



DIGGING DEEPER

Introduction to the Book of Psalms

Lesson 4: What Can We Learn and Experience from Reading the Psalms?

The Psalms give us knowledge.

- We read to learn. If you want to learn to be a photographer you read a book called “Photography for Dummies.”
- We read the Psalms to know God better and understand Him more deeply.

The Psalms reflect human emotions.

- Psalms are full of emotion. We have entire genres of Psalms based on their emotion: praise, lament, and confidence.
- Additional emotions present in the psalms include reverence, shame, sadness, anger, and doubt.
 - **Reverence** (example 8:1)

“O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens” *Psalms 8:1 (ESV)*.
 - **Shame** (example 44:15)

“All day long my disgrace is before me, and shame has covered my face” *Psalms 44:15 (ESV)*.
 - **Sadness** (example 6:6-7)

“I am weary with my moaning; every night I flood my bed with tears; I drench my couch with my weeping. My eye wastes away because of grief; it grows weak because of all my foes” *Psalms 6:6-7 (ESV)*.
 - **Anger** (example 5:10)

“Make them bear their guilt, O God; let them fall by their own counsels; because of the abundance of their transgressions cast them out, for they have rebelled against you” *Psalms 5:10 (ESV)*.

- **Doubt** (example 14:1)

“The fool says in his heart, “There is no God.” They are corrupt, they do abominable deeds, there is none who does good” *Psalms 14:1 (ESV)*.

The Psalms Direct our Wills

- Many of the Psalms instruct us how we should behave.
- There are three broad categories of these instructional psalms.
 - **Wisdom.** Wisdom psalms typically contrast righteous behavior with the wicked (example 32:1).

“Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered” *Psalms 32:1 (ESV)*.

- **By Example.** Some psalms reflect examples of righteous behavior toward God. Many of these take the form of “I will...” (example 7:17, we should thank God).

“I will give to the LORD the thanks due to his righteousness, and I will sing praise to the name of the LORD, the Most High” *Psalms 7:17 (ESV)*.

- **By Command.** Some psalms of worship command certain behaviors (example 103:1-2).

“Bless the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name! Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits” *Psalms 103:1-2 (ESV)*.