



A Course

In

**PSALMS,
STUDIES IN**

Prepared by the
Committee on Religious Education
of the
American Bible College

Pineland, Florida 33945

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The American Bible College wishes to thank Zondervan Publishing House for its use of their book, PSALMS BIBLE READINGS by F. B. Myer and encourage the readers of this course to consider their many publications.

The Wikipedia, *The Free Encyclopedia* comments on F. B. Myer:

Frederick Brotherton Meyer (April 8, 1847 – March 28, 1929) was a Baptist pastor and evangelist in England.

Meyer was born in London. He attended Brighton College and graduated from the University of London in 1869. He studied theology at Regent's Park College, Oxford. Meyer began pastoring churches in 1870. His first pastorate was at Pembroke Baptist Chapel in Liverpool. In 1872 he pastored Priory Street Baptist Church in York. While he was there he met the American evangelist Dwight L. Moody, whom he introduced to other churches in England. The two preachers became lifelong friends.

Other churches he pastored were: • Victoria Road Church in Leicester (1874-1878); • Melbourne Hall in Leicester (1878-1888); • Regent's Park Chapel in London (1888-1892).

In 1895 Meyer went to Christ Church in Lambeth. At the time only 100 people attended the church, but within two years over 2,000 were regularly attending. He stayed there for fifteen years, and then began traveling to preach at conferences and evangelistic services.

His evangelistic tours included South Africa and Asia. He also visited the United States and Canada several times.

He spent the last few years of his life working as a pastor in England's churches, but still made trips to North America, including one he made at age 80.

A few days before his death, Meyer wrote the following words to a friend:

I have just heard, to my great surprise, that I have but a few days to live. It may be that before this reaches you, I shall have entered the palace. Don't trouble to write. We shall meet in the morning.^[1]

Meyer was part of the Higher Life movement and preached often at the Keswick Convention. He was known as a crusader against immorality. He preached against drunkenness and prostitution. He is said to have brought about the closing of hundreds of saloons and brothels.

Meyer wrote over 40 books, including Christian biographies and devotional commentaries on the Bible. He, along with seven other clergymen, was also a signatory to the London Manifesto asserting that the Second Coming was imminent in 1918.

2007 saw the release of the first modern biography of Meyer; "F.B. Meyer", written by Bob Holman and published by Christian Focus publications

INTRODUCTION

[During this course the student is required to read through the entire Psalms ten times.

There are various methods of Bible study, such as the exegetical, expository, topical, study of books, study by chapters, study of important passages, and the biographical method. In this study we are following the study by chapters method which is section outlined with included important details. F. B. Myer outlined the Psalms according to his considered section topics. Then he included his comments on what he thought was the most important details. We include this book is an excellent example of a devotional commentary. The text and Old English is left intact except where additions will either be footnoted or noted by brackets, [].

Although the American Bible College does not agree with the Revised Standard Version text (R.V.), we retain its use by F. B. Myer as a commentary usage.

[The 1917 SCOFIELD REFERENCE BIBLE introduction to the Book of Psalms reads:

The simplest description of the five books of Psalms is that they were the inspired prayer-and-praise book of Israel. They are revelations of truth, not abstractly, but in the terms of human experience. The truth revealed is wrought into the emotions, desires, and sufferings of the people of God by the circumstances through which they pass. But those circumstances are such as to constitute an anticipation of analogous conditions through which Christ in His incarnation, and the Jewish remnant in the tribulation (Is 10.21, refs), should pass; Song then many Psalms are prophetic of the sufferings, the faith, and the victory of both.

Psalms 22. and 50. are examples. The former—the holy of holies of the Bible—reveals all that was in the mind of Christ when He uttered the desolate cry, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" The latter is an anticipation of what will be in the heart of Israel when she shall turn to Jehovah again (Dt. 30:1,2). Other Psalms are directly prophetic of "the sufferings of Christ, and the glories which should follow" (Lk. 24:25-27,44). Psa. 2. is a notable instance, presenting Jehovah's Anointed as rejected and crucified (Ps. 2:1-3, Acts 4:24-28) but afterward set as King in Zion.

The great themes of the Psalms are, Christ, Jehovah, the Law, Creation, the future of Israel, and the exercises of the renewed heart in suffering, in joy, in perplexity. The promises of the Psalms are primarily Jewish, and suited to a people under the law, but are spiritually true in Christian experience also, in the sense that they disclose the mind of God, and the exercises of His heart toward those who are perplexed, afflicted, or cast down.

The imprecatory Psalms are the cry of the oppressed in Israel for justice—a cry appropriate and right in the earthly people of God, and based upon a distinct promise in the Abrahamic Covenant [See Scofield Note:] ("Gen 15:18"), but a cry unsuited to the church, a heavenly people who have taken their place with a rejected and crucified Christ. (Lk 9:52-55).]

THE PSALMS

THE Jewish Psalms have furnished the bridal hymns, the battle songs, the pilgrim marches, the penitential prayers, and the

public praises of every nation in Christendom, since Christendom was born. They have rolled through the din of every great European battlefield; they have pealed through the scream of the storm in every ocean highway of the world. Drake's sailors sang them when they clave the virgin waters of the Pacific; Frobisher's, when they dashed against the barriers of Arctic ice and night. They floated over the waters on that day of days when England held her freedom against Pope and Spaniard, and won the naval supremacy of the world. They crossed the ocean with the *Mayflower* pilgrims; were sung round Cromwell's camp fires, and his Ironsides charged to their music; whilst they have filled the peaceful homes of England with the voice of supplication and the breath of praise. In palace halls, by happy hearths, in squalid rooms, in pauper wards, in prison cells, in crowded sanctuaries, in lonely wilderness—everywhere they have uttered our moan of contrition and our song of triumph; our tearful complaints, and our wrestling, conquering, prayer.*

About one-third of the Psalms are anonymous. Seventy-three bear the name of David, "the sweet Psalmist of Israel." Twenty-four are attributed to the minstrels of his reign, and to subsequent singers; some of whom may have lived in the glorious period of Ezra's restoration. Two are attributed to Solomon; and one to Moses, "the man of God."

The inscriptions of the Psalms have given rise to much discussion. Some of them indicate the musical accompaniment, which had been carefully selected—whether with flutes, as the 5th; or with stringed instruments, as the 6th. Others express the intentions of the Psalms—to TEACH; to BRING TO REMEMBRANCE; to GIVE THANKS. Others again commemorate the circumstances under which the Psalms they head were penned; as for instance the 56th, which is entitled, "The silent dove in far off lands," and com-

memorates the time when David was an exile in the land of the Philistines.

The Hebrew Title for this precious collection of Sacred Hymns is PRAISES; and rightly so, for the most prominent feature in them is *Praise*. The rendering of this word into Greek gives us our title PSALMS.

There are FIVE BOOKS embraced in this collection:—

THE FIRST, including 1-41; ending with the doxology and a double Amen.

THE SECOND, including 42-72; ending in the same way, and with the further addition that: "The prayers of David, the son of Jesse, are ended."

THE THIRD, including 73-89; ending with a somewhat different doxology and a double Amen.

THE FOURTH, including 90-106; ending with doxology, amen, and hallelujah.

THE FIFTH, including 107-150; ending with [a doxology of] repeated hallelujahs. There are three ways in which the Psalms may be studied. We may look at them, first, as recording the inner heart-history of those who wrote them, and especially of David. We cannot understand his life merely by reading the historical books; but when we compare the outer with the inner, and listen to his own musings on the varied episodes of his changeful career, we are able to form an altogether new and realistic conception of that rich and many-chorded nature. It was good that he should be afflicted: that he should extract from the wine-press of his sorrows a cordial to cheer all weary and aching hearts till time shall be no more.

Next, we should study the Psalter in its bearing on our blessed Lord. He said Himself, "It is written in the Psalms concerning Me" (Luke 24:44); and He expressed some of his deepest emotions in words borrowed from that marvellous vocabulary. There are some Psalms that are entirely Messianic, for they can have no useful reference but to the Lord Jesus; others, have a primary reference to some figure or event in Hebrew story, from which, however, they soon pass on, to find a

* Rev. Baldwin Brown.

richer and wider fulfilment in Him to whose person and work all the rays of Scripture converge. It is the Spirit of Christ which breathe, throughout the Psalter; and we cannot be surprised if it often rise, into tones and expression, of thought which may be uttered by human lips, but certainly emanate from a higher than mortal source. In this sense David's Son is also David's Root.

Lastly, we may study the Psalms *for ourselves*, nourishing our spirits with their rich expressions of experimental religion. Few men have reached such heights of joy, or touched such depth, of penitential grief, as David. Nor is there a note in the entire *gamut* of the experience, of the religious life, which does not speak beneath his marvellous touch. When language fails us, these Psalms will often express our deepest selves; our yearnings for God; our contrition for sin; our inexpressible joy. They are like some marble staircase, trodden by myriads of feet, yet unworn and clear-cut still, up which we too may pass from the blessedness of the initial verse, to the ringing hallelujahs that peal out their inspired anthems in the closing sentence of this Golden Book of the inner life.

May He, who is expressly said to have been their Author (II Sam. 23:2; Acts 1:16; 4:25; Heb. 3:7,8), give us his own divine and blessed help so we seek to open up their sacred and blessed treasures!

LISTING OF PSALMS

BOOK ONE

1. "Blessed is the Man!"
2. "Thou art My Son!"
3. "I will not be Afraid!"
4. "Here me when I Call!"
5. "In the Morning!"
6. "The Lord hath Heard!"
7. "In Thee do I put my Trust!"
8. "How Excellent is Thy Name!"
9. "With my Whole Heart"
10. "Thou hast Seen! Thou hast Heard!"
11. The Righteous Lord
12. "Help, Lord!"
13. "How Long, O Lord?"
14. "The Fool Hath said—"No God!"
15. "Walking With God"
16. "My Heart is Glad"
17. "I Shall be Satisfied!"
18. "My Rock and my Fortress"
19. The Witness of the Havens"
20. "The Lord Answer Thee!"
21. Strength and Salvation
22. The Psalm of the Cross
23. Shepherd Psalm, The
24. King of Glory, The
25. "Secret of the Lord, The"
26. "Judge Me, O Lord!"
27. "Seek ye My Face!"
28. Unto Thee will I Cry
30. "Thou hast Lifted me Up"
31. "In the Secret of Thy Presence"
32. "Thou Forgavest!"
33. "Rejoice in the Lord!"
34. This Poor Man Cried"
35. "Who is Like unto Thee?"
36. "Thy Loving Kindness"
37. "Fret Not Thyself"
38. "Forsake me Not!"
39. I Was Dumb!"
40. "Lo, I Come!"
41. "Mine Own Familiar Friend!"

BOOK TWO

42. "As the Heart Panteth!"
43. "God, my Exceeding Joy!"
44. Thou art my King, O God!"
45. "Things Touching the King"
46. "Be Still!"
47. King over all the Earth"
48. "Zion the joy of the Whole Earth"
49. "They that Trust in Wealth"
50. "I am God, thy God!"
51. "Broken and Contrite, Heart, A"
52. Doom of the Evil Doer, The
53. Without God
54. "God is My Helper
55. Oh for Wings like a Dove!"
56. "Put my Tears in Thy Bottle!"
57. The Soul Among Lions
58. Like the Deaf Adder"
59. "Deliver me, O God!"
60. Save with Thy Right Hand!"
61. "Save with Thy Right Hand!"
62. "My Soul Thirsteth"
63. "Rock that is Higher I, The"
64. Counsel of the Wicked, The
65. River of God, The
66. "Verily God hath Heard!"
67. Let the People Praise Thee!"
68. "Let God Arise!"
69. In Deep Waters
70. "I am Poor and Needy"
71. Declining Years, A Psalm For
72. Coming King, The

BOOK THREE

73. "Set in Slippery Places"
74. "Why hast Thou Cast us off?"
75. "He Putteth Down, and Lifteth Up"
76. Thou art to be Feared"
77. "The Waters saw Thee"
78. God's Dealings with Israel
79. "Where is their God?"
80. "Vine out of Egypt, A"
81. "My People would not

Hearken"

82. Poor and Needy, The
83. "Be not still, O God!"
84. "A Day in Thy Courts"
85. Mercy and Truth
86. "Bow down Thine Ear!"
87. Gates of Zion, The
88. "Incline Thine Ear!"
89. The Lord's Mercies

BOOK FOUR

90. :Threescore Years and Ten"
91. "The Secret Place of the Most High"
92. "It is a Good Thing to give Thanks"
93. "The Lord Reigneth!"
94. Thy Mercy held me up"
95. Let us sing unto the Lord!"
96. Beauty of Holiness, The
97. "Let the Earth Rejoice!"
98. A New Song
99. "Exalt ye the Lord"
100. "With Thanksgiving!"
101. Mercy and judgment
102. "Withered like Grass"
103. Gratitude, The Psalm of
104. "How Manifold are Thy Works!"
105. Covenant with Abraham, The
106. "They Forgat God!"

BOOK FIVE

107. "Oh that Men would Praise the Lord!"
108. "My Heart is Fixed!"
109. "Hold not thy Peace, O God!"
110. "Sit Thou at My Right Hand!"
111. "Works of the Lord, The"
112. "Hallelujah!"
113. "He Raiseth up the Poor"
114. "The Sea saw it, and fled!"
115. "Not unto us, O Lord!"

116. I Love the Lord”
117. “All ye Nations!”
118. “Chastened Sore!”
119. “Thy Law Do I Love!”
120. “In my Distress”
121. “The Lord is Thy Keeper”
122. “Peace be within thy walls!”
123. Unto Thee Lift Mine Eyes
124. “The Lord on our Side”
125. “As Mount Zion”
126. “The Captivity Turned, The”
127. “Except the Lord build”
128. On Fearing the Lord
129. “They Afflicted Me”
130. “Out of the Depths”
131. “As a Weaned Child”
132. “Lord, Remember David”
133. “As the Dew of Hermon!”
134. “Lift up your Hands!”
135. “Praise ye the Lord!”
136. “His Mercy...For Ever”
137. “By the Rivers of Babylon”
138. “I will Praise Thee!”
139. “Thou hast Searched me!”
140. “Thou art My God!”
141. “Let my Prayer be as
Incense!”
142. “With My Voice”
143. “Hear My Prayer, O Lord!”
144. “Lord, What is Man?”
145. “I will Extol Thee!”
146. “While I Live will I Praise”
147. “It is good to Sing Praises!”
148. Praise Him, all His Angels!
149. Sing a New Song!
150. “Praise God in His
Sanctuary!”

THE FIRST BOOK OF THE PSALMS

Psalm I "BLESSED IS THE MAN!"

This Psalm, like a sign-post, points the way to blessedness. The opening word may be read, "Oh, the blessedness!" In this exclamation is embodied the experience of a life, ratified and sealed by the Holy Spirit. The Psalter [writer of the psalm] begins with the same message as the Sermon on the Mount. Religious life is the blessed life; and blessedness is more than happiness. Beneath the lintel of this benediction we pass into the temple of praise.

BLESSEDNESS IS TO BE OBTAINED IN TWO WAYS.—(I) NEGATIVELY.—Avoid the company of the irreligious. (v. 1) You must mix with them in daily business; but do not choose their society. When let go from necessary engagements, make for the people of God (Acts 4:23).

(II) POSITIVELY.—We cannot live on negations; and if we withdraw ourselves from the society of evil men, we must enter the circle of prophets and kings, psalmists and historians, who are ever waiting to greet us with their holiest, noblest thoughts, within the circle of sacred Scripture.

(v. 2) It is not enough to read the Bible as a duty—we must come to it with *delight*. And this is possible on these conditions: give yourself up to it; eschew light and foolish literature, which cloy the appetite; ever open the Book in happy fellowship with its Author [the Holy Spirit]. Nor is it enough to read it cursorily and forget it: we must *meditate*, until, by the process of spiritual digestion, it is assimilated (Jas. 1:25). Better one verse really masticated than a whole chapter bolted.

THE REWARDS OF THE BLESSED MAN (v. 3).—He shall be under Divine culture, *planted* (Ps. 92:13); within reach of perennial supplies, *planted by rivers* (John 7:38,39); prepared against any demand or *emergency—fruit in season*; unfading beauty and freshness, a spiritual evergreen; and prosperity even in this world, because his life is ordered by discretion and obedience to Divine principles. Joseph realized this picture (Gen. 39:3,4).

THE CONTRAST TO THE BLESSED MAN (v. 4).—It might be rendered, *Not so the ungodly, not so*. As to their career, all that has been said of the righteous is to be reversed. They go from bad to worse in their choice of company; beginning with the ungodly, and ending with the scornful; and from walking, they pass to

standing and sitting, which give the idea of permanence and of settled enjoyment. As to their nature, they are as chaff, which is like wheat, and yet utterly worthless. As to their doom, they shall be forgotten on earth, leaving no trace, taking no root; and in the other world they shall be forever excluded from the festal hosts of the redeemed (Matt. 13:30; Rev. 21:27).

THE COMFORTS OF THE BLESSED MAN.—God knows his way, though dark and difficult. Nothing is hidden from Him who bottles our tears (Ps. 56:8); and He will not let us be over-pressed. And, though the ungodly may appear to prosper at the expense of the righteous, it shall be only for a moment: ultimately the way of the un-godly *shall perish* (see Ps. 37). Wherefore, rest in the Lord. Your blessedness is better than the ill-gotten gains of the ungodly, and will last longer.

Psalm II "THOU ART MY SON!"

[Listings of Messianic Psalms widely vary from author to author. However, most scholars include in the Messianic list: Pss. 2, 8, 16, 18, 20, 21, 22, 35, 40, 45, 55, 61, 68, 69, 72, 88, 89, 96-99, 102, 109, 110, and 132. Some of the most obvious Messianic Psalms are: Psalm 2 – The Sea-ting of Christ as King; Psalm 8 – The Incarnation of Christ; Psalm 16 – The Resurrection of Christ; Psalm 22 – The Crucifixion of Christ; Psalm 68 – the Ascension of Christ; Psalm 88 – The Death of Christ; and Psalm 102 – The Second Coming of Christ; Psalm – 110 The Millennial King]

This familiar poem is a psalm of Jehovah's King. There is strong reason to believe that it refers to David and that in a reasonable sense David fulfils some phases of the poem. It is, however, as a typical and prophetic psalm that we deal with it in this study. It is prophetic of the world kingdoms in their rebellion against the kingdom of Christ and the entrance into the fray of the Son of God who is Jehovah's representative against these earthly kingdoms, and finally the triumph of the kingdom of Christ. Jehovah gladly gives him the nations as his own inheritance. He allows him the privilege of winning them. If they accept him and trust him, they will rejoice with him forever. If they rebel and refuse, he must judge them and the judgment will be severe.¹

¹ Yates, Kyle M., *STUDIES IN PSALMS* (Nashville, TN., BROADMAN PRESS) 1953, p. 134.

The Psalm can only find its complete fulfillment in Him to whom its glowing passages are referred in Acts 4:25; 13:33; Heb. 1:5; 5:5; Rev. 2:27. A natural division is suggested by the structure of the Psalm into four stanzas of three verses each.

THE DETERMINED HATE OF THE PEOPLE (vv. 1-3).—The word *rage* has the idea of the tumultuous concourse of vast crowds of people, swarming with Oriental gesticulations and cries into a central meeting-place, aroused to a frenzy of excitement. *Imagine* is the same word translated *meditate* (1:2); whilst the godly meditates on God's law, the ungodly meditates a project which is *vain*, and shall come utterly to nought. Pilate and Herod and the Jewish rulers are for once at peace among themselves in their common hostility to the Messiah (Luke 23:12,13). Let us not effect worldly alliances, for the drift of the great ones of the earth is against our Lord. *Compare* verse 3 with Hos. 11 :4 and Matt. 11 :30.

THE DIVINE TRANQUILITY (vv. 4-6).—The scene shifts to heaven; there God is depicted as undismayed—a strong man laughs at the ineffectual efforts of tiny children to throw him down. *Yet I have set*, i.e., anointed. —"Messiah" and "Christ" alike mean *anointed*. Our Lord was anointed with the Holy Ghost (Isa. 11:2,3; 61:1; Acts 10:38; Luke 4:18; John 3:34). He is God's own King; *MY King*; as Solomon was David's (I Kings 1:37,38, etc.).

MESSIAH'S MANIFESTO (vv. 7,8).—Standing forth, He produces and recites one of the eternal decrees. Before time was, He was the only-begotten of the Father (John 17:5); but his son-ship was declared at his Resurrection; then He was born first from among the dead and sealed (Acts 13:30-37; Rom. 1:4; Col. 1:18). The world is his heritage; but the gift is conditional on prayer. For this He pleads through the ages; and, if we are truly at one with Him, we too shall *ask*. The pastoral staff for the sheep; the "iron rod" for those who oppose.

OVERTURES AND COUNSELS OF PEACE (v. 12).—*Kiss*, the expression of homage (I Sam. 10:1). The word "adore" is literally *to the mouth*. To "perish in the way" reminds of 1:6. Notice the change in R.V.; "his wrath will soon be kindled" (Jas. 5:9; Rev. 6:17). *Oh the blessed-ness!* closes this Psalm as it began the first.

Psalm III "I WILL NOT BE AFRAID!"

AN ENUMERATION OF TROUBLE (vv. 1,2).—Though God knows all, it relieves the over-charged heart to make a full statement of

anxieties and troubles. The foes were *many*. They quoted his sin as a reason for supposing that God had withdrawn his aid (II Sam. 16 :7,8). The word *help* is *salvation*; but salvation belongeth unto God v. (8; 35:3).

AN EXPRESSION OF UNFALTERING TRUST (vv. 3,4).—God our shield (Gen. 15:1) is *for i.e., around us*. Would that we found our *glory* in Him only (Jer. 9:23,24). It is a good thing to use the voice in prayer, as our Lord did. Words keep the heart awake (Heb. 5:7). David looked to God as dwelling between the cherubim of the ark, the symbol of propitiation; and he thus approached Him, as sinners must ever do, through the Lamb of God, the Priest of man.

AN ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF MERCY (vv. 5,6).—It was the perfect-ion of trust to be able to sleep under such circumstances, and to be devoid of fear when environed by such mighty hosts. But it is gloriously possible. So Jesus slept (Mark 4:38), and Peter (Acts 12:6). Let us be sure that we are where God would have us to be: then let us resign ourselves to his care; and, even though pursued by the results of our own mistakes and sins, we shall find that He will save us in them, if not from them.

AN URGENT ENTREATY (vv. 7,8).—For the third time the idea of *salvation* is introduced. The writer's foes are looked upon as wild beasts, who, when their jawbone is broken and their teeth dashed out, may roam around, but are powerless to hurt. David speaks as if he felt that this work was already done, and his foes' rage futile. And he turns from them to the great mass of his people, led wrong by wily conspirators, and pleads that God's best blessings may rest on them. So does our Lord intercede for us.

END OF SAMPLE