

READ The BIBLE Together



**Selected Psalms from Book IV
[Psalm 90, 91, 92, 93, 95, 99, 100 & 103]**

20th March – 30th April 2016

**SHALOM CHURCH, SINGAPORE
(Upholding the 1689 Baptist Confession of Faith)**

Day 1-2 Read **PSALM 90**

For this current RTBT series, we shall be studying some selected psalms from Book IV (**PSALM 90-106**).

The **BOOK of PSALMS** has 150 psalms. Each psalm was penned in a particular historical context. One day (we don't know *when*), someone (we don't know *who*), took these 150 psalms and arrange them into five separate books. Hence we have **BOOK I, BOOK II, BOOK III, BOOK IV** and **BOOK V** in the **BOOK of PSALMS**.

In **BOOK I** and **BOOK II**, the emphasis fell on the highs and lows of *David's* life, ending with **PSALM 72** that speaks of the crowning of *Solomon, David's* son as king of Israel. In **BOOK III**, the failures of the kings of Israel were highlighted, ending with the exile of God's people. Hence we read words like these in **PSALM 89**: "*You have made his glory cease, and cast his throne down to the ground*" and "*How long, LORD? Will You hide Yourself forever? Will Your wrath burn like fire?*"

As we come to **BOOK IV – PSALM 90-106**, the people of God are in dire straits. They have lost their land, their temple and their king, and they are now in exile in Babylon. **BOOK IV** addressed God's people in such sad situation.

We begin with the first psalm in **BOOK IV: PSALM 90**.

1. What is your first impression after reading **PSALM 90**?

2. Read **PSALM 90** using other modern translations like ESV and NASB. Read it also in the Chinese/Tamil/Tagalog Bible, if you can.

Is/Are there any significant difference(s) between **PSALM 90** (NKJV) and other translations? If yes, note down the differences below:

3. (a) Who is the human author of **PSALM 90**?

- (b) The human author is called '*the man of God*'. What does this mean?

4. What is the theme of **PSALM 90**?

5. Philip Eveson, former principal of London Theological Seminary, said concerning this psalm:

"It deals with the brevity of human life against the backdrop of God's eternity . . . What Ecclesiastes preaches, this psalm prays. The fleeting nature of human life is not because that is how we were originally made but is the result of God's judgment on human sin. It is placed at this point in the Psalms to express the situation in which the people of God found themselves after the tragedy of the Babylonian invasion and deportation.

Like Moses in the wilderness the Jewish exiles were without land, city, temple and king and they were living through a time when there was deep concern over the realization of God's promises. It stands at the head of a series of psalms, some of whichever to Moses, where God is worshipped as the eternal king and savior of his people. While the prayer emphasizes the sense of sin it also encourages the people to trust God that he would make that own efforts successful.

The psalm begins by calling attention to God's eternity and stability in contrast to human frailty (verses 1-6), then considers God's wrath as a result of human sin(verses 7-12) and closes with pleas for wisdom and help in the light of God's Grace (verses 13-17)."

You have read **PSALM 90** at least three times. Do you agree with Philip Eveson's explanations quoted above concerning **PSALM 90**? Do you have anything to add?

6. Isaac Watts wrote a hymn based on **PSALM 90**:

*O God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast,
And our eternal home.*

*Under the shadow of Thy throne
Thy saints have dwelt secure;
Sufficient is Thine arm alone,
And our defence is sure.*

*Before the hills in order stood,
Or earth received her frame,
From everlasting Thou art God,
To endless years the same.*

*A thousand ages in Thy sight
Are like an evening gone;
Short as the watch that ends the night
Before the rising sun.*

*Time, like an ever-rolling stream,
Bears all its sons away;
They fly forgotten, as a dream
Dies at the opening day.*

*O God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Be Thou our guard while life shall last,
And our eternal home.*

Sing this hymn in personal or family worship.

Day 3 Read **PSALM 90:1-6**

1. *Moses* begins his prayer saying that God has been their dwelling place.

(a) What does it mean that God is the dwelling place of His people?

(b) God is not just the dwelling place of this generation of Israelites, but for all generations. This means He was Abraham's dwelling place, Isaac's dwelling place, Jacob's dwelling place, Joseph's dwelling place as well as Moses' dwelling place now.

How can God be such a permanent dwelling place? (**Verse 2**)

2. In contrast to God's eternity, *Moses* graphically described the fleeting nature of human life.

- (a) He calls it “*sleep*” (**verse 5b**). The meaning could be to convey that our life is like our dreams when we are asleep. The moment we are awake, they are gone and forgotten!
 - (b) To what else did *Moses* liken our human existence? (**Verse 5c-6**)
 - (c) What do you think *Moses* is seeking to convey when he says that we are carried away like a flood (**verse 5a**)?
3. In **verse 3**, we read that God says to man, “*Return*” (**verse 3**). What do you think this means?
4. What do you think is the message of **verse 4**?

Day 4-5 Read **PSALM 90:7-12**

1. **Verses 7-10** are a graphical description of man’s mortality.
- (a) What is the reason for man’s mortality?
 - (b) **Verse 8** talks about our iniquities and our secret sins. What does that have to do with our mortality?
 - (c) Can you identify with the words in **verse 10**? Elaborate.

2. In **verse 11** *Moses* asked a question. In **verse 12** *Moses* provided the answer himself.
- (a) What is the question and what does it mean?

 - (b) What is the answer and what does it mean?

 - (c) Re-look at your answer in 2(b). What does it mean to you?

Day 6-7 Read **PSALM 90:13-17**

A heart of wisdom will express itself in prayer. In **verses 13-17**, we have the prayer of *Moses*.

1. **Verse 13** is *Moses'* first petition. What is he asking for?

2. *Moses'* second petition is found in **verses 14-15**. What is he asking for?

3. *Moses'* third petition is found in **verses 16-17**. What is he asking for?

4. Review the three petitions of *Moses* found above. Which one will be your prayer today? Why?

5. How can you see the Gospel in **PSALM 90**?

Week 2

[27th March – 2nd April 2016]

Day 1 Read **PSALM 91**

1. What is your first impression after reading **PSALM 91**?

2. Read **PSALM 91** using other modern translations like ESV and NASB. Read it also in the Chinese/Tamil/Tagalog Bible if you can.

Is/Are there any significant difference(s) between **PSALM 91** (NKJV) and other translations? If yes, note down the differences below:

3. What is the theme of **PSALM 91**?

4. Who do you think is the main character in view in **PSALM 91**? (In other words, who is the 'you' mentioned in **verses 3-13**?)

Day 2 Read **PSALM 91:1-2**

Matthew Henry, in his commentary on **PSALM 91**, made this astute comment: "*Many think that to Christ, as Mediator, these promises do primarily belong (Isa. 49:2), not because to him the devil applied one of these promises (Mt. 4:6), but because to him they are very applicable, and, coming through him, they are more sweet and sure to all believers.*"

In other words, the "you" mentioned in **verses 3-13** is ultimately referring to our Lord Jesus Christ. This would correspond to our Lord's own words in **LUKE 24:44** that the **PSALMS** speak concerning Him!

When the psalmist first wrote **PSALM 91**, he was probably talking about the king of Israel who was also known as the Lord's anointed one. The Lord's anointed one who will lead the Lord's people, he must put his trust in the Lord and made the Lord his refuge. When he does that, he will experience all the blessings that **PSALM 91** describes. Since he is the Lord's anointed one, when he is blessed, then the people he leads and represents will also be blessed. Hence, in this way, **PSALM 91** is relevant and applicable to Israel.

Our Lord Jesus Christ is the Ultimate Fulfillment of this person called "*the Lord's anointed*". Hence, as Matthew Henry has stated, Jesus Christ our Lord is the Person that **PSALM 91** is ultimately referring to. He is the One who meets the description of **verses 1-2**, enjoys the blessings of **verses 3-13**, and receives the affirmation of God in **verses 14-16**. Since Jesus Christ is our Head, that what is true for the head is true for the body. As such, **PSALM 91** is applicable to us, in Jesus Christ!

1. What do the words " *dwell* " and " *abide* " mean?
2. What does the phrase " *secret place of the Most High* " refer to?
3. What does the phrase " *shadow of the Almighty* " refer to?
4. In **verse 2**, the psalmist said that God is his refuge and fortress. How is this related to **verse 1**?
5. What do you think is the psalmist seeking to convey in **verses 1-2**?
6. Will you proclaim the words of **verse 2**? Why or why not?

Day 3-4 Read **PSALM 91:3-8**

1. God's care for His beloved is certain. How can we see this from these 6 verses?

2. God's care for His beloved is tender. How can we see this from these 6 verses?

3. God's care for His beloved is constant and comprehensive. How can we see this from these 6 verses?

4. What do you think is the message of **verses 7-8**?

5. (a) If this is how God cares for Christ, then why did He die on the cross?

(b) If this is how God cares for those of us in Christ, then why would Christians suffer and even be martyred?

Day 5 Read **PSALM 91:9-13**

1. (a) What do you think is the message of **verses 10-12**?

(b) Do you think this is applicable to Christians today? Elaborate.

2. What do you think is the message of **verse 13**?

Day 6 Read **PSALM 91:14-16**

1. In these 3 verses, we see that God is speaking to His beloved, assuring him of His love. Altogether, God stated 8 things that He will do for His beloved. What are they?

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2. Remember that **PSALM 91** is ultimately talking about the Lord Jesus Christ. Are these 3 verses true of Jesus? Elaborate.

3. All through church history, we have Christian missionaries who were martyred. Many of them were killed when they were quite young.

If **PSALM 91** is applicable to those of us in Christ (Christians), then how can we reconcile Christian missionaries martyred at a young age, with “*with long life I will satisfy him*” (**verse 16**)?

Day 7 Review **PSALM 91**

1. What are the truths concerning God that you have learnt from **PSALM 91**?
2. Which area(s) in your life must change now that you have read **PSALM 91**?
3. What is the single most important thing you have learnt from **PSALM 91**?
4. Take time to learn to sing this hymn (by Augustus Toplady), and use it to affirm your faith in the Lord:

*A Sov'reign Protector I have,
Unseen, yet forever at hand,
Unchangeably faithful to save,
Almighty to rule and command.
He smiles, and my comforts abound;
His grace as the dew shall descend;
And walls of salvation surround
The soul He delights to defend.*

*Inspirer and Hearer of prayer,
Thou Shepherd and Guardian of Thine,
My all to Thy covenant care
I sleeping and waking resign.
If Thou art my Shield and my Sun,
The night is no darkness to me;
And fast as my moments roll on,
They bring me but nearer to Thee.*

Day 1 Read **PSALM 92**

1. What is your first impression of it after reading **PSALM 92**?
2. Read **PSALM 92** using other modern translations like ESV and NASB. Read it also in the Chinese/Tamil/Tagalog Bible if you can.

Is/Are there any significant difference(s) between **PSALM 92** (NKJV) and other translations? If yes, note down the differences below:

3. What is the theme of **PSALM 92**?
4. What do you think is the purpose of **PSALM 92**? How did you arrive at your answer?
5. Isaac Watts has written a hymn based on **PSALM 92**:

*Sweet is the work, my God, my King,
To praise Thy Name, give thanks and sing,
To show Thy love by morning light
And talk of all Thy truth at night.*

*Sweet is the day of sacred rest,
No mortal cares shall seize my breast.
O may my heart in tune be found,
Like David's harp of solemn sound!*

*My heart shall triumph in my Lord
And bless His works and bless His Word.
Thy works of grace, how bright they shine!*

*But I shall share a glorious part,
When grace has well refined my heart;
And fresh supplies of joy are shed,
Like holy oil, to cheer my head.*

*Then shall I see, and hear, and know
All I desired and wished below;
And every power find sweet employ
In that eternal world of joy.*

Sing this hymn in your personal or family worship.

Day 2 Read **PSALM 92:1-3**

1. The psalmist calls us to praise the Lord and say that it is good to do so (**verse 1**). Why is it good to praise the Lord?

2. How are we to praise the Lord?

Verse 2:

Verse 3:

3. When are we to praise the Lord?

4. Write down one area in your life that must change as a result of **PSALM 92:1-3**.

Day 3-4 Read **PSALM 92:4-11**

1. What is the reason given in **verse 4** for praising the Lord?

2. (a) What did the psalmist say concerning God's work? (**Verse 5a**)

(b) What did the psalmist say concerning God's thought? (**Verse 5b**)

(c) What is the relation between God's work and God's thought?
3. What is it that a fool (senseless man) does not know (understand)? (**Verses 6-7**)
4. Do you think God's enemies and the workers of iniquities (**verses 9**) are the same as "*my enemies*" and "*the wicked who rise up against me*" (**verse 11**)? Explain.
5. What will happen to the people mentioned in **verses 9 & 11**? Why?
6. What do you think is the meaning of **verse 10**?
7. What do you think is the meaning of **verse 11**?
8. How can we apply these 8 verses to the Christian Life?

Day 5-6 Read **PSALM 92:12-15**

1. (a) Who do you think is "*the righteous*" mentioned in **verse 12**?

(b) To what is he likened? (**Verse 12**)

2. In **verses 13-14**, the focus shifts from the righteous to the people who belong to him. What will be true of them?

(The word-picture found in these two verses is strongly reminiscent of the blessed man in **PSALM 1:3**)

3. As the righteous and the people who belong to him flourish, what will they do? (**Verse 15**)

Day 7 Review **PSALM 92**

1. What are the truths concerning God that you have learnt from **PSALM 92**?

2. Which area(s) of your life must change now that you have read **PSALM 92**?

3. How can we see the Gospel in **PSALM 92**?

Day 1-3 **PSALM 93**

Read **PSALM 93** using the NKJV, ESV and NASB. Then do a detailed study of each verse:

Verse 1

The verse begins with these three words: "The LORD reigns".

Who? *The LORD!*

We note that throughout this psalm, the psalmist addressed God as '*the LORD*' and only as '*the LORD*' (See **EXODUS 3:14-15**).

What is the significance of this?

What? *He reigns!*

Why would the final editor of **PSALMS** place **PSALM 93** here, calling the attention of the Israelites to the truth that the LORD reigns? It is generally held that Book III of **PSALMS** depicts the sad decline of Israel and Judah, culminating in their exile. So when we come to Book IV (**PSALM 90-106**), the people of God are in exile, and have no (human) king. Into such woeful situations, Book IV reminds God's people that:

- (i) God is our eternal dwelling place
- (ii) Dwelling in the secret place of the Almighty is safe and secure
- (ii) Our Almighty God will surely triumph over His enemies (and we in Him)

In this 4th psalm of Book IV, God's people are reminded that though they have no human king, God is King and He remains their King!

What can we say about the reigning LORD? *He is clothed with majesty.*

What does '*majesty*' entail? Here the psalmist zeroes in on one aspect: *God has clothed Himself with strength!* So strong is the LORD that He has established this world and it cannot be moved!

How sure is this? "*Surely,*" says the psalmist.

(Here in **verse 1**, like in **verses 3-4**, the psalmist used a Hebrew literary device called climactic/staircase parallelism:

He is clothed with majesty;

The LORD is clothed, He has girded Himself with strength.

Surely *the world is established, so that it cannot be moved.*)

Verse 2

In a sense, this verse continues and contrasts **verse 1**. In **verse 1**, we read that the LORD established this world. So this world has a beginning and a creator. In contrast,

God's throne is established from of old. What would '*from of old*' mean? Everlasting, for God is from everlasting!

What doctrine of God is being taught here?

Verses 3-4

The psalmist used another climactic/staircase parallelism in these two verses.

Identify the parallelism and then explain its message. (What questions will you ask, to help you arrive at understanding the message here?)

Verse 5

What are the truths taught here concerning God?

Review your answers above, and then answer this question: **What is the message of PSALM 93?**

Day 4 Read **PSALM 95**

Read **PSALM 95** using the NKJV, ESV and NASB, and then note down what significant observations or questions you might have below:

Take some time to review the questions used in our reading of **PSALM 90-93** (Week 1 Day 1 – Week 4 Day 3). Note how the questions asked led us, slowly but surely, to arrive at our understanding of the message of each of the psalm.

Day 5-7 Read **PSALM 95**

What is the message of **PSALM 95**?

(How did you arrive at your answer? In other words, what questions [**Who? What? Where? How? When? Why?**] did you ask, to help you get your answer?)

Week 5

[17th – 23rd April 2016]

Day 1-2 Read **PSALM 99**

What is the message of **PSALM 99**?

(How did you arrive at your answer? In other words, what questions [**Who? What? Where? How? When? Why?**] did you ask, to help you get your answer?)

Day 3-4 Read **PSALM 100**

What is the message of **PSALM 100**?

(How did you arrive at your answer? In other words, what questions [**Who? What? Where? How? When? Why?**] did you ask, to help you get your answer?)

Day 5-7 Read **PSALM 102**

What is the message of **PSALM 102**?

(How did you arrive at your answer? In other words, what questions [**Who? What? Where? How? When? Why?**] did you ask, to help you get your answer?)

Week 6

[24th – 30th April 2016]

Day 1 Read **PSALM 103**

1. (a) What is your first impression after reading **PSALM 103**?

(b) Matthew Henry, in his commentary on **PSALM 103**, began with these words:
“This psalm calls more for devotion than exposition; it is a most excellent psalm of praise.”

Do you agree? Elaborate.

2. Read **PSALM 103** using other modern translations like ESV and NASB. Read it also in the Chinese/Tamil/Tagalog Bible if you can.

Is/Are there any significant difference(s) between **PSALM 103** (NKJV) and other translations? If yes, note down the differences below:

3. (a) Who is the human author of **PSALM 103**? How do you know?

(b) What do you think is the theme and overall message of **PSALM 103**?

4. Henry Francis Lyte wrote a hymn based on **PSALM 103**:

*Praise, my soul, the King of heaven;
to his feet thy tribute bring;
ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven,
evermore his praises sing:
Alleluia, alleluia!
Praise the everlasting King.*

*Praise him for his grace and favor
to our fathers in distress;
praise him still the same for ever,
slow to chide and swift to bless:
Alleluia, alleluia!
Glorious in his faithfulness.*

*Father-like, he tends and spares us;
well our feeble frame he knows;
in his hand he gently bears us,
rescues us from all our foes.
Alleluia, alleluia!
Widely yet his mercy flows.*

*Angels, help us to adore him;
ye behold him face to face;
sun and moon, bow down before him,
dwellers all in time and space.
Alleluia, alleluia!
Praise with us the God of grace.*

Take time to sing this hymn in worship of your Lord!

Day 2 Read **PSALM 103:1-5**

1. What does it mean to bless the LORD (**verses 1-2a**)?
2. The psalmist *David* is calling whom to bless the LORD?
3. How (in what manner) should one bless the LORD?
4. *David* says that we must not forget God's benefits to us, and then proceeds to list five of them. What are they and what do they mean?

Benefit

Meaning

(1)

(2)

(3)

(4)

(5)

5. What is the most important lesson you have learnt from **PSALM 103:1-5**?

Day 3-4 Read **PSALM 103:6-18**

1. List down all the truths you can find in **PSALM 103:6-18** concerning God:
2. How should these revealed truths about God affect you? Pick 2 of the truths you found listed in **PSALM 103:6-18** and explain how it affected your life.

#1:

#2:

3. The focus switched to man in **verses 15-16**. What is the main point here?
4. The word "*But*" in **verse 17** tells us that **verses 17-18** is set in contrast to **verses 15-16**. What is the contrast?
5. What do you think is the message of **PSALM 103:6-18** and how does it contribute to the overall message of **PSALM 103**?

Day 5-6 Read **PSALM 103:19-22**

1. (a) What is the message of **verse 19**?

(b) How does **verse 19** contribute to the overall message of **PSALM 103**?

2. The psalmist ends this psalm with these words: *Bless the LORD, O my soul.*

(a) Who else did he call to join him in blessing the LORD?

(b) What is the significance of the psalmist's action here?

3. When was the last time you bless the LORD, and for what reasons did you bless Him?

Day 7 Review **PSALM 103**

1. After reviewing your answers in **Week 6 Day 1-6**, is there a need to change your answer of Question 3(b) of **Week 6 Day 1**? If yes, what is the change needed?

2. How can you see the Gospel in **PSALM 103**?

3. Point out one area in your life that has changed after you have read **PSALM 103**?

Acknowledgement

Whatever the weaknesses of this Read-The-Bible-Together guide, they would have been far greater without the kind help of sisters CHUA En Hui, SEAH Huay Leng, Keran WEI and brother Muthuvel Nandakumaran. They gave their time and energy to review the entire guide, asking questions all the way and giving many valuable suggestions.

Thank you, brother and sisters!

Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another! (Proverbs 27:17, ESV)

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Questions or comments concerning this RTBT guide?
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