

Daily Psalms
A Lenten Devotion/Prayer Guide

By

Rev. Scott Jorgenson

2018

May the Lord bless you in your time with Him. This devotional utilizes Psalms from the Common Lectionary for Lent as a guide for your life of meditation, devotion, and prayer. Use this tool as the Lord leads you in personal preparation for the celebration of His resurrection. May it lead you to a deeper longing and commitment to our Savior and Lord, Jesus Christ.

Day #1: Psalm 51:1-3 (Ash Wednesday) Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions. 2 Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. 3 For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me.

Recognizing our own sin can be extremely humbling. Reflect on unconfessed sin in your life. "Own it." Put them "before you" in your prayer today, asking for forgiveness.

We are reminded not only of our shortcomings but also of God's unfailing love for us that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. His forgiveness is given because of his great compassion for us. All that is unholy in us can be cleansed by Christ's work on the cross. 1 John 1:9 reminds us again, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins..."

Day #2: Psalm 51:4-6 (Thursday) Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight; so you are right in your verdict and justified when you judge. 5 Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me. 6 Yet you desired faithfulness even in the womb; you taught me wisdom in that secret place.

The worldly consequences of sin sometimes get in the way of us bringing those sins before God first. In your prayers today be sure you are confessing the root of your sin and not the consequences. Bring those sins against God before His throne.

As to the consequences: He teaches us wisdom in our faithfulness.

Day #3: Psalm 51:7-12 (Friday) Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow. 8 Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones you have crushed rejoice. 9 Hide your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquity. 10 Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. 11 Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me. 12 Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.

Fruits of our confessions: clean, white, washed, joy, gladness, purity, renewal, present with God, filled with the Holy Spirit, restoration and sustained. God makes a compelling case to “get real” with Him. Make your prayers real, make them specific. He knows our heart, be REALLY honest with Him. And be blessed!

Day #4: Psalm 51:13-17 (Saturday) Then I will teach transgressors your ways, so that sinners will turn back to you. 14 Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God, you who are God my Savior, and my tongue will sing of your righteousness. 15 Open my lips, Lord, and my mouth will declare your praise. 16 You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it; you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings. 17 My sacrifice, O God, is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart you, God, will not despise.

Simply because we are full of remorse and humble ourselves before our God does not mean we have to be quiet about who God is. Humility does not mean silence. In fact, His forgiveness gives us occasion to teach, sing and declare God’s righteousness. Prayerful consider how to share what God has taught you through forgiveness. What might others learn or appreciate about what you have experienced? For what do you sing God’s praises?

Day #5: Psalm 25:1-2a (1st Sunday in Lent) In you, Lord my God, I put my trust. 2a I trust in you

Trust, or lack thereof, is a big issue. We distrust others. We are taught self-reliance. We distrust authority. We distrust governments and rulers. And with just cause. People disappoint. Systems fail us. I remind myself to keep my expectations of others low but have high hopes. God is forever faithful. Ask God today to reveal areas of mistrust in your life and how you may need to renew your trust in Him.

Day #6: Psalm 25:2b-3 (Monday) Do not let me be put to shame, nor let my enemies triumph over me. 3 No one who hopes in you will ever be put to shame, but shame will come on those who are treacherous without cause.

I am reminded of the corporate ladder...do whatever is necessary for the promotion. Many careers have been trampled by those who are “treacherous without cause.”

When we strive to honor one another, above ourselves, as Christ taught, we will never be put to shame. Pray for those who persecute you. Pray for those who injure without cause. Pray against your own potential to harm without cause.

Day #7: Psalm 25:4 (Tuesday) Show me your ways, Lord, teach me your paths.

This verse could be shortened to “seek and find.” Today is a two –part prayer. First, ask God to reveal His plan (seek), not only for your life, but for the day. What would God have you do, say, be? And second, pray for assistance (find) in doing just that. We sometimes hear that still, small voice moving us in unexpected ways. We also need help in finding out HOW to respond. May God bless you today by not only showing you His way but also teaching you to walk that path.

Day #8: Psalm 25:5 (Wednesday) Guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long.

I had never used a guide in my life until my first short-term mission trip to Kenya: new culture, new language, new environment. God’s truth is a bit foreign to the world. Pray for the Lord to be your GUIDE in understanding His Word and His truth. A good guide increases our hope for a successful journey. God gives us hope all day long when we allow Him to be our guide.

Day #9: Psalm 25:6-7 (Thursday) Remember, Lord, your great mercy and love, for they are from of old. 7 Do not remember the sins of my youth and my rebellious ways; according to your love remember me, for you, Lord, are good.

What a beautiful prayer, “Do not remember my sins, but remember me.” I have heard it said, “Hate the sin but love the sinner.” Psalm 25 is much more lovely. In your prayers today be reminded that God does love you and He forgives your sin.

Day #10: Psalm 25:8-9 (Friday) Good and upright is the Lord; therefore he instructs sinners in his ways. 9 He guides the humble in what is right and teaches them his way.

Good parents teach their children: not to touch a hot stove, to look both ways when crossing the road, etc. because they care about their children and what happens to them. Give thanks to God today that He cares enough about us to instruct us in a better way.

Day #11: Psalm 25:10 (Saturday) All the ways of the Lord are loving and faithful toward those who keep the demands of his covenant.

In Jesus we have a new covenant in that God's laws are put into our minds and written on our hearts and that God will be our God and we will be His people (Jer. 31:31). God indicates that His dwelling place will be in us. Prayerfully allow God to more fully dwell in you and may you experience His love and faithfulness in your life.

Day #12: Psalm 22:23 (2nd Sunday in Lent) You who fear the Lord, praise him! All you descendants of Jacob, honor him! Revere him, all you descendants of Israel!

We are called to praise Him, honor Him, and revere Him. May prayers of praise today rise from your humility before God. May your prayers of honor today rise from the faithfulness of those who have walked this path of faithfulness before you. May your reverent prayers come from being part of God's family.

Day #13: Psalm 22:24 (Monday) For he has not despised or scorned the suffering of the afflicted one; he has not hidden his face from him but has listened to his cry for help.

This direct reference to the suffering Messiah depicts a God who hears the affliction. Cry out to God today with your hurts and your pleas for help. Be reminded of God's faithfulness to His Son, Jesus, and to we, His people...even in our affliction.

Day #14: Psalm 22:25 (Tuesday) From you comes the theme of my praise in the great assembly; before those who fear you I will fulfill my vows.

How has God gifted you? What is the "theme" of YOUR praise? Have you committed to this call in your life? In your time with the Lord today give thanks for themes in your past and possibilities for the future.

Day #15: Psalm 22:26 (Wednesday) The poor will eat and be satisfied; those who seek the Lord will praise him - may your hearts live forever!

It is God who can fill our longing hearts. He satisfies. And even in our longing, simply seeking Him brings praise. Seek God in your prayers today and let praise flow from your desire for God's blessing in your life.

Day #16: Psalm 22:27-28 (Thursday) All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations will bow down before him, 28 for dominion belongs to the Lord and he rules over the nations.

God's reign is not for a time and a people, it is for all time and for all people. Pray for the nations today: for a turning to God and recognition of His rule over heaven and earth.

Day #17: Psalm 22:29 (Friday) All the rich of the earth will feast and worship; all who go down to the dust will kneel before him - those who cannot keep themselves alive.

God is our provider...even of life itself. Give thanks for the gift of our lives and the seasons in them: seasons of celebration and worship as well as seasons of humility and longing.

Day #18: Psalm 22:30-31 (Saturday) Posterity will serve him; future generations will be told about the Lord. 31 They will proclaim his righteousness, declaring to a people yet unborn: He has done it!

God has sent us into the world to proclaim His love for us through Jesus Christ. So that the world may know...If we do not proclaim it, posterity cannot serve God and future generations will not know about the Lord. Reflect on God's righteousness in your life today and be prepared to declare it! Christ has conquered sin and death. He has done it!

Day #19: Psalm 19:1,2 (3rd Sunday in Lent) The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. 2 Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they reveal knowledge.

The sun rises every day. The stars shine every night. And so should we proclaim the works of God in our own lives. Pray for your life to continually declare, proclaim, and pour out praise for God's glory.

Day #20: Psalm 19: 3,4a (Monday) They have no speech, they use no words; no sound is heard from them. 4 Yet their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world.

"Let your walk talk." Our witness to God in our lives are seen as well as heard. Credited to Saint Francis of Assisi, "Preach the Gospel, and if you have to, use words." Ask God to guide you in your walk with Him reflecting on the question, "How is your walk with the Lord?"

Day #21: Psalm 19: 4b-6 (Tuesday) In the heavens God has pitched a tent for the sun. 5 It is like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, like a champion rejoicing to run his course. 6 It rises at one end of the heavens and makes its circuit to the other; nothing is deprived of its warmth.

The imagery here is of the sun being a bridegroom. The parallel is that Jesus, God's son, is to be wedded to us, His bride. And Christ's light in us brings warmth. May your prayers today bring to mind God's nurturing spirits, bringing light, and life, and growth, and heat, and passion to our otherwise lifeless existence.

Day #22: Psalm 19: 7-9 (Wednesday) The law of the Lord is perfect, refreshing the soul. The statutes of the Lord are trustworthy, making wise the simple. 8 The precepts of the Lord are right, giving joy to the heart. The commands of the Lord are radiant, giving light to the eyes. 9 The fear of the Lord is pure, enduring forever. The decrees of the Lord are firm, and all of them are righteous.

God's law, statutes, precepts, and commands are all given for our direction. Without them we become stagnant, we mistrust, we misunderstand, we lack joy, we live in shadows. Let God's commands refresh you today.

Day #23: Psalm 19: 10-11 (Thursday) They are more precious than gold, than much pure gold; they are sweeter than honey, than honey from the honeycomb. 11 By them your servant is warned; in keeping them there is great reward.

I have a favorite beekeeper with his apiary situated in an apple orchard. "They" in this verse refers to God's law. There is sweetness in being loved by a God who gives direction and provides protection. And there is even greater sweetness in the rewards of living a life of devotion to the One who loves us.

Day #24: Psalm 19: 12,13 (Friday) But who can discern their own errors? Forgive my hidden faults. 13 Keep your servant also from willful sins; may they not rule over me. Then I will be blameless, innocent of great transgression.

Willful sins are so difficult to overcome. Pray intently today for those things in your life that aren't righteous, those things that you justify, those things that God has revealed to you. Pray the actual words in these verses, "Forgive my hidden faults. Keep your servant also from willful sins; may they not rule over me."

Day #25: Psalm 19: 14 (Saturday) May these words of my mouth and this meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer.

We try to impress our family, our friends, our community, and even our church. We are supposed to please God! How is God a rock for you today? Thank Him for that. How has God redeemed your life? Give Him praise for that. And commit yourself to pleasing God as He knows our thoughts as well as our words

Day #26: Psalm 107:1 (4th Sunday in Lent) Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever.

During Lent we simplify. Simplify your prayer life today: give thanks to the Lord. God is good. God loves us. May these basic tenets of the our faith resonate within you over, and over, and over. God IS good. God's love endures forever.

Day #27: Psalm 107: 3 (Monday) those he gathered from the lands, from east and west, from north and south.

Reflect on your life without the Lord. Where did you come from? How had you strayed? Remember how God brought you from that place to where you are today. And today, there is no place from which He still cannot reach. Allow Him to gather you closer today.

Day #28: Psalm 107: 17,18 (Tuesday) Some became fools through their rebellious ways and suffered affliction because of their iniquities. 18 They loathed all food and drew near the gates of death.

Pray today that you don't get drawn into a rebellious attitude: not doing what God has direction, not living by God's righteous laws, not giving your heart, and soul, and mind to your Lord and Savior. There are consequences to our rebellion and pray that God keeps you from it.

Day #29: Psalm 107: 19 (Wednesday) Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble, and he saved them from their distress.

We sometimes minimize our difficulties, "Someone is always suffering more than me." Cry out to God. He knows your heart. And in your cries may God save you from your distress.

Day #30: Psalm 107: 20 (Thursday) He sent out his word and healed them; he rescued them from the grave.

We can see the reference to Jesus' presence in this world. God's Word become flesh. Jesus' healing of us. And, of course, His victory over the grave. May God's Word wash over you today in prayer. May He rescue you today from whatever has you trapped. May you know life in Jesus' name.

Day #31: Psalm 107: 21 (Friday) Let them give thanks to the Lord for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for mankind.

Make this Friday another day of thanksgiving. Unfailing love is deserving of thanks. May your prayer be willed with the wonder of God's work in your life and the world around you.

Day #32: Psalm 107: 22 (Saturday) Let them sacrifice thank offerings and tell of his works with songs of joy.

Giving thanks can be somewhat of a sacrifice. We live in a culture of "haves." There are relatively few of us that are "have nots." Make a sacrifice of time today to list the things you are thankful for and not take them for granted. Neil Diamond is quoted as saying, "Even chickens can sing." Let songs of joy accompany your prayers of thanks.

Day #33: Psalm 51:1,2 (5th Sunday in Lent) Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions. 2 Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin.

May God's mercy overwhelm you today. His mercy is given because of His unfailing love for us. His mercy is given because of His great compassion for us. Ask God to forgive you today. He is faithful and just to forgive us.

Day #34: Psalm 51:3 (Monday) For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me.

We can be forgiven, but we can't always forget. May the memories protect you in the future. May the lessons learned guide you tomorrow. And be reminded, that once confessed, they are forgiven.

Day #35: Psalm 51:4 (Tuesday) Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight; so you are right in your verdict and justified when you judge.

My faith is bolstered by the fact that God is our judge. I cry out for God's justice when the world fails to bring justice. Unfortunately, God's justice applies to me, too. God is righteous. God does exact justice. Let His righteousness illuminate the sin and overcome the evil.

Day #36: Psalm 51: 5,6 (Wednesday) Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me. 6 Yet you desired faithfulness even in the womb; you taught me wisdom in that secret place.

It is a bit sobering...we are without sin. We are without excuse. We are in need of God's forgiveness and grace. He desires our faithfulness. And He is willing to walk with us every moment of our life. Take time today to commit to faithfulness.

Day #37: Psalm 51:7 (Thursday) Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.

Hyssop, symbolic of being purified. Snow, also a symbol of purity. It takes God to make us pure. It takes Christ's work on the cross for forgiveness. As we seek to be more like Jesus, the One who knew no sin, ask God for assistance. Ask for strength, and wisdom, and grace in your life.

Day #38: Psalm 51:8,9 (Friday) Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones you have crushed rejoice. 9 Hide your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquity.

Just as Jesus was raised from the dead, so we too can know joy and gladness in our being forgiven. In the words of a contemporary worship song, "we are no longer slaves to fear." We don't have to mope around in our failings. But, being forgiven we are set free from sin and joy and gladness and rejoicing are ours by the power of Christ in us.

Day #39: Psalm 51:10-12 (Saturday) Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. 11 Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me. 12 Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.

Genesis gives us a wonderful account of God's creative work. And His creative work did not stop after that sixth day. God continually brings creation to our lives. He creates in us a pure heart. He creates steadfastness. He creates joy in salvation and creates

willingness. It speaks of God's presence in our lives. He does NOT cast us away but lives in us through His Holy Spirit.

Day #40: Psalm 118:1-2,19-29 (6th Sunday in Lent) Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever. 2 Let Israel say: "His love endures forever."

Whenever we read a repetitive verse, we read it with emphasis. "His love endures forever!" Make that your prayer today. No matter the circumstances, no matter the difficulty, no matter the sinfulness...His love endures forever. May you bask in His love today.

Day #41: Psalm 118:19-20 (Monday) Open for me the gates of the righteous; I will enter and give thanks to the Lord. 20 This is the gate of the Lord through which the righteous may enter.

Righteousness doesn't just happen. We have to enter the gates. We have to decide to enter the gates of heaven. And those gates were opened wide through Jesus Christ that all may enter. Are there gates of righteousness in which you have chosen NOT to enter? Ask God to reveal doors to righteousness in your life.

Day #42: Psalm 118: 21,22 (Tuesday) I will give you thanks, for you answered me; you have become my salvation. 22 The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone

The Jewish leaders in Jesus' day rejected Him as Lord and Savior. Our lives are built on the salvation that comes through Christ. Jesus must be our cornerstone. The foundation from which everything else in our life comes. And that salvation is freely given to all who call on His name. Give thanks to God for His gift of salvation in His son, Jesus Christ. Jesus is God's answer to our cries for help.

Day #43: Psalm 118: 23,24 (Wednesday) the Lord has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes. 24 The Lord has done it this very day; let us rejoice today and be glad.

Spend some time with God today marveling at his mercy, forgiveness, and salvation. Marvel at His love for you. Marvel at His presence in your life. Marvel and rejoice!

Day #44: Psalm 118: 25 (Thursday) Lord, save us! Lord, grant us success!

Once we know the Lord there are still so many things that distract us from the life God wants for us. "Save us" speaks to our need to continually seek God's protection from sin

and distraction and apathy. When we are fully engaged with God, then the plans that He has for us can be accomplished.

Day #45: Psalm 118:26-27 (Friday) Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. From the house of the Lord we bless you. 27 The Lord is God, and he has made his light shine on us. With boughs in hand, join in the festal procession up to the horns of the altar.

The words to the Palm Sunday song ring in my ears, “Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna!” We can come before God by what Christ has done. He is our great high priest. And only through Him can we “process up” to the altar of God. Use your prayer time today to praise God for allowing us to come before Him and to be His ambassadors to the world.

Day #46: Psalm 118: 28-29 (Saturday) You are my God, and I will praise you; you are my God, and I will exalt you. 29 Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever.

When we allow God to be OUR God, how can we not praise? How can we not exalt? On this day before Easter, give thanks to YOUR Lord!

Day #47: Psalm 114:7,8 (Easter Sunday) Tremble, earth, at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob, 8 who turned the rock into a pool, the hard rock into springs of water.

Christ is Risen!

I am reminded of Jesus indicating that if the people are silenced then the rocks would cry out. All of creation knows of God our Creator, Redeemer, and Savior. This Easter may you come closer to the One who knows you, loves you, protects you, forgives you and calls you His own. And may the Earth tremble at His presence in YOUR life!

Scriptures taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™ Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved worldwide. www.zondervan.com The “NIV” and “New International Version” are trademarks registered in the United States Patent and Trademark Office by Biblica, Inc.™