

Psalm 1 Outline

I. The Two Ways (1-5)

A. Blessed is the man who... (1-3)

1. What he does: (1-2)

a. Neg: Blessed is the man who does not conform to wickedness (1)

1) Blessed is the man who (1a)

Blessed means more than just happy, but rather a deeply rewarding, prosperous life, with a depth and longevity to the prosperity.

2) Does not walk in the plan of the guilty ones (1b)

3) And does not stand in the conduct of the sinful ones (1c)

4) And does not sit in the dwelling place of rebellious ones (1d)

b. Pos: But rather loves God's Law (2)

1) The instruction (Torah) of Yahweh is a delight to him (2a)

The books of Moses and probably also wider instruction from Scripture and received tradition and immediate communication.

He sees it as a delight, contrast a burden that it is often thought to be. It is a liberating thing, teaching him to live a truly fulfilled life.

"Perhaps some of you can claim a sort of negative purity, because you do not walk in the way of the ungodly; but let me ask you – Is your delight in the law of God? Do you study God's Word? Do you make it the man of your right hand – your best companion and hourly guide? If not, the blessing of Psalm 1 does not belong to you." - Spurgeon

2) And in His instruction he meditates night and day (2b)

He internalizes Torah, so that it can be automatically lived out. It has to be imprinted on the mind and emotions, to become an automatic part of the thinking and willing and doing. Cf. Ps 2:1; 19:14; 38:28; 71:24; 63:6; 77:12; 143:5.

2. The result: (3)

a. He will be like a tree transplanted by canals of water (3a)

Symbolic of solidity, firmness, ability to withstand trouble, symbolized by the withering of drought, on the contrary, he is fruitful and prosperous.

b. Which prospers in every way (3b-d)

1) it will give its fruit in its time (3b)

2) and its leaves will not wither (3c)

3) and all which he will do will succeed (3d)

B. The Wicked do not prosper (4-5)

1. The wicked are blown away (4)

a. Not so the Wicked (4a)

b. But rather they are like chaff which the wind drives it away (4b)

Symbolic of insubstantiality and emptiness. There is nothing in their lives of enough weight to keep them from being blown away in a storm. Picture of the winnowing process where the plant is thrown in the air and the heavier grain falls back to the ground while the lighter stalk blows away in the wind.

2. Their result: They are judged and excluded (5)

The ironic opposite of verse 1 where the righteous is seen as a minority excluded or tempted by the majority of the wicked. In this case, the wicked is excluded from the assembly of the righteous which is the only assembly that endures.

a. Therefore, the guilty ones will not stand in the judgment (5a)

b. and the sinners in the assembly of the righteous (5b)

II. Summary: The end of the two ways (6)

A. The righteous: For Yahweh knows the way of the righteous one (6a)

An intimate experiential knowledge. God is involved in the way of righteousness.

B. The wicked: But the way of the guilty ones will perish. (6b)

The opposite of being acknowledged by God. "These are people who say to God (in the words of Job 21:13) 'Depart from us! We do not desire knowledge of thy ways.' God, correspondingly, pays no attention to their way, but allows them to walk to their destruction." Provan 129.