

INTRODUCTION TO THE PERSONALIZED PSALMS

“In these busy days, it would be greatly to the spiritual profit of Christians if they were more familiar with the Book of Psalms, in which they would find a complete armory for life’s battles, and a perfect supply for life’s needs.”[1]

The Bible directs us to use the Psalms in numerous ways in our spiritual disciplines:

When believers gather together, we are to bring a psalm:

How is it then, brethren? Whenever you come together, each of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification. (1 Corinthians 14:26)

We are to teach and admonish one another with psalms:

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. (Colossians 3:16)

The psalms are to be part of our regular conversation:

Speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord. (Ephesians 5:19)

The psalms provide a divine hymn book, from which we are to sing to God:

Sing to Him, sing psalms to Him; talk of all His wondrous works! (1 Chronicles 16:9)

We are instructed to shout psalms to Him:

Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving; let us shout joyfully to him with psalms. (Psalm 95:2)

Various psalms also provide tremendous prayer models. For example, the prayer of repentance in Psalm 51:

- 1 *Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Your lovingkindness; according to the multitude of Your tender mercies, blot out my transgressions.*
- 2 *Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.*
- 3 *For I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is always before me.*
- 4 *Against You, and You only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Your sight--
(Psalm 51:1-4)*

Personalized Psalms” enables you to use the psalms in these and other Scriptural ways in personal and group devotions. Each psalm is edited in the first person, enabling you to converse directly with God in your worship experience. The title of each personalized psalm is a personal, positive declaration of prayer, praise, or power drawn from that specific psalm.

Even Psalms targeting evil nations take on new meaning when you come into agreement with righteous judgment on the enemies of God. “Imprecatory” psalms are those which call down judgment on the enemy. In the New Testament we are told to love our enemies (Matthew 5:44). This is not a conflict, however. When we read or pray imprecatory psalms, we are not exhibiting a hateful attitude but we are praying regarding God’s final judgment of the world and evil. These should never be used to pray against someone you do not like. These psalms should be used as declarations against evil—not people—but against the powers of the enemy that motivates wickedness.

The *Personalized Psalms* are intended to be used rather than simply read. First, make the positive confession with the title of the Psalm, then use the psalm to lift your own prayer, praise, or declaration to God. Experiment by praying, singing, and shouting psalms to God as the Bible directs. Take time to meditate on each psalm.

The *Personalized Psalms* are designed to move you beyond a mere perusal of the psalms into personal possession of this rich treasury of God’s Word.

[1] Charles Spurgeon, preface to *Psalms, Volume I. The Crossway Classic Commentaries*, edited by Alister McGrath and J.I. Packer. Crossway Books: Wheaton, Illinois, 1993.