

# PSALMS

## Chapter 1

**Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; <sup>2</sup>but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night. <sup>3</sup>He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers. <sup>4</sup>The wicked are not so, but are like chaff that the wind drives away. <sup>5</sup>Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous; <sup>6</sup>for the LORD knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.**

**Ps 1** Author and date unknown. Godly wisdom here declares the final outcome of the two “ways”: “the way of sinners” (v. 1) and “the way of the righteous” (v. 6). The Psalms speak (using various terms) as the people of God, those whom he receives in his presence and favors with his salvation and blessing, must be characterized by righteousness—sinners have no place among them (v. 5; see Ps 15; 24)—and (2) that the godly piety that speaks in the Psalms is a faithful response to God’s revealed (and written) directives for life—which is the path that leads to blessedness. (CSB)

Psalm 1 sets the tone for much of the rest of the Psalter by contrasting the way of the righteous with the way of the ungodly. The message of the psalm centers on the importance of meditating on God’s Word. (A Commentary on the Psalms – Ross – V-1 – p. 182)

Psalm 1 is a psalm of comfort. It admonishes us to gladly hear and learn God’s Word and brings us the comfort that, in so doing, we will have many and great benefits. Just as a palm tree by the water grows green and brings fruit despite all heat and cold and the like, so also all our words and works prosper despite all enemies. Human doctrines do not have this benefit, and, as the wind blows the chaff away, so they also pass away. For God says that those who study His Word please Him, but others He allows to perish. (Reading the Psalms with Luther)

This Psalm in contents is of a general nature. Luther gave it the following superscription: “Concerning the Blessedness of the Godly and the Punishment of the Ungodly.” In this Psalm the delight which godly people have in the Word of God is brought into focus and is commended. It is a Psalm which moreover extols the glory of God’s Word. What, according to this Psalm, constitutes true piety and godliness? It is simply this, that one lives and moves in the Word of God. (Stoekhardt)

Based on the psalm’s high regard for God’s Word, the author may have been a scholar of the Law. (TLSB)

Psalm 1 is a psalm of sharp contrast. As the psalmist contrasts the way of the righteous and the way of the wicked, we see that these two roads lead toward very different eternal destinies. (LL)

These verses set forth three characteristics of the godly: They resist sin, they love God’s word, and they produce the fruits of faith. Because the godly are guided by God’s Word, they do not govern their lives by the false values of the unbelieving world. In Romans 12:2 Paul admonishes us, “Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you be able to test and approve what God’s will is – His good, pleasing and

perfect will.” Psalm 1 implies the same warning. Christians must not derive their values and goals from the sinful standards of the world. Whatever shapes our thinking will soon shape our actions. (PBC)

**1:1** Speaks progressively of association with the ungodly and participation in their ungodly ways. (CSB)

*Blessed* – The happy condition of those who revere the Lord and do his will (see 94:12; 112:1; 119:1–2; 128:1; Pr 29:18; cf. Ps 41:1; 106:3; Pr 14:21; Isa 56:2), who put their trust in him (see 40:4; 84:5, 12; 144:15; 146:5; Pr 16:20; Isa 30:18; Jer 17:7; cf. Ps 2:12; 34:8), and so are blessed by God (see especially 41:1–3; 144:12–14; see also Mt 5:3–12). The Psalter begins by proclaiming the blessedness of the godly and ends by calling all living things to praise God in his earthly and heavenly sanctuaries (Ps 150). (CSB)

The word means more than “happy,” because happiness is an emotion often dependent on outward circumstances. “Blessed” here refers to the ultimate well-being and distinctive joy of those who share in the salvation of the kingdom of God. (CSB-Mt) – *happiness*; only in masculine plural construction as interjection, how *happy!*:—blessed, happy.

Blessed refers to the joyful spiritual condition of those who are right with God and the pleasure and satisfaction that is derived from that. (A Commentary on the Psalms – Ross)

The formula “Blessed is the man” evokes joy and gratitude, as human being may live in fellowship with their God. Blessedness is not deserved; it is a gift of God. god declares sinners to be righteous and freely grants them newness of life in which he protects them from the full effects of the world under judgment (Gen. 3:15-10). (Expositor’s Bible Commentary – V-5 – Psalms)

*Walk...stand...sit.* – A progression from following after to settling in with the worst kind of sinners. (TLSB)

Each leads to the next. If we let sin walk into our lives, it will soon stand there firmly planted, and will eventually sit down and make it home with us. (LL)

It does briefly indicate that, when a man once begins to live in the company of men who are separated from God, both will find themselves becoming involved ever more deeply. (Leupold)

These point to the mind and practice of this person. (Learning – Attitude – Action) (Stoekhardt)

The first characterization of the ungodly their perverse mind and disposition was described, in the second their evil conduct and practices, and now in the third their vicious talk and scornful words are held up to view. Godlessness reaches its climax in vicious scorn and insolent scoffing. (Stoekhardt)

The three verbs, “walk,” “stand,” and “sit,” warn Christians against letting ungodly influences gradually penetrate in their lives. Don’t walk according to the advice of the wicked, that is, don’t begin to accept their values. Don’t stand in the way of sinners, that is, don’t hang around with them and join in their sinful actions. Don’t sit with the mockers, that is don’t make yourself at home with them. Don’t join them in their impenitent way of life and their bold defiance of God. Don’t become one of them. (PBC)

Some Luther-isms...

– “As soon as we notice this, we must quickly lift our eyes to God and pray, “O my God and Father, see how I am being tempted and lured into this or that vice and how I am hindered in doing this or that good work. Defend and help me, dear Father; do not let me succumb and be ensnared.”

– “Dear brother, you cannot prevent the birds from flying over your head, but you can certainly keep them from building a nest in your hair.”

Romans 12:2 *“Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.”*

Note from Romans 12:2. This is an outward molding to fit a pattern. Believers should not be molded by the ways of this world. (TLSB)

“Don’t let the world around you squeeze you into its mold.” (J.B. Phillips)

Proverbs 1:10, *“My son, if sinners entice you, do not give in to them.”*

1 Peter 5:8-9, *“Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. <sup>9</sup> Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings.”*

*walk in.* Order his life according to. – Don’t begin to accept their values. (PBC)

“who has not shaped his conduct after the principles (plans) of the ungodly.” (Leupold)

Here it would refer to living according to the advice of ungodly. (A Commentary on the Psalms – Ross)

*counsel.* Deliberations and advice (see Pr 1:10–19). (CSB)

It is a general word for advice that is concerned with the moral and ethical decisions in life. (A Commentary on the Psalms – Ross)

Their depraved mind and way of life which disregards and rules out God in their thinking and planning. (Hezah, counsel, is a collective concept.) (Stoeckhardt)

The godly man, on the other hand, avoids such an ungodly way of life, shuns such a mind which leaves out God in his thinking and planning. “He does not move on the worthless plane of ill-concocted scheming and plotting of the godless.” Delitzsch. (Stoeckhardt)

*Wicked* – Getting loose from God and falling into evil. (Leupold)

Hebrew resha‘im. These are people who disobey God’s Law and are excluded from public worship and the covenant community. People who habitually sin. (TLSB)

(The ungodly, reshaim, to be loose, here used to describe the attitude of certain men over against God). The German Gott-los (free of God) well describes the mind of the ungodly. The ungodly are people who ignore and defy the sovereignty of God and His commandments. They try to loose themselves from His control and government. They have entirely fallen away from God and no longer want to have any more to do with Him. (Stoeckhardt)

*stand.* Stand oneself. (CSB)

Making it a point to linger in the company of those whom he should shun. (Kretzmann)

We do not slow down to “stand in the way of sinners,” listening to their supposed wisdom and joining them in their sinful actions. (LL)

Indicating a halting to consider the life style of the sinner. (A Commentary on the Psalms – Ross)

*Way.* This refers to the course of life, how one lives. (A Commentary on the Psalms – Ross)

*sinners.* See v. 5; those for whom evil is habitual, for whom wickedness is a way of life. (CSB)

The term is used with the reference to their work and practice. Their hostility to God shows itself in their works. A “sinner” is really one who has departed from the right way, the way which God has assigned in the Law. “The way of sinners” is their tendency to do wrong, their evil way of life. The righteous, godly man does not enter upon such an evil way of life. He conscientiously avoids the evil habits of sinners. It is his mind and disposition to avoid every sin and departure from God’s Law. (Stoeckhardt)

Means their manner of living. When a man “takes his stand” in such a way he is committed to the nefarious (evil – infamous) way of life that marks all who are walking in it. (Leupold)

*sit.* Settle oneself. (CSB)

Would signify joining in collusion with the scorers and being identified with them. (A Commentary on the Psalms – Ross)

*Seat.* This is a figure that indicates the place of joining with the scorers and identifying with their activities. (A Commentary on the Psalms – Ross)

“Nor taken seat in the assembly of scoffers.” Birds of a feather flock together. Mockery and ridicule of that which is holy have often drawn men together in this unholy cause. This last has plainly advanced farthest away from God. (Leupold)

Mention is made here of the “seat” of the scoffers. They come together for the purpose of holding unholy sessions, so that one may encourage the other in his enmity against God. They talk together with unrestraint, and so their exchange of ideas develops into a scoffing session, as one encourages the other by displaying a bold front in defiance of God’s Word and will. The sin of scoffing, mocking, and indulging in profanities flourishes best in the company of like-minded people. Everyone who attends such a meeting is apt to be swept away to engage also in such wicked talk. (Stoeckhardt)

*mockers.* Those who ridicule God and defiantly reject his law (see Pr 1:22). (CSB)

People who robustly mock and ridicule God's Law. The progression describes people who, perhaps naively, begin to imitate those who despise God's Law and replace it with what suits their own whims. Imitation leads to alliance, and alliance leads to assimilation. This leads to outright rejection and even ridicule of God and His Word. Those who refuse to tread this path avoid this downward spiral. As such they are truly blessed. (TLSB)

In the language of wisdom, mockers are fools (Proverbs 9:8; 14:6). They do not respond to instruction (9:7; 15:12) but stir up strife by their insults (22:10) (Expositor's Bible Commentary – V-5 – Psalms)

Here the Psalmist asserts that the godly man avoids such ungodly sessions. He will not join together with such people who indulge in frivolous scoffing and vile profanities. Any man who fears God will carefully shun such places and meetings where he knows that people talk disrespectfully about God and His Word. (Stoekhardt)

Luther thinks the association with a false church is also included in these words. Christians, indeed, should avoid such fellowship for this is forbidden elsewhere in God's Word. However, at this place the Psalmist speaks particularly of the convivial engagements of the ungodly. From these the godly people must stay away. (Stoekhardt)

Two things are here said to caution all godly people: First, they must beware of the perverse mind and evil works of the ungodly. Second, they must also avoid intimate association with the ungodly. (Stoekhardt)

First, stepping aside from the right path into crooked ways in compliance with evil counsel; secondly, continuing a line of conduct conscience condemns; at last, sitting down at the banquet of sinful pleasure, conscience drugged or scared, God openly despised. (PC)

**1:2 *delight*** – It is to him not a troublesome and unwelcome fetter; it is not a set of hard restraints. (Leupold)

This is said of the man who has been declared “blessed.” Such a man has his delight, not in the vain ways and works of the ungodly, but rather in the Law of the Lord. (Stoekhardt)

They are really not our own doing: We're simply being given the opportunity to do the good things, “which God prepared in advance for us to do.” (Spiritual Gifts) (PBC)

*on his law he meditates.* † Seeking guidance for life in God's word rather than in the deliberations of the wicked. (CSB)

Law refers to the whole word of God, both law and gospel. (The first five books of the Bible then – whole Scripture now) The Hebrew word here means “teaching” or “instruction.” Christians find their greatest joy in the gospel, which tells them of God's forgiveness of their sins. But when Christians are motivated by the new spirit of faith which the Holy Spirit has created within them, they also delight in God's law as it is summarized in the Ten Commandments and other passages of Scripture. Because they love their Savior, they want to obey His commands and do the things that will please God. They delight in all of God's words from beginning to end. (PBC)

The “Law” of the Lord is the “Torah,” the Holy Scriptures, as far as they were the extant at that time. Already in Joshua 1:7-8 reference is made to the Torah. So Joshua at this time had the Torah of Moses in hand. In this place the entire Torah is meant. We then understand the word “Law” to mean the entire Word of God. The Psalmist thus means to say: “Blessed is the man... who has his delight in the Word of God.” (Stoeckhardt)

The Torah of that time contained not only what, strictly speaking, we call Law. It also related the wonderful ways of God with Israel and his gracious deeds for his people. The heart and center of these holy writings were prophecies the divine promises which pointed forward to Christ. These promises are what we commonly call the Gospel. In all these things the righteous man is intensely interested and finds it his delight. (Stoeckhardt)

We simply cannot resist the influence of worldly wisdom and its temptations if we spend only occasional and casual time in God’s Word. (LL)

You may feel that meditation is something only monks and mystics can do. So let me ask, do you know how to worry? If you can worry, you can meditate. To meditate merely means to think about something over and over. Let it simmer in your mind. Reflect on it from different angles until it becomes part of you. (If you want to walk on Water, You’ve got to get out of the Boat – John Ortberg – p. 166)

Some would call it Christian spiritual formation. Christian spiritual formation is the process of being conformed to the image of Christ. (Shaped by the Word – M. Robert Mulholland Jr. p. 27)

Translates Hebrew hagah and siach, terms about speaking. A person holds his attention by uttering words of Scripture or prayers to focus his thoughts. The Israelites meditated on God’s Word by reciting it. The believer explores God’s Word, since there is always something left over to understand and to do. Therefore you must never be proud, as if you were already full. (Luther, AE 11:434). Chemnitz: Each person, in whatever station or calling he has, may meditate on the law of the Lord and speak of His testimonies” (LTh 2:380). Luther suggests that this verb recalls the singing of the birds, “so the church continuously fills its mouth with preaching in joy and gladness like that of the little birds” (AE 11:437, n 223). (TLSB p. 842)

“The Law is a mirror in which God’s will and what pleases Him are exactly portrayed. This mirror should be constantly held up to the believers and be diligently encouraged for them without ceasing” (FC SD VI 4). (TLSB)

This half-aloud reading and rereading are really the process of musing or meditating as it may be practiced in the Orient. Obviously not an unwholesome absorption with the Scriptures, but a healthy interest in them and knowledge of their real content, which continually influence and affect the man so devoted to this holy treasure. (Leupold)

It can remind one of Deuteronomy 6:6-9, “*These commandments that I give you today are to be pon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Ties them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.*” To meditate is to think carefully, deeply, and diligently, and properly it means to muse in the heart. Hence to meditate is, as it were, to stir up in the inside, or to be moved in the innermost self. But one does not meditate on the law of the Lord unless his delight was first

fixed in it. It is for this reason that the ungodly do not meditate on the law of the Lord, since as false plants they did not take root. Yet they meditate on other things, namely, on things in which their delight is rooted, things they themselves desire and love, such as gold, honor, and flesh. The best reader is the one who looks for the understanding of the words from the words themselves, rather than imposing his own understanding, and takes something out, rather than bringing something in, and does not force the words to seem to contain what he had assumed must be understood before reading. (Luther)

We “meditate” on it, pondering both what it says and how it can change or our lives. We simply cannot resist the influence of worldly wisdom and its temptations if we spend only occasional and casual time in God’s Word. (LL)

A man must be planted in the “word” in the conception of God as the arbiter of right and wrong, and consequently must possess principles by which he lives – as the first step in godliness; he must be planted beside the rivers of grace of God, from which he obtains constant renewal, and refreshing. He must, in private prayer and worship, and above all in the sacraments, be seeking that in-taking without which his inner life will wither and die. Then, and only then, he can confidently hope that he will bring forth his fruit in this his season. (IB)

A primitive root to *murmur* (in pleasure or anger); by implication to *ponder*:—imagine, meditate, mourn, mutter, roar, X sore, speak, study, talk, utter. – Obviously, strong attachment to the law begets a correspondingly strong aversion toward evil. (Leupold)

The righteous or godly man manifests his delight in the Law by diligently giving himself up to the study of God’s Word, by pondering it, and by speaking about it. “Meditate,” the Hebrew “hagah,” really means to murmur softly in deep thought, to ponder in such a way, that the thoughts flow forth in the form of expressive words. The righteous man ponders God’s marvelous mercy and kindness. He recognizes the infinite wisdom of his commandments. With amazement he thinks about the gracious will of God as it is directed to himself. He engages in such thoughts even at night time when he lies awake, he ponders what he has read and learned about God’s Word. A fine example of this was the Elector of Saxony in Luther’s time. Something similar is said of St. Bernard of Clairvaux, 1091-1153. (Stoeckhardt)

The man whose whole life is so bound up in the Word of God is a blessed man. Luther says that such a man through his love for the Word has been baked into one cake with the Word. (Stoeckhardt)

Whatever shapes our thinking will soon shape our actions. Because the godly are guided by God’s word, they do not govern their lives by the false values of the unbelieving world. In Romans 12:2 Paul admonishes us, “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.” (PBC)

Brother Lawrence says, “The time of business does not with me differ from the time of prayer; and in the noise and clutter of my kitchen, while several persons are at the same time calling for different things, I possess God in as great tranquility as if I were upon my knees at the Blessed Sacrament. (The Practice of the Presence of God pp. 3-4)

*day and night.* See Jos 1:8. (CSB)

Christians cannot expect to resist the values of the unbelieving world if they devote one hour of the week to meditating on God's word and the other 167 hours to providing for the needs of their bodies and enjoying worldly entertainment. We need regular Bible study with fellow Christians. We need to recognize the importance of regular family devotions and personal Bible study. We need to cultivate the habit of remembering and applying the truths of God's word when we are confronted with temptations or faced with decisions in daily life. God's children will find their greatest joy and satisfaction in studying his word and thinking about it day and night. (PBC)

Constantly. Luther: "This blessed man has his love, the Law of God, always in his mouth, always in his heart and, if possible, in his ear" (AE 14:298). Chemnitz: "The Spirit of renewal works a willingness of this kind in the believers" (LTh 2:341). (TLSB)

Meditation is a reflection on the word of God in the course of daily activities (Joshua 1:8). Regardless of the time of day or context, the godly respond to life in accordance with God's Word. (Expositor's Bible Commentary – V-5 – Psalms)

**1:3** *like a tree ... does not wither*. See Jer 17:8; a simile of the blessedness of the righteous. Such a tree withstands the buffeting of the winds and, flourishing, it blesses man, animals and birds with its unfailing fruit and shade. (CSB)

We can take verse 3 as a promise from God. Those who by God's grace, guide their lives by his Word and thus avoid living out the "wisdom" of the wicked will experience great prosperity – true prosperity. This includes a rich worship life, peace during life's storms and trials, the blessing of a conscience washed clean by the blood of Christ, the joy and hope of an eternal home in heaven when life on this earth ends. (LL)

The simile of the tree represents a flourishing and fruitful life; the simile is here extended for clarification. First, it is planted by channels of water or irrigation ditches. If the tree represents the individual, then the water represents the Word of God, for as the water makes the trees grow, the Word causes the person to grow spiritually. (A Commentary on the Psalms – Ross)

In Wisdom literature, the tree is a metaphor for wisdom itself (Proverbs 3:18), and the wise person is likened to a tree of life and his or her speech and activities are life-giving and restorative (Proverbs 11:30; 15:4). Unlike trees growing wild in wadis or planted in the fields, where the amount of rainfall varies, the tree the psalmist envisions has been planted purposely beside irrigation canals, artificial water channels made for the purpose of irrigation (cf. Proverbs 21:1; Eccl. 2:5-6; Isaiah 30:25). (Expositor's Bible Commentary – V-5 – Psalms)

The imagery of the leaves and fruit assures the godly that they will receive God's blessings and will enjoy life as a gift from God (cf. Ezek. 47:12). True to the language used in Wisdom literature, the godly are characterized by the success the Lord sends their way. The prosperity of the righteous does not necessarily extend to the assurances of great wealth but primarily to God's blessing on their words and works (cf. 90:14-17). (Expositor's Bible Commentary – V-5 – Psalms)

Now the way of the righteous or godly person is described in contrast with the way of the ungodly. The difference of the way becomes evident in the difference of their works. The works of the righteous are compared to fruits. Since, however, these fruits issue not from the righteous himself, but as a product of God's Word, the Psalmist proceeds to call our attention to this



source. He wants us to see that all good works of the righteous are brought about by the Word of God. (Stoeckhardt)

The Egyptian “Wisdom of Amenemope” contrasted a tree in a field with a tree in a garden, i.e., a hot-tempered wild person with a silent, cultivated person. (TLSB)

Luke 6:43-45. <sup>43</sup> “No good tree bears bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit. <sup>44</sup> Each tree is recognized by its own fruit. People do not pick figs from thornbushes, or grapes from briars. <sup>45</sup> The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For out of the overflow of his heart his mouth speaks.”

*Planted* – This is to say that it has roots. (Luther)

Planted, not self-sown, not dropped into its place by chance – planted by God’s own hand (James 1:18). (PC)

*Streams* – Streams or canals of irrigation so common both in Egypt and in Babylonia, by which fruit trees were planted, as especially date-palms, which needed the vicinity of water. (PC)

*Fruit* – When believers are motivated by the gospel and guided by God’s Word, they will produce the fruits of faith, that is, works pleasing to God. (PBC)

Produces something from which others benefit. (TLSB)

These fruits issue not from the righteous himself, but as a product of God’s Word. (Stoeckhardt)

“bearing luscious fruit each season without fail. Their leaves never wither, and all they do shall prosper.” (LB)

The tree produces fruit in its season – not all the time, but when it is supposed to bear fruit. The verb, either the habitual or progressive imperfect, affirms that such a tree continually or regularly gives fruit in its season. If a tree is alive and being watered, it will show the proper growth; likewise, if true believers are in the word, they will produce righteousness. (A Commentary on the Psalms – Ross)

The green foliage is an emblem of faith, which converts the water of life of the divine word into sap and strength, and the fruit, an emblem of works, which gradually ripen and scatter their blessings around; a tree that has lost its leaves, does not bring its fruit to maturity. (KD)

Is strong despite adverse circumstances. (TLSB)

*Wither*. if the tree is carefully planted so that it can grow and is well-watered, it will not only live, but also flourish. Likewise one would expect to find the spiritual life alive and flourishing if nourished by the Word of the Lord. (A Commentary on the Psalms – Ross)

In this case fruit and leaves must be considered as a unit, both together representing good works. As the leaf does not wither, so the fruit bearing goes on till the end. The righteous always remains fresh in his spiritual life and always remains productive as a tree of the Lord. He never

ceases to bear the fruit of good works. The Psalmist wants to emphasize that a believer's strength never abates but keeps on performing good works, because he thrives and draws his strength and life from the Word. By the leaves of the tree you recognize his state of health. As the leaves of the righteous do not wither, he ever enjoys good spiritual health, producing fruit at all age levels. Compare Psalm 92:1-15. There the godly is compared to a palm tree: "The righteous shall flourish like a palm tree." In Jeremiah 17:7-8 we read: "Blessed is the man, that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is. For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river and shall not see when heat cometh but her leaf shall be green, and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit." All these examples bear out the fact that the righteous is a most fortunate state. (Stoekhardt)

*prosper* – Succeeds. This is meant absolutely only in so far as the devotion to the Word is absolute. But generally speaking, it will be obvious in such a life that God is crowning the man's endeavors with success. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit. Even negative things help the faith to grow. (Leupold)

Luther: "Beware that prosperity is not understood as prosperity of the flesh. This prospering is hidden; it is so deep within the spirit that if you do not hold fast to it in faith, you might rather call it the greatest adversity. For just as the devil violently hates the 'leaves' and the Word of God, so he also hates those who teach it and listen to it; and he persecutes them with the help of the powers of the whole world. So you are witness to the greatest of all miracles when you hear that everything prospers which the blessed man does. For what is more wonderful than that the believers increase when they are destroyed, that they multiply when they are diminished, that they overcome when they are subdued, that they enter when they are cast out, that they are victorious when they are defeated?... Thus God exalts His saints, that the height of misfortune becomes the height of prosperity" (AE 14:304). (TLSB)

He is going a blessed way. Already in this life, "the lines are fallen unto him in pleasant places. "In all that he does he prosper." With these words the Psalmist returns from the picture to reality. As the righteous keeps on working in service of the Lord till the end, God grants him success. He is constantly by his side, strengthening him and directing all his efforts to a proper and successful end. Such a man is truly a blessed person of the Lord. (Stoekhardt)

**1:4** *The ungodly are not so.* Even though unbelievers appear to be good people, they do not understand the faith and have no desire to please God or obey his word, and so they produce nothing of value for God. (A Commentary on the Psalms – Ross)

To unbelievers the message is urgent: they must come to faith in the Lord, because if they live their lives without faith in him or his word, not even their good deeds will not count and they will not survive the judgment to come. (A Commentary on the Psalms – Ross)

The wicked shift back and forth with every change of public opinion. On the Last Day, they will be revealed for who they are – the enemies of God, sinners stained by rebellion and unwillingness to come to Him for His gift of righteousness and True Wisdom, our Lord Jesus. (LL)

They don't heed God's Word. They produce no fruit. They will receive no blessing. To God their achievements are as worthless as the chaff which is blown away when the farmer threshes his grain. (PBC)

*like chaff ... blows away.* A simile of the wretchedness of the wicked. Chaff is carried away by the lightest wind, and its removal brings about cleansing by extracting what is utterly useless. (CSB)

Jeremiah compares the lot of the wicked to a fried-up bush in the wasteland. Malachi compares the end of the wicked on the day of the Lord both to “stubble” and to a tree consumed by fire from root to branch (4:1). The metaphor of chaff reveals both the uselessness of the wicked and the ease with which God will deal with them. Even as the winnower casts the chaff to the afternoon breeze, so the Lord will drive away the wicked. No one will remember their place. (Expositor’s Bible Commentary – V-5 – Psalms)

Winnowing farmers harvested the grain and, on a breezy evening, would throw it into the air. Since the chaff was lighter than the grain, the breeze would blow the chaff away. Accumulated chaff was burned - vivid picture of the end of a life divorced from God. (TLSB)

Chaff is the outer membrane that protects a kernel of grain from the elements as it reaches maturity. In harvesting the grain during Bible times, the chaff and the kernel were crushed and tossed into the air. Because the chaff was lighter, it blew away with the slightest of wind, while the valuable grain fell to the earth where it could be gathered. (TLB-FAQ)

The ungodly with the demonstrative art.) are the opposite of a tree planted by the water-courses: they are like chaff (from to press out), which the wind drives away, viz., from the loftily situated threshing-floor (Is. 17:13), i.e., without root below, without fruit above, devoid of all the vigor and freshness of life, lying loose upon the threshing-floor and a prey of the slightest breeze-thus utterly worthless and unstable. (KD)

Chaff, having no kernel in it is blown away by the wind. The wicked, godless, ungodly people have no interest in the Word of God and therefore cannot hold on to it. There is no faith in such men, and therefore they have no moral worth before God. All their thinking, planning, and doing is vain in His eyes. Even all their seeming good works are like worn-eaten apples which though beautiful outwardly are already rotten in the core. They are not suited to any real good purpose in the world. For this reason, they are whisked away like chaff by the wind. There is no permanency to their existence. (Stoeckhardt)

Grain was threshed and beaten out on some high ground with flail, and then cast up into the air. The fresh breezes then would blow and so separate the chaff from the wheat which would then be gathered into the garner. (Stoeckhardt)

**1:5** *will not stand in the judgment.* Will not be able to withstand God’s wrath when he judges (see 76:7; 130:3; Ezr 9:15; Mal 3:2; Mt 25:31–46; Rev 6:17). (CSB)

This is God’s final judgment. The wicked will not be able to withstand the final judgment. (TLSB)

On Judgment Day God will gather believers into their heavenly home just as a farmer gathers the good grain into his barn, but the ungodly will be blown away from God’s presence like chaff. (PBC)

In this judgment God deals with the godly, the believers, by his grace, because of their faith. It is for this reason that the righteous can stand. On the Last Day God will save his people. The

ungodly have no faith. They cannot stand before God's judgment. It will consume them. (Matthew 25:31-46 esp. 32) (Stoeckhardt)

This thought often occurs in the Psalms. God comes to save His people. God on the Last Day will justify His congregation before the world. He is going save them from the wicked. He will see to it that they will receive their right, and promised reward. In this case "judgment" implies that God secures the right for His own. When God on the Last Day will hold judgment and stand up for His people the ungodly will be able unable to stand, as they have no part in God's people. They have no chance to endure God's judgment, just as they are not able to remain in the congregation of the righteous. In other words, they are excluded from the salvation of the Lord. (Stoeckhardt)

John 3:18, "*Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son.*"

*assembly.* The worshiping assembly at God's sanctuary (as in 22:25; 26:12; 35:18; 40:9-10; 111:1; 149:1; see Ps 15; 24). (CSB)

Israelites who gather for public worship. Also can refer to all those who trust in God for their salvation gathering at the final judgment. (TLSB)

*righteous.* † One of several terms in the OT for God's people; it presents them as justified or declared righteous and hence living rightly. In every human relationship they faithfully fulfill the obligations that the relationship entails, remembering that power and authority (of whatever sort: domestic, social, political, economic, religious, intellectual) are to be used to bless, not to exploit. (CSB)

**1:6** *knows them* – Its main point should be of great comfort to the faithful: The Lord knows them. This verb is a participle, emphasizing the knowing as continuous or durative in nature. The idea is more than a mental awareness, what we call knowledge; Delitzsch said it was "a knowledge which was in living, intimate relationship to its subject and at the same time was inclined to it and bound to it by love" (s.v. Ps. 139:1 (A Commentary on the Psalms – Ross)

Thus it is a knowledge that saves. If the Lord knows them, they will not perish; if he does not know them, they will. And this is the language the NT says that Jesus will use in the coming judgment: "I do not know you" (Luke 13:27) and "I am the Good Shepherd. I know my own and my own know me" (John 10:14).

*way ... way.* Implicit in the destinies of the two life-styles are also the destinies of those who choose them. (CSB)

Not simply the behavior of these two types of people, but particular dispositions toward God and theologies. The wicked hold God's Word in contempt and utter disregard. The righteous order their lives and view the world according to God's Word and wisdom. (TLSB)

This verse does not intend to introduce a new thought, but rather is meant to confirm what has been said. To "know" here means to recognize someone or something with approval. As the Lord knows and recognizes the righteous, his faith and his way of life, He looks on him with favor, cares for him and directs his way to proper ends. (Stoeckhardt)

**Psalm 1** Shows us the destiny of both the righteous and the wicked. The wicked will, at the final judgment, find themselves alienated from God and, ultimately, inheritors of eternal damnation. No one is exempt from this most frightening fate. Yet God has provided a different way. He sets us on the way of righteousness and keeps us on it through His Word. The means of grace forever remind us—even when we have succumbed to the various temptations of life—that, through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, our destination is certain. We will stand holy before God in the final judgment as members of the congregation of the righteous. • O Lord, bless our meditation on the accomplished fact of our salvation, through Christ Jesus. Amen. (TLSB)

## You are Blessed Psalm 1:1

Blessed is joyful spiritual condition of those who are right with God and the pleasure and satisfaction that is derived from that. It is joyful because of another J word “Jesus.” Jesus came to this earth do what no human being could ever do and that is to free us from the power of sin, death and the devil. He never sinned and so his life was an acceptable payment for all of our sins. Death could not hold him and our death will lead to a life in eternity. And, we can tell the devil to get lost and he has to leave us.

In baptism we were made God’s dear children. By the Holy Spirit we are kept in that saving faith. Our eternal life is guaranteed. The devil will still use sin and death to tempt us, but we know whose we are. We are blessed (joyful) even in times of bad health and broken relationships. We can be joyful even as tears flow at the death of loved one. Nothing in this life can steal our joy knowing whose we are and where we are going.

Prayer: Dear heavenly Father, thank your love for us as you have brought us into a saving faith that brings us constant blessings. Amen