BIBLE STUDY

**Becoming A Person of Prayer**

**Lesson 6: Prayers from the Bible: The Psalms**

**DISCUSSION**

Prayer is surrender--surrender to the will of God and cooperation with that will. If I throw out a boathook from the boat and catch hold of the shore and pull, do I pull the shore to me, or do I pull myself to the shore? Prayer is not pulling God to my will, but the aligning of my will to the will of God.

E. Stanley Jones, Liberating Ministry From The Success Syndrome, K Hughes, Tyndale, 1988, p. 73.

**In this next section of our study, we will examine prayers found directly in the Scriptures. We will begin our study with the Book of Psalms.**

\*Who wrote the book of Psalms?

The Psalms have long been recognized as the “hymn book” of the Jewish people.

The Hebrew title is “*Tehillim*” which means “the book of praises (a song sung to the accompaniment of a stringed instrument).”

The Psalms are divided into five (5) “books”. (There is no 23rd or 100th division of psalms)

* Book 1 – Psalm 1-41
* Book 2 – Psalm 42-72
* Book 3 – Psalm 73-89
* Book 4 – Psalm 90-106
* Book 5 – Psalm 107 –150

Its writers are usually identified in the superscriptions (which appear just prior to the specific psalm being read).

* Psalm 3 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Psalm 42\* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Psalm 72 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Psalm 73 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Psalm 90 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\*Maskil is a term of uncertain meaning found in the book of Psalms. Most Bible translations suggest that maskil is a literary or musical term. Most likely, it relates to the purpose of specific psalms or how they were performed or recited.

The most noted writer in Psalms is David. He is attributed with writing 73 psalms.

\*What is likely the most famous of the psalms of David?

Situated in the Biblical canon among the books of poetry, Psalms is so much more than songs or poetry. It is irreplaceable as a devotional guide and hymnal.

But did you know that the book of Psalms is also a ***prayer book***?

There are many prayers found within this devotional/hymnal; prayers addressing many different categories:

* Strength
* Guidance
* Thanksgiving
* Peace
* Protection, and so much more.

We will begin this section of lessons with Psalm 51, David’s Prayer for Restoration.

\*Do you know the circumstances which prompted David to write this Psalm?

**DISCOVERY**

2 Samuel 11 - 12

David & Bathsheba

**(v.1)** “In the spring when kings march out to war…David remained in Jerusalem.”

* In the spring, after the latter rains were over it was customary to resume military activity.
* Though kings usually led their armies personally, David, for reasons not related, remained in Jerusalem.
* David was not where he was supposed to be, when he was supposed to be.

**(v.2)** “One evening David…saw a woman bathing – a very beautiful woman.”

* David arose, went to a rooftop of the palace, and from there happened to observe Bathsheba … the *wife* of his neighbor Uriah. She was bathing out in the open.

**(vv.3-5)** “David sent someone to inquire about her…sent messengers to get her…slept with her. She conceived.”

**(vv.6-13)** David attempts to cover this up by bringing Uriah home from the war for a respite.

* Uriah is unwilling to compromise pleasure for war with his compatriots.

**(vv.14-15)** David devises a murderous plot against Uriah.

**(vv.26-27)** Following Uriah’s murder, David marries Bathsheba, and she gives birth to a son.

**Chapter 12**

**(v.1-14)** The LORD sends the prophet Nathan to David with a serious message.

* Sometime after the birth of Bathsheba’s son, Nathan the prophet told David a story of a rich man who, in spite of having everything, stole a poor neighbor’s only ewe (i.e., female) lamb to provide a feast for a guest. Enraged, David pronounced that the man who would do such a despicable thing ought to die.
* The prophet tells David, “You are the man!”

**(vv.15-19)** The baby becomes terminally ill and dies.

**(vv.20-22)** David’s fast, lament and recovery.

1 Kings 15:5 is a good summary of David’s life for God – including the episode with Uriah/Bathsheba.

At some point, David realizes his sin and expresses his prayer of confession – Psalm 51.

What is the superscription of Psalm 51?

In this prayer David makes three major requests:

* **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(vv.1-7)**
* **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (vv.8-12)**
* **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (vv.13-19)**

David appealed to God’s love and compassion as he sought forgiveness and cleansing from his sin.

David needed God’s **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**.

\*What is your understanding of mercy?

Mercy withholds that which is rightfully deserved.

**Lamentations 3:22-23**

**DIRECTION**

**Pray a prayer thanking God for His never-ending mercies.**

**Read Psalm 51**