**The Book of Psalms—Study Guide (Psalms 58-66)**

The Bible always takes precedence in our study of God’s Word (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21). This guide is just a “help” compiled from the Soncino commentary, Ambassador College notes, & personal study.

**Psalm 58: To the Chief Musician. Set to “Do Not Destroy.”** **A Michtam of David.** Soncino titles this Psalm: “Unjust Judges Condemned.”

1-2: A question is presented to the wicked: “Do you speak righteousness and judge uprightly?” The answer is: NO. In their hearts, they work wickedness (scheming to pervert justice); they weigh out the violence of their hands (scales were used for fair dealing; symbolically the wicked weighed out violence against the innocent).

3-5: The wicked are estranged (from the principles of equity) even from the womb (having this inclination to do evil) and go astray as soon as they are born, speaking lies. Their poison (venomous words) is like the poison of a snake, and they are like the deaf cobra that stops its ear which will not heed—the wicked are not dissuaded.

6-8: David prayed that God would break their teeth (render them harmless), and that they would flow away as waters, and that their arrows would be cut in pieces. A snail that melts as it goes away was a belief by some that its slimy trail was the dissolution of its substance. The wicked are to be as the stillborn child who does not see.

9: Before pots (for cooking) could feel the heat from the burning thorns (because of a windstorm which comes up and scatters the thorns before they could burn sufficiently), God will quickly take the wicked away as with a whirlwind in His burning wrath. Notice Psalm 118:12; Jeremiah 23:19.

10-11: The righteous will rejoice when they see God’s vengeance (Hebrews 10:30-31). The righteous will wash his feet (symbolic) in the blood of the wicked. So, men will say, “Surely there is a reward for the righteous, Surely He is God who judges in the earth.”

**Psalm 59: To the Chief Musician. Set to “Do Not Destroy.”** **A Michtam of David when Saul sent men, and they watched the house in order to kill him.**  This event is found in 1 Samuel 19:10-16. Soncino titles this Psalm: “Prayer in Danger.”

1-4: David asked God to deliver and defend him from his enemies. He asked to be saved from bloodthirsty men as they were laying in wait for him. They were gathered against him (with impudence and brazenness), not for any transgression he did, but they still ran and prepared themselves against him even though he had no fault.

5: He asked God, the God of Israel, to awake (Psalm 44:23) and help him. He also asked God to awake and punish all the nations (which come against Israel), and not be merciful to any wicked transgressors. Selah.

6-7: At evening, the wicked return. They growl like a dog and go throughout the city. They belch with their mouth, and swords are in their lips. They ask, “Who hears?”

8-10: But, God does hear and shall laugh at them (Psalm 2:4). He will have all the nations in derision. David was going to wait on God, for He was David’s defense. The God of mercy would meet David, and God was going to allow David to see his desire come upon his enemies.

11-12: David asked God not to slay them (in a swift destruction), lest the people forget, but to scatter them—drive them from their homes, and bring them down. Because of the sin of their mouth, which is what they say, let them be taken in their pride (their self-assurance) for the cursing and lying they speak.

13: Consume them so that they may not continue (make them realize they have served as a living example of divine retribution). Let it be known that God rules in Jacob to the ends of the earth. Selah.

14-17: The dogs wander up and down for food, and howl if not satisfied. But David would be satisfied and would sing of God’s great power and of His mercy. God was his defense and refuge in the day of trouble. He would also sing of God being his strength and his defense, and of his God of mercy.

**Psalm 60: To the Chief Musician. Set to “Lily of the Testimony”** (Name of a melody—Psalms 45; 69; 80). **A Michtam of David. For teaching** (an example of a song for teaching is found in 2 Samuel 1:17-19). **When he fought against Mesopotamia and Syria of Zobah, and Joab returned and killed twelve thousand Edomites in the Valley of Salt (near the Dead Sea).** (This event is found in 2 Samuel 8:3, 13-16). Soncino titles this Psalm: “In the Shadow of Defeat.” These areas will again be plundered by Israel in the future: Isaiah 11:14.

1-3: David noted that God had broken them (Israel) down, but asked that they would be restored back to Him. God makes the earth to tremble but He will also heal its breaches. God has shown His people hard things (Psalm 71:20), and they drank the wine of confusion (Isaiah 51:17, 22—refers to the cup of fury upon them).

4-5: God gives those who fear Him a banner (Psalm 20:5), which will be displayed because of the truth. (Christ will also be our banner: Isaiah 11:10). God’s beloved would be delivered and be saved. See Psalm 108:5-6.

6: (The following three verses are repeated in Psalm 108:7-9). The phrase “God spoke in His holiness” means that His words will be fulfilled (Psalm 89:35; Amos 4:2). God divided the land and gave it to Israel. Shechem represented the land on the west side of the Jordan, and the Valley of Succoth to the east (Joshua 13:24-27).

7: Manasseh was divided: one half stayed on the east side (Gilead), and the other on the west (Joshua 13:29-31).

Ephraim is described as being the helmet to a warrior’s head (hence, protection for Israel). Judah is “My lawgiver” or scepter (See Genesis 49:10). See a prophecy regarding Judah and Ephraim: Isaiah 11:12-13.

8: Moab is God’s washpot. Moab had planned to destroy Israel—but it became as a basin in which conquerors would wash their feet. (A washpot also symbolizes menial status—2 Samuel 8:1-2). Regarding Edom, God would cast His shoe (as a master would cast his shoe to a servant to clean—it was a sign of contempt).

9-10: Philistia will cry aloud because of God. Questions are now asked: Who would bring David to the strong city (possibly Petra, capital of Edom, which was fortified by rocks) and to the rest of Edom? Answer: It would be God, for without Him, it could not be accomplished. See Numbers 24:17-19.

11-12: Only God can give us help from trouble, for the help of man is useless (Psalm 146:3-5). It is through God that we are victorious. It is God who will tread down our enemies (Repeated in Psalm 108:10-13).

**Psalm 61: To the Chief Musician. On a stringed instrument**. **A Psalm of David:** Soncino titles this Psalm: “A Prayer in Exile.” (It could be describing the time of Absalom’s revolt against David).

1-2: David asked God to hear and attend to his prayer from wherever on the earth he was. When his heart was overwhelmed, he asked God to lead him to the rock of refuge that was higher than him (Psalms 31:2-3; 62:2, 7).

3-4: God had been a shelter to him—a strong tower from the enemy. David knew that he would dwell in God’s tabernacle forever (See a prophecy in Revelation 3:12). He would trust in the shelter of His wings. Selah.

5-6: God heard his vows. God gives a heritage to those who fear Him. God would prolong the king’s life—through his generations for many years (As the prophet Nathan noted in 2 Samuel 7:16). See Proverbs 10:27.

7-8: The king will abide before God forever. Mercy and truth preserve the king. See Proverbs 20:28. (The Targum—Aramaic translation says: “Then I will praise Thy name for all eternity when I pay my vows in the day of Israel’s redemption and in the day when King Messiah is consecrated to become ruler”).

**Psalm 62: To the Chief Musician. To Jeduthun** (see notes on Psalm 39—Jeduthun was a director of the temple choir)**.** **A Psalm of David.** Soncino titles this Psalm: “The One Sure Refuge.”

1-2: David waited for God. His salvation came from God, who (alone and no one else) was his rock and defense. David knew that he would not be moved (or greatly disturbed with a feeling of hopelessness).

3-4: David knew that his enemies wanted to attack and destroy him like a leaning wall or tower and a tottering fence (A similar expression is in Isaiah 30:12-14). His enemies consulted to cast him down from his high position. They delighted in lies. They blessed with their mouth, but cursed inwardly.

5-8: David’s expectation came from God (These verses are a repeat of verses 1-2). God was his salvation and glory. A lesson for us is to trust in God at all times. Pour out your heart to Him. He is our refuge. Selah.

9: Men of low degree are a vapor. Men of high degree are a lie (their wealth can be swept from them). Both (rich and poor), if weighed on the scales, are lighter than vapor (breath or vanity). See also Isaiah 40:17.

10: Do not trust in oppression, nor hope in robbery (Soncino says “ill-gotten gains will yield no permanent advantage”). If riches do increase, don’t set your heart on them.

11-12: God has spoken once and twice. David heard this more than once—that power and mercy belongs to God. Also, God renders to each according to his work (Proverbs 24:12).

**Psalm 63: A Psalm of David when he was in the wilderness of Judah.** (At the time of Saul: 1 Samuel 22:5; 23:14. And at the time of Absalom: 2 Samuel 15:23, 28).Soncino titles this Psalm: “An Exile’s Longing.”

1-2: David acknowledged that God was his God, and that he would seek Him early. He thirsted for Him as in a dry land where there was no water. So he looked for God and His glory in the sanctuary (God’s throne).

3-5: God’s lovingkindness is bigger than life. David’s lips praised Him. He would lift up his hands in His name. He knew his soul would be satisfied with marrow and fatness (spiritual satisfaction from God).

6-8: He remembered God on his bed and meditated on Him in the night watches. He rejoiced in the shadow of His wings, because God was his help. His soul followed close behind God as God’s hand upheld him.

9-10: Those who sought David’s life will go into the lower parts of the earth (The grave—see Ephesians 4:9). They will fall by the sword and be a portion for the jackals (They won’t have an honorable burial).

11: Everyone who swears by God will glory (see Deuteronomy 6:13; 10:20; Isaiah 65:16). The mouth of those who speak lies shall be stopped. (Soncino says: Deceiving men by oaths sworn in the name of God which they falsify in act, will be reduced to silence in Sheol).

**Psalm 64: To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David.** Soncino titles this Psalm: “Divine Judgment.”

1-2: David asked God to hear his voice in his meditation and to preserve his life from the enemy. He also asked that God hide him from the secret plots and the rebellion of the workers of iniquity.

3-4: The wicked sharpen their tongues like a sword, and bend their bows to shoot their arrows—bitter (poisoned) words. They shoot in secret at the blameless. They shoot at him suddenly and don’t fear.

5-6: They encourage doing an evil matter and talk of laying snares and ask, “Who will see?” They devise iniquities by saying, “We have perfected a shrewd scheme.” The inward thought and heart of man are deep.

7-8: But, God will shoot at them with an arrow. Suddenly, they will be wounded. So He will make them stumble over their own tongue (Proverbs 17:20). All who see them will flee away.

9-10: All men shall fear and declare the work of God, for they will wisely consider His doing. The righteous will be glad and will trust in God. All the upright in heart shall glory.

**Psalm 65: To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David. A Song.** Soncino titles this Psalm: “A harvest hymn.”

1-2: God awaits praise in Zion, and to Him the vow will be performed (Psalm 66:13). God hears our prayers, and will hear from all flesh (Isaiah 66:23). This is millennial. See Isaiah 2:2-3; 56:7-8.

3-4: Iniquities have prevailed, but God will provide atonement for our transgressions. Blessed is the man whom God chooses to approach Him, so that he can dwell in God’s courts (God calls us—John 6:44). We will be satisfied with the goodness in God’s house—His holy temple.

5-7: By awesome deeds in righteousness God answers us. The God of our salvation is the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of the far-off seas. He has established the mountains by His strength, clothed with power. He stills the noise of the waves (as an example: Matthew 8:26-27), and the tumult of the peoples.

8-10: Those who dwell in the farthest parts of the earth will be in awe of God’s signs (See Luke 21:25-26). God makes the outgoings of the morning and evenings rejoice (those who live each day will shout for joy). God waters the earth and provides the grain. He waters the ridges, and settles the furrows (Isaiah 30:25).

11-13: God crowns the year with beautiful crops and His paths drip with abundance. (God provides the rains—Deuteronomy 11:14). He blesses the pastures of the wilderness, and the little hills rejoice. The pastures are clothed with flocks. The valleys are covered with grain--they shout for joy and sing (Isaiah 35:1-2; 55:12-13).

**Psalm 66: To the Chief Musician. A Song. A Psalm.** Soncino titles this Psalm: “Song of Deliverance.”

1-4: Praise God with a joyful shout. What to say in praising God is noted: “How awesome are your works!” Through the greatness of God’s power, His enemies shall submit (come cringing) to God. All the earth shall worship and sing praises to God. (This is similar to what Hezekiah said—Isaiah 37:20; and this is future too).

5-7: The awesome works of God included turning the **sea** into dry land (Exodus 14:21-22), and when Israel went through the **river** on foot (Joshua 3:17). This will happen again: Isaiah 11:15. As the Israelites did, we too should look back at those memorable events and rejoice. God rules by His power forever and He observes all.

8-9: All the peoples are to bless God, and that the voice of His praise is to be heard. He keeps us alive and He doesn’t allow our feet to be moved (or to stumble and fall before the enemy).

10-12: God tests and refines us as silver. He brought us into the net and afflicted our backs and caused men to ride over our heads (Soncino: A picture of wounded men on the ground being run over by horsemen). We went through water and fire (trials: see Isaiah 43:1-3; Zechariah 13:9), but God brought us out into rich abundance.

13-15: When David was in trouble, he said he would go into God’s house with offerings and pay God his vows, which his lips had uttered. He would offer burnt sacrifices of fat with rams, bulls and goats (Psalm 51:19).

16-18: Come and hear, all who fear God. David would declare what God had done for him. He would extol God with his tongue. David believed he had no iniquity in his heart and if he did harbor sins, he knew that God would not hear him (See Isaiah 1:15-17).

19-20: But, David knew that God heard him, and had attended the voice of his prayer. Blessed be God who has not turned away from our prayers to Him nor from His mercy toward us.