

Introduction

1. Study of the Psalms for the second half of 2026

- a) Book One of the Psalms
- b) Looking at the Psalms of David

2. Approach

- a) A thematic approach
- b) Understand the theological significance of each Psalm
- c) Appreciate the relationship between the different Psalms
- d) To cluster them accordingly
- e) Highlight the theological aspects

3. Themes

- a) Inspiration for worship
- b) The need for prayer
- c) Heartfelt repentance
- d) Complexity of vindication
- e) Contrast between the righteous and the wicked etc

4. The need to pray

- a) Regular prayers that are needed each day
- b) Adverse circumstances helped David to be more conscious that he should maintain these regular prayers

Psalm 4

The need for prayer in times of distress

Superscription

“To the Chief Musician. With stringed instruments. A Psalm of David.”

1. David appointed a Chief Musician

- a) The Chief Musician was to organise all the Psalms collected
- b) Includes many psalms of David and from other authors

2. With stringed instruments

- a) Musical note given to the Chief Musician
- b) This Psalm was to be sung with stringed instruments

3. The author

- a) Clearly stated
- b) David is the author of the Psalm

A time of great distress

“How long, O you sons of men, will you turn my glory to shame? How long will you love worthlessness and seek falsehood?” Ps 4:2

1. This is the context of this Psalm
2. This was a life-threatening situation
3. They had been turning his glory to shame
4. They loved worthlessness
5. They sought to spread false words and did false things

Prayer and the need for a life of righteousness

“Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness!

You have relieved me in my distress;

Have mercy on me, and hear my prayer.” Ps 4:1

1. “God of my righteousness”

- a) Not a usual title of God
- b) In facing his circumstances, David sought to address God differently

- c) As God was righteous, David also ought to be righteous
- d) He sought to live in godliness and holiness
- e) The Lord would hear his call in view of his righteousness

2. God hears the prayers of those who are godly

“But know that the Lord has set apart for Himself him who is godly; the Lord will hear when I call to Him.” Ps 4:3

- a) He knew that the Lord had set apart...sanctified for Himself those who are godly
- b) Confidence in prayer

Meditation during prayer

“Be angry, and do not sin. Meditate within your heart on your bed, and be still.” Ps 4:4

1. Anger is an emotional concern that needs to be checked

- a) It could lead to sin
- b) If we are angry and sin, then it would affect our prayer

2. David sought to enter into meditation as a spiritual discipline

- a) He found time at night to meditate
- b) Before he went to bed
- c) He needed to meditate deeply within his heart and to be still

Post prayer practices

“Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, and put your trust in the Lord.” Ps 4:5

1. Offering sacrifices of righteousness

2. Placing trust in the Lord

There will be doubters

“There are many who say, “Who will show us any good?” Ps 4:6

- 1. There will always be those who will respond negatively
- 2. They will cast doubts as to whether anyone will show any good

Turning to prayer again

“Lord, lift up the light of Your countenance upon us.” Ps 4:6

- 1. The challenge is to look to the Lord to deal with these doubters

2. To keep seeking God to lift up the light of His countenance

The blessings that come through prayer

1. Gladness of heart

“You have put gladness in my heart, more than in the season that their grain and wine increased.” Ps 4:7

2. Peaceful sleep

“I will both lie down in peace, and sleep;” Ps 4:8

3. Safety

“For You alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety.” Ps 4:8

Lesson learned

1. To understand the need for prayer as we go through times of distress
2. To live righteously as it matters to the Lord as we turn to Him in prayer
3. Seeking to meditate on God...to learn to be still and not allow anger to get the better of us
4. Pray for the Lord’s countenance and favour to be upon us...that we may find joy, peace and safety