

PSALM 1

THE PREFACE PSALM

Blessed indeed are we to have this priceless Book of Psalms; for it holds within its sacred bosom so much of the Lord's covenant-grace and mercy, as revealed to us in the Person and work of His dear Son, that it may well be considered as an embodiment of the whole Gospel!

The general title of this Book is taken from the Hebrew word *tehillim*, which means "Psalms" – particularly Psalms or Songs of praise. Several penmen were employed by the Holy Spirit to be the composers, under His own gracious inspiration, of these Psalms. The greater part of the book (which contains 150 Psalms altogether) was written by King David. But in addition to him, there were also a few others – such as Ethan, Heman, Asaph, and even Moses. Hence we cannot state the precise period in which all the Psalms were set down in writing, although we can say that those which were composed by David would have been committed to paper about 1,000 years before the birth of Jesus.

It is hardly possible to enter upon the very threshold of this Divine Treasury without having our minds strikingly attracted by the solemn and sacred contents which abound on its pages. The very first Psalm opens with "Blessed," and the last closes with "Hallelujah." And although, on the surface of many of these songs, much seems to be said about the particular writers, as if they were referring to themselves; and even though we shall meet with much concerning David and Solomon – yet when the eye is enlightened to behold spiritual things, we are frequently constrained to cry out, "A greater than Solomon is here!" For many things are said in this Book which could never truthfully be said of anyone except the Lord Jesus, and there are many other expressions which would be little short of blasphemy if they were spoken of any other except Him. Therefore, the Church in all ages should be on the lookout to catch a glimpse of her spiritual Husband whenever the Book of Psalms is brought before her view. In its pages, we shall discover something of the wonders of His Person and the wonders of His work. We shall trace the outlines of His advent, incarnation, life, sufferings, conflicts, victories, death, resurrection, ascension, sovereignty,

Overview of the Psalm, adapted from Charles Spurgeon:

This Psalm may be regarded as The Preface Psalm, since it has in it a suggestion of the contents of the entire Book. It is the Psalmist's desire to teach us the way to blessedness, and to warn us of the sure destruction of sinners. This Psalm may be looked upon, in some respects, as the text upon which the entire Book of Psalms makes up a Divine sermon.

Psalm 1 consists of two parts. In the first (from verse 1 to the end of verse 3) David shows us wherein the felicity and blessedness of a Godly person consists, what his exercises are, and what blessings he shall receive from the Lord. In the second part (from verse 4 to the end), he contrasts the state and character of the ungodly, reveals his future, and describes his ultimate doom in telling language.

and power; and we shall see prophecies of the great events which will be connected with His promised return. We shall behold the sweet sketches of His blessed offices which He fulfilled when He ministered upon earth, and which He still continues to fulfill in heaven. May our soul be delighted and entranced as we behold Jesus, through these inspired writings, in all His lovely offices as the Prophet, Priest, and King of His Church! If He will only open our eyes so that we may behold the wondrous things of His Word, we shall gladly trace His footsteps and workings of grace toward His people, as they are sweetly set forth here in this Book.

The first composition with which this Book opens is a Psalm of consolation. Herein the hearts of the Godly are encouraged and stirred up to magnify the Word of God above all things; for upon it, the entirety of true life and salvation stands. We are also taught that we should hear, read, weigh, and meditate upon it with a willingness of mind; for this Psalm shows that those alone are truly



blessed who are enabled to learn and know the will and the works of God from the pages of His written Word. Such persons enjoy a firm, sure, and eternal consolation – both in prosperity and adversity. A tree that grows on the banks of a river will continually grow upward – higher and higher – against all the violence of storms. It retains its strength against all the weights that man can put upon it. And by a secret growth, it flourishes daily and brings forth fruit in its proper season. In the same manner, according to this Psalm, the saints of God increase and grow continually by His Spirit and by the Word. Thereby, they are rendered more and more firm and constant, and they become invincible against every evil and all the calamities of life.

On the other hand, this Psalm denies that any true knowledge of God or any real consolation can be derived from human doctrine – no matter how beautiful a show they may put on. Those who are wicked and hypocritical are like chaff – the light and worthless leftovers from threshing wheat – which is scattered away by the wind. They do not endure in times of temptation; and by and by, they separate themselves from the assembly of the righteous, and finally come to nothing. God looks in love upon those who worship Him by hearing, learning, and declaring His Word; and these are the ones whom this Psalm pronounces to be blessed. But He disregards all the rest who are hypocrites and Pharisaical worshipers; He despises all their “good works” and “worship,” and He leaves them to perish in their blindness.

As we read and study this introductory composition to this precious Book, let us pray for grace to hear, read, meditate upon, and ponder the Word of God.

Lord, we repent of times when we have been deficient in our love of Your Word, which has led us to fail in properly studying it and meditating upon it. We beseech You for grace to imitate the Psalmist, and to delight daily in our Bibles! Amen.