,  
and for my thirst they gave me sour wine to drink.

[22] Let their own table before them become a snare;  
and when they are at peace, let it become a trap.

[23] Let their eyes be darkened, so that they cannot see,  
and make their loins tremble continually.

[24] Pour out your indignation upon them,

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- and let your burning anger overtake them.
- [25] May their camp be a desolation;  
let no one dwell in their tents.
- [26] For they persecute him whom you have struck down,  
and they recount the pain of those you have wounded.
- [27] Add to them punishment upon punishment;  
may they have no acquittal from you.
- [28] Let them be blotted out of the book of the living;  
let them not be enrolled among the righteous.
- [29] But I am afflicted and in pain;  
let your salvation, O God, set me on high!
- [30] I will praise the name of God with a song;  
I will magnify him with thanksgiving.
- [31] This will please the LORD more than an ox  
or a bull with horns and hoofs.
- [32] When the humble see it they will be glad;  
you who seek God, let your hearts revive.
- [33] For the LORD hears the needy  
and does not despise his own people who are prisoners.
- [34] Let heaven and earth praise him,  
the seas and everything that moves in them.
- [35] For God will save Zion  
and build up the cities of Judah,  
and people shall dwell there and possess it;
- [36] the offspring of his servants shall inherit it,  
and those who love his name shall dwell in it.



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## July 21 - Psalm 71

**Lectio Divina** (follow the instructions on pages 10-14)

*Psalm 71: Forsake Me Not When My Strength Is Spent*

[1] In you, O LORD, do I take refuge;  
let me never be put to shame!

[2] In your righteousness deliver me and rescue me;  
incline your ear to me, and save me!

[3] Be to me a rock of refuge,  
to which I may continually come;  
you have given the command to save me,  
for you are my rock and my fortress.

[4] Rescue me, O my God, from the hand of the wicked,  
from the grasp of the unjust and cruel man.

[5] For you, O Lord, are my hope,  
my trust, O LORD, from my youth.

[6] Upon you I have leaned from before my birth;  
you are he who took me from my mother's womb.  
My praise is continually of you.

[7] I have been as a portent to many,  
but you are my strong refuge.

[8] My mouth is filled with your praise,  
and with your glory all the day.

[9] Do not cast me off in the time of old age;  
forsake me not when my strength is spent.

[10] For my enemies speak concerning me;  
those who watch for my life consult together

[11] and say, "God has forsaken him;  
pursue and seize him,  
for there is none to deliver him."

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[12] O God, be not far from me;  
O my God, make haste to help me!

[13] May my accusers be put to shame and consumed;  
with scorn and disgrace may they be covered  
who seek my hurt.

[14] But I will hope continually  
and will praise you yet more and more.

[15] My mouth will tell of your righteous acts,  
of your deeds of salvation all the day,  
for their number is past my knowledge.

[16] With the mighty deeds of the Lord GOD I will come;  
I will remind them of your righteousness, yours alone.

[17] O God, from my youth you have taught me,  
and I still proclaim your wondrous deeds.

[18] So even to old age and gray hairs,  
O God, do not forsake me,  
until I proclaim your might to another generation,  
your power to all those to come.

[19] Your righteousness, O God,  
reaches the high heavens.  
You who have done great things,  
O God, who is like you?

[20] You who have made me see many troubles and calamities  
will revive me again;  
from the depths of the earth  
you will bring me up again.

[21] You will increase my greatness  
and comfort me again.

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[22] I will also praise you with the harp  
for your faithfulness, O my God;  
I will sing praises to you with the lyre,  
O Holy One of Israel.

[23] My lips will shout for joy,  
when I sing praises to you;  
my soul also, which you have redeemed.

[24] And my tongue will talk of your righteous help all the day long,  
for they have been put to shame and disappointed  
who sought to do me hurt.

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## July 28 - Psalm 74

**Lectio Divina** (follow the instructions on pages 10-14)

*Psalm 74: Arise, O God, Defend Your Cause*

*A Maskil of Asaph.*

- [1] O God, why do you cast us off forever?  
    Why does your anger smoke against the sheep of your pasture?
- [2] Remember your congregation, which you have purchased of old,  
    which you have redeemed to be the tribe of your heritage!  
    Remember Mount Zion, where you have dwelt.
- [3] Direct your steps to the perpetual ruins;  
    the enemy has destroyed everything in the sanctuary!
- [4] Your foes have roared in the midst of your meeting place;  
    they set up their own signs for signs.
- [5] They were like those who swing axes  
    in a forest of trees.
- [6] And all its carved wood  
    they broke down with hatchets and hammers.
- [7] They set your sanctuary on fire;  
    they profaned the dwelling place of your name,  
    bringing it down to the ground.
- [8] They said to themselves, “We will utterly subdue them”;  
    they burned all the meeting places of God in the land.
- [9] We do not see our signs;  
    there is no longer any prophet,  
    and there is none among us who knows how long.
- [10] How long, O God, is the foe to scoff?  
    Is the enemy to revile your name forever?
- [11] Why do you hold back your hand, your right hand?  
    Take it from the fold of your garment and destroy them!

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- [12] Yet God my King is from of old,  
working salvation in the midst of the earth.
- [13] You divided the sea by your might;  
you broke the heads of the sea monsters on the waters.
- [14] You crushed the heads of Leviathan;  
you gave him as food for the creatures of the wilderness.
- [15] You split open springs and brooks;  
you dried up ever-flowing streams.
- [16] Yours is the day, yours also the night;  
you have established the heavenly lights and the sun.
- [17] You have fixed all the boundaries of the earth;  
you have made summer and winter.
- [18] Remember this, O LORD, how the enemy scoffs,  
and a foolish people reviles your name.
- [19] Do not deliver the soul of your dove to the wild beasts;  
do not forget the life of your poor forever.
- [20] Have regard for the covenant,  
for the dark places of the land are full of the habitations of violence.
- [21] Let not the downtrodden turn back in shame;  
let the poor and needy praise your name.
- [22] Arise, O God, defend your cause;  
remember how the foolish scoff at you all the day!
- [23] Do not forget the clamor of your foes,  
the uproar of those who rise against you, which goes up continually!

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## August 4 - Psalm 75

**Lectio Divina** (follow the instructions on pages 10-14)

*Psalm 75: God Will Judge with Equity*

*To the choirmaster: according to Do Not Destroy. A Psalm of Asaph. A Song.*

[1] We give thanks to you, O God;  
we give thanks, for your name is near.  
We recount your wondrous deeds.

[2] “At the set time that I appoint  
I will judge with equity.

[3] When the earth totters, and all its inhabitants,  
it is I who keep steady its pillars. Selah

[4] I say to the boastful, ‘Do not boast,’  
and to the wicked, ‘Do not lift up your horn;

[5] do not lift up your horn on high,  
or speak with haughty neck.”

[6] For not from the east or from the west  
and not from the wilderness comes lifting up,

[7] but it is God who executes judgment,  
putting down one and lifting up another.

[8] For in the hand of the LORD there is a cup  
with foaming wine, well mixed,  
and he pours out from it,  
and all the wicked of the earth  
shall drain it down to the dregs.

[9] But I will declare it forever;  
I will sing praises to the God of Jacob.

[10] All the horns of the wicked I will cut off,  
but the horns of the righteous shall be lifted up.

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## August 11 - Psalm 76

**Lectio Divina** (follow the instructions on pages 10-14)

*Psalm 76: Who Can Stand Before You?*

*To the choirmaster: with stringed instruments. A Psalm of Asaph. A Song.*

*[1] In Judah God is known;*

*his name is great in Israel.*

*[2] His abode has been established in Salem,*

*his dwelling place in Zion.*

*[3] There he broke the flashing arrows,*

*the shield, the sword, and the weapons of war. Selah*

*[4] Glorious are you, more majestic*

*than the mountains full of prey.*

*[5] The stouthearted were stripped of their spoil;*

*they sank into sleep;*

*all the men of war*

*were unable to use their hands.*

*[6] At your rebuke, O God of Jacob,*

*both rider and horse lay stunned.*

*[7] But you, you are to be feared!*

*Who can stand before you*

*when once your anger is roused?*

*[8] From the heavens you uttered judgment;*

*the earth feared and was still,*

*[9] when God arose to establish judgment,*

*to save all the humble of the earth. Selah*

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*[10] Surely the wrath of man shall praise you;  
the remnant of wrath you will put on like a belt.*

*[11] Make your vows to the LORD your God and perform them;  
let all around him bring gifts  
to him who is to be feared,*

*[12] who cuts off the spirit of princes,  
who is to be feared by the kings of the earth.*



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## August 18 - Psalm 77

**Lectio Divina** (follow the instructions on pages 10-14)

*Psalm 77: In the Day of Trouble I Seek the Lord*

*To the choirmaster: according to Jeduthun. A Psalm of Asaph.*

- [1] I cry aloud to God,  
aloud to God, and he will hear me.
- [2] In the day of my trouble I seek the Lord;  
in the night my hand is stretched out without wearying;  
my soul refuses to be comforted.
- [3] When I remember God, I moan;  
when I meditate, my spirit faints. Selah
- [4] You hold my eyelids open;  
I am so troubled that I cannot speak.
- [5] I consider the days of old,  
the years long ago.
- [6] I said, "Let me remember my song in the night;  
let me meditate in my heart."  
Then my spirit made a diligent search:
- [7] "Will the Lord spurn forever,  
and never again be favorable?
- [8] Has his steadfast love forever ceased?  
Are his promises at an end for all time?
- [9] Has God forgotten to be gracious?  
Has he in anger shut up his compassion?" Selah
- [10] Then I said, "I will appeal to this,  
to the years of the right hand of the Most High."
- [11] I will remember the deeds of the LORD;  
yes, I will remember your wonders of old.
- [12] I will ponder all your work,  
and meditate on your mighty deeds.

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[13] Your way, O God, is holy.

What god is great like our God?

[14] You are the God who works wonders;

you have made known your might among the peoples.

[15] You with your arm redeemed your people,

the children of Jacob and Joseph. Selah

[16] When the waters saw you, O God,

when the waters saw you, they were afraid;

indeed, the deep trembled.

[17] The clouds poured out water;

the skies gave forth thunder;

your arrows flashed on every side.

[18] The crash of your thunder was in the whirlwind;

your lightnings lighted up the world;

the earth trembled and shook.

[19] Your way was through the sea,

your path through the great waters;

yet your footprints were unseen.

[20] You led your people like a flock

by the hand of Moses and Aaron.

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## August 25 - Psalm 78

**Lectio Divina** (follow the instructions on pages 10-14)

*Psalm 78: Tell the Coming Generation*

*A Maskil of Asaph.*

[1] Give ear, O my people, to my teaching;  
incline your ears to the words of my mouth!

[2] I will open my mouth in a parable;  
I will utter dark sayings from of old,

[3] things that we have heard and known,  
that our fathers have told us.

[4] We will not hide them from their children,  
but tell to the coming generation  
the glorious deeds of the LORD, and his might,  
and the wonders that he has done.

[5] He established a testimony in Jacob  
and appointed a law in Israel,  
which he commanded our fathers  
to teach to their children,

[6] that the next generation might know them,  
the children yet unborn,  
and arise and tell them to their children,

[7] so that they should set their hope in God  
and not forget the works of God,  
but keep his commandments;

[8] and that they should not be like their fathers,  
a stubborn and rebellious generation,  
a generation whose heart was not steadfast,  
whose spirit was not faithful to God.

[9] The Ephraimites, armed with the bow,  
turned back on the day of battle.

[10] They did not keep God's covenant,

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but refused to walk according to his law.

[11] They forgot his works

and the wonders that he had shown them.

[12] In the sight of their fathers he performed wonders

in the land of Egypt, in the fields of Zoan.

[13] He divided the sea and let them pass through it,

and made the waters stand like a heap.

[14] In the daytime he led them with a cloud,

and all the night with a fiery light.

[15] He split rocks in the wilderness

and gave them drink abundantly as from the deep.

[16] He made streams come out of the rock

and caused waters to flow down like rivers.

[17] Yet they sinned still more against him,

rebelling against the Most High in the desert.

[18] They tested God in their heart

by demanding the food they craved.

[19] They spoke against God, saying,

“Can God spread a table in the wilderness?

[20] He struck the rock so that water gushed out

and streams overflowed.

Can he also give bread

or provide meat for his people?”

[21] Therefore, when the LORD heard, he was full of wrath;

a fire was kindled against Jacob;

his anger rose against Israel,

[22] because they did not believe in God

and did not trust his saving power.

[23] Yet he commanded the skies above

and opened the doors of heaven,

[24] and he rained down on them manna to eat

and gave them the grain of heaven.

[25] Man ate of the bread of the angels;

he sent them food in abundance.

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[26] He caused the east wind to blow in the heavens,  
and by his power he led out the south wind;  
[27] he rained meat on them like dust,  
winged birds like the sand of the seas;  
[28] he let them fall in the midst of their camp,  
all around their dwellings.  
[29] And they ate and were well filled,  
for he gave them what they craved.  
[30] But before they had satisfied their craving,  
while the food was still in their mouths,  
[31] the anger of God rose against them,  
and he killed the strongest of them  
and laid low the young men of Israel.

[32] In spite of all this, they still sinned;  
despite his wonders, they did not believe.  
[33] So he made their days vanish like a breath,  
and their years in terror.  
[34] When he killed them, they sought him;  
they repented and sought God earnestly.  
[35] They remembered that God was their rock,  
the Most High God their redeemer.  
[36] But they flattered him with their mouths;  
they lied to him with their tongues.  
[37] Their heart was not steadfast toward him;  
they were not faithful to his covenant.  
[38] Yet he, being compassionate,  
atoned for their iniquity  
and did not destroy them;  
he restrained his anger often  
and did not stir up all his wrath.  
[39] He remembered that they were but flesh,  
a wind that passes and comes not again.  
[40] How often they rebelled against him in the wilderness  
and grieved him in the desert!  
[41] They tested God again and again  
and provoked the Holy One of Israel.

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- [42] They did not remember his power  
or the day when he redeemed them from the foe,
- [43] when he performed his signs in Egypt  
and his marvels in the fields of Zoan.
- [44] He turned their rivers to blood,  
so that they could not drink of their streams.
- [45] He sent among them swarms of flies, which devoured them,  
and frogs, which destroyed them.
- [46] He gave their crops to the destroying locust  
and the fruit of their labor to the locust.
- [47] He destroyed their vines with hail  
and their sycamores with frost.
- [48] He gave over their cattle to the hail  
and their flocks to thunderbolts.
- [49] He let loose on them his burning anger,  
wrath, indignation, and distress,  
a company of destroying angels.
- [50] He made a path for his anger;  
he did not spare them from death,  
but gave their lives over to the plague.
- [51] He struck down every firstborn in Egypt,  
the firstfruits of their strength in the tents of Ham.
- [52] Then he led out his people like sheep  
and guided them in the wilderness like a flock.
- [53] He led them in safety, so that they were not afraid,  
but the sea overwhelmed their enemies.
- [54] And he brought them to his holy land,  
to the mountain which his right hand had won.
- [55] He drove out nations before them;  
he apportioned them for a possession  
and settled the tribes of Israel in their tents.
- [56] Yet they tested and rebelled against the Most High God  
and did not keep his testimonies,
- [57] but turned away and acted treacherously like their fathers;  
they twisted like a deceitful bow.
- [58] For they provoked him to anger with their high places;
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they moved him to jealousy with their idols.  
[59] When God heard, he was full of wrath,  
and he utterly rejected Israel.  
[60] He forsook his dwelling at Shiloh,  
the tent where he dwelt among mankind,  
[61] and delivered his power to captivity,  
his glory to the hand of the foe.  
[62] He gave his people over to the sword  
and vented his wrath on his heritage.  
[63] Fire devoured their young men,  
and their young women had no marriage song.  
[64] Their priests fell by the sword,  
and their widows made no lamentation.  
[65] Then the Lord awoke as from sleep,  
like a strong man shouting because of wine.  
[66] And he put his adversaries to rout;  
he put them to everlasting shame.

[67] He rejected the tent of Joseph;  
he did not choose the tribe of Ephraim,  
[68] but he chose the tribe of Judah,  
Mount Zion, which he loves.  
[69] He built his sanctuary like the high heavens,  
like the earth, which he has founded forever.  
[70] He chose David his servant  
and took him from the sheepfolds;  
[71] from following the nursing ewes he brought him  
to shepherd Jacob his people,  
Israel his inheritance.  
[72] With upright heart he shepherded them  
and guided them with his skillful hand.

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## September 1 - Psalm 79

**Lectio Divina** (follow the instructions on pages 10-14)

*Psalm 79: How Long, O LORD?*

*A Psalm of Asaph.*

[1] O God, the nations have come into your inheritance;  
they have defiled your holy temple;  
they have laid Jerusalem in ruins.

[2] They have given the bodies of your servants  
to the birds of the heavens for food,  
the flesh of your faithful to the beasts of the earth.

[3] They have poured out their blood like water  
all around Jerusalem,  
and there was no one to bury them.

[4] We have become a taunt to our neighbors,  
mocked and derided by those around us.

[5] How long, O LORD? Will you be angry forever?  
Will your jealousy burn like fire?

[6] Pour out your anger on the nations  
that do not know you,  
and on the kingdoms  
that do not call upon your name!

[7] For they have devoured Jacob  
and laid waste his habitation.

[8] Do not remember against us our former iniquities;  
let your compassion come speedily to meet us,  
for we are brought very low.

[9] Help us, O God of our salvation,  
for the glory of your name;  
deliver us, and atone for our sins,  
for your name's sake!

[10] Why should the nations say,



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“Where is their God?”

Let the avenging of the outpoured blood of your servants  
be known among the nations before our eyes!

[11] Let the groans of the prisoners come before you;  
according to your great power, preserve those doomed to die!

[12] Return sevenfold into the lap of our neighbors  
the taunts with which they have taunted you, O Lord!

[13] But we your people, the sheep of your pasture,  
will give thanks to you forever;  
from generation to generation we will recount your praise.

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## What Wiser Men Have Said

“The Psalms have a unique place in the Bible because while most of the Scripture speaks *to* us, the Psalms speak *for* us.”

– Athanasius of Alexandria

“[The] Psalms have always proved to be a great source of solace and encouragement to God’s people throughout the centuries—both the children of Israel and the members of the Christian Church.

Here we are able to watch noble souls struggling with their problems and with themselves. They talk of themselves and to their souls, baring their hearts, analyzing their problems, chiding and encouraging themselves. Sometimes they are elated, at other times depressed, but they are always honest with themselves. That is why they are of such real value to us if we also are honest with ourselves.”

– D. Martyn Lloyd Jones, *Spiritual Depression*, 9

“The emperor Marcus Antoninus being in Germany with his army, was enclosed in a dry country by his enemies, who so stopped all the passages that he and his army were likely to perish for lack of water. The emperor’s lieutenant seeing him so distressed, told him that he had heard that the Christians could obtain anything of their God by their prayers, whereupon the emperor, having a legion of Christians in his army, desired them to pray to their God for his and the army’s delivery out of that danger, which they presently did, and presently a great thunder fell among the enemies, and abundance of water upon the Romans, whereby their thirst was quenched, and the enemies overthrown without any fight.

Mary, Queen of Scots, was accustomed to say, ‘That she feared Knox’s prayers more than an army of ten thousand men.’”

– Thomas Brooks, *Precious Remedies Against Satan’s Devices*, 194

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Notes:

“As Jesus, in whom God himself dwells, longed for fellowship which God because he had become a man as we (Luke 2:49), so he prays with us for the total nearness and presence of God with those who are his [John 17].”

– Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Psalms: The Prayerbook of the Bible*, 41-42

“A sleepy soul is already an ensnared soul. That soul that will not watch against temptations, will certainly fall before the power of temptations. Satan works most strongly on the imagination, when the soul is drowsy. The soul's slothfulness is Satan's opportunity to fall upon the soul and to destroy the soul, as Joshua did the men of Ai. The best way to be safe and secure from all Satan's assaults is, with Nehemiah and the Jews, to watch and pray, and pray and watch. By this means they became too hard for their enemies, and the work of the Lord did prosper sweetly in their hands.”

– Thomas Brooks, *Precious Remedies Against Satan's Devices*, 246-247

“Shall Satan keep a crafty watch, and shall not Christians keep a holy spiritual watch? Our whole life is beset with temptations. Satan watches all opportunities to break our peace, to wound our consciences, to lessen our comforts, to impair our graces, to slur our evidences, and to dampen our assurances. Oh! what need then have we to be always upon our watch-tower, lest we be surprised by this subtle serpent. Watchfulness includes a waking, a rousing up of the soul. It is a continual, careful observing of our hearts and ways, in all the turnings of our lives—that we still keep close to God and his Word....

Remember the dragon is subtle, and bites the elephant's ear, and then sucks his blood, because he knows that to be the only place which the elephant cannot reach with his trunk to defend; so our enemies are so subtle, that they will bite us, and strike us where they may most mischief us, and therefore it does very much concern us, to stand always upon our guard.”

– Thomas Brooks, *Precious Remedies Against Satan's Devices*, 247-248



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