

The Seven Psalms

Prayers of Returning to God

Wings of Love Community Church



Long ago, (c. 1350 A.D.) William Langland wrote this little poem:

**I live *in* London / and I live *on* London
The tools I labor with / to get my living by,
Are the Lord's Prayer, my Primer / my Dirges and my Vespers,
And sometimes my Psalter / and the Seven Psalms.**

The Seven Psalms are the seven penitential psalms: 6, 32, 38, 51, 102, 130 and 143. They are, as it is said in the title of Psalm 102, the 'prayer of the afflicted when he is overwhelmed and pours out his complaint before the LORD'. They are the seven weapons where with to oppose the seven deadly sins: The seven prayers inspired by the seven-fold Spirit to the repentant sinner: the seven guardians for the seven days of the week: the seven companions for the seven Canonical Hours of the day'. It was also said by the men of old time at the seven penitential psalms provide the seven steps in the latter of repentance.

The first step is the fear of punishment, and this is Psalm 6. The second step is sorrow for sin, and the verse is Psalm 32:5, which in RV is: 'I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord.' The third step is the hope of pardon, in the verse Psalm 38:15, 'for in the do I hope; Thou will answer, O Lord my God.'

The fourth step is the love of a cleansed soul, and the verse is Psalm 51:7: 'Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me and I shall be whiter than snow.' The fifth step is longing for the heavenly Jerusalem, and the verse is Psalm 102:16: 'For the Lord shall build up Zion, He shall prosper in his glory.'

The sixth step is distrust of self, and the verse in the Psalms 130:6: 'My soul looketh for the Lord.' The seventh step is prayer against final doom, and the verse is Psalm 143:2: 'and enter not into judgment with thy servant.'

--Norman Snaith, *The Seven Psalms*, Epworth Press, London, England, 1964.

"...the Psalms have a unique place in the Bible because most of the Scripture speaks to us, while the Psalms speak for us." -Athanasius of Alexandria

Psalm 6

To the chief Musician on stringed-instruments, sung by men with deep voices, A Psalm of David

O LORD, rebuke me not in your anger, neither chastise me in your hot displeasure.

Have mercy on me, O LORD; for I [am] weak: O LORD, heal me; for my bones are vexed.

My soul is also sore vexed: but you, O LORD, how long?

Return, O LORD, deliver my soul: oh save me for your mercies' sake. For in death [there is] no remembrance of you: in the grave who shall give you praise?

I am weary with my groaning; all the night I make my bed to swim; I water my couch with my tears. My eye is consumed because of grief; it waxes old because of all my enemies. Depart from me, all you workers of iniquity; for the LORD has heard the voice of my weeping.

The LORD has heard my supplication; the LORD will receive my prayer.

Let all my enemies be ashamed and sore vexed: let them return [and] be ashamed suddenly.

Psalm 32

A Psalm of David, A teaching psalm

Blessed [is he whose] transgression [is] forgiven,
[whose] sin [is] covered.

Blessed [is] the man unto whom the LORD imputes not
iniquity, and in whose spirit [there is] no guile.

When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my
roaring all the day long.

For day and night your hand was heavy upon me: my
moisture is turned into the drought of summer. Selah.

I acknowledged my sin to you, and my iniquity have I
not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the
LORD; and you forgave the iniquity of my sin. Selah.

For this shall every one that is godly pray unto you in a
time when you may be found: surely in the floods of
great waters they shall not come close to him.

You [are] my hiding place; you shall preserve me from
trouble; you shall surround me about with songs of
deliverance. Selah.

I will instruct you and teach you in the way which thou
shall go: I will guide you with my eye.

Don't be as the horse, [or] as the mule, [which] have no understanding: whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, unless they come near to you.

Many sorrows [shall be] to the wicked: but he that trusts in the LORD, mercy shall surround him.

Be glad in the LORD, and rejoice, you righteous: and shout for joy, all [you that are] upright in heart.

Psalm 51

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet came unto him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba.

Have mercy upon me, O God, according to your loving-kindness: according to the multitude of your tender mercies, blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin [is] ever before me. Against you, you only, have I sinned, and done [this] evil in your sight: that you might be justified when you speak, [and] be clear when you judge.

Behold, I was shaped in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me. Behold, you desire truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden [part] you shall make me to know wisdom.

Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Make me to hear joy and gladness; [that] the bones [which] you have broken may rejoice. Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities.

Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from your presence; and take not your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation; and uphold me [with your] free

spirit. [Then] will I teach transgressors your ways; and sinners shall be converted unto you.

Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, you God of my salvation: [and] my tongue shall sing aloud of your righteousness.

O Lord, you open my lips; and my mouth shall show forth your praise. For you desire not sacrifice, or else would I give [it]: you delight not in burnt offering.

The sacrifices of God [are] a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

Do good in your good pleasure unto Zion: you build the walls of Jerusalem. Then shall you be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt offering and whole burnt offering: then shall they offer bullocks upon your altar.

Psalm 102

A Prayer of the afflicted, when he is overwhelmed, and pours out his complaint before the LORD.

Hear my prayer, O LORD, and let my cry come unto you. Hide not your face from me in the day [when] I am in trouble; incline your ear to me: in the day [when] I call answer me quickly.

For my days are consumed like smoke, and my bones are burned as in a fireplace. My heart is broken, and withers like grass; so that I forget to eat my bread. By reason of the voice of my groaning, my bones cleave to my skin.

I am like a pelican of the wilderness: I am like an owl of the desert. I watch, and am as a sparrow alone upon the house top.

My enemies criticize me all the day; [and] they that are mad against me are sworn against me. For I have eaten ashes like bread, and mingled my drink with weeping, because of your indignation and your wrath: for you have lifted me up, and thrown me down. My days [are] like a shadow that declines; and I am withered like grass.

But you, O LORD, shall endure forever, and your remembrance unto all generations.

You shall arise, [and] have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favor her, yes, the set time, is come. For your servants take pleasure in her stones, and favor its dust.

So the heathen shall fear the name of the LORD, and all the kings of the earth your glory. When the LORD shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory. He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer.

This shall be written for the generation to come: and the people who shall be created shall praise the LORD. For he has looked down from the height of his sanctuary; from heaven did the LORD behold the earth; To hear the groaning of the prisoner; to release those that are appointed to death; To declare the name of the LORD in Zion, and his praise in Jerusalem; When the people are gathered together, and the kingdoms, to serve the LORD.

He weakened my strength in the way; he shortened my days. I said, O my God, take me not away in the middle of my days: your years [are] throughout all generations.

Of old have you laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens [are] the work of your hands. They shall perish, but you shall endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a coat shall you change them, and they shall be changed:

But you [are] the same, and your years shall have no end.
The children of your servants shall continue, and their
seed shall be established before you.

Psalm 130

Out of the depths have I cried unto you, O LORD.

Lord, hear my voice: let your ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications.

If you, LORD, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who would stand? But [there is] forgiveness with you, that you may be feared.

I wait for the LORD, my soul does wait, and in his word do I hope. My soul [waits] for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning: [I say, more than] they that watch for the morning.

Let Israel hope in the LORD: for with the LORD [there is] mercy, and with him [is] plenteous redemption. And he shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities.

Psalm 143

A Psalm of David

Hear my prayer, O LORD, give ear to my supplications: in your faithfulness answer me, [and] in your righteousness. And enter not into judgment with your servant: for in your sight shall no man living be justified.

For the enemy has persecuted my soul; he has knocked my life down to the ground; he has made me to dwell in darkness, as those that have been long dead.

Therefore is my spirit overwhelmed within me; my heart within me is desolate.

I remember the days of old; I meditate on all your works; I consider the work of your hands. I stretch forth my hands unto you: my soul [thirsts] after you, as a thirsty land. Selah.

Hear me quickly, O LORD: my spirit [is] failing: don't hide your face from me, or I will be like them that go down into the pit.

Cause me to hear your loving-kindness in the morning; for in you do I trust: cause me to know the way where I should walk; for I lift up my soul unto you.

Deliver me, O LORD, from my enemies: I escape to you to hide me. Teach me to do your will; for you [are] my God: your spirit [is] good; lead me into the land of

uprightness. Revive me, O LORD, for your name's sake:
for your righteousness' sake bring my soul out of trouble.
And of your mercy cut off my enemies, and destroy all
them that afflict my soul: for I [am] your servant.

Word Helps:

Blood-guiltiness	Guilty of murder/ great evil
Blot-out	to wipe out completely; destroy
Converted	to change in character; cause to turn from an evil life to a righteous one:
Drought	an extended shortage that causes damage
Heathen	an individual of a people that do not acknowledge the God of the Bible
Hyssop	a plant, whose twigs were used in ceremonial sprinkling.
Indignation	strong displeasure at something considered unjust, offensive, insulting ; righteous anger.
Iniquity	violation of right or duty; wicked act; sin.
Revive	to reanimate or cheer (the spirit, heart, etc., or a person).
Roaring	a loud, deep cry or sound or a series of such sounds
Rebuke	to express sharp, stern disapproval of; reprove; reprimand; scold
Selah	Musical notation; pause to contemplate or praise
Supplication	Humble prayer, entreaty, or petition.
Transgressions	violation of a law, command, etc.; sin
Vex	to afflict with physical or spiritual pain
Waxes	Worn-out; to grow weak; to be wasted
Zion	A high hill in Jerusalem representing a spiritual high place where God's people enjoy His blessings