



Learn Your Bible

Resources to help you learn and understand the Bible

Short Study 004: Psalm 1

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Read Psalm 1.

This Psalm, with which the Psalter opens, contrasts the life and destiny of two groups of people – those who follow God’s ways and those who do not (called in this translation the *ungodly*).

vv 1-2 The life of the godly. Those who follow God’s ways are blessed (favoured with happiness) because they govern their life not on the advice, ways or stance of the wicked but on the law of the LORD. The “law” stands for all that God commands, which for us embraces the whole of the Old and New Testaments. Their passion to know what God requires of them is displayed in their unceasing *meditation* on His law – they keep on recalling it to mind. Compare Joshua 1:7-8. What does it mean to meditate day and night? See what the commentaries say. To what extent do you govern your life according to the Bible?

v3 The effect of a godly life. Those who follow God’s ways will be firm, spiritually nourished and fruitful, like a tree planted by water. Do you think the “fruit” is that which is described in Galatians 5:22-23?

vv4-5 The effect of an ungodly life. A firm and fruitful life will not be theirs. In contrast to a well-rooted tree, chaff is blown away in the wind when the wheat is threshed. Such is the insecurity of the ungodly - their life will not stand scrutiny at the judgment and they will have no place with the Lord’s chosen people.

v6 The two outcomes. *Knows* in this verse can mean either that the LORD is aware of every step the godly take, or that He *watches over* the way of the godly (as translated in the NIV). Both are true, and give the assurance that God will secure their future. Those who reject God’s ways, however, do not have that assurance and their future is bleak.

To think about: Jesus used a different illustration to say much the same thing as this Psalm. Can you think what it was? (It can be found in Matthew 7:24-27.)

To dig deeper: Read Deut 30:15-20 and compare this to Psalm 1.