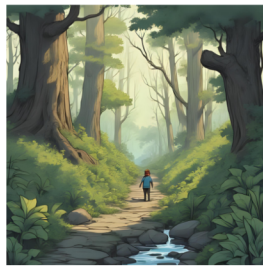


GROWTH GROUP STUDY GUIDE

SONGS IN THE SAVIOUR'S FOOTSTEPS



THE BOOK OF PSALMS

SONGS

IN THE SAVIOUR'S FOOTSTEPS



THE BOOK OF PSALMS

The Book of Psalms

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INTRODUCTION

God has given us a songbook: The book of Psalms.

On Sunday we saw ...the blessed life is found in meditating on God's word (Psalm 1) and taking refuge in His Son (Psalm 2). The book of Psalms enables us to do just that! It spurs us on to follow Christ together whether we weep, worship, wait or wander.

This term:

- *We'll meet the great messiah of the Old Testament - David. We'll hear his cries as a sufferer (Ps 40), and a sinner (Ps 51).*
- *We'll hear Israel confess & cry for help, (Ps 78 & 88).*
- *We'll seek hope (Ps 91) and then see our hero (Ps 118).*
- *We'll praise God for his steadfast love! (Ps 150).*

We'll hear Psalms from each of the five books. Each reflects part of Israel's journey and points us to Christ. See Appendix I for a diagram of how the 5 books of the Psalms fit together.

It'll be quite a ride! So sing up! Let's enjoy this chance to spur one another on as we follow Jesus' footsteps together.

STUDY 1

PSALM 40: WAITING FOR GOD



When things are difficult...who are you most likely to vent to about it?

This Psalm sits in Book I of Psalms. Book I focuses on the life and times of David - the great Messiah (aka 'Christ') of the Old Testament.

You would expect these Psalms to be upbeat and triumphant! But they're not.

These Psalms point to how Christ, even more so than David, found his victory not in earthly glory but as the faithful messiah who took refuge in God.

LISTEN CLOSELY

Read out the Psalm together. In your booklet (overleaf):

- 1) Circle any key repeated words.
- 2) Underline words/phrases to do with talking.
- 3) Highlight those verses in which David describes his circumstances.

PSALM 40

TO THE CHOIRMASTER. A PSALM OF DAVID.

1 I waited patiently for the Lord;

he inclined to me and heard my cry.

2 He drew me up from the pit of destruction,

out of the miry bog,

and set my feet upon a rock,

making my steps secure.

3 He put a new song in my mouth,

a song of praise to our God.

Many will see and fear,

and put their trust in the Lord.

4 Blessed is the man who makes

the Lord his trust,

who does not turn to the proud,

to those who go astray after a lie!

5 You have multiplied, O Lord my God,

your wondrous deeds and your thoughts toward us;

none can compare with you!

I will proclaim and tell of them,

yet they are more than can be told.

6 In sacrifice and offering you have not delighted,

but you have given me an open ear.

Burnt offering and sin offering

you have not required.

7 Then I said, "Behold, I have come;

in the scroll of the book it is written of me:

8 I delight to do your will, O my God;

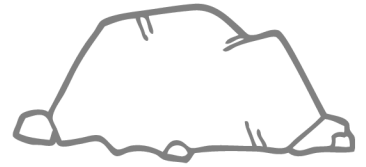
your law is within my heart.

9 I have told the glad news of deliverance

in the great congregation;

behold, I have not restrained my lips,

as you know, O Lord.



10 I have not hidden your deliverance within my heart;
I have spoken of your faithfulness and your salvation;
I have not concealed your steadfast love and your faithfulness
from the great congregation.

11 As for you, O Lord, you will not restrain
your mercy from me;
your steadfast love and your faithfulness will
ever preserve me!

12 For evils have encompassed me
beyond number;
my iniquities have overtaken me,
and I cannot see;
they are more than the hairs of my head;
my heart fails me.

13 Be pleased, O Lord, to deliver me!
O Lord, make haste to help me!

14 Let those be put to shame and disappointed altogether
who seek to snatch away my life;
let those be turned back and brought to dishonor
who delight in my hurt!

15 Let those be appalled because of their shame
who say to me, "Aha, Aha!"

16 But may all who seek you
rejoice and be glad in you;
may those who love your salvation
say continually, "Great is the Lord!"

17 As for me, I am poor and needy,
but the Lord takes thought for me.
You are my help and my deliverer;
do not delay, O my God!

LEARN DEEPLY



From this Psalm, what do you think is David's biggest reason for hope?

We've seen that Psalms 1-2 help us understand the book as a whole....How is the man of Psalm 40 fulfilling Psalms 1-2?

When do we see Jesus call out in hope to God? If you like, you can flick through gospels to help you answer.

RETUNE OUR THINKING

"My faith is a private matter". How might the Psalmist reply to that statement?

Is David praying or venting? List all the differences between praying and venting you can think of.



Praying:

Venting:

What are the benefits of praying over venting?

KEEP SINGING

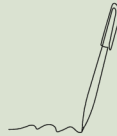
Next time something is hard, what would it look like to go to God with it *first*, how might that change your response?

Think of someone you know who is going through a hard time. What would 'blessed' look like according to verse 4? How could you encourage them to trust God in what's going on?

PRAYER

Choose something you are finding hard at the moment & write a prayer to God mirroring Psalm 40:

God, this is what's hard...



As for you O LORD, I know you are...

Be pleased, O LORD to...[i.e. how could He help?]

in Jesus' name, Amen

STUDY 2

PSALM 51: CRYING OUT FOR GRACE



Think of a time when you were guilty of sin.
Which picture best reflects how you felt:



LISTEN CLOSELY

This Psalm is in Book II.

Last week we met David in his suffering. Here we meet him in his sin.

From the subscription (see Appendix 2) we learn David wrote this Psalm after his sin of adultery (with Bathsheba) and murder (of her husband) has come into the light (through the prophet Nathan) (see 2 Samuel 11).

Read out Psalm 51 (overleaf).

1) Circle the different words/phrases used to describe sin.

2) Underline all the things David asks God to do for him.

3) Highlight phrases which describe what happens when God forgives.

PSALM 51

TO THE CHOIRMASTER. A PSALM OF DAVID, WHEN NATHAN THE PROPHET WENT TO HIM, AFTER HE HAD GONE IN TO BATHSHEBA.

- ¹ Have mercy on me, O God,
according to your steadfast love;
according to your abundant mercy
blot out my transgressions.
- ² Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,
and cleanse me from my sin!
- ³ For I know my transgressions,
and my sin is ever before me.
- ⁴ Against you, you only, have I sinned
and done what is evil in your sight,
so that you may be justified in your words
and blameless in your judgment.
- ⁵ Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity,
and in sin did my mother conceive me.
- ⁶ Behold, you delight in truth in the inward being,
and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart.
- ⁷ Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;
wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.
- ⁸ Let me hear joy and gladness;
let the bones that you have broken rejoice.

- ⁹ Hide your face from my sins,
and blot out all my iniquities.
- ¹⁰ Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within me.
- ¹¹ Cast me not away from your presence,
and take not your Holy Spirit from me.
- ¹² Restore to me the joy of your salvation,
and uphold me with a willing spirit.
- ¹³ Then I will teach transgressors your ways,
and sinners will return to you.
- ¹⁴ Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God,
O God of my salvation,
and my tongue will sing aloud of your righteousness.
- ¹⁵ O Lord, open my lips,
and my mouth will declare your praise.
- ¹⁶ For you will not delight in sacrifice, or I would give it;
you will not be pleased with a burnt offering.
- ¹⁷ The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit;
a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.
- ¹⁸ Do good to Zion in your good pleasure;
build up the walls of Jerusalem;
- ¹⁹ then will you delight in right sacrifices,
in burnt offerings and whole burnt offerings;
then bulls will be offered on your altar.

LEARN DEEPLY

Group discussion:

- Group 1: What does Psalm 51 teach about sin and its impact on our relationship with God?
- Group 2: What does Psalm 51 teach about God's forgiveness and its impact on our relationship with Him?

"Have mercy on me, O God, I tried my best and have been generally good" is NOT what verse 1 says. How does Psalm 51's picture of salvation match the New Testament (e.g. Luke 8:9-14)?

RETUNE OUR THINKING



"Humans are born good, but society corrupts. Reform society, and people can flourish."

Where do you see this philosophy adopted in your workplace and life?

Re-write the quote in light of Psalm 51:

.....

KEEP SINGING

Look back over the group discussion. Which verse from Psalm 51 do you think you need to really keep singing?

Think of a friend you know who is struggling with sin. Which verse would you like to share with them?

“Repentance is more than just sorrow for the past: repentance is a change of mind and heart, a new life of denying self and serving the Saviour as King in self's place.
- JI Packer, *Knowing God*.”

PRAYER

Choose a habit or attitude that you would like to (or know you need to) turn away from. Using phrases from Psalm 51, write out a prayer of confession to God.



STUDY 3

PSALM 78: LOOK BACK, MOVE FORWARD



What childhood story gets retold in your family? Why do you think your family keeps telling it?

Psalm 78 sits in Book III of the Psalms. This book is linked to the dark days of Israel (see Appendix 1). Israel had split into 2 - North (Israel) and South (Judah) and the destruction of both (first the North then the South) was on the horizon.

This Psalm is a 'maskil'. A type of Psalm intended to teach and give wisdom.

LISTEN CLOSELY

Read Psalm 78:5-8. This is the big idea of the Psalm! Now read the whole thing (overleaf). While you read:
1) Circle key words which are repeated.

2) Put a ✕ next to times Israel is rebellious.

Put a ♥ next to times God is merciful.

(The events described in the Psalm are listed in Appendix 3.)

PSALM 78

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[b] the bow,
turned back on the day of battle.
- ¹⁰ They did not keep God's covenant,
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,
rebellious 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.

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.
⁴² They did not remember his power[e]
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;
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.

LEARN DEEPLY

If you had to explain the main message of Psalm 78 to a 7 year old what would you say?

In 1 Cor 10 Paul uses Israel's disobedience as a warning for Christians. How do you see yourself in Israel's choices in Psalm 78?

KEEP SINGING

What opportunities do you have to tell 'the coming generation the glorious deeds of the LORD' (vs4)?

Are there times you are tempted to 'hide them'?

Do you think we are in the same position of urgency as the Psalmist to tell the next generation? Why or why not?



PRAYER

Who could you pray for in the next generation, that they would come to stand firm on Christ?

STUDY 4



GG2026: Why are we talking about plans?

For the next 3 weeks, we're going to take 10 minutes to look ahead and think about Growth Group for 2026.

At Crossroads we love our Growth Groups as, under God, they help us grow more like Jesus as we:

- learn from the Bible in repentance and faith;
- pray for God to change us; and
- love & care for each other.

When packing (or prioritising), it's best to 'put the big things in first'. To help this happen for 2026, we are opening Growth Group sign-ups early. So, if you'd like to, you'll be able to sign up for a 2026 Growth Group from Sunday 16 Nov 2025.

Our prayer is early sign-ups will help us:

- start 2026 with GG already in place, making it easier to avoid clashes and be regular;
- start 2026 focused on inviting newcomers to GG;
- for City: enjoy Summer GG, knowing what's ahead.

Read Ephesians 4:11-14 and discuss...

1) God grows his church by giving us one another. Which phrases show the goal we are moving to together?

2) Given this, what could we look for in a growth group?

Have a person pray for wisdom as we make decisions

STUDY 4

PSALM 88: WHEN GOD FEELS DISTANT



When have you felt most deeply the sadness that nearness to death brings?

Psalm 88 is a lament.

It marks the darkest point in Psalms.

Book III reflects Israel's lowest era—the divided kingdom, the North destroyed, the South invaded.

It's as if in this Psalm, one person's brush with death mirrors Israel's brush with national death.

LISTEN CLOSELY

Read the Psalm aloud twice. Each time, change reader when the Psalmist says 'O Lord' (at vv 9b, 13, 14). (These mark the Psalm's structure).

Circle all the words which describe death/the place of the dead

Which verses show why the Psalmist is in this position?

PSALM 88

**A SONG. A PSALM OF THE SONS OF KORAH. TO THE
CHOIRMASTER: ACCORDING TO MAHALATH LEANNOH.
A MASKIL OF HEMAN THE EZRAHITE.**

- ¹ O Lord, God of my salvation,
I cry out day and night before you.
- ² Let my prayer come before you;
incline your ear to my cry!
- ³ For my soul is full of troubles,
and my life draws near to Sheol.
- ⁴ I am counted among those who go down to the pit;
I am a man who has no strength,
- ⁵ like one set loose among the dead,
like the slain that lie in the grave,
like those whom you remember no more,
for they are cut off from your hand.
- ⁶ You have put me in the depths of the pit,
in the regions dark and deep.
- ⁷ Your wrath lies heavy upon me,
and you overwhelm me with all your waves. *Selah*
- ⁸ You have caused my companions to shun me;
you have made me a horror to them.
I am shut in so that I cannot escape;
- ⁹ my eye grows dim through sorrow.
Every day I call upon you, O Lord;
I spread out my hands to you.
- ¹⁰ Do you work wonders for the dead?
Do the departed rise up to praise you? *Selah*

- ¹¹ Is your steadfast love declared in the grave,
or your faithfulness in Abaddon?
- ¹² Are your wonders known in the darkness,
or your righteousness in the land of forgetfulness?
- ¹³ But I, O Lord, cry to you;
in the morning my prayer comes before you.
- ¹⁴ O Lord, why do you cast my soul away?
Why do you hide your face from me?
- ¹⁵ Afflicted and close to death from my youth up,
I suffer your terrors; I am helpless.
- ¹⁶ Your wrath has swept over me;
your dreadful assaults destroy me.
- ¹⁷ They surround me like a flood all day long;
they close in on me together.
- ¹⁸ You have caused my beloved and my friend to shun me;
my companions have become darkness.

LEARN DEEPLY



Can we put this Psalm on the lips of Jesus?

Jesus - "the life" - died. How does this Psalm give you a deeper understanding of Jesus' death?

RETUNE OUR THINKING

“

Instead of explaining our suffering, God shares it
- Wolterstorff,
(Lament for a Son)

”



“From Ps 88, do you agree with this quote? Why or why not?”

“What comfort do you think Jesus’ suffering could have provided the Psalmist in his suffering?”

“Let me say ... how incredibly encouraging I find the person who wrote this poem. He was a faithful Israelite, and his experience of God was one of long disappointment and lonely sorrow. But still he clings to God as his Saviour, despite not knowing why God doesn't save him. He refuses to go gentle into the night, but neither does he rage against his Maker. As he sinks away, he clings to God. Can you think of anything more impressive?”
- Andrew Shead, (Walk his Way)

KEEP SINGING

Who might be feeling this way now—maybe even you? What comfort from this Psalm would you share?

If not today, one day we'll face despair. In pairs, share one truth from Psalm 88 you'd want your future self to hear.

Pray together, asking God to enable you to cling to him in Christ.

STUDY 5



GG2026: How could we think about plans?

At Crossroads, under God, our Growth Groups help us grow more like Jesus as we:

- learn from the Bible in repentance and faith;
- pray for God to change us; and
- love & care for each other.

Sometimes staying or moving groups can better serve the gospel, our godliness or others'.

Read the **scenarios** below & discuss: What could be best for the gospel? For their godliness? For others?

- **Chris** chose his 2025 group as his friends are in it, but the location has made it a struggle to be regular. He's tossing up joining a group closer to home for 2026.
- **Chrissy's** had the same group for 4 years. It's comfortable but she knows a new group that could use core members.
- **Kristof** joined in June. He prayed out loud for the first time last week. He's unsure whether to stay or move.

Leaders: now is a great time to share your plans for 2026

Reflection

In pairs: what factors you are weighing up in choosing a group for next year?

STUDY 5

PSALM 91: GOD MY REFUGE



Share a time when you found refuge just when you needed it.

Psalms 91 sits in Book IV.

Book IV lines up with Israel's time in exile (see Appendix I).

We would expect it to be even darker than Book III. But it isn't. Instead it is filled with hope. Psalms 91-100 are the longest stretch of praise in the whole book of Psalms!

The big question is - how?

LISTEN CLOSELY

Read Psalm 91 (overleaf).

Change readers for each new speaker in the text (at verses 3 and 14).

- Who do you think the different speakers are?

“I will say to the LORD - ‘my refuge’ (vs 2). Circle images of refuge and protection in the Psalm.

- Which image resonates most strongly with you?

PSALM 91

- ¹ He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High
will abide in the shadow of the Almighty.
- ² I will say to the Lord, “My refuge and my fortress,
my God, in whom I trust.”
- ³ For he will deliver you from the snare of the fowler
and from the deadly pestilence.
- ⁴ He will cover you with his pinions,
and under his wings you will find refuge;
his faithfulness is a shield and buckler.
- ⁵ You will not fear the terror of the night,
nor the arrow that flies by day,
- ⁶ nor the pestilence that stalks in darkness,
nor the destruction that wastes at noonday.
- ⁷ A thousand may fall at your side,
ten thousand at your right hand,
but it will not come near you.
- ⁸ You will only look with your eyes
and see the recompense of the wicked.
- ⁹ Because you have made the Lord your dwelling place—
the Most High, who is my refuge—
- ¹⁰ no evil shall be allowed to befall you,
no plague come near your tent.

PSALM 91 CONTINUED

- ¹¹ For he will command his angels concerning you
to guard you in all your ways.
- ¹² On their hands they will bear you up,
lest you strike your foot against a stone.
- ¹³ You will tread on the lion and the adder;
the young lion and the serpent you will trample
underfoot.
- ¹⁴ Because he holds fast to me in love, I will deliver him;
I will protect him, because he knows my name.
- ¹⁵ When he calls to me, I will answer him;
I will be with him in trouble;
I will rescue him and honor him.
- ¹⁶ With long life I will satisfy him
and show him my salvation.”

LEARN DEEPLY

In pairs write out verses 1-2 and 14-16 in your own words:



Let's imagine Jesus saying this Psalm. When did God ultimately 'rescue him and honor him' (vs15)?

Just like the Psalmist, as Christians, we face troubles. What kind of protection does Christ's work on the cross give us?

RETUNE OUR THINKING: ANGELS



Consider vs 11-13. It's clear the 'ways' the Psalmist walks are God's ways. This is not a promise that angels will protect us from the results of following our own agenda (c.f. Luke 4). Rather, it's a promise that angels protect Christians from being pulled from God by Satan's attacks (lions and serpents, cf. 1 Pet 5:8; Heb 1:14).

Is this how the world views angels? Why or why not?

KEEP SINGING!

In what part of life do you feel least bold as a Christian?

How does this Psalm give you confidence to live more boldly for Christ?

Who is somebody in your life who you could encourage with the truths of this Psalm?

Praise God for the protection we have in Christ and the confidence that gives us to live for him.



STUDY 6



GG2026: What could be best for next year?

At Crossroads, under God, our Growth Groups help us grow more like Jesus as we:

- learn from the Bible in repentance and faith;
- pray for God to change us; and
- love & care for each other.

2026 Growth Group sign ups are now open!

As you decide, keep Ephesians 4 in mind - God's goal is that we would **grow in Christ together**.

Individually, for 5 minutes consider your 2026 plans.

- What group could be best for gospel growth? For your godliness? For others?

You may also like to consider:

- How are you feeling about the decision/other's decisions?
- Who could you thank God for? Any anxieties to entrust to God? Any hopes to bring to him?

As a group, take a moment to go around and briefly share what you're thinking about for GG next year.

Pray for wise decision making and a fruitful 2026

STUDY 6

PSALM 118: SALVATION'S SOUNDTRACK



Share an important moment in your life. If it had a “soundtrack,” what song would be playing?

WHERE THIS PSALM SITS

It sits as part of Book V of the Psalms (Psalms 107–150).

Psalm 118 is the last in the Hallel Psalms (Psalms 113–118)—sung during Passover as songs of thanksgiving for God’s deliverance. This is likely the final song Jesus and His disciples sang together before heading to the Mount of Olives (Matthew 26:30).

Psalm 118 opens (Matt 21:9), closes (Matt 26:30), and is sprinkled throughout Jesus’ final week. You could say it became the soundtrack of the most important week in human history.

LISTEN CLOSELY

In the Psalm overleaf...

- 1) circle all the repeated words and phrases
- 2) Underline any images or metaphors
- 3) Put a box around parts of the text that reveal feelings or attitudes.

PSALM 118

Oh give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
for his steadfast love endures forever!

2 Let Israel say,

“His steadfast love endures forever.”

3 Let the house of Aaron say,

“His steadfast love endures forever.”

4 Let those who fear the Lord say,

“His steadfast love endures forever.”

5 Out of my distress I called on the Lord;
the Lord answered me and set me free.

6 The Lord is on my side; I will not fear.

What can man do to me?

7 The Lord is on my side as my helper;

I shall look in triumph on those who hate me.

8 It is better to take refuge in the Lord
than to trust in man.

9 It is better to take refuge in the Lord
than to trust in princes.

10 All nations surrounded me;
in the name of the Lord I cut them off!

11 They surrounded me, surrounded me on every side;
in the name of the Lord I cut them off!

12 They surrounded me like bees;
they went out like a fire among thorns;
in the name of the Lord I cut them off!

13 I was pushed hard, so that I was falling,
but the Lord helped me.

- 14 The Lord is my strength and my song;
he has become my salvation.
- 15 Glad songs of salvation
are in the tents of the righteous:
"The right hand of the Lord does valiantly,
16 the right hand of the Lord exalts,
the right hand of the Lord does valiantly!"
- 17 I shall not die, but I shall live,
and recount the deeds of the Lord.
- 18 The Lord has disciplined me severely,
but he has not given me over to death.
- 19 Open to me the gates of righteousness,
that I may enter through them
and give thanks to the Lord.
- 20 This is the gate of the Lord;
the righteous shall enter through it.
- 21 I thank you that you have answered me
and have become my salvation.
- 22 The stone that the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone.^[b]
- 23 This is the Lord's doing;
it is marvelous in our eyes.
- 24 This is the day that the Lord has made;
let us rejoice and be glad in it.
- 25 Save us, we pray, O Lord!
O Lord, we pray, give us success!

- 26 Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!
We bless you from the house of the Lord.
- 27 The Lord is God,
and he has made his light to shine upon us.
Bind the festal sacrifice with cords,
up to the horns of the altar!
- 28 You are my God, and I will give thanks to you;
you are my God; I will extol you.
- 29 Oh give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
for his steadfast love endures forever!

LEARN DEEPLY

Why is God's steadfast love worth celebrating? What does it say about us? What does it say about Him?

Can you find other places in Scripture where the words, images, or themes of Psalm 118 appear? (It is the second most-quoted Psalm in the New Testament.)

How do these connections help you understand the Psalm's meaning and its fulfilment in Jesus?

Psalm 118 echoes the Exodus story of God rescuing His people. Where do you see those hints in the Psalm?

Now look to Jesus' rescue through His life, death, and resurrection—what does this Psalm show us about the way Jesus rescues and rules?

RETUNE OUR THINKING



The Psalmist boasts in God's victory rather than his own. In what ways do we tend to celebrate ourselves instead of giving glory to God? What would it look like for our words and actions to point people to Him instead?

In a culture obsessed with likes, followers, and approval, it's easy to look to people for our sense of worth. What does it mean to truly take refuge in the Lord, and how might that change the way we handle criticism or comparison?

KEEP SINGING

Who in your life needs to hear about God's steadfast love, salvation, and help today?

As a church, what practices could we adopt so that worship, gratitude, and refuge in God are things we do together rather than just privately?

PRAYER

Write a prayer of praise in response to this Psalm: how can you hold onto His promises and ask him to do what He has promised in His word?

STUDY 7

PSALM 150: TO THE PRAISE OF HIS GLORY



What's the best or worst anthem you've ever heard or sung? What made it so powerful or lifeless?

WHERE THIS PSALM SITS

*The last Psalm of Book V and the whole Psalter.
It functions as a grand finale, summing up the whole collection.*

It's pure praise.

LISTEN CLOSELY

As you look at the text, ask the questions:
Where, Why, How, Who?

What does this Psalm reveal about God's purpose/vision for the world?

What does this Psalm show us about human beings?

PSALM 150

Let Everything Praise the Lord

1 Praise the Lord!

Praise God in his sanctuary;
praise him in his mighty heavens!^[a]

2 Praise him for his mighty deeds;
praise him according to his excellent greatness!

3 Praise him with trumpet sound;
praise him with lute and harp!

4 Praise him with tambourine and dance;
praise him with strings and pipe!

5 Praise him with sounding cymbals;
praise him with loud clashing cymbals!

6 Let everything that has breath praise the Lord!
Praise the Lord!

LEARN DEEPLY

As you read the Psalm, reflect on what should lead us to worship God.

How does Jesus' humility, suffering, death, and resurrection expand on our idea of greatness and deepen our reason to praise?

If Psalm 150 is a foretaste, what do the resurrection and new creation show us about the fullness of praise?

Read Rom 8:18-25; Rev 5:13, 7:9-12, 21:1-5

KEEP SINGING

How can you use your breath, energy, and talents to praise God this week?

How can our church encourage one another to keep praising God this week?

Who needs to hear about God's deeds, and how can our praise point them to Jesus?

RETUNE OUR THINKING



The Psalm ends with “Let everything that has breath praise the LORD.” What does this say about the purpose of our lives?

What are our modern “instruments” — how can daily work, skills, and resources become ways we praise and worship?

What does worship that is rooted in who He is and what He has done guard us against?

KEEP SINGING

Who in your life needs to hear about God's steadfast love, salvation, and help today?

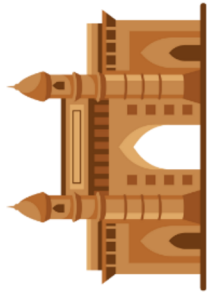
As a church, what practices could we adopt so that worship, gratitude, and refuge in God are things we do together rather than just privately?

PRAYER

Write a prayer of praise in response to this Psalm: how can you hold onto His promises and ask him to do what He has promised in His word?

APPENDIX 1

The 5 books
of the Psalms
(drawn from Shear 'Walk his Way')



Psalms 1&2 are the gateway to the book. They teach us why and how to read it

* While not every psalm in this book was written in this period, they have been 'booked' together. Each psalm is 'at home' in this period in some way. Think of it as a curated patchwork.

The last 5 psalms show the goal of our journey: praise!

BookI BookII BookIII BookIV BookV

3

Period*: Life and times of King David

Type: mostly laments - some praise/thanks.

Rather than victorious, David is the faithful messiah who takes refuge in God

41

42

Period: Life and times of King David.

Ps71 echoes the end of David's life, Ps 72 is a prayer for his son, Solomon.

Type: mostly laments.

72

73

Period: Split kingdom (after Exile). Includes the fall of the Nth, and then the Sth.

Type: All but 5 are laments, often communal in the face of national disaster.

89

90

Period: 70 years of exile.

Type: Joyful recognition that the LORD reigns over the nations, ends with prayer for return from exile.

106

107

Period: return from Exile

Type: Lots of praise. Opens with prayer for return answered.

145

146

147

148

149

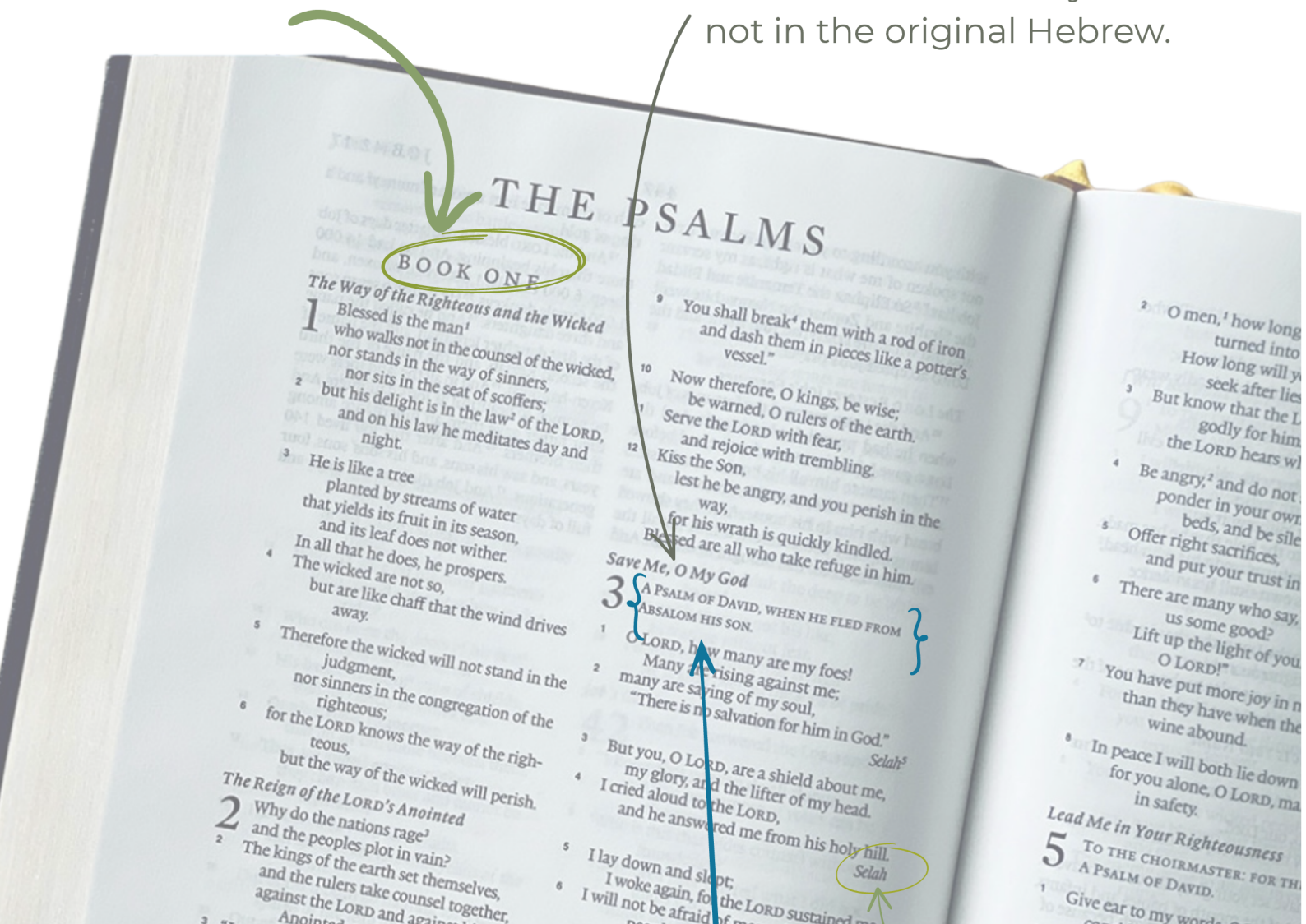
150

APPENDIX 2

What's what in the text?

These 'books' were compiled over time by the original Hebrew collators.

These titles have been added by our English bible translators. They were not in the original Hebrew.



Some Psalms have these 'superscriptions'. They were included by the original Hebrew collators and are 'verse 1' in Hebrew bibles. They should be read when reading aloud the Psalm.

A musical term in the original Hebrew. Operates as a structural marker/pause point.

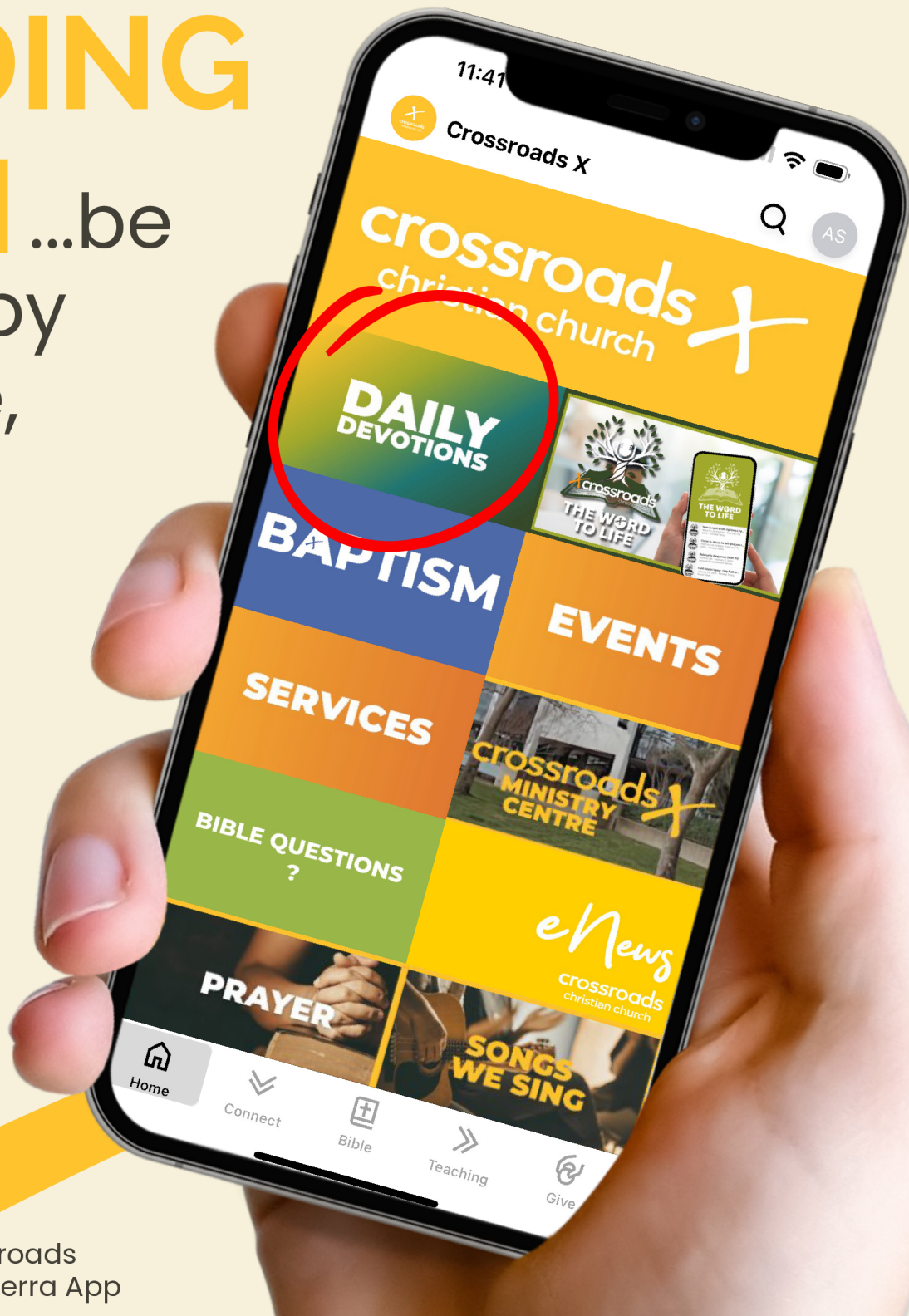
APPENDIX 3

Psalm 78 History List

Verses in Ps 78	Event in Israel's history	Cross reference
Vv 5, 6	God gives Israel the law, to be passed down.	Deut 6:6-9
vv 12-16	God's performs wonders in Egypt: divides the sea, leads with cloud/fire, gives water from the rock	Ex. 7-14
vv 17-20	Israel grumbles in the wilderness,	Num. 11 (quail); Ex 16 (manna)
vv 21-25	God provides manna	Ex. 16:4-15; Num. 11:7-9
vv26-31	God sends quail in anger, people struck down	Num. 11:31-34
vv 32-37	Israel sins again and again, showing shallow repentance	Num. 14:1-12; Judg. 2:11-19
vv 38-39	God's compassion and restraint	Ex 34:6-7
vv40-51	The plagues in Egypt	Ex 7-12
vv 52-54	Exodus and conquest of Canaan	Ex 12-14 Josh. 3-6
vv56-64	Israel's rebellion in the land; loss of the ark	Judg. 2:11-15 1 Sam. 4:10-11
vv 65-66	God rises and defeats enemies	1 Sam. 5:1-12
vv 67-72	God rejects Ephraim, chooses Judah and David as shepherd-king	1 Sam. 16:1-13 2 Sam. 7:8-16

DAILY BIBLE READING

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shaped by
Scripture,
every
day.



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Psalms series today.*