

Let Us Come Before His Presence

365 days to learn, meditate and pray
from the Psalms and the Sermon on
the Mount

Yann Opsitch

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LET US COME BEFORE HIS PRESENCE: 365 DAYS TO LEARN,
MEDITATE AND PRAY FROM THE PSALMS AND THE SER-
MON ON THE MOUNT

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*To my dear and lovely wife Rita,
who encouraged me greatly in writing this book.*

Let us Come Before His Presence in
the Psalms

Week 1: The God of Blessing

Day 1

*1 "Blessed is the man
Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly,
2 Nor stands in the path of sinners,
Nor sits in the seat of the scornful;"*
(Psalm 1.1,2)

The Hebrew word used here for “blessed” (*ashrei*) begins and sets the tone for the entire book of Psalms. Sometimes translated as “happy” (as in Deuteronomy 33.29, KJV) the word *ashrei* concludes the second Psalm about the coming Messiah (God’s anointed Son): “Blessed are all who take refuge in him.”

Blessings from God are the result or fruit of something else. This is illustrated in the first Psalm by the picture of the tree planted by the waters and bringing its fruit in its season. Blessings and happiness are offered to the forgiven (Psalms 32.1); to a nation under God (Psalms 33.12); to the one who trusts in God (34.8). The same can be said of the Sermon on the Mount where Jesus also introduced his teachings with the word “blessed” (Matthew 5.1-12). The blessed are those who meditate — “moan” or “lament” (*bagah*) in their hearts — over the Word. “Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted” Matthew 5.4 (see James 4.9).

In Jewish literature, to bless is often connected to the bringing down of divine abundance (*aisb*). As in Psalm 34.8 the blessed enjoy the goodness of God; they are partakers of His promises: “Oh, taste and see that the Lord *is* good; blessed *is* the man *who* trusts in Him!”

The blessed are known by their actions; by their difference of behavior as opposed to the ungodly, sinners or scornful who mock the things of God and deride biblical wisdom in order to involve others in their folly.

The scornful (*leit-z*) mock out of pride and arrogance. They are among the incorrigible fools of the book of Proverbs. The mockers or scornful

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of the Bible are unteachable and refuse to listen (Proverbs 9.8; 13.1). To be seated with them is a waste of time (Proverbs 15.12). Unbelievers and Pharisees often mocked Jesus' teachings (Luke 8.53; Mark 5.40; Matthew 9.24; Luke 16.14). Both the Gentiles and chief priests, along with elders and scribes, mocked Jesus at his trial and crucifixion (Matthew 27.31, 41; Mark 10.34; 15.20; Luke 22.63). The apostle Paul was mocked for his preaching of the resurrection (Acts 17.32).

The "blessed" can also be a group of people, a family or even an entire nation: "Blessed *is* the nation whose God *is* the Lord, the people He has chosen as His own inheritance." (Psalms 33.12)

The words of Psalms 1 are echoed by the prophet Jeremiah:

"But blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord,
whose confidence is in him.
They will be like a tree planted by the water
that sends out its roots by the stream.
It does not fear when heat comes;
its leaves are always green.
It has no worries in a year of drought
and never fails to bear fruit." (Jeremiah 17.17,18)

The blessed are like trees planted or rather "replanted" (*ke'etz sbatul*) in the divine soil watered by God's Word. In its season or at the proper time, these trees bring fruit. The leaves of these trees don't wither or "dry up" because they are "replanted" in eternity (see Isaiah 41.19.20; 44.4; Proverbs 11.30; Matthew 7.17-19; Galatians 5.22-26).

The blessed are fruitful throughout their lives in everything they do: "That you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God" (Colossians 2.10).

The counsel of the ungodly or wicked lead to death and destruction. They are like chaff, not good or useful for anything. Their end is opposite to the end of the blessed. They shall not be able to stand on the day of judgment. The way or path of the wicked leads to destruction, ruin.

Prayer

Lord, we want to delight every day in your Word. We thank you for speaking to us through the prophets and your Son. Give us today a heart to avoid evil and do what is good. We pray that we can produce good fruits to your glory through your Holy Spirit. Amen.