

February 8, 2026

Psalm 5

Give ear to my words, O Lord; consider my groaning. ² Give attention to the sound of my cry, my King and my God, for to you do I pray. ³ O Lord, in the morning you hear my voice; in the morning I prepare a sacrifice for you and watch. ⁴ For you are not a God who delights in wickedness; evil may not dwell with you. ⁵ The boastful shall not stand before your eyes; you hate all evildoers. ⁶ You destroy those who speak lies; the Lord abhors the bloodthirsty and deceitful man. ⁷ But I, through the abundance of your steadfast love, will enter your house. I will bow down toward your holy temple in the fear of you. ⁸ Lead me, O Lord, in your righteousness because of my enemies; make your way straight before me. ⁹ For there is no truth in their mouth; their inmost self is destruction; their throat is an open grave; they flatter with their tongue. ¹⁰ Make them bear their guilt, O God; let them fall by their own counsels; because of the abundance of their transgressions cast them out, for they have rebelled against you. ¹¹ But let all who take refuge in you rejoice; let them ever sing for joy, and spread your protection over them, that those who love your name may exult in you. ¹² For you bless the righteous, O Lord; you cover him with favor as with a shield.

“David here complains of the malice and falsehood of his enemies who sought his ruin...”

-Matthew Henry



Praying Our Way Through Darkness Psalm 5

“They were not merely sinners, but deceivers; not merely open foes, but treacherous friends.”

-Charles Spurgeon

BIG IDEA: In a world that clutters our path with deceit and darkness, let us pray expectantly for God’s guidance, trusting that our Father will employ every resource of heaven to lead us in His way because of His abundant, steadfast love for us in His Son.

Or to say it more simply, The Gospel forms unshakable trust in a world bent on disturbance and disruption.

OUTLINE

1. Praying with Cries and Groans (Verses 1-3)
2. God’s Holy Hatred of Evil (Verses 4-6)
3. Praying for Divine Guidance (Verses 7-8)
4. Praying for Divine Justice (Verses 9-10)
5. God’s Blessing and Favor (Verses 11-2)

DISCIPLESHIP DURING THE WEEK

These “Sermon Discussion Questions” are designed for study during the week for believers in a wide variety of ages & stages in their walk with Christ.

1. How do you respond when obstacles prevent you from achieving a desired outcome, such as a dream vacation, an injury that prevented you from playing in a championship game, completing a race for which you had trained for many months, or a co-worker with less experience or tenure got the promotion that you thought was yours?
2. (Verses 1-3) When your distress shows up as anxiety, anger, silence, distraction, or exhaustion rather than loud weeping, how does Psalm 5 assure you that God still hears every groan?
3. (Verses 4-6) How does David’s affirmation of God’s character provide instruction as to how to respond when a friend betrays you, false information about you is posted on social media, or you are mocked for your faith?
4. (Verses 7-8) Write these verses in your own words. How can these verses provide a plan to offer a friend who is trying to figure out how to respond to betrayal, slander, or evil that has been done to them?
5. (Verses 9-10) How can believers today pray imprecatory psalms like Psalm 5 in a way that expresses both holy hatred of sin and genuine love for those who oppose God?
6. (Verses 11-12) Amid all darkness and deceit, David calls the church to rejoice, to sing for joy...why?

“All the benefits of salvation are given to us in Christ, who is Himself the blessing of God.”

-Herman Bavinck

“All divine love, grace, and favor toward sinners flow through the person of Christ... Christ is both the means and measure of all God’s blessings to His people.”

-John Owen

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Sometimes our prayers have a tone of excitement and gratitude...other times we pray with a sense of urgency and determination...but there are also moments when prayer is hard, where the weight of our circumstances causes us to groan and cry out to God in prayer. This is the situation here in Psalm 5. This individual lament from David is the first psalm that prays for the downfall of one's enemies. Such Psalms relate to situations where one is faced with bloodthirsty and deceitful persecutors.

-ESV Study Bible

Instead of taking vengeance into his own hands, David entrusts their demise to a holy and just God. Praying for God's justice on his enemies is something we encountered a couple of weeks ago in Psalm 3. And here now in Psalm 5, we see that verse 10 is a part of a group of songs called the imprecatory psalms, which are Spirit-inspired prayers in which God's people cry out for His righteous judgment against evil and injustice. And you'll also remember that we said: That imprecatory Psalms are compatible with Jesus' command to love our enemies because they surrender judgment to God rather than taking vengeance into human hands.

-Pastor Bill

Praise to Jesus – Holy and faithful Father, we praise You as the God who hears our cries, hates all that is evil, and surrounds Your people with favor like a shield.

Repent through Jesus – We confess that in a world filled with deceit and darkness, we have too often been tempted to return evil for evil, to trust our own instincts more than Your guidance, and to seek justice on our own terms rather than resting in Your righteousness. Forgive us for the ways we have wandered from Your path and quiet our hearts by the abundance of Your steadfast love given to us in Jesus Christ.

Consecration for Jesus – Now consecrate us anew: lead us in Your righteousness, make Your way straight before us, guard us from compromise, and shape us into people who rejoice in You, trust Your justice, and walk faithfully under the shelter of Your gracious favor. Amen.

FOR FAMILIES AND YOUNG CHILDREN

These questions are written to aid parents in leading family devotions with their children.

1. Read verses 1-2. What did King David ask God to “consider” and to “Give attention to”? (In the ESV, we read in verse 1 that he asks God to “consider my groaning” and verse 2 says “Give attention to the sound of my cry”. Other translations use these words: “mourn” or “lament” or “cry for help” or “sighing”. This is a psalm of lament in which King David is taking his sadness and distress to God. Talk with your children about how we don’t often think of this type of prayer as acceptable. But the psalms of lament are important for us to learn since we live in a broken world that will bring us struggles and disappointments.)
2. In verse 2, to whom does King David address his prayer? (He said, “my King and my God.” First, point out to your children the use of “my.” This is an expression of a personal faith in God. Then talk with your children about how King David understood that God is his King and the true King of Israel. David prayed this way as a reminder that God is the Sovereign and Almighty King.)
3. Compare the description of the “boastful” in this psalm versus the description of God. (The boastful are called wicked, evil, liars, bloodthirsty, and guilty. David focuses on how these enemies of God use destructive and false speech. God is described as righteous, full of steadfast love, protective, and merciful. Talk with your children about the importance of knowing how God is described in the Bible for our prayers and for our faith journey.)
4. Take time today or this week to ask your children to help you rewrite this psalm as a family prayer and then pray it with your family.

Recommended Resource to study the Psalms with your children:

WonderFull: Ancient Psalms Ever New by Marty Machowski

Scriptures for further study:

John 16:33

Romans 8:37-39

FOR STUDENTS

Scriptures for further study:

Romans 8:35-39

Psalms 11:5

Proverbs 3:1-12

1. Read verses 1–3. David prays with groaning, crying, and expectation. What does it mean to pray this honestly and still “watch” for God to act? When have you last prayed like that?
2. Verse 3 suggests David begins his day by seeking God. How might beginning your day with prayer shape how you view your circumstances, emotions, or the people around you?
3. Verses 4–6 describe God’s hatred for evil, lies, and pride. Why is it important for us to remember that God’s love also includes justice and holiness? What happens when we ignore this part of who God is?
4. In verse 7, David comes into God’s presence not because he’s perfect but because of God’s “abundant steadfast love.” How does that encourage you when you don’t feel worthy to pray?
5. Verse 8 is a prayer for God’s guidance in the midst of enemies. Where in your life do you feel like you’re walking through spiritual fog or facing opposition? What would it look like to pray verse 8 personally this week?
6. David describes the wicked in verses 9–10 as people who use deceptive and destructive words. How can our words either reflect God’s truth or add to the darkness around us?
7. In verses 11–12, David ends with a tone of confidence. What images does he use to describe God’s protection and blessing? What would it look like for you to take refuge in God this week?

FOR NON-BELIEVERS OR NEW BELIEVERS

1. If the previous Psalm 4 was a prayer offered at night, then Psalm 5 is a prayer offered in the morning.

Question: Why is it good for us to pray at the beginning as well as at the end of our day? How might your day be reshaped by starting it in prayer?

2. Verse 3 teaches us how to pray with expectation.

Question: How can you pray in a way that is less perfunctory (i.e., going through the motions) and more intentional and expectant?

3. Look again at verses 4 and 5.

Question: What is God's settled posture towards sin and evil?

Question: There is a popular expression: "God hates the sin but loves the sinner." How does Psalm 5:5 (see also Psalm 11:5) challenge this notion?

4. As believers, we all desire for God to give us wisdom in our lives and guidance in our decision-making.

Question: Based on verse 8, what kind of guidance should we be seeking above all?

5. Look more closely at verses 11 and 12. Here we see words like "refuge," "protection," "surround," and "shield."

Question: What overriding image is David leaving us with?

Question: How does prayer help us to work through our concerns and feelings about our circumstances, and arrive at a clearer understanding of God and a healthier perspective on our situations?

The Blessed Life: A Study of the Psalms



"The Light of the World" (1851-1853) by William Holman Hunt

Psalms Introduction

The Book of Psalms is the sacred place where the living God meets His people in the most intimate and personal of ways. He invites them to know Him not merely as an idea, but as their refuge, portion, shepherd, and King. From the opening doorway of blessedness in Psalm 1 to the climactic Hallelujahs of Psalm 150, the Psalter reveals that the truly happy life is one rooted in the person and work of Almighty God, whose steadfast love holds His people through every season of the soul. As the Psalter moves from anguish to adoration, from darkness to dawn, it becomes a mirror of the Christian life itself. It teaches us to pray honestly, to hope stubbornly, and to sing faithfully, even when night seems long. In the deepest valleys, the Psalms give voice to the church's groan; on the highest heights, they train the church's doxology. And in every line, every cry, and every hallelujah, Christ Himself comes near, revealing the light of the world in the dark night of the soul and leading His people into the blessedness that only His grace can give.

– Pastor Bill

About the artwork and artist.

The Light of the World, 1851-1853, is an iconic allegorical painting by William Holman Hunt. The painting depicts Jesus Christ as a regal figure in flowing robes, wearing a crown of thorns, holding a glowing lantern, and preparing to knock on a weed-overgrown wooden door with no external handle. This illustrates Revelation 3:20 from the Bible: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him..." The artist William Holman Hunt is showing us that Jesus is the divine door to the living God who meets His people in the most intimate and personal ways. The closed, overgrown door → representing the human soul or "obstinately shut mind" that has long ignored spiritual calling. There is no handle on the outside → the door can only be opened from within, emphasizing free will and personal invitation to faith. The lantern → Christ as the light of the world (John 8:12), illuminating darkness and offering salvation. The work marked Hunt's deepening Christian faith (from earlier agnosticism) and became one of the most reproduced and devotional images of the Victorian era, inspiring oratorios, hymns, and widespread popular piety. It's often called a visual sermon on personal salvation.