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Prayer and Praise in the Psalms



By Steven J. Hogan

~ A Saturday Morning Post #309 ~

I have been a pastor for over 45 years, and now that we're in the end-times, I am more motivated than ever to help people know the Lord and grow in their relationship with Him. That's what's most important now, and in the trouble-filled times ahead!!! *"One thing I ask of the Lord, this is what I seek; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord, and to seek Him in His temple"* (Ps. 27:4). *"Whom have I in heaven but You? And earth has nothing I desire besides You"* (Ps. 73:25). Speaking of our relationship with Him, Jesus said, *"only one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her."* Luke 10:38-42

Do you get it? Only one thing is truly important, and that's your personal relationship with the living God! One of the best ways to grow in your relationship with God is to be reading and thinking about the book of Psalms. Without question, this book will greatly help you have a close and intimate walk with Him.

The book of Psalms gives all these examples from the life of David and others who had excellent relationships with God. The Psalms were purposely given to you by God so you can draw close to Him, so you can know His love, and so you can love Him with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength. God wants you to learn from the hundreds of examples in this Spirit-inspired book, the longest book in the Bible, the book that more than any other focuses on your relationship with Him.

Here are some important aspects about Psalms and our relationship with God:
1. Our personal relationship with God is one of the primary themes in the Psalms.
2. The writers of the Psalms are not holding back in their communication with God – they are very honest and transparent.
3. The writers are fearing God, praising God, crying out to God, calling out to God, seeking God, loving God, trusting God, hoping in God, waiting on God, listening to God, learning from God, getting direction from God, and looking forward to being with God.

4. The Psalms will benefit you spiritually, emotionally, mentally, and physically.
5. There are different themes in the Psalms – God and Jesus Christ, the history of the Jews, the future of the Jews, trials, persecution, prophecy, your relationship with God, and your purpose in life.
6. The Psalms will help you when you are sick, tired, sad, fearful, lonely, angry, discouraged, depressed, proud, afflicted, anguished, abandoned, persecuted, feeling empty, feeling hopeless, feeling guilty, or any combination of the above.

7. The Psalmists desire to be with God, to spend time with Him. They want the truth. And they want love, joy, peace, holiness, comfort, direction, protection, wisdom, hope, strength, encouragement, and a friend. They want to be close to God, to *“see”* His face, to *“feel”* His presence, and to *“taste”* and enjoy His mercy and love.
8. Psalm 119 is essential for your relationship with God. It is extremely detailed in how it speaks of God’s word, giving you insights you won’t find in any other book. Psalm 119 is my favorite chapter in the Bible for

it motivates me to read it, instructs me how to study it, and helps me to obey it.

In the article's section, I have listed out hundreds of verses from Psalms that are examples of a believer's relationship with God, specifically how he should communicate with God, how he should pray to God and praise God. The reason we know these are personal prayers and praise is that the words *"I"* , *"me"*, and *"my"* are used, which refer to you, and the words *"You"* and *"Your"*, which refer to God. As you read the Psalms, I strongly encourage you to look for and learn from these verses, for I'm convinced they will help you to relate to and know God in a more intimate way.

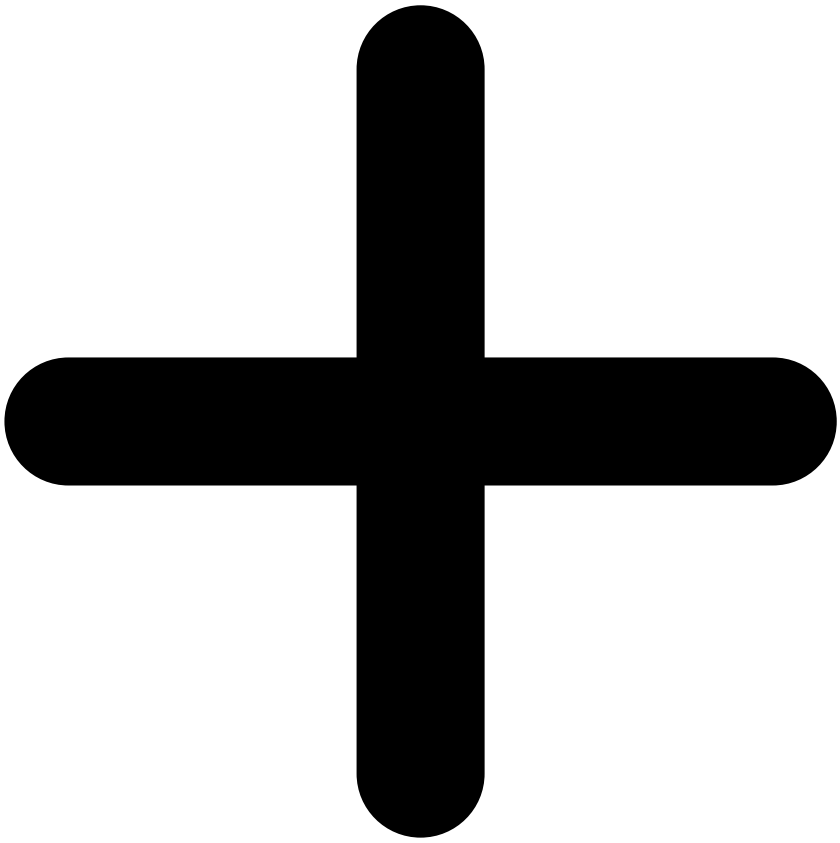
Here is a short sampling of these relational verses: **Ps. 4:8** – *"I will lie down and sleep in peace, for You alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety."* **Ps. 16:1** – *"Keep me safe, O God, for in You I take refuge."* **Ps. 27:11** – *"Teach me Your way, O Lord, lead me in a straight path because of my oppressors."* **Ps. 30:11** – *"I will exalt You, O Lord, for You lifted me out of the depths."* **Ps. 31:14-17 –** *"I trust in You, O Lord; I say, 'You are my God.'"* **Ps. 40:8** – *"I desire to do Your will, O my God."* **Ps. 59:1** – *"Deliver me from my enemies, O God; protect me from evildoers."* **Ps. 67:3** – *"May the peoples praise you, O God; may all the people praise You."* **Ps. 71:5** – *"You have been my hope, O Sovereign Lord, my confidence since my youth."* **Ps. 82:2-3** – *"How long will You defend the unjust and show partiality to the wicked? Defend the cause of the weak and fatherless."* **Ps. 92:4** – *"You make my glad by Your deeds, O Lord, I sing for joy at the works of Your hands."* **Ps. 101:1** – *"I will sing of Your love and justice; to You, O Lord, I will sing praise."*

I love the book of Psalms – it's my favorite book in the Bible. Part of my reading every morning is a Psalm and an 8-verse passage from Psalm 119. They have proved to be precious to my soul, for they have helped me to know, *"see"*, and experience the living God. I wouldn't have been able to keep going for God these past 50+ years without them – and I will keep needing and reading them the rest of my life.

As you know, we are living in the end-times, the last years before Christ's return – and these are tough and trying times, and it will get worse before it gets better. You might be here when that devilish Antichrist comes and rules over this world, and is greatly persecuting Christians. That's when you will really need a close relationship with God. To spiritually survive and be spiritually successful at that time, you will need His love, His leading, and His strength, and that's when the Psalms will prove to be extremely valuable to you.

But why wait? Being with your Father and being with Jesus is the right thing and the best thing to do now, and so be reading and believing the Psalms, and by so doing, you will be close to God, you will be walking with God, you will be a well-loved and obedient Christian, and you will be preparing for the future. *"I will exalt You, my God the King; I will praise Your name forever and ever."* Psalm 145:1

P.S. Again, I am stressing your relationship with God, now and forever. And I am focusing on the Psalms, God's book to help you grow in your relationship with Him. I encourage you to read last weeks post if you have not yet done so – *"The Psalms are Needed Now and In the Future."*



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