

Psalm 1. The Psalm of Introduction.

Read through this Psalm in 1. The King James Version

Psalm 1:1-6 (KJV)

¹ Blessed *is* the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

² But his delight *is* in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

³ And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

⁴ The ungodly *are* not so: but *are* like the chaff which the wind driveth away.

⁵ Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

⁶ For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.

2. The Message or Living Translation

Psalm 1:1-6 (MSG)

¹ How well God must like you— you don't hang out at Sin Saloon, you don't slink along Dead-End Road, you don't go to Smart-Mouth College.

² Instead you thrill to GOD's Word, you chew on Scripture day and night.

³ You're a tree replanted in Eden, bearing fresh fruit every month, Never dropping a leaf, always in blossom.

⁴ You're not at all like the wicked, who are mere windblown dust—

⁵ Without defense in court, unfit company for innocent people.

⁶ GOD charts the road you take. The road *they* take is Skid Row.

3. The NIV

Psalm 1:1-6 (NIV2011)

¹ Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers,

² but whose delight is in the law of the LORD, and who meditates on his law day and night.

³ That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither— whatever they do prospers.

⁴ Not so the wicked! They are like chaff that the wind blows away.

⁵ Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous.

⁶ For the LORD watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked leads to destruction.

Notice the style differences and the emphasis changes. Translations will come up with different ways of putting things.

Question 1 -Do these differences mean one translation is more right than the other translations?

Most scholars would say that Psalm 1 AND 2 are the introduction to the book of Psalms. One writer likens this to a having a Foreword and a Preface to the one book. But it is a good place to start – Now there is a heap of scholarly type stuff we could look at. The Psalms genre – It is a wisdom Psalm it's poetic structure it is chiasmic in its format. But is it what we need to get from it today? Probably not. We need to know how what the author wrote applies to us now. I look at Psalm much more devotionally than academically, so my assumption is that it will speak to me in some way.

So: The beginning.

Let's look at what the Psalms says.

Verse one starts with the word Blessed.

PS 1:1 Blessed is the man
who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked
or stand in the way of sinners
or sit in the seat of mockers.

Question 2 -What does the word “blessed” mean to us? (I am not asking for a definition but what you perceive it to mean)

Blessed is sometimes translated happy, other times it infers that someone is possessing stuff that makes them content. That could be either knowledge, wisdom or possessions.

The verse states that blessed is the man who does not.....

Obviously there are boundaries placed on the blessing. Right from the start the Psalms is linked with the rest of scripture.

The First books of the bible gives the standards for life – laws if you want to call them that.

So simply stated Blessed is the man who doesn't break God's laws.

Another way of putting is: Blessed or happy or content is the man who stays within God's boundaries.

But notice here it says not to walk, stand or sit.

who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked

or stand in the way of sinners

or sit in the seat of mockers.

You get the impression that God's people are not to be involved with those wicked people . Or as one commentator stated : Not to have anything to do with their lifestyle (walking) Their decision making (Standing) and their fellowship together (Sitting) I think in practical terms don't participate with wicked people's lifestyle.

An aside question: Does that mean have nothing to do with them? How do they hear about Jesus? I suppose our answer is to "Be in the world but not of the world".

You see the flip side of this is found in the next verse. We don't associate with evil (And I would include evil activities as well as evil people.)

PS 1:2 But his delight is in the law of the LORD,
and on his law he meditates day and night.

This is the lifestyle we are called to.

Question 3 – What does it mean to delight in the law of the LORD?

Delight on the law. Delight on the rules? MM interesting.

The word law in many ways is the idiom for the Word of God – we have our bible – the Jews had their books of the law. The Law was perceived to be God's words, God's instructions and the advice for living.

To delight over something

Next we see our first piece of imagery. Psalms is full of images, some which are quite foreign to our thought processes. We need to remember the culture of the time was subsistence agriculture. They relied on good seasons or suitable environment to survive.

PS 1:3 He is like a tree planted by streams of water,
which yields its fruit in season
and whose leaf does not wither.
Whatever he does prospers.

The blessing of people who know God are compared to a tree. Unlike trees growing wild or planted in the fields, where the amount of rainfall varies, the tree the psalmist envisions has been planted purposely by river or perhaps an irrigation canal. Everything is set up for the tree to do its job – make fruit.

The imagery of leaves and fruit assures the people who know God that they will receive blessing and will enjoy the life God has gifted them with.
The "prosperity" of the righteous person is God's blessing on their words and works.

Are we promised prosperity if we do the right thing? WE are promised God's prosperity. It was asked of me recently, and I checked if I could share the question, Are we not experiencing God's blessing as a church because we are doing it all wrong?

Interesting question: Have a think about it.

Does God punish His church for disobedience? Yes He does. Are we being disobedient? That is an interesting perspective. I do think we are searching for God's will, we are following His direction and yet perhaps (Shrug) WE need to be humble and open to God.

But God promises a prosperity within His understanding not our own.

So we have be prosperous. Revive Youth Night 100 kids made commitments or recommitment, that's amazing.

People caring and looking after each other, me included – amazing care.

People praying for God to work, worshipping together

People studying God's word and growing spiritually

Enough finance to send assistance to missionaries, fill boxes, help farmers wives.

We are prosperous

– I think the problem is more our perception of prosperity than a lack of it.

Back to the text.

Of course there is a flip side. Psalms uses positive and negative imagery to make its points. Here we see in the next verse the negative side. Notice that verse 1 was negative, verse 2 positive, verse 3 positive and verse 4 negative. This format will be seen in other Psalms also.

PS 1:4 Not so the wicked!
They are like chaff
that the wind blows away.

Again an agricultural image is used – something the people understand and link with. The wicked get blown away and are nothing.

Hang on- do we see that happen – the wicked seem to be the prosperous – (Hold your horse here – we’ll deal with that in another Psalm)

One of the big issues in Psalms is God’s dealing with the sins of the so called “wicked”.

Question 4 – Who are the wicked??

Basically the flip side of a previous statement.

Blessed is the man who doesn’t break God’s laws.

The Wicked are those who do break God’s laws.

A Sub question? Can Christians be wicked???

We assume so – we are told to return to our first love, maintain our faith etc – obviously there is the chance of “Backsliding” as it was called when I was a kid. I would probably use the term – “losing Focus on God”

We all do that. Is it wicked? If it has sin attached – then yep. So these warnings are for us.

**PS 1:5 Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment,
nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous.**

This passage has a certain spin on that. Wicked is very definite and final. As for sinners – they are with the wicked. But there is a finality here. The wicked are seemed to be those who chose not to get together with God, or to stay away from God.

Question 5 – What does this verse mean when it says “the wicked will not stand in the judgment”?

One way of looking at this is to realise the wicked have no place in God’s plans. Either the future (as in judgement and heaven) or in the present.

The final verse of the Psalm is about hope.

**PS 1:6 For the LORD watches over the way of the righteous,
but the way of the wicked will perish.**

The reason for the certainty of the judgment lies in God's knowledge of the affairs of humankind. God's "knowledge" is a deep commitment to, love for, and care of his own; people. Notice the translation "the LORD watches over."

Question 6 – What practical “watching over” has God been doing in your life lately?