

## The Book of Psalms

# 28

## Morning Devotions

Select a passage in God's Word. Talk with the Lord as you read the passage, then go back and find one or two verses which the Lord has impressed on your heart and meditate on them.

## Morning Study

This morning we study an overview of the book of **Psalms**. **Psalms** is not actually a single book but five books in one. The five books of psalms are as follows:

- ➡ Book One – **1-41**
- ➡ Book Two – **42-72**
- ➡ Book Three – **73-89**
- ➡ Book Four – **90-106**
- ➡ Book Five – **107-150**

The book of **Psalms** is without question a composition of poetry, but the poetic style used in Hebrew is different from that used in English. Hebrew poetry rarely had rhyming, but usually followed a symmetrical pattern called "parallelism." An example of one form of parallelism is **142:1**:

"I cry aloud to the Lord; I lift up my voice to the Lord for mercy."

There are also many other kinds of symmetry and amazingly intricate patterns found within the book of **Psalms**. Examples include: **119**, in which the line of each stanza begins with the same letter of the Hebrew alphabet; **44**, in which the psalm is fashioned in steps like a ziggurat; and **136**, in which every line resounds the declaration: "His love endures forever."

Because of the length of the book of **Psalms** (with 150 chapters, easily the largest book in the Bible), and because it was never meant to be read through in one sitting, we will not be reading all the way through the book in our morning study. We recommend, instead, if you haven't already, that you focus on reading through the **Psalms** in your morning devotions.

But for this morning, let's read in one sitting a section of fifteen psalms called *The Song of Ascents* – **Psalms 120-134**. It is believed by many scholars that pilgrims sang these psalms as they approached Jerusalem. As you read, note the symmetry, not just within the psalms, but also between them.

# Memory Verse

Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God – this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Romans 12:1-2

(Memorize one verse, or both if you can)

Here are a few suggestions that may help you to memorize your memory verse:

- ➡ Ask the Lord to help you remember his Word (see [John 14:26](#)).
- ➡ Use the version of the Bible you are most familiar with. What you normally read in your Bible is what you need to be memorizing.
- ➡ Don't just memorize the contents of the verse; memorize its "address" (the verse reference) as well. You can do this by following this pattern: Step 1: **reference**; Step 2: **verse content**; Step 3: **reference**. Then repeat steps 1-3. Note that you are quoting the reference twice as many times as you quote the actual verse content. This gives the verse a clear "reference tag."
- ➡ After you have read your memory verse out aloud several times, try going through your memory verse *without* reading your computer screen.
- ➡ Look up your memory verse in your Bible. Look at its immediate context and read the verses that come before and after your memory verse.
- ➡ Print out your memory verse or jot it down on a piece of paper. Take this paper with you when you go to work or do other daily activities. Meditate on the meaning of the verse throughout the day.
- ➡ During your noon appointment with the Lord, take out your memory verse and go over it again. Talk to the Lord about what this verse means to you personally.
- ➡ In the evening (at either your evening study or your evening devotions), see if you can quote your memory verse from memory. Then, without looking at the memory verse itself, see if you can find it in your Bible.
- ➡ The next day, before you begin committing a new verse to memory, rehearse your previous day's memory verse and see if you can remember it (without cheating!).
- ➡ Finally, at the end of the week (possibly on the Sunday), collect all your week's memory verses, rehearse them and see if you can recall them without reading them. Spend a little extra time on any verses you have difficulty recalling.
- ➡ Remember: Don't just memorize a verse. Put it into practice ([James 1:22](#)). It is not being able to quote a verse from memory that counts. It is His Word *abiding* in your heart that counts ([John 15:7](#)). When you actually apply a verse consistently to your daily life, that is when you *truly* know that verse!