

PSALM 1:1-6

CHAPTER STUDIES ON THE PSALTER

"This Psalm, in some respects, is a text that makes the entire Book of Psalms an extraordinary sermon from the Lord."

This Psalm reveals the contents of the entire Book of Psalms. It is the psalmist's purpose to teach the way to blessedness and to warn of the sure destruction of sinners. This Psalm, in some respects, is a text that makes the entire Book of Psalms an extraordinary sermon from the Lord. In the second part, from v. 4 to the end of the chapter, David contrasts the condition and character of the ungodly, reveals their future, and describes in telling language the ultimate doom of sinners.

The blessed man is described as negative (v. 1) and positive (v. 2): a man (Psalm 1:1) who **walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly**. He receives wiser counsel. He walks in the Lord's commandments. The ways of obedience are pleasant paths of peace. His footsteps are ordered by the word of God, and not by the world's crafty and wicked devices. It is a rich sign of inner grace when the outer walk is changed, and ungodliness is far from our actions.

Nor standeth in the way of sinners His company is more select. Although a sinner, he is now a blood-washed sinner, made alive by the Holy Spirit and renewed in heart. Standing by the strength of God's rich grace, in the congregation of the righteous, he refuses to fellowship with evil.

Nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. He finds no rest in the atheist's scoffing. Let others mock sin, eternity, hell, heaven, and the Eternal God, this man has learned a better philosophy. He has too great a sense of God's presence to hear His name blasphemed. The seat of the scornful may be lofty, but it is near the gate of hell. Flee from it. It will soon be empty, and destruction will swallow the one who sits on it.

(Psalm 1:2) But his delight is in the law of the LORD. He is not under the law as a curse. He is in the law. He delights to be in it, he delights to meditate in it, to read it by day and meditate in it at night.

The law of the Lord is the true believer's daily bread. In David's day it was a small volume of inspiration, only the first five books of Moses. How much should we value the entire written word?

(Psalm 1:3) He shall be like a tree planted. Not a wild tree, but a tree planted, chosen, considered property, cultivated, and secured from the last terrible uprooting. "Every plant which My heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted" (Matthew 15:13).

By the rivers of water. Even if one river should fail, God has another. The rivers of pardon, the rivers of grace, the rivers of promise, and the rivers of fellowship with

Christ are never failing sources of supply. The saints' trials are divine farming that produces abundant fruit.

(Psalm 1:4) The ungodly are not so. We have now come to the second part of the Psalm. This verse uses the ill condition of the wicked to heighten the coloring of the righteous. We understand that whatever good is said about the righteous is not true of the ungodly. This is their character, **like the chaff**, intrinsically worthless, dead, unserviceable, without substance, and easily carried away. This is their doom, **the wind driveth away**. Death, with its terrible blast, will hurry them into the fire and they will be consumed.

(Psalm 1:5) Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment. They will stand there to be judged, but not to be acquitted. Fear will grip them, they will not stand their ground. They will flee and not stand in their defense. They will blush and be covered with eternal contempt. Well may the saints long for heaven where no evil dwells, **nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous**.

(Psalm 1:6) For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous, But the way of the ungodly shall perish. Or as the Hebrew more fully expresses it, "The Lord is knowing the way of the righteous." He is constantly looking on their way. Though it is often in fog and darkness, still the Lord knows the way of the righteous. Even in clouds and storms of affliction, He understands the way of the righteous. "The very hairs of your head are all numbered" (Matthew 10:30). "He will not

suffer thy foot to be moved" (Psalm 121:3).

"But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." (Job 23:10).

But the way of the ungodly shall perish.

Not only shall they perish, but their **way** shall perish. The righteous carve their names on the rock, but the wicked write their memories in the sand. The righteous plow the earth and sow a harvest that will never be fully reaped until we enter eternity's joys. The wicked plow the seas and there seems to be a shining trail behind their keel. Nevertheless, the waves will pass over it and the place that knew them will know them no more. **The way of the ungodly shall perish.**

1. **How do you become one of those who are called "blessed" (Ps. 1:1)? What does Christ call those His life has reproduced in?**
Matthew 5:1-26,48, Romans 6:11, Galatians 2:20
2. **Explain how the blessed are like a "tree planted by the rivers of water."**
Matthew 15:13
3. **What does the portion of Psalm 1:3 mean to you "Whose leaf shall not wither"?**
Genesis 39:3,4, Ecclesiastes 3:1-11, Ezekiel 47:12, Matthew 21:18-22, Revelation 22:2
4. **How are the godly and the wicked contrasted**