

Study Guide

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BY STILL WATERS

Pondering the Psalms

Psalm I. Rewards for the Righteous

TRANSCRIPT OF VIDEO

Psalm I is one of my favorite Psalms due to an image it created in my mind many years ago. Similarly, there are a couple of Bible passages where my imagination has inserted myself into the Bible scene that has made it come alive indelibly in my life. In all of these passages, I find myself in the presence of my Lord and my God.

One such passage is in the book of Revelation 3:12 where I find I morphed into a pillar in the temple of God. A place where I will eternally enjoy the pleasure of being in His presence. My mind both marvels and boggles when I imagine this scene.

Another image is found in Isaiah 40:11 where my God – the Good Shepherd, carries me like a lamb close to His bosom where I can feel and hear His heartbeat. Oh, what pure, unspeakable joy that thought brings with it!

In this Psalm, I am captivated by the idea of being a tree planted by the waters, where it is incessantly nourished by God's presence through His word. Let's hold the image at the back of our minds as we are nourished by this beautiful Psalm I?

“Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked

or stand in the way of sinners,

or sit in the company of mockers,

But whose delight is in the law of the Lord,

and who meditates on it day and night.

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.

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

Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment,

nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous.

For the Lord watches over the way of the righteous,

but the way of the wicked leads to destruction.”

This uncomplicated Psalm describes two kinds of persons. The first person is a recipient of God's blessing (v 1-2) and the second is a person who needs a blessing from God but instead rebels against God. (v 4-6) The difference between these two kinds of persons lies 'in where they receive counsel and the type of counsel they receive.

Verses 1-2 show the result of poor counsel obtained from the wrong company of the wicked. Those who rebel and stand with sinners and make fun of God will get blown away like chaff when things get rough in this life. Additionally, they will not be able to stand in God's presence on the day of judgment.

The righteous, on the other hand who choose to be directed by God's word and delight in keeping it are blessed. This kind of person is like a tree planted by the waters which gets nourishment in all seasons and whose leaves never wither. In verse 3 we read about the benefits of meditating on God's word. It guides a person into wisdom and righteousness. The right counsel provides stability, inward nourishment, and refreshment, fruitfulness, and productivity, strength, durability, and success. (v3) Those are a lot of blessings!!

While this Psalm clearly was written to motivate us all to be righteous, let us see two more passages from the Bible that should also motivate us to spend time with God's word and to lead a righteous life.

In Jeremiah 17:8-9 we see a similar image of a tree by waters. Talking of the righteous, Jeremiah says, "They will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit."

This verse offers comfort especially during this pandemic and motivates Christians to remain people of integrity, justice, and empathy and not yield to the many temptations they face to cut corners.

If the passage of Jeremiah is not sufficient motivation, let me turn to King David who in the sunset of his life says this.

"I was young and now I am old, yet I have never seen the righteous forsaken or their children begging bread. They are always generous and lend freely; their children will be a blessing."

As you and I aspire to be righteous may the righteousness of Christ provide us more than salvation and, helps us become the person God created us to be.

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