

Tim Chester

Psalms

Reviving the Soul



✓ 6-Session Bible Study

Tim Chester

Psalms

Reviving the Soul



✓ **6-Session Bible Study**

Psalms: Reviving the Soul

A Good Book Guide

© Tim Chester/The Good Book Company, 2006.

This edition printed 2026.

Published by The Good Book Company



thegoodbook.com | thegoodbook.co.uk

thegoodbook.com.au | thegoodbook.co.nz

Unless indicated, all Scripture references are taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version. Copyright © 2011 Biblica. Used by permission.

Every book published by The Good Book Company has been written by a human author and edited by a human editor. While AI tools are sometimes used to assist with research and support certain processes, all content has been created by a human author and thoroughly checked by our editorial team to ensure it is biblically faithful and pastorally wise.

Titles published by The Good Book Company may be purchased in bulk for educational, business, fundraising or sales promotional use. For information and bespoke pricing, please email specialmarkets@thegoodbook.com.

Tim Chester has asserted his right under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 to be identified as author of this work.

All rights reserved. Except as may be permitted by the Copyright Act, no part of this publication may be reproduced in any form or by any means without prior permission from the publisher.

A CIP catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

Design by André Parker and Drew McCall

ISBN: 9781802541885 | JOB-008908 | Printed in India

Contents

Introduction	4
Why Study Psalms?	5
1. A Song for Sleepless Nights <i>Psalms 3 and 4</i>	7
2. A Song for When Sin Seems Good <i>Psalms 16</i>	13
3. A Song for When We Want to Run Away <i>Psalms 18</i>	19
4. A Song for Dark Days <i>Psalms 23</i>	25
5. A Song for When We Are Afraid <i>Psalms 27</i>	31
6. A Song for Secret Guilt <i>Psalms 32</i>	37
Leader's Guide	43



Introduction

One of the Bible writers described God's word as "a lamp for my feet, a light on my path" (Psalm 119:105, NIV). God gave us the Bible to tell us about who he is and what he wants for us. He speaks through it by his Spirit and lights our way through life.

That means that we need to look carefully at the Bible and uncover its meaning—but we also need to apply what we've discovered to our lives.

Good Book Guides are designed to help you do just that. The sessions in this book are interactive and easy to lead. They're perfect for use in groups or for personal study.

Let's take a look at what is included in each session.

Talkabout: Every session starts with an ice-breaker question, designed to get people talking around a subject that links to the Bible study.

Investigate: These questions help you explore what the passage is about.

Apply: These questions are designed to get you thinking practically: what does this Bible teaching mean for you and your church?

Explore More: These optional sections help you to go deeper or to explore another part of the Bible which connects with the main passage.

Getting Personal: These sections are a chance for personal reflection. Some groups may feel comfortable discussing these, but you may prefer to look at them quietly as individuals instead—or leave them out.

Pray: Here, you're invited to pray in the light of the truths and challenges you've seen in the study.

Each session is also designed to be easily split into two! Watch out for the **Apply** section that comes halfway through, and stop there if you haven't got time to do the whole thing in one go.

In the back of the book, you'll find a **Leader's Guide**, which provides helpful notes on every question, along with everything else that group leaders need in order to facilitate a great session and help the group uncover the riches of God's light-giving word.

Why Study Psalms?

Have you ever got the tune of a mindless song stuck in your head? You find yourself humming a song you don't even like. The world around us sings a song and that song often gets fixed in our minds. We find ourselves joining in. What the world thinks and desires becomes what we think and desire.

The Psalms help us re-tune our hearts. David says that the Lord "put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to our God. Many will see and fear the LORD and put their trust in him" (Psalm 40:3). The Psalms re-tune our hearts to the new song of God's redemption. As a result, we learn again to fear God instead of fearing other people. We learn to trust God in the face of adversity.

"The law of the LORD is perfect,
refreshing the soul.
The statutes of the LORD are trustworthy,
making wise the simple.
The precepts of the LORD are right,
giving joy to the heart.
The commands of the LORD are radiant,
giving light to the eyes." (Psalm 19:7-8)

The word of God revives the soul like medicine. That is the theme of this selection of psalms. They are all taken from the first book of Psalms (Psalms 1 – 41), most of which are songs of people in trouble. They usually begin with the problems we face. But they don't leave us there. They turn us back to God; to his character and his salvation. They offer us hope in the midst of despair. They put a new song in our mouths.

You may feel as if your soul is afflicted, downcast or sick. You may be troubled by worry, sin, problems, suffering, fear or guilt. But in these psalms we will find medicine for the soul. We will learn with the psalmist to re-tune our hearts with the new song of God's redemption. And we will discover that the chorus of this new song is "Worthy is the Lamb" (Revelation 5:9-13).

NOTE: These Bible studies offer more of a thematic journey through selected psalms, rather than an attempt to gain a complete understanding of each of these Spirit-inspired songs. The studies focus on aspects of the psalms that relate to our emotional response to the God who loved us and gave himself for us in Christ.



King David 1040-970 BC

All the psalms featured in this Good Book Guide were written by David.

1

A Song for Sleepless Nights

Psalms 3 and 4

Talkabout

1. What thoughts or feelings keep you awake at night?

Investigate

 Read 2 Samuel 15:1-30

DICTIONARY

Absalom (v 1): one of King David's sons.

Zadok (v 24): the high priest.

Ark of the covenant of God (v 24): a gold-covered box where God was particularly present among his people.

2. What is David's situation?

3. What do you think you would have been thinking if you had been in David's situation? What do you think you would have been feeling?

Read Psalm 3

DICTIONARY

Selah (v 2, 4, 8): probably a musical instruction.

Deliverance (v 8): rescue.

4. Psalm 3 was written when David fled from Absalom. How did David sleep that night?
5. David says, "I will not fear" (v 6). What enables him to respond to the situation without fear?
6. Look at verse 3. What normally is the shield of a king? What is the glory of a king? What is the position of a king?
7. David has lost his army, his glory and his exalted position. But what has he not lost?

8. How does this enable David to respond?

David does not fear the future because he values God more than anything on earth, and nothing can take God away from him.

Apply

David says, "I will not fear..." He does not say, "I do not fear..." He decides not to fear. He tells himself not to fear. It is an act of will based on the truth of God's word. He "preaches" the truth to himself so that he will not fear.

9. How do people deal with anxiety? How about you?

10. How can we learn to "preach the truth" to ourselves so that we do not fear?

Getting Personal | OPTIONAL

Think about situations in which you fear the loss of protection (your shield), pleasure (your glory) or your reputation (your exalted position). How would trust and delight in God transform your fears?

Explore More | OPTIONAL

Look at verses 7-8. The deliverance of David = the blessing of God's people. David points to Jesus. Jesus is David's greater Son. David was anointed king over God's people and Jesus is the anointed King of God's people (the word "Christ" = anointed one).

- How is the deliverance described in verse 7 fulfilled in Jesus?
 - How does the deliverance of Jesus bring blessing to God's people?
 - How can these truths help us cope with anxious nights?
-

Here is an "anti-psalm" of Psalm 3. The song has been rewritten to make it say the opposite of what it actually says.

*I've got so many problems!
It seems as if everyone's against me.
Everyone says: "You have to look after number one".
My security is in my bank balance,
I glory in my possessions,
I want to rise up the career ladder.
I complain to anyone who'll hear me.
I lie awake at night
and in the morning I'm worn out with worry.
I'm worried about all the people who get in my way.
I need to get up; I need to get going.
I need to beat the opposition.
I need to show them who's best.
My success comes through my hard work.
I'm going to make sure I enjoy the good life.*

11. Which of the statements in this anti-psalm sound like things you might say or think?

- Work out what the corresponding line is in the real psalm. How do these truths set us free from worry?

Investigate

Read Psalm 4

DICTIONARY

Delusions (v 2): beliefs which are completely wrong.

Grain and new wine (v 7): a picture of having plenty of possessions.

12. Look at verses 1-3. We often get angry because our reputation is at stake. What is David's response?
13. Look at verses 4-5. What is David's prescription when anger keeps us awake at night?
14. Why does David invite us to search our hearts? See James 4:1.

Sometimes we get angry because we are concerned for God's glory or because we love other people. Jesus himself was sometimes angry. But more often we get angry because of self-centred desires in our hearts. We get angry when those desires are threatened or frustrated, and when we are not getting our way.

Getting Personal | OPTIONAL

Think about the last time you got angry—perhaps even brooded about it at night. What triggered your anger?

Anger is a sign that we are not getting what we want. What desires in your heart does your anger reveal?

Apply

15. Look at verses 6-8. What is David's remedy for self-centred desires?

- How could we put this remedy into practice?

Pray

Look at what David says about God and his relationship with God in these two songs. Use this as a basis of praise to God.

List some things you are anxious or angry about. Ask God to help you to remove your anxiety and anger as you delight in him.