

Pastor Joshua Lance

Pastor's Minute

January 20, 2026

Intro to Psalms

The Bible's Lit Playlist

Hey there Ebenezer family, welcome to another episode of the Pastor's Minute...

This year we are going to venture to go through as many of the Psalms together as we can. I hope to do this in as many varieties of methods as there are varieties of Psalms in the book. WE may take an episode to read the Psalm and go into depth explaining it, or i may briefly explain it and play or sing a portion of it.

So what are Psalms or as we say, the Psalms? The book of Psalms is a giant (what we would today call) playlist of the songs of God's people. These songs range from praise to lament to even songs used when going into battle. This song book is divided into 5 books to mirror the 5 Books of Moses. The way it is put together follows collections, but these collections seem to also follow the authors of the various Psalms. There are also collections within the collections. For example, Psalms 120-134 are called the "Songs of Ascents" and Psalms 113-118 are known as the Hallel, which were songs sung while making the journey to Jerusalem for a festival. Both are in book Five.

Now, all thru this year as you are watching these episodes i want you to take note of 3 distinct things that are common themes in the book of Psalms.

Number 1- As with songs today, these songs are poetry that uses poetic language. That means that we cannot read each and every word literally. The basics of poetic language applies here.

Words and phrases are used in metaphor and simile; used to paint a picture in the mind of the reader. Sometimes God is described with human features like eyes or ears, etc. Again this is poetic and meant to paint a picture in your mind.

Not only is this poetry but it is Hebrew Poetry, meaning that the lines are laid out in thoughts rather than rhymes. Parallelism is a huge method used by Psalmist. The second line will often repeat the first using different words but same meaning, or expand what the first says or even contrast what the first says in order to paint the picture. These are poetry methods we need to be aware of, when reading the Psalms.

Number 2- There is a theme that runs all through the book of Psalms, that of blessing. But according to the book it is not just a blanket blessing for everyone, only those who fear or seek after the LORD. That's the very language that is used.

Let me give you a few examples. Psalm 25:14 says, "The friendship of the LORD is for those who fear Him..." (Psalm 25:14 ESV). Or Psalm 112:1, "Praise the LORD! Blessed is the man who fears the LORD, who greatly delights in His commandments!" (Psalm 112:1 ESV). You could also look up Psalm 147:11, 128:1, 34:7, or 115:13, they all say the same thing; those who fear or seek after the LORD will be blessed.

I think that is a really cool things! I've said this a few times in the past weeks on Sunday morning because it's something that I've just realized and am wrestling with myself. So many times I think we are hesitant to start or do anything for fear that we won't do it right. Doing it right has nothing to do with it and that's what the Psalmist is saying here. He doesn't write, God blesses those who seek Him in the correct way, NO!, it says God blesses those who fear Him, seek after Him. So even our most clumsy attempts to seek the LORD, or show fear (awe and reverence) to the LORD receive blessing from Him. That is really cool and really comforting! That theme runs all through the book of Psalms. That brings us to Number 3.

Number 3- What exactly is a blessing? What does that mean? We got the first part, seek the LORD...fear the LORD- if we do that, God brings blessing. What does that mean? What does that look like?

To put it in the most simplest terms, blessing means to have a full basket. If you think of your life as a basket of bread, if you are blessed the basket is full. Loaves are stacked on top of each other risking falling over the side and falling out, and that's kind of the secondary meaning of blessing as well. If we are blessed, our basket is full, the point of that is to then be a blessing to others, putting into their baskets. This is the idea of blessing in the Old and New Testament.

We will see this a lot throughout as we study the Psalms together, and especially next week as we look at Psalm 1.

I hope you are excited to go through the Psalm together and I hope that this will be a huge encouragement to you. Until next time, love the LORD your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength. Love your neighbor as yourself.

May the Grace of the LORD Jesus

The Love of God the Father

And the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit

Be with you all...Amen!