

## INTRO-

### *Introductory Illustration*

- **Imagine** that you were living in the medieval period (5-15<sup>th</sup> centuries). Say that someone handed you an old **Hebrew Scroll of the Book of PSALMS**.
  - You began to unroll it, carefully & slowly.
  - You go to the beginning of it & you find **Psalm 1 in RED letters & with NO evidence of any number at all**.
  - In some of the great collections of Hebrew MSS that we have, Ps 1 is left unnumbered as a **preface** to the rest of the Psalter & in red letters.
  - It kind of sets the stage for the rest.

**THESIS—There is a path that loves God & a path that hates God. A path that delights in God & a path that dishonors God. There is a path that glorifies God & a path that rebels against God. A path that leads to life & a path that leads to death. A path that leads to heaven & a path that leads to hell.**

*Charles Spurgeon said of this Psalm: “Walk with God, and you cannot mistake the road; you have infallible wisdom to direct you, permanent love to comfort you, and eternal power to defend you”* (quoted in Lawson, 13).

### **Find Happiness by Walking on the Godly Path!**

This is a **wisdom psalm** that draws from the OT wisdom tradition (Prov 1-9) & the One who is WISDOM incarnate (Jesus – Col 2:3); and the wisdom tradition of the NT (James 3.13-18). **Do you want to be wise? Skillfull? Equipped for Godly & right & happy living?**

**Proverbs 13:13** The one who despises the word will himself be ruined, But the one who fears the commandment will be rewarded.

## **I. SEE THE PATH OF THE GODLY MAN (1-3)**

### **The happy man delighting in God!**

There is a road that leads to abundant happiness & joy. It’s not the road that most travel on nor is it the road that we *might naturally* choose.

### **3 qualifying phrases:**

#### **a. His satisfaction in the Lord! (1a)**

- i. אֲשֶׁר־יִשְׂרָאֵל - how **blessednesses** (plural!) – how abundant, many, fulfilling are the **joys/happinesses**. **Happy the man!**

#### **b. His separation from the world! (1b)**

- i. Does not walk in the counsel of the wicked
  1. **\*discernment\*** - beware ungodly counsel!
- ii. Does not stand in the path of sinners
- iii. Does not sit in the seat of scoffers.
  1. **Note the progression!**

2. Guard the steps that lead to SIN: **(1) considering sin** (walking); **(2) contemplating sin** (standing); and **(3) being comfortable in sin** (sitting/dwelling).
3. Let us flee the first step. The rolling stone descends with quickening speed.

**NOTE:** you can't only *refrain* from being separated from the wicked. You need to *replace* that void with something else. **CHANGE!**

*Your testimonies also are my delight and my counselors* (Psalm 119:24)

**c. His saturation in the Word! (2)**

- i. **BUT** (strong contrast):
- ii. In the **LAW** (*Torah*) of Yahweh he delights
- iii. And in the **LAW** he *meditates* day & night.
  1. הַחֲמִידָה! – meditate – inward digestion to bring outward transformation. *Murmur, whisper, mutter* over & over.
  2. Do **YOU meditate?**
  3. Listen to how Jeremiah **15:16 puts it**.
- iv. **What is YOUR delight??** What makes you *truly* happy?  
**So literally** did a Jewish sect, called the **Essenes** who lived at Qumran by the Dead Sea, take this phrase “day & night” that they established a rotation of interpreters to study & expound the Law of God 24 hours a day! (Wilson, 103)!!

For the psalmist, the Scriptures are his “soul-refreshing feast.”

**Martin Luther said:** “I could not live in paradise without the word of God, but I could live well enough in hell with it.”

**OH YES---he's like a tree.** One translation (Tg) has “*living tree*”.

Firmly planted by streams of water (=healthy)

**\*note passive participle** *God did it!*

It gives fruit in season (=living, production, fruit)

Its leaf does not wither (=lasting, enduring)

All that he does prospers (=hand of God w/ him)

--you live w/ *hope* of God's blessing.

--cf. **Jeremiah 17:7-10 (allusion!)**

--it is the godly man who bears fruit (**Gal 5.22-23**)

**Psalm 119:1** How blessed are those whose way is blameless, Who walk in the law of the LORD.

The godly man has a constant eye on God, on His Word, & on the path He wants me to go!  
***Is that you? The path You're on?***

Luther said: the one who delights in & meditates on the Word of God finds more in the Psalms *in his own study* than all the other interpretations & human advice that others may give (in Kraus, 122).

*Are you on the path of the godly man?*

## II. FLEE THE PATH OF THE WICKED MAN (4-5) The evil man destroyed by God

לֹא-כִן הָרְשָׁעִים *strong contrast*; stark contrast!

Ancient translations double the negative:

“*Not so* the wicked...*Not So!* (2x!—LXX)

### a. The wicked man is corrupted (4)

- i. כַּפֹּחַ- chaff. *In the ANE*, chaff is the light ‘shell’ around the kernel of grain. In your field you’d take wheat & go to the hill & throw it up in the air so the wind would drive the worthless **chaff away** but the precious WHEAT would fall to the ground for harvesting.
- ii. Chaff is worthless, useless, thrown away & burnt. Light, hollow.
- iii. The wind drives the chaff away (blows it, pushes it); LXX: “throws it away”.
  1. **note** how *short & terse* this verse is.
  2. How weak & worthless they are. **They will have NO** shield in the day of battle. **They have NO light** when darkness dwarfs them; **they have NO eternal arm** to lean upon; **they have no compassionate heart** to beat for them; **they’ll have NO loving eye** to watch over them!
  3. **THEY** will blow away like the lightest, most hollow little wrapper in the tornado of God’s Judgment! **Quick lived & forever dying.**
- iv. **Remember John the Baptist? Matthew 3:12** "His winnowing fork is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clear His threshing floor; and He will gather His wheat into the barn, but He will burn up the **chaff with unquenchable fire.**"

Here’s the amazing & startling truth. *Note how close the wheat & the chaff grow together.* The wheat is Godly. The chaff grows up with it but is worthless, blown away & destroyed.

### b. The wicked man is condemned (5)

i. **THEREFORE**--The wicked will not stand:

#### 1. in the Judgment

- a. B/c the wicked are so light & worthless & easily blown away, they are found **wanting/lacking.**
- b. They have ‘**no escape**’ **no ‘mask to wear**’ **no ‘rock to hide in**’ and **no ‘boat to deliver to safety**’.

#### 2. in the assembly of the righteous.

- a. Presently the wicked have no place in the assembly of the righteous.
  - i. Sooner would a fish live upon a tree than a wicked man in the eternal heaven (Spurgeon, 1/1:3)

- b. In the future the wicked will have no portion in the eternal assembly of saints (Rev 21:8; 22:15)!
- 3. *Ultimately* In the great white throne (Rev 20.11-15) they will have nowhere to stand or go or flee to!
- ii. **Nahum 1:2-6** (who can stand?); & **Rev 6:17** (who can stand in the day of God’s wrath?)
  - 1. *What a sobering & saddening & sickening scene.* They cannot stand; they are corrupt & condemned!

**But Christ stood CONDEMNED in our place before the judgment bar of God & satisfied justice.**

And BTW- Jesus fulfilled v.1 – perfectly!!  
כִּי- “For” or “because” – here’s the reason/result of what’s been said.

#### **CONCLUSION: (v.6) TWO DESTINIES (judgment)**

- יהוה יודע הַיָּשָׁרִים- The **LORD** knows (intimate knowledge)
  - God knows the way of the righteous
    - Interesting that in the book of Acts, *Christianity is called “THE WAY”*—the godly man walks *in the way of the godly*. Are YOU?
  - But the LORD is absent from the wicked
  - Brings it back full circle (**inclusio** w/ v.1 – way of the wicked).
    - The way of the wicked אֲדַמָּה-**A—Z psalm**.
    - The psalm begins with **happy blessings** and it ends with **torturous perishing**. These are the 2 choices. Which are you on?
- This is not the only occurrence of TWO ways in life
  - **Deut 30:15-20**
  - **Matt 7:13-15**

**Isaiah 55:7** <sup>7</sup> Let the **wicked** forsake **his way** And the unrighteous man his thoughts; And let him return to the LORD, And He will have compassion on him, And to our God, For He will abundantly pardon.

#### **PRAYING PSALM 1**

- Lord, keep me in the path of the godly and the righteous instead of the path of sinners (v. 1)
- Make Your Word my delight by day and by night (v. 2)
- Father, establish me and ground me in You and Your Word (v. 3).
- O God, bring the unrighteous to justice in Your time and Your way (vv. 4- 5).
- Thank You, Lord, for knowing about me, understanding my life, and caring for me (v. 6).