

Week One + Thursday Evening

O God, come to our assistance.

O Lord, hasten to help us.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit.

As it was before,
is now,
and ever more.

Psalm 119:1

Your hands have made me and set me in place.
Help me understand so I can learn your
commandments.
Then those who honor you will see me and be glad
because I have waited for your promise.
Lord, I know that your rules are right
and that you rightly made me suffer.
Please let your faithful love comfort me,
according to what you've said to your servant.
Let your compassion come to me so I can live again,
because your Instruction is my joy!
But let the arrogant be ashamed
because they oppressed me with lies—
meanwhile, I will be contemplating your precepts!
Let the people who honor you come back to me;
let those who know your precepts return to me.
Let my heart be blameless in your statutes
so that I am not put to shame.

Psalm 37

Don't get upset over evildoers;
don't be jealous of those who do wrong,

because they will fade fast, like grass;
they will wither like green vegetables.

Trust the Lord and do good;
live in the land, and farm faithfulness.
Enjoy the Lord,
and he will give what your heart asks.

Commit your way to the Lord!
Trust him! He will act
and will make your righteousness shine like the
dawn,
your justice like high noon.

Be still before the Lord,
and wait for him.
Don't get upset when someone gets ahead—
someone who invents evil schemes.
Let go of anger and leave rage behind!
Don't get upset—it will only lead to evil.
Because evildoers will be eliminated,
but those who hope in the Lord—
they will possess the land.

In just a little while the wicked won't exist!
If you go looking around their place,
they won't be there.
But the weak will inherit the land;
they will enjoy a surplus of peace.

The wicked plot against the righteous,
grinding their teeth at them.
But my Lord just laughs at them
because he knows that their day is coming.
The wicked draw their swords and bend their bows
to bring down the weak and the needy,

to slaughter those whose way is right.
But the sword of the wicked will enter their own hearts!
Their bows will be broken!

Better is the little that the righteous have
than the overabundant wealth of the wicked.
The arms of the wicked will be broken,
but the Lord supports the righteous.

The Lord is intimately acquainted
with the lives of the blameless;
their heritage will last forever.
They won't be ashamed in troubling times,
and in a period of famine they will eat their fill.

But the wicked will die,
the Lord's enemies will disappear—
disappear like the beauty of a meadow—in smoke.

The wicked borrow and don't pay it back, but the
righteous are generous and giving.
Those blessed by God will possess the land,
but those cursed by God will be cut off.

A person's steps are made secure by the Lord
when they delight in his way.
Though they trip up, they won't be thrown down,
because the Lord holds their hand.

I was young and now I'm old,
but I have never seen the righteous left all alone,
have never seen their children begging for bread.
They are always gracious and generous.
Their children are a blessing.

Turn away from evil! Do good!

Then you will live in the land forever.
The Lord loves justice.
He will never leave his faithful all alone.
They are guarded forever,

But the children of the wicked are eliminated.
The righteous will possess the land;
they will live on it forever.

The mouths of the righteous recite wisdom;
their tongues discuss justice.
The Instruction of their God is in their hearts;
they don't miss a step.

The wicked, on the other hand, target the righteous,
seeking to kill them.
But the Lord won't leave the righteous
to the power of the wicked,
and won't let the righteous
be found guilty when they are judged.

Hope in the Lord and keep his way!
He will lift you up so you can possess the land.
When the wicked are eliminated,
you will see it for yourself!

I myself have seen wicked powerful people,
exalting themselves like a stately cedar.
But when I came back, they were gone!
I looked all over for them,
but they couldn't be found!

Observe those who have integrity
and watch those whose heart is right
because the future belongs to persons of peace.
But wrongdoers will be destroyed all together;

the future of the wicked will be cut short.

The salvation of the righteous comes from the Lord;
he is their refuge in times of trouble.
The Lord will help them and rescue them—
rescue them from the wicked—and he will save them
because they have taken refuge in him.

Psalm 132

Lord, remember David—
all the ways he suffered
and how he swore to the Lord,
how he promised the strong one of Jacob:

“I won’t enter my house,
won’t get into my bed.
I won’t let my eyes close,
won’t let my eyelids sleep,
until I find a place for the Lord,
a dwelling place for the strong one of Jacob.”

Yes, we heard about it in Ephrathah;
we found it in the fields of Jaar.
Let’s enter God’s dwelling place;
let’s worship at the place God rests his feet!

Get up, Lord, go to your residence—
you and your powerful covenant chest!
Let your priests be dressed in righteousness;
let your faithful shout out with joy!
And for the sake of your servant David,
do not reject your anointed one.

The Lord swore to David
a true promise that God won’t take back:
“I will put one of your own children on your throne.

And if your children keep my covenant
and the laws that I will teach them,
then their children too will rule on your throne
forever.”

Because the Lord chose Zion;
he wanted it for his home.
“This is my residence forever.
I will live here because I wanted it for myself.

I will most certainly bless its food supply;
I will fill its needy full of food!
I will dress its priests in salvation,
and its faithful will shout out loud with joy!

It is there that I will make David’s strength thrive.
I will prepare a lamp for my anointed one there.
I will dress his enemies in shame,
but the crown he wears will shine.”

Psalm 16

Protect me, God, because I take refuge in you.
I say to the Lord, “You are my Lord.
Apart from you, I have nothing good.”

Now as for the “holy ones” in the land,
the “magnificent ones” that I was so happy about;
let their suffering increase because
they hurried after a different god.
I won’t participate in their blood offerings;
I won’t let their names cross my lips.

You, Lord, are my portion, my cup;
you control my destiny.
The property lines have fallen beautifully for me;

yes, I have a lovely home.

I will bless the Lord who advises me;
even at night I am instructed
in the depths of my mind.
I always put the Lord in front of me;
I will not stumble because he is on my right side.

That's why my heart celebrates and my mood is
joyous;
yes, my whole body will rest in safety
because you won't abandon my life to the grave;
you won't let your faithful follower see the pit.

You teach me the way of life.
In your presence is total celebration.
Beautiful things are always in your right hand.

Psalm 144

Bless the Lord, my rock,
who taught my hands how to fight,
who taught my fingers how to do battle!

God is my loyal one, my fortress,
my place of safety, my rescuer,
my shield, in whom I take refuge,
and the one who subdues people before me.

What are human beings, Lord, that you know them at
all?

What are human beings that you even consider
them?
Humans are like a puff of air;
their days go by like a shadow.

Lord, part your skies and come down!

Touch the mountains so they smoke!
Flash lightning and scatter the enemy!
Shoot your arrows and defeat them!

Stretch out your hand from above!
Rescue me and deliver me from deep water,
from the power of strangers, whose mouths speak
lies,
and whose strong hand is a strong hand of
deception!

I will sing a new song to you, God.
I will sing praises to you on a ten-stringed harp,
to you—the one who gives saving help to rulers,
and who rescues his servant David from the evil
sword.

Rescue me and deliver me from the power of
strangers,
whose mouths speak lies,
and whose strong hand is a strong hand of
deception,

So that our sons can grow up fully, in their youth, like
plants;
so that our daughters can be like pillars carved to
decorate a palace;

So that our barns can be full, providing all kinds of
food;
so that our flocks can be in the thousands—
even tens of thousands—in our fields;
so that our cattle can be loaded with calves;

So that there won't be any breach in the walls,
no exile, no outcries in our streets!

The people who have it like this are truly happy!
The people whose God is the Lord are truly happy!

Scripture Reading 1 John 4:7-12

“Dear friends, let us continue to love one another, for love comes from God. Anyone who loves is a child of God and knows God. But anyone who does not love does not know God, for God is love.

“God showed how much he loves us by sending his one and only Son into the world so that we might have eternal life through him. This is real love—not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins.

“Dear friends, since God loves us that much, we surely ought to love each other. No one has ever seen God. But if we love each other, God lives in us, and his love is brought to full expression in us.”

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession

To you, O Lord, I lift my soul.

O God, in you I trust.

We give you our praise and thanks, O God, for all gifts of love we have received from you, and for your persistent mercy in Jesus Christ. Especially we thank you for

- work we have accomplished pleasing to you...
- the faithful witness of Christian people...
- the example of righteousness we see in parents and teachers...
- the innocence and openness we see in children...
- all works of compassion...

We give you our cares and concerns, O God, because we know you are kind and care for your children in every circumstance. Especially we pray for

- those who struggle with doubt and despair...
- people afflicted with disease....
- those called to special ministries...
- people neglected or abused...
- Baptist, Disciples of Christ, and other free churches...

(Include additional persons from “Our Heartfelt Sympathies” portion of our Friday prayer chain)

Our Father...

To you, O God
we give up the burdens of this day,
trusting your love and mercy.
To you, O God,
we surrender ourselves,
trusting our risen Lord to lead us always
in the way of peace,
today, tomorrow, and forever.
Amen

*May the Lord bless us,
grant us a peaceful night,
and a perfect rest.
Amen.*

References:

Psalms from CEB; Prayers from BCW; Scripture reading from New Living Translation.