

CALL TO WORSHIP

AN INDUCTIVE INTRODUCTION
TO STUDYING THE PSALMS

Rachel Collins



Treasuring God's Word
Fredericksburg, VA

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*Praise the LORD, all nations!
Extol him, all peoples!
For great is his steadfast love toward us,
and the faithfulness of the LORD endures forever.
Praise the LORD!
(Psalm 117)*

**May the study of His Word lead our hearts to worship the Lord in exultant
praise!**

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BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Take a few moments to consider ways that you can make spending time with the Lord a priority as we work through this study. He longs to speak to you and has given you His Spirit, who will open His Word personally to your heart.

Method

This study guide uses the inductive method of Bible study. You'll notice that the bulk of your time will be spent directly interacting with the text of the Scriptures themselves, with just a few summaries and explanations included to aid your study. The questions are designed to help you as you look at the text to see what it says, to guide you through a proper understanding of what it means, and to challenge you to consider your responses to what the Lord is showing you. If you are new to inductive Bible study, take a few minutes to read the explanation of this method in the Appendix.

Translation

The questions in this study are based on the English Standard Version (ESV) of the Bible. You can choose any translation you prefer for your study, but if a question doesn't make sense in your preferred translation, see if referring to the ESV aids in your understanding.

Structure

Each lesson is divided into five parts. The first four will guide you through an inductive study of a passage, and the fifth is designed as a review and small group discussion guide. At the end of selected parts you will find sections titled *Go Deeper*. These optional exercises allow you to explore related Scripture or outside resources. If you'd like to go further in your study, download the Bonus Packet which contains instructions for an independent study of an additional psalm that complements each lesson.

Bonus Packet

Bonus studies, printable copies of the psalms and charts in this study, additional study materials, and small group leader tips are included in the free downloadable bonus packet. Click the QR code to the right or at the end of each lesson to access this downloadable PDF.



Pacing

This study is designed for you to set your own pace. Most people find success in working one lesson over two weeks. If you are leading a group through this study,

consider meeting every other week, allowing group members to focus on the main body of the study, and leaving the *Go Deeper* sections and bonus studies as optional extras for those who have more time.

Resources



All you will need to complete this study is this study guide, your personal Bible, and your choice of pens, pencils, or highlighters. If you choose to work through the *Go Deeper* sections or the additional studies in the downloadable Bonus Packet, you will also want to have a notebook where you will have room to record your discoveries. While the text of the psalms is provided for you, you may consider purchasing a copy of the book of Psalms designed for inductive study to keep your notes in one place. These can be found under the *Bibles* section of the *Treasuring God's Word* website, or by scanning the code to the left.

Encouragement

Remember that Bible study is a privilege, not an obligation, and that working through this study guide should not be considered homework. Enjoy this sweet opportunity to get to know the Lord personally: His attributes, His ways, what pleases Him, what displeases Him, how He sees you, and how He wants you to see Him. Don't worry about falling behind if you are using this guide with a group. Begin each new lesson with your group with no guilt for what you didn't complete in the previous lesson.

Most importantly, make sure to begin your time of study in prayer. This is so easily neglected, and yet is the key to a rich, deep time in the Word. As 1 Corinthians 2:6-16 explains, it is the Spirit of God who explains to us the wisdom of God. Through prayer, we recognize our need for the Spirit to open our ears and our hearts to the things of God so that we are reading His Word with spiritual understanding rather than natural understanding. Pray for an open heart as you begin your study, for understanding as you continue, and in response as you complete each study session.

Contact

It brings me great joy to hear how the Lord uses this study in His Church! If you have any questions or need clarification about anything in this study, have a story to share about how the Lord is using this study, or simply want to say hello and let me know that you are using this either for personal or small group use, feel free to contact me at Rachel@treasuringgodsword.com! I would love to hear from you!

May the Lord pour out His unlimited riches of wisdom and insight into your heart as you meditate on His Word!

OPENING WORDS

It's Sunday morning, we've gathered with our friends and family at church, and the service is about to begin. As it does, the worship leader shares a Scripture, a prayer, a song, or a simple invitation that transfers us from our everyday lives and into the presence of God—a call to worship. We remember why we gather, who we are truly meeting with, and the awesomeness of our Lord as we focus our hearts and our minds on Him.

While the study that you are about to undertake is significantly longer than a traditional call to worship,, the intention is the same. The Psalms are the hymnbook of the Bible, and studying them will lead you into His presence just as during Sunday morning worship. Included in the book of Psalms are words of wisdom, expressions of faith and trust in the Lord, instructions and doctrinal teaching, joyful shouts of thanksgiving and pained cries of lament, deep prophetic utterings, and jubilant songs of praise. Over the next several weeks, we will be introducing all of these types of psalms, recognizing their differences, hearing their unique linguistic melodies, while rejoicing in the common anthem of the reign of our Sovereign King.

Our prayer is that this study will lead you into worship of your Lord, your Savior, your Shepherd, your King. As we study together, we will dig into details of the text. We'll discover themes, flow, and structure of the psalms. We'll look into the meaning of the original words that were used, and we'll seek to understand the imagery and emotion that is being evoked. Underneath all of this is the desire that our time in the psalms would inspire us to lift up our hearts in awe and wonder of our God.

Let's prepare our spirits to enter into the throne room of the Majesty on High. We are entering into a sacred place, hearing ancient prayers offered on the golden altar, offering the same sweet incense of praise to the eternal, unchanging One worthy of honor, glory, and praise. Come, let us worship our King!

And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, saying,

"To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!"

(Revelation 5:13)

LESSON I

THE PATHWAY OF WORSHIP

Psalms 1 & 2

Is it any surprise that the very first word of the book of Psalms is *blessed*? The book of Psalms is indeed a book of worship, and as we worship our Lord, we are truly blessed. But do we understand what blessing is?

When the Lord speaks of blessing, what does He mean? And how do we walk in the blessing that is available to us? As we open our study in Psalms, let's open our hearts to worship and our ears to hear the Lord's call to blessing.

*Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding.
In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.
(Proverbs 3:5-6)*



PART I

THE PATH OF PROSPERITY

Are you ready to learn a new way to study the psalms? Years ago, the Lord led me to inductive Bible study, and my understanding of Scripture blossomed. I discovered the power of knowing what God's Word says, of paying attention to the words found in the text, and basing my interpretation and application on the clear teaching of Scripture rather than assumptions and speculations.

This workbook will walk you through an inductive study of several familiar psalms, basing the instructions around the steps found in Studying the Psalms in the Appendix. Take your time as you study. This first lesson will be a little longer as I walk you through the steps of inductive study, explaining key features along the way. Feel free to break this lesson up over two or more weeks if you need additional time.

I pray that you will enjoy your time with the Lord in His Word! There is no sweeter way to spend your time than hearing His voice speaking to you as you study. Listen to what He says—He has something to teach you about Himself that will change your life!

Prepare Your Heart

As we begin our study, it is essential that we seek the Lord in prayer before we open and read His Word. The wisdom that is found in Scripture is a not readily understood by our human minds but is explained to us by the Spirit of God (1 Corinthians 2:6-16).

Pause for a moment in prayer

Ask the Lord to open your heart and your mind to the wisdom that He wants to bless you with.

After prayer, read Psalm 1*

Read the psalm without stopping to take notes, a practice we will continue as we begin to study each new psalm.

* For your convenience, the text of each of the psalms in this study can be found in the appendix as well as in the printable Bonus Packet. You may also consider purchasing a Bible such as the Spiral Bound Scripture journals, available at <http://www.treasuringgodsword.com>, to keep track of all of your studies in the Psalms.

What are your first impressions of this psalm?

Dig In

There are many genres in the book of Psalms, and many styles in which the writers of the psalms chose to make their messages heard.** Psalm 1 has characteristics of a wisdom psalm.

Read the note about wisdom psalms

What do you notice in Psalm 1 that would identify it as this genre?

Reading through a psalm first as a whole and then breaking it down by stanza (group of verses often separated with a space in your Bible) is a great way to begin your study of any psalm. Understanding the overarching structure of a psalm helps us to interpret each piece of the psalm in context.

Let's see if we can discern the flow of thought in this psalm.

Read Psalm 1

What seems to be the theme, or primary message in these verses? Keep your answers simple. As long as you can explain your answer from the words in the psalm, you are on the right path. I've filled in the first one as an example.

vv. 1-2 *The blessed man delights in the law of God*

vv. 3-4

vv. 5-6

WISDOM PSALMS

These psalms read very much like the book of Proverbs, often featuring a contrast between the actions of the wise person and those of the foolish person, illustrating what it looks like to live a life that is pleasing to the Lord. Other wisdom psalms include Psalm 112, Psalm 78, and the famous Psalm 119, which is included in the Bonus packet, linked at the end of this lesson.

** Information about genres, as well as other characteristics of studying psalms can be found in *A Word about Studying Psalms*, included in the Bonus Packet.

Once we understand the overall flow of a psalm, we then want to learn about the people that are mentioned in it.

Read Psalm 1

Besides the Lord, who are the two people (or groups of people) described in this psalm?

Let's focus on what Psalm 1 says about *the blessed man*.

Read Psalm 1.

Highlight references to *the blessed man*, including pronouns. Note what the psalm says about this person.

What does he NOT do? (v. 1)

What DOES he do? (v. 2)

What is the result? (v. 3)

What is his relationship with the Lord? (v. 6)

PARALLELISM

A feature of Hebrew poetry in which successive lines echo a common idea. Parallel lines can echo, intensify, or contrast with each other.

Read the note on parallelism

Psalm 1:1 is a beautiful example of parallelism, a distinguishing feature of Hebrew poetry. As you study Psalms and other biblical poetry, pay attention to the use of parallelism to discover how the author uses this technique to define, emphasize, or deepen his thoughts.

Read Psalm 1:1 again

Underline the verbs in each line. Circle the object of the verbs—what the verb is referring to. Doing this will help you see the parallelism in this verse more clearly.

What do you notice about how each line builds on the previous one?

Up to this point we've focused on observation, seeing what the text itself says. Now let's move into interpretation as we seek to understand what the Lord wants us to understand through the psalmist's words. We're going to examine a few key words, using Scripture to interpret the intended meaning of these words. We'll also look at some contrasts that are presented in the first few verses of this psalm, as well as consider the imagery that is found here. It's incredible how much there is to learn just in the first few verses of Psalm 1!

Feel free to take a break if you need to and come back to this tomorrow. This study is intentionally divided into lessons and parts rather than weeks and days so that you can work at a comfortable pace.

Let's look more closely at a couple of key words.

Read Psalm 1:2

Two words in this verse are key to understanding the wisdom found within. Let's look a little deeper into the meaning of these words, examining both the intent of the original Hebrew language used and what else we can learn about them from Scripture.

Law

The first key word is *law*. The Hebrew word found here is the word *torah*. There are many ways to understand *torah* which will change the way we apply this verse.

The first five books of the Bible (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy) are collectively called the *Torah*, the *Books of the Law*, a proper name given to this collection of writings. But the word *torah* is not exclusively used in reference to these specific books.

Look at these verses

What is the reader being commanded to do?

*My son, do not forget my teaching, but let your heart keep my commandments.
(Proverbs 3:1)*

My son, keep your father's commandment, and forsake not your mother's teaching. (Proverbs 6:20)

The word *teaching* in these verses is the same word as we find in Psalm 1:2; the word *torah*. You see here that *torah* is not exclusive to the Books of the Law as we know them, but refers to teaching, to instruction.¹

In general, in the ESV, when the word *torah* is being used to describe the first five books of the Hebrew Scriptures, the word *Law* will be capitalized (for example, 2 Kings 17:13 or Nehemiah 8:2). When it is being used to describe teaching or instruction that is not exclusive to the Books of the Law, the word *law* will not be capitalized.

Let's take this understanding back to the verse.

Read Psalm 1:2

Keep this understanding of *law* in mind as you read.

How does this interpretation affect the way you would apply this verse?

Meditates

Now let's consider the key word *meditate*. The word found here is *hagah* and alludes to a beautiful image. It means to mutter or to speak, and envisions the cooing of a dove.²

Biblical meditation is distinct from what we may be familiar with in Eastern meditation. Eastern meditation is an attempt to empty the mind in an attempt to gain a clearer understanding of oneself. Biblical mediation, on the other hand, is a constant repeating to yourself of the truths found in Scripture as we seek to know the Lord. You'll find references to this kind of meditation throughout the Psalms.

Read these verses

Underline the phrase that is parallel with the phrase *meditation of my heart*. How does this help us understand what Scripture means by meditation?

Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer. (Psalm 19:14)

*My mouth shall speak wisdom; the meditation of my heart shall be understanding.
(Psalm 49:3)*

What do you meditate on? In other words, what consumes your heart and mind during the course of the day?

We've seen the parallelism in verses 1 and 2 and considered a few key words. Now let's look at the contrasts and images found in these verses.

Read Psalm 1:1-2

Notice the word *delight* in verse 2.

What contrasts are made in these verses?

Restate these verses in the first person, replacing "the man" with "me" or "I".

One of the joys of studying the Psalms is soaking in the imagery that is used to describe spiritual truths. For obvious reasons, these images should not be interpreted literally, but rather understood in the context of both the truths they represent and the emotions they evoke.

Read Psalm 1:3

This verse contains a simile, an analogy describing the blessed man.

What is this simile?



Consider how this image illustrates the blessings of delighting in the law, the instruction of the Lord as contained in His Word.

How does this image encourage you as you spend time in this study of the psalms?

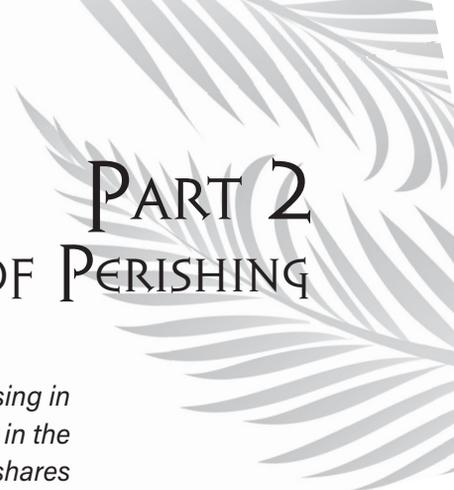
Meditate

How does your life compare with what you have learned in Psalm 1 so far? Do you place the same value on God's Word that the blessed man does? How is delighting in the Lord's instruction an act of worship? You may want to start a journal where you can prayerfully respond to what the Lord is sharing with you in each lesson.

Go Deeper

Let's look for a moment at the contrast between the wisdom of the world and the wisdom found in the Lord.

Read James 3:13-18. Notice the two sources of wisdom found in these verses and make note of what you see about each type of wisdom, using the words from the text. Notice both characteristics of the wisdom and the outcome of each type of wisdom. Keeping in mind what you learned about wisdom from James 3, consider the wisdom found in Psalm 1:1-3. *What does that look like for our lives in a practical sense? Are we to reject instruction from non-believers? How about contact with them? How do we distinguish good counsel and the good paths from those that would lead to destruction?*



PART 2

THE PATH OF PERISHING

In the first part of our study, we saw that there is great blessing in meditating on the Lord's instruction, His law, found not just in the Books of the Law but throughout the Scriptures. Psalm 1:1-3 shares the pathway of prosperity for those who delight in God's teaching.

This prosperity refers to the joy of spiritual blessing, where God watches over our lives and accomplishes His purposes in us. However, not everyone chooses to follow this path of true prosperity. Let's look at the contrast found in this psalm.

Prepare Your Heart

Open your study in prayer, asking the Lord to reveal His wisdom to your heart.

Dig In

Read Psalm 1

Highlight references to *the wicked*, including synonyms such as *sinners* and *scoffers*. It will be helpful to highlight these words in a different way than how you highlighted the *blessed man*.

What does the psalm say about the wicked? (v. 4)

What is the result of their life? (v. 5)

What does verse 6 imply about their relationship with the Lord?

Read Psalm 1 again

Notice words such as *but* that indicate a contrast. I put a mark like this: *✓* over *but* to highlight the contrast.

What is being contrasted in this psalm?

KEY WORDS

Learning to recognize key words in a text is a skill that will transform your study of the Word. Often, but not always, you will find these key words repeated in a text, either directly or in synonyms and parallels.

For example, in Psalm 1, the contrast between *the righteous* and *the wicked* is a theme that unites the entire psalm. Highlighting *righteous* and *wicked* and making lists of what the psalm tells you about these concepts will help you to unlock the message of this psalm.

As you continue to study Psalms, you will find repeated references to *the righteous* and *wicked* throughout the book. Highlight these words as you study so that you can easily recognize all that Scripture teaches about these important concepts.

In addition to *righteous* and *wicked*, some other key words found throughout Psalms include *refuge*, *deliverance*, *enemy*, *steadfast love*, *faithfulness*, *trust*, and *salvation*.

You likely noticed a contrast in verses 3 and 4, as well as in verse 6. Let's consider this contrast.

Based on what you see here, how would you define the prosperity described in these verses?

How does this contrast with the perishing of the wicked?

In the previous part of our study, we saw the simile in verse 3 that illustrates the prosperity of the righteous man. Psalm 1:4 presents us with a contrasting simile, comparing the wicked to chaff that is blown away. It's a picture of emptiness, of worthlessness, the exact opposite of prosperity.

However, as we look around, we often see the wicked prospering, seemingly in contradiction to the truth being presented here. We are not the only ones who wonder about how to reconcile this. Let's look at the thoughts of someone who pondered this long before the psalms were written.

Read Job 21:7-18

Highlight references to *the wicked*, including pronouns, preferably in the same way as you did in Psalm 1.

What does Job notice about the wicked?

How does what you see in Job compare with Psalm 1:4?

You may have noticed that Job is wondering why he doesn't see the wicked being treated like chaff. Let's look at some other places that compare the outcome of the wicked to chaff.

Read Matthew 3:11-12

Who is John the Baptist speaking of in these verses?

What is this person going to do?

Read Matthew 13:36-43

Note any phrase that indicates when something might happen.

How does what you read in Matthew compare with Psalm 1?

When will we see the chaff (weeds, tares) being blown away?

How does knowing that God has a plan for dealing with the wickedness of the world around us help us to persevere?

Before we finish, let's review what this psalm teaches us about the Lord.

Read Psalm 1 one more time

This time, highlight references to *the LORD*.

You may have picked up on this when we discussed the contrasts in this psalm, but just to make sure you saw it, what does Psalm 1 teach us about the Lord?



Jesus has some words for us that echo these concepts from Psalm 1.

Read these verses

What do you see that is similar to Psalm 1?

John 4:13-15

John 15:1-11

Notice Jesus' words about abiding in Christ in John 15:7-10. What parallels do you notice between this passage about abiding in Christ and Psalm 1's description of delighting in the law of the Lord?

What is the result?

Are you abiding in Christ? Are you drinking of the living water? What fruit is this producing in your life?

Meditate

Let's put all of this together. Psalm 1 compares two distinct ways of life: one that leads to prosperity, and one that leads to perishing. What makes the difference? What does this look like for you in your everyday life? You may want to prayerfully write about this in your journal.

My prayer is that you will find the Word of God to be your delight, that you will rejoice in the wisdom He abundantly gives, and that you will experience the joy of fruitful living in His blessings.

Go Deeper

If you've ever wondered, as Job did, why the wicked seem to prosper, you are not alone. The Lord often speaks to this, calling us to have patience and trust His plans and timing. Read Psalms 37 and 73, highlighting references including synonyms to the wicked in the same way you did in Psalm 1. *What struggle does the psalmist have as he looks around him? How do these psalms compare with what you see in Psalm 1? What additional encouragement and instruction is there for us in these psalms?* 2 Peter 3:9 gives us a glimpse into the Lord's heart. *What does this tell you about why it seems that God does not deal immediately with the wicked? If we are to have the heart of God, what should our response be to those who are following the way of the wicked?*



PART 3

THE PATH OF REBELLION

Psalm 1 gave us wisdom concerning two paths we can take in life. We can choose the path of delighting in God's instruction, embracing His wisdom, and enjoying the blessings that come with walking in that path. Or we can choose the path of the scoffers, those who refuse to acknowledge the wisdom of the Lord and face the consequences of this decision. Psalm 2 takes us into the mind of those who have chosen the latter path, and we see the Lord's response to their plans. He has a message for them—a message that we would be wise to pay attention to.

Prepare Your Heart

Open in prayer, then read Psalm 2

Just as we did for Psalm 1, read Psalm 2 in its entirety at least once without pausing to take notes.

What are your first impressions of this psalm?

Dig In

Let's do an overview of this psalm.

Read Psalm 2

Who are the main characters in this psalm?

At first glance, what seems to be the primary message of this psalm?

Let's look a little closer at the structure of Psalm 2. You'll notice that this psalm is clearly divided into four stanzas, or groupings of verses.

For each stanza, notice who is the primary speaker (or group of speakers) as well as his message. If it is not clear to you at this point, make your best guess based on what you see. You can make adjustments as we continue our study.

vv. 1-3

vv. 4-6

vv. 7-9

vv. 10-12

Psalm 2 features some powerful emotions. You likely noticed a tension between two main groupings of people in this psalm—the nations and their kings, and the Lord and His Anointed.

Read Psalm 2:1-6 twice

Keep these groupings in mind.

The first time you read this, highlight references to *the nations, peoples, and their kings* in one color, and underline words that describe their emotions in the same color.

The second time, highlight references to *the LORD* in another color, and underline words that describe His emotions.

You'll notice that there is a third person mentioned in these verses: *the anointed*. Be careful not to jump to interpretation with these references. At this point, simply notice what the psalm says about Lord's relationship with His Anointed.

What words does this psalm use to speak of the emotions of the nations?

Based on what you see, why are they feeling this way?

What words does this psalm use to speak of the emotions of the Lord?



Based on what you see in the psalm and what you know about the Lord, why is He feeling this way?

The nations are raging, angry, refusing to submit to the authority of God. They consider His rule to be a bondage, a burden. They demand their independence and plot ways to escape Him. For His part, God hears their rebellious words. He mocks their feeble plans, and makes plans of His own.

The wrath of God is a challenging topic, but it is one that is central to the message of the Bible and is the reason that the gospel is such good news.

Read these verses

Who is God's wrath directed at? Why are they the object of His wrath? What is the outcome of His wrath? When will they experience this wrath? How can one escape God's wrath? (Not all questions will be answered in all verses.)

Psalm 21:8-9

Nahum 1:2, 6-9

Romans 1:18-21

Revelation 6:15-17

Read Psalm 2 in its entirety once again

Is this psalm encouraging to you? Challenging? Frightening? Confusing?

Why?

Meditate

We'll go deeper into interpretation and application as we continue our study of this psalm. For now, consider the world around you. How does what you see in the world compare to what you read in this psalm? Is there a message in this psalm that would be applicable to today?

Where do you stand? Can you identify with the people in the first stanza of this psalm? In other words, in what ways do you currently, or have you in the past, attempted to cast off the bonds of the Lord? How did that turn out for you?

Go Deeper

These verses on the wrath of God are just a brief overview and are by no means comprehensive. Take some time to explore this topic, focusing on the same questions you answered in these verses. Using any biblical reference tools you have available, do a topical search on God's wrath, judgment, and the Day of the Lord. Keep all this in mind as we continue our study, particularly as we get to the final verse of Psalm 2.



PART 4

THE PATH OF REFUGE

The nations rage, vowing to cast off the reign of God Almighty so they can do as they please. Meanwhile, the Lord mocks their empty plans, knowing that they are utterly impotent compared with His omnipotence. He has already established His plans to set up His King despite the protests of those who would rebel against Him. In verses 1-3, the nations had their say, and in verses 4-6, we heard the Lord's response. Now, as we move into verse 7, we discover another voice.

Prepare Your Heart

Begin in prayer.

Read Psalm 2

As you read today, is there anything you are noticing that you didn't notice before?

Dig In

Read Psalm 2:7-9

Highlight references to *the Lord* and to *the nations* as you did previously. Read carefully to determine who the pronouns are speaking of. As you answer these questions, remember that we are still observing this passage. Do not jump to interpretation yet; instead answer with words from the text.

Who is speaking in this stanza? (vv. 2 and 6)

What is his relationship with the Lord?

What has the Lord promised to him?

Now that we have observed what the text says, let's use our tools of interpretation to help us discover who this passage is speaking of.

Psalms 2 is what is known as a royalty, or kingship, psalm.

Read the note about royalty psalms

You saw that as we highlighted references to the Lord we skipped making any interpretive decisions about how to highlight the Lord's Anointed. This was intentional, as these references in the royal psalms occasionally have a dual interpretation, particularly when read with a New Testament perspective.

Let's begin our interpretation by using cross-references, allowing Scripture to interpret Scripture, starting with some Old Testament references. These references will help us listen to this psalm in the way that the ancient Israelites would have heard it.

The word *anointed* in verse 2 is the Hebrew word *mesiyah*, or *Messiah* as it is transliterated into English. Under our New Testament understanding, we recognize the *Messiah* as referring to Jesus, but this concept was not one that the ancient Israelites would have considered.³ When they heard of the Lord's anointed, His *mesiyah*, particularly in the Psalms, their minds would have gone to David and to a very special promise that God gave to David.

Read 1 Samuel 16:1, 11-13

Read the full passage if you have time.

What was Samuel instructed to do?

Why? (v. 1)

Who did Samuel anoint?

Read 1 Samuel 16:6

Notice what Samuel thought to himself when David's older brother Eliab was brought before him.

What phrase does Samuel use when referring to the one that he was looking for?

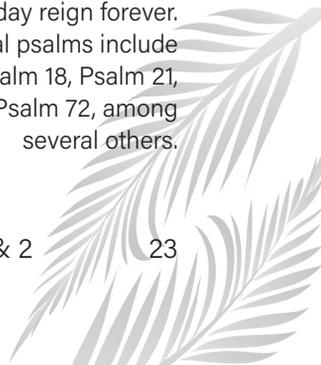
How does this compare with Psalm 2:2?

ROYALTY PSALMS

Royalty, or kingship, psalms are readily distinguished by their references to the king, whether that king is earthly or our heavenly King.

Occasionally, these psalms are a cry to the Lord from the heart of the king, who is recognizing his responsibility to the Lord to serve His people. Other times, they are a prayer for the king, sung by the people as they seek the Lord's strength. And sometimes, as in Psalm 45, they read very much like a song of praise to the king.

As you read these psalms, particularly Psalm 2 and Psalm 110, watch for references to the coming King, the One who is foreshadowed and pictured by the earthly kings. Very often, but not always, these royal psalms are messianic in nature, speaking in veiled terms of the King of Kings who will one day reign forever. Royal psalms include Psalm 18, Psalm 21, and Psalm 72, among several others.



Do you see how ancient Israel would have recognized David as being the Lord's anointed? Let's move forward many years in David's life. At this point, David's authority is well established, and Israel has also been established as a mighty nation under David's leadership.

Even so, the center of Israelite worship remains the tabernacle established under Moses' authority. The Ark of the Covenant, a symbol of God's presence, is still housed in a tent. David's heart was stirred to build something more permanent for the Lord, a house that would be the center of worship from that point forward. It would no longer need to be moved from place to place but would be forever located in Jerusalem.

David shares this desire with the prophet Nathan, who at first gives him his blessing to build the temple, the house of the Lord. But the Lord speaks, and He shares His heart for this house.

Read 2 Samuel 7:4-17

Underline all the promises that God spoke to David. What promises did God make to David?

v. 9

v. 11

v. 12

v. 13

v. 16

Look again at 2 Samuel 7:14

What relationship would God have with David's descendants?

How does all of this compare with what you see in Psalm 2?

David's response to this promise (2 Samuel 7:18-29) indicates that he at least partially understood the magnitude of this promise that God made to him. After the exile, when the line of David seemed to have ended, the people of Israel understood that

God's promise to David meant there would be a coming Son of David who would be a great Deliverer and King.

It wasn't until after the death and resurrection of Jesus and the revelation given to the apostles by the Holy Spirit that it became clear that this promise found its fulfillment in Jesus.

Let's see how the apostles understood Psalm 2.

Read these verses

How do these verses help us interpret Psalm 2?

Acts 4:24-28

Acts 13:32-33

There is one more interesting verse that connects with all we've been studying.

Read Hebrews 1:5

Notice how the first part of this verse quotes Psalm 2:7, while the second part quotes 2 Samuel 7:14.

How do the New Testament Scriptures interpret these Old Testament passages?

Now that we've clearly established the identity of the Lord's Anointed in Psalm 2, let's finish working through the psalm.

Read Psalm 2:7-12

Highlight references to *the Son*, *the LORD*, and *the kings of the earth*. You can go back and highlight previous references to the Son as well if you'd like.

Who is speaking in verses 7-9?

What has the Lord promised Him? (v. 8)

What is said about Him? (v. 9)

What instruction is given in verse 11?

What contrast is made in verse 12?

Now let's see the fulfillment of these verses.

Look up the following references

How do they compare with what is promised in Psalm 2?

John 3:35-36

Philippians 2:5-11

Revelation 11:15-18

Write out the final line of this psalm, the blessing that brings it to a conclusion. Writing verses by hand helps us as we memorize Scripture and cements truths more deeply in our hearts and minds.

This is the gospel in the Old Testament. After His resurrection, Jesus said in Luke 24:44 that everything written about Him in the Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms must be fulfilled, and that repentance for the forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed.

How does Psalm 2:11-12 imply that repentance for forgiveness of sins, and as John 3:35-36 says, deliverance from wrath, would be found in the Son?

Meditate

Where do you stand? Are you still in the place of the nations, wanting to live any way you please without God having authority in your life? Or have you repented of that sin of self-reliance and bowed the knee to the Son?





PART 5

REFRESH AND REFLECT

Psalms 1 and 2 form an introduction to the book of Psalms. In Psalm 1, we find the call to heed the instructions found in this book of praise, as well as in the entirety of Scripture, and the blessing that comes from obedience to the Lord's wisdom. In Psalm 2, we find the proclamation that God is the supreme authority, to whom all in heaven and on earth owe allegiance, as well as the promise of refuge found in the Son. In all of this, we see two paths: a path of rebellion that leads to perishing and a path of refuge that leads to prosperity. Which path will you choose?

Refresh

Read Psalms 1 and 2

In each lesson, we will begin our time of review with five questions:

SMALL GROUP LEADERS

We will begin our review of each lesson with the five Refresh questions you find here. Use these five questions to open your discussion with a review of the psalm or psalms that you are studying each week, allowing your group to draw application from them as it comes up. Spend the remaining time in your discussion focusing on the application questions in the Reflect section, as well as those you have considered in the lesson.

What is the main idea or theme of these psalms?

What do you learn about God from these psalms?

What do you learn about those singing these psalms?

How would these psalms have helped the psalmist or those hearing them draw nearer to God?

What do these psalms teach us about worship?



Reflect

Choose a few of the following questions and spend some time answering them. Journal your responses here or in a separate notebook.

Jesus spoke of two ways in Matthew 7:13-14. Read these verses. How do they add to what you've learned from Psalms 1 and 2?

Psalm 1 tells us that the blessed man is one who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked but meditates on the law (instruction) of the Lord day and night. What does this look like in your life? Who are you allowing to influence you—in-person, online, or in books and other media? What do you spend time thinking about as you go about your daily life? How can you grow in meditating on the Lord's teaching?

How does the Bible define success and prosperity? How does this compare with your own definitions?

We often hear of God being a God of love, and this is a very true assessment of Him. However, passages such as Psalm 2 make it clear that God's love doesn't exclude Him from experiencing anger and wrath. Based on what you see in Psalm 2, including the cross-references you looked at, what stirs the wrath of God? Recognizing that we are in no position to judge God, do you believe that His wrath is justified? How do you see God's love even in this psalm that speaks of His wrath?



Have you ever experienced a time when it seemed like the wicked were getting away with their destructive plans? Did they ultimately succeed? If they did, what encouragement do you receive from Psalms 1 and 2?

What would it look like for you to apply the messages of Psalms 1 and 2 to your life? Are you walking in the path of prosperity? Are you taking refuge in the Son? Look again at Philippians 2:5-9 from Part 4 and notice what it took for the Son to be able to be your refuge. Spend some time in worship and submission as the Spirit leads.

You'll find a chart in the Appendix titled *The God I Worship*. As you work through your study, fill in all the reasons that God gives us to worship Him. Think about His character, His actions, His relationship with you, His attributes, anything that you learn about God as you study. Make note of the reference in the first column. In the second column list the fact or facts about God that you learned from that reference using the wording given in the verse. The third column is for your personal response to this truth about God. You might use this space to explain in your own words why this truth about God is a reason to worship, or you might choose to simply write a brief word of praise.

Go back through Psalms 1 and 2 and fill in this chart with what these psalms tell us about God, as well as your response to this information. If you are doing this study in a group, be ready to share some of your responses.

Each week we will conclude our study in a time of prayer. Write out a prayer of response to the Lord, sharing your heart with Him as you meditate on His Word. You may want to use one or both of the psalms we studied this week as you do this, either using the psalm as a basis for your prayer and adding your own thoughts or rephrasing the psalm in your own words^{***}. As always, this is between you and the Lord, so be honest, not worrying about appearing spiritual. He is listening to you.



WANT MORE? SCAN THE CODE
FOR A BONUS STUDY OF PSALM
119:1-24.

^{***} Donald Whitney has written an excellent short book entitled *Praying the Bible* that will walk you through the process of using the psalms as the basis for your prayer. You can find it at your local bookstore or online.

