

Psalm 1-10 choral reading

CHARACTERS: A, B, (leaders) All, Group A, Group B, VOICE OF GOD, DAVID

SETTING: bare stage

RUN TIME: 2 minutes/page

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Psalm 1-10 (HCSB)

Psalm 1

A: Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked

GROUP A: or stand in the way that sinners take

B: or sit in the company of mockers,

GROUP B: Blessed is the one whose delight is in the law of the Lord,

ALL: and who meditates on his law day and night.

A: That person is like a tree planted by streams of water,

GROUP A: which yields its fruit in season

B: whose leaf does not wither

GROUP B: whatever they do prospers.

ALL: Not so the wicked!

A: They are like chaff that the wind blows away.

GROUP A: Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment,

ALL: nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous.

B: For the Lord watches over the way of the righteous,

GROUP B: but the way of the wicked leads to destruction.

Psalm 2

A: Why do the nations conspire and the peoples plot in vain?

B: The kings of the earth rise up and the rulers band together

GROUP A: against the Lord and against his anointed, saying,

GROUP B: Let us break their chains and throw off their shackles.

A: The One enthroned in heaven laughs;

B: the Lord scoffs at them.

ALL: He rebukes them in his anger and terrifies them in his wrath, saying,

VOICE OF GOD: I have installed my king on Zion, my holy mountain.

ALL: I will proclaim the Lord's decree:

A: He said to me,

VOICE OF GOD: You are my son; today I have become your father. 8 Ask me, and I will make the nations your inheritance,

ALL: the ends of the earth your possession.

VOICE OF GOD: You will break them with a rod of iron; you will dash them to pieces like pottery.

B: Therefore, you kings, be wise;

GROUP B: be warned, you rulers of the earth.

ALL: Serve the Lord with fear and celebrate his rule with trembling.

GROUP A: Kiss his son, or he will be angry and your way will lead to your destruction,

GROUP B: for his wrath can flare up in a moment.

ALL: Blessed are all who take refuge in him.

Psalm 3

A: A psalm written by David when he fled from his son Absalom.

DAVID: Lord, how many are my foes! How many rise up against me! Many are saying of me,

B: *(arrogantly)* God will not deliver him.

DAVID: But you, Lord, are a shield around me,

ALL: my glory, the One who lifts my head high.

DAVID: I call out to the Lord,

ALL: and he answers me from his holy mountain.

DAVID: I lie down and sleep;

ALL: I wake again, because the Lord sustains me.

DAVID: I will not fear though tens of thousands assail me on every side.

ALL: Arise, Lord! Deliver me, my God!

DAVID: Strike all my enemies on the jaw; break the teeth of the wicked.

ALL: From the Lord comes deliverance. May your blessing be on your people.

Psalm 4

DAVID: Answer me when I call to you, my righteous God.

GROUP A: Give me relief from my distress;

GROUP B: have mercy on me and hear my prayer.

DAVID: How long will you people turn my glory into shame?

GROUP A: How long will you love delusions and seek false gods?

GROUP B: Know that the Lord has set apart his faithful servant for himself;

DAVID: The Lord hears when I call to him.

GROUP A: Tremble and do not sin; when you are on your beds,

GROUP B: search your hearts and be silent.

DAVID: Offer the sacrifices of the righteous and trust in the Lord.

GROUP B: Many, Lord, are asking

GROUP A: Who will bring us prosperity?

ALL: Let the light of your face shine on us.

DAVID: Fill my heart with joy when their grain and new wine abound.

ALL: In peace I will lie down and sleep, for you alone, Lord, make me dwell in safety.

Psalm 5

DAVID: Listen to my words, Lord, consider my lament.

ALL: Hear my cry for help, my King and my God, for to you I pray.

DAVID: In the morning, Lord, you hear my voice;

ALL: In the morning, I lay my requests before you and wait expectantly.

DAVID: For you are not a God who is pleased with wickedness;

ALL: with you, evil people are not welcome.

GROUP A: The arrogant cannot stand in your presence.

GROUP B: You hate all who do wrong;

GROUP A: You destroy those who tell lies.

GROUP B: The bloodthirsty and deceitful you, Lord, detest.

DAVID: But I, by your great love, can come into your house;

ALL: In reverence, I bow down toward your holy temple.

DAVID: Lead me, Lord, in your righteousness because of my enemies—

ALL: Make your way straight before me.

DAVID: Not a word from their mouth can be trusted; their heart is filled with malice.

GROUP A: Their throat is an open grave;

GROUP B: with their tongues they tell lies.

ALL: Declare them guilty, O God!

DAVID: Let their intrigues be their downfall.

GROUP A: Banish them for their many sins, for they have rebelled against you.

DAVID: But let all who take refuge in you be glad;

GROUP B: let them ever sing for joy.

DAVID: Spread your protection over them,

ALL: that those who love your name may rejoice in you.

DAVID: Surely, Lord, you bless the righteous;

ALL: You surround them with your favor as with a shield.

Psalm 6

DAVID: Lord, do not rebuke me in your anger or discipline me in your wrath.

ALL: Have mercy on me, Lord, for I am faint;

DAVID: heal me, Lord, for my bones are in agony. My soul is in deep anguish.

ALL: How long, Lord, how long?

DAVID: Turn, Lord, and deliver me; save me because of your unfailing love.

GROUP A: Among the dead no one proclaims your name.

GROUP B: Who praises you from the grave?

DAVID: I am worn out from my groaning.

ALL: All night long I flood my bed with weeping and drench my couch with tears.

DAVID: My eyes grow weak with sorrow;

ALL: they fail because of all my foes.

DAVID: Away from me, all you who do evil, for the Lord has heard my weeping.

GROUP B: The Lord has heard my cry for mercy;

GROUP A: the Lord accepts my prayer.

DAVID: All my enemies will be overwhelmed with shame and anguish;

ALL: they will turn back and suddenly be put to shame.

Psalm 7

DAVID: Lord my God, I take refuge in you;

GROUP A: save and deliver me from all who pursue me,

GROUP B: or they will tear me apart like a lion

ALL: and rip me to pieces with no one to rescue me.

DAVID: Lord my God, if I have done this and there is guilt on my hands—

GROUP A: if I have repaid my ally with evil

GROUP B: or without cause have robbed my foe—

ALL: then let my enemy pursue and overtake me;

DAVID: let him trample my life to the ground and make me sleep in the dust.

ALL: Arise, Lord, in your anger;

DAVID: rise up against the rage of my enemies.

ALL: Awake, my God; decree justice.

DAVID: Let the assembled peoples gather around you, while you sit enthroned over them on high.

GROUP A: Let the Lord judge the peoples.

DAVID: Vindicate me, Lord, according to my righteousness,

GROUP B: according to my integrity, O Most High.

GROUP A: Bring to an end the violence of the wicked and make the righteous secure—

ALL: you, the righteous God who probes minds and hearts.

DAVID: My shield is God Most High, who saves the upright in heart.

GROUP A: God is a righteous judge,

GROUP B: a God who displays his wrath every day.

DAVID: If he does not relent, he will sharpen his sword;

GROUP A: he will bend and string his bow.

GROUP B: He has prepared his deadly weapons;

ALL: He makes ready his flaming arrows.

DAVID: Whoever is pregnant with evil conceives trouble and gives birth to disillusionment.

GROUP A: Whoever digs a hole and scoops it out falls into the pit they have made.

GROUP B: The trouble they cause recoils on them;

ALL: their violence comes down on their own heads.

DAVID: I will give thanks to the Lord because of his righteousness;

ALL: I will sing the praises of the name of the Lord Most High.

Psalm 8

A: Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

ALL: You have set your glory in the heavens.

B: Through the praise of children and infants, you have established a stronghold against your enemies,

ALL: to silence the foe and the avenger.

A: When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers,

GROUP A: the moon and the stars, which you have set in place,

B: what is mankind that you are mindful of them,

GROUP B: human beings that you care for them?

A: You have made them a little lower than the angels

GROUP A: and crowned them with glory and honor.

B: You made them rulers over the works of your hands;

GROUP B: you put everything under their feet:

ALL: all flocks and herds, and the animals of the wild,

GROUP A: the birds in the sky,

GROUP B: and the fish in the sea,

ALL: all that swim the paths of the seas.

A: Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

Psalm 9

DAVID: I will give thanks to you, Lord, with all my heart;

ALL: I will tell of all your wonderful deeds.

GROUP A: I will be glad and rejoice in you;

GROUP B: I will sing the praises of your name, O Most High.

DAVID: My enemies turn back; they stumble and perish before you.

ALL: For you have upheld my right and my cause, sitting enthroned as the righteous judge.

DAVID: You have rebuked the nations and destroyed the wicked;

ALL: you have blotted out their name for ever and ever.

DAVID: Endless ruin has overtaken my enemies,

GROUP A: you have uprooted their cities;

GROUP B: even the memory of them has perished.

DAVID: The Lord reigns forever; he has established his throne for judgment.

GROUP A: He rules the world in righteousness and judges the peoples with equity.

GROUP B: The Lord is a refuge for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble.

DAVID: Those who know your name trust in you,

ALL: for you, Lord, have never forsaken those who seek you.

DAVID: Sing the praises of the Lord, enthroned in Zion;

ALL: proclaim among the nations what he has done.

DAVID: For he who avenges blood remembers;

ALL: he does not ignore the cries of the afflicted.

DAVID: Lord, see how my enemies persecute me!

ALL: Have mercy and lift me up from the gates of death,

DAVID: that I may declare your praises in the gates of Daughter Zion,

ALL: and there rejoice in your salvation.

DAVID: The nations have fallen into the pit they have dug;

GROUP A: their feet are caught in the net they have hidden.

DAVID: The Lord is known by his acts of justice;

GROUP B: the wicked are ensnared by the work of their hands.

DAVID: The wicked go down to the realm of the dead,

ALL: all the nations that forget God.

DAVID: But God will never forget the needy; the hope of the afflicted will never perish.

ALL: *(powerfully)* Arise, Lord, do not let mortals triumph; let the nations be judged in your presence.

DAVID: Strike them with terror, Lord;

ALL: let the nations know they are only mortal.

Psalm 10

DAVID: (*sorrowful*) Why, Lord, do you stand far off? Why do you hide yourself in times of trouble?

GROUP A: In his arrogance the wicked man hunts down the weak,

GROUP B: Those who are caught in the schemes he devises.

GROUP A: He boasts about the cravings of his heart;

GROUP B: he blesses the greedy and reviles the Lord.

DAVID: In his pride, the wicked man does not seek him; in all his thoughts there is no room for God.

GROUP A: His ways are always prosperous but your laws are rejected by him;

GROUP B: he sneers at all his enemies. He says to himself,

A: (*haughty, sneering*) Nothing will ever shake me. No one will ever do me harm.

GROUP A: His mouth is full of lies and threats;

GROUP B: trouble and evil are under his tongue.

DAVID: He lies in wait near the villages;

ALL: From ambush, he murders the innocent.

DAVID: His eyes watch in secret for his victims;

ALL: Like a lion in cover, he lies in wait.

GROUP A: He lies in wait to catch the helpless;

GROUP B: he catches the helpless and drags them off in his net.

GROUP A: (*sorrowful*) His victims are crushed, they collapse;

GROUP B: they fall under his strength. He says to himself,

A: God will never notice; he covers his face and never sees.

DAVID: (*powerfully*) Arise, Lord! Lift up your hand, O God.

ALL: Do not forget the helpless.

GROUP A: Why does the wicked man revile God?

GROUP B: Why does he say to himself,

A: (*confident*) He won't call me to account?

DAVID: But you, God, see the trouble of the afflicted; you consider their grief and take it in hand.

GROUP A: The victims commit themselves to you;

GROUP B: you are the helper of the fatherless.

DAVID: Break the arm of the wicked man;

GROUP A: call the evildoer to account for his wickedness

GROUP B: that would not otherwise be found out.

DAVID: (*rejoicing*) The Lord is King for ever and ever;

ALL: the nations will perish from his land.

DAVID: You, Lord, hear the desire of the afflicted;

GROUP A: you encourage them, and you listen to their cry,

GROUP B: defending the fatherless and the oppressed,

ALL: so that mere earthly mortals will never again strike terror.