

Psalm a Day Lenten Devotional

2017

By Christine V. Hides



Lent and Holy Week 2017:

Ash Wednesday, March 1

Maundy Thursday, April 13

Good Friday, April 14

Easter Sunday, April 16

Invitation:

Regular prayer and Bible study are an essential part of growing in faith. This Lenten resource invites you to read one psalm per day. Because the psalms contain difficult language and metaphor, especially for children, I offer three different reading options:

- *Psalms for Young Children* by Marie-Helen Deval
- *Prayers before an Awesome God: the Psalms for Teenagers* by David Haas
- The Bible, any version of your choosing

Most of us have experienced something that leaves us speechless; profound events often startle us into silence. Prayer is our faithful response to both good and bad experiences and everything in between. The psalms can be our voice when the words don't come. What would happen if we all read one psalm a day? What if we explored our own emotions of joy, sorrow, anger, fear, love and hope which mirror the timeless feelings of the psalm writers?

What are psalms?

"Psalms is the Hebrew name given to hymns or songs of praise. Although there are many other psalms in Hebrew literature, for ancient Israel the collection of 150 became their hymnal. For Christians the term psalm refers only to the 150 psalms composing the book of Psalms of the Old Testament. Christians have used the psalms through the centuries as a way to express their faith and as a resource for personal prayer and devotional life." – from www.Umc.org

Using this guide:

As you begin this Lenten exercise, be intentional about choosing a place and time that allows you to focus on God's word. Will you read in a quiet room? Or will reading with others be more meaningful for you? Can you set a regular time to read the day's psalm and mark it in your calendar?

If you become distracted while reading or forget a day, be kind to yourself. Think about strategies for staying focused. Perhaps it will be helpful to hold a cross or other object as you read and pray. Some find it helpful to write parts of the psalms and doodle or illustrate around the text. Choose the place, time, and practices that allow you to encounter God in the psalms.

Grace and peace to you on your Lenten journey,

Christine V. Hides

Week One: Introduction

Day	Date	Psalm
Wednesday	1-March	1
Thursday	2-March	4
Friday	3-March	5
Saturday	4-March	8
Sunday	5-March	91

Questions to consider:

At what points during the week did you feel your reading of the psalms was particularly meaningful? Reflect on what helped you to pray as you read. See if you can continue the things that encourage focused prayer throughout the coming weeks.

What surprised you about this week's Psalms? Were there particular phrases that caught your attention? Can you mark those places in your books to come back to later?

When did you feel closest to God this week?

What questions do you have about the Psalms this week? Who can you discuss your questions with?

Week Two: Images

Day	Date	Psalm
Monday	6-March	9
Tuesday	7-March	13
Wednesday	8-March	18
Thursday	9-March	23
Friday	10-March	27
Saturday	11-March	28
Sunday	12-March	27

Questions to consider:

What images came to mind when you read this week's psalms?

What did you discover about who God is in these psalms?

Discuss your favorite outdoor spaces. Do you feel close to God in nature? Why or why not?

Week Three: Emotions

“One of the wonderful things about the Psalms is that they represent every possible human situation. You will find ways to express joy, excitement, hope, contentment, peace, and confidence. And many of the Psalms give us a way to voice our loneliness, sadness, pain, anger, even rage. God wants to hear from us, everything that happens to us, everything that we are going through.” From David Haas, *Prayers before an Awesome God*

Day	Date	Psalm
Monday	13-March	32
Tuesday	14-March	34
Wednesday	15-March	42
Thursday	16-March	46
Friday	17-March	47
Saturday	18-March	51
Sunday	19-March	63

Questions to consider:

What emotions have you been surprised to find expressed in the Psalms read so far
The last page of this devotional has bookmarks with psalms for times when we feel a particular way. Add these to your Bible and turn to the Psalms when you need them!

Talk about a time when you felt hesitant to share an emotion with God in your prayer. What helps you to share all of your feelings with God?

Week Four: On Kingdoms

Day	Date	Psalm
Monday	20-March	63
Tuesday	21-March	69
Wednesday	22-March	70
Thursday	23-March	84
Friday	24-March	85
Saturday	25-March	86
Sunday	26-March	32

Questions to consider:

How do you feel about the kingdom imagery in the Psalms? What questions arise as you read these passages?

What signs do you see of God’s reign of peace and love on this earth? How can you share God’s hope for the world through prayer and justice work?

Week Five: Many Names for God

Day	Date	Psalm
Monday	27-March	88
Tuesday	28-March	89
Wednesday	29-March	91
Thursday	30-March	95
Friday	31-March	98
Saturday	1-April	100
Sunday	2-April	126

Questions to consider:

What names for God did you discover as you considered how to write the address of the prayer?

What images of God resonate with you?

Week Six: Community

Day	Date	Psalm
Monday	3-April	103
Tuesday	4-April	104
Wednesday	5-April	108
Thursday	6-April	113
Friday	7-April	116
Saturday	8-April	117
Sunday	9-April	118

Questions to consider:

Faith is formed in community through caring relationships. Take a moment to name your faith mentors. Who do you mentor?

What gifts do you bring to Sunday worship? Are there ways you like to be regularly involved in worship? Do you feel God calling you to recommit yourself to worshipping in community through your presence and participation?

Week Seven: Holy Week

Day	Date	Psalm
Monday	10-April	125
Tuesday	11-April	130
Wednesday	12-April	136
Thursday	13-April	139
Friday	14-April	143
Saturday	15-April	150

Questions to consider:

Which psalm is your favorite?

Which psalms seem written for you?

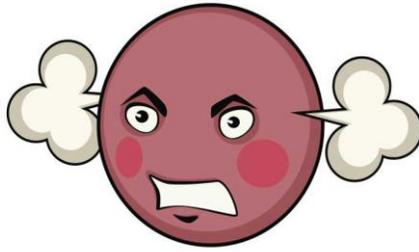
How have the psalms helped you to connect with the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ?

Happy



Psalm 5,
Psalm 9,
Psalm 103

Angry



Psalm 109,
Psalm 83,
Psalm 144

Joyful



Psalm 47, Psalm 95,
Psalm 108,
Psalm 136, Psalm 150

Peaceful



Psalm 1,
Psalm 4,
Psalm 139

Sad



Psalm 88,
Psalm 69,
Psalm 70

Scared



Psalm 23,
Psalm 4,
Psalm 46