



Prayer space No 17 June 2021

PRAYING WITH THE PSALMS

"The more deeply we grow in the psalms, and the more often we pray them as our own, the more simple and rich our prayer will become."

- Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together*

The Psalms are a tremendous resource for prayer and Christian spirituality. They form the collection of the prayers and songs of praise of ancient Israel, which have also become the prayers and songs of the Christian Church from its earliest days. When we recite and pray them together and on our own they teach us how to form our own personal prayers. Together they model an open and authentic way of relating to God.

Psalms allow us to speak to God, and because they are Scripture they also allow God to speak to us. They are full of emotion, calm reflection and deep wisdom. The Psalms can teach us to pray and provide us with words when we are unable to express ourselves to God. Importantly the Psalms allow us to come to God just as we are - there is no self-censorship in the Psalms.

Stf 57

1 Let all the world in every corner sing:
my God and King!
The heavens are not too high,
his praise may thither fly;
the earth is not too low,
his praises there may grow.
Let all the world in every corner sing:
my God and King!

2 Let all the world in every corner sing:
my God and King!
The Church with psalms must shout,
no door can keep them out;
but above all, the heart
must bear the longest part.
Let all the world in every corner sing:
my God and King!

George Herbert (1593-1633)

Today we will concentrate on using a Psalm of Praise & Devotion using Psalm 8

Reading it through

Take a few deep breaths to calm yourself and clear your thoughts. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you pray, and to make the words of the psalm a prayer for you. Read the psalm through once (either aloud or silently). Take a minute of silence to let it sink in.

Psalm 8

For the director of music. According to *gittith*. A psalm of David.

¹LORD, our Lord,
how majestic is your name in the whole earth!

You have set your glory
in the heavens.

²You have made sure that children
and infants praise you.

Their praise is a wall
that stops the talk of your enemies.

³I think about the heavens.
I think about what your fingers have created.

I think about the moon and stars
that you have set in place.

⁴What are human beings that you think about them?
What is a son of man that you take care of him?

⁵You have made them a little lower than the angels.
You placed on them a crown of glory and honor.

⁶You made human beings rule over everything your hands created.
You put everything under their control.

⁷They rule over all flocks and herds
and over the wild animals.

⁸They rule over the birds in the sky
and over the fish in the ocean.
They rule over everything that swims in the oceans.

⁹LORD, our Lord,
how majestic is your name in the whole earth!

Consider what in the psalm spoke to you or to your needs today. Consider also what didn't speak to you, or seemed foreign.

Remember that the Psalms are the prayers of real human beings, and express real emotions, even ones that are sometimes uncomfortable.

Thank God for what spoke to you and for what challenged you or made you uncomfortable.

Take another moment of silence and go on with your day keeping in mind what you have taken from the psalm.

Stf 272

1 From heaven you came, helpless babe,
entered our world, your glory veiled,
not to be served but to serve,
and give your life that we might live.

*This is our God, the Servant King,
he calls us now to follow him,
to bring our lives as a daily offering
of worship to the Servant King.*

2 There in the garden of tears
my heavy load he chose to bear;
his heart with sorrow was torn,
'Yet not my will but yours,' he said.

3 Come see his hands and his feet,
the scars that speak of sacrifice,
hands that flung stars into space
to cruel nails surrendered.

4 So let us learn how to serve
and in our lives enthrone him,
each other's needs to prefer,
for it is Christ we're serving.

Graham Kendrick (b. 1950)

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Other psalms for praise and devotion are a 19, 23, 33, 65, 100, 103, 104, 111, 113-115, 117, 134-136, 145-150