

Wonder *full*

Ancient Psalms
Ever New

Marty Machowski

Illustrated by Andy McGuire

The Psalms Help Us Pray

READ PSALM 5

Give ear to my words, O LORD;
consider my groaning.
Give attention to the sound of my cry,

my
King
and my God,
for to you do I
pray.

O LORD, in the morning you hear my voice;
in the morning I prepare a sacrifice for you and watch.

Did you know you can use the words of the Psalms to help you pray? When you read a psalm, think of ways you could use it in your prayers to God. We have hard days just like the psalm writers did and we need God's help too.

Practice making Psalm 5 your own prayer. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you use David's prayers and make them your own. For example, Psalm 5 might become something like this:

Dear Jesus, you are my King and my God. Please hear my prayer this morning and help me live for you and keep a close watch over all I do.

God, please forgive me for ignoring you today. Forgive me for lying to my parents, and for being mean to my sister. Thank you for forgiveness. Thank you that I can come near to you because of Jesus. Thank you for listening.

This week, I really need your help at school. I'm so tired of the kids being mean. Please speak to them—you know who they are. Be my shield and protector and pave a path for me so I know what to do. Thank you for always being my safe place. Amen.

Now it's your turn! Try reshaping Psalm 5 into your own words and prayer. Share what's really on your heart. Where do you need God's help? Where do you need forgiveness? What are you thankful for? Offer your words to God as a prayer.

A Closer Look

Make a list of all the things that David says that God will do for him in answer to his prayer. Underline one verse from this psalm that you would like to remember today. If you would like, you can put the date next to the verse and your prayer request.

Psalm 11:1



Prayers for Difficult Days

READ PSALMS 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13

A lament is a sad prayer or song where the author shares the trouble he or she feels. When sad things happen, the Psalms show us it is okay to tell God how we really feel. God is our loving Father who cares for us and is always ready to comfort us.

King David called out to God in times of trouble, and he even wrote songs about his difficult days for all the people to sing. David prayed to God for protection from his enemies. All through his life there were people who wanted to harm him and also harm Israel. But any of your troubles can be your “enemies.” These songs are examples of how we can pray any time we are in any kind of trouble.

Read through Psalms 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13. As you read, remember Jesus is the Lord. Jesus knows how hard the sad days can be—he had sad days of his own. So, the next time something sad or disappointing happens, tell God how you feel. Then, like King David did, ask God for help. You can pray one of these psalms every day. There is no hurry! Take your time.

PSALM 6

A Prayer to God When You Are Sad

“I am weary with my moaning; every night I flood my bed with tears; I drench my couch with my weeping. My eye wastes away because of grief; it grows weak because of all my foes.”
(vv. 6–7)

Read Psalm 6 from your Bible. Choose a verse or two as a guide and tell God all of the reasons you are sad. Then ask him to help you because of his steadfast love (v. 4). How did praying this way help you?

PSALM 7

A Prayer to God When You Are in Trouble

“O LORD my God, in you do I take refuge; save me from all my pursuers and deliver me.” (v. 1)

“My shield is God Most High, who saves the upright in heart.” (v. 10 NIV)

Read Psalm 7 from your Bible. What part of David’s prayer reminds you of your life and something you are going through? Underline one verse and put the date next to it to remind you you prayed for help. Perhaps next time you read Psalm 7 you will be able to add how God answered your prayer.

PSALM 9

A Prayer for Grace

“Be gracious to me, O LORD! See my affliction from those who hate me.” (v. 13)

In this psalm David prays that God will give him grace (help he doesn’t deserve). Sometimes the best thing to do on a hard day is to remember what God has already done for you. David does this in Psalm 9. He begins by counting all of God’s wonderful deeds. Make a list of ten things God has done for you. Now turn the items on your list into a prayer of thanks and pray it back to God. Then ask for grace for what you are facing today.

PSALM 10

A Prayer for When You Feel Alone

“Why, O LORD, do you stand far away? Why do you hide yourself in times of trouble?” (v. 1)

“To you the helpless commits himself; you have been the helper of the fatherless.” (v. 14)

Have you ever felt like God is far away from you? Read through Psalm 10. Even though David feels like God is far away, he prays anyway. How is the end of the psalm different than the beginning (vv. 16–18)? What do you learn about when to pray from this psalm?

PSALM 11

A Prayer for Safety

“In the LORD I take refuge; how can you say to my soul, ‘Flee like a bird to your mountain, for behold, the wicked bend the bow; they have fitted their arrow to the string to shoot in the dark at the upright in heart; if the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do?’ . . . For the LORD is righteous; he loves righteous deeds; the upright shall behold his face.” (vv. 1–3, 7)

Notice how David fills his prayer with truths about God. Make a list of three things you want to pray about and three truths about who God is that you can speak back to him in prayer. Then find a quiet place and pray, using both lists.

PSALM 12

A Prayer for When You Are Discouraged

“Save, O LORD, for the godly one is gone; for the faithful have vanished from among the children of man. Everyone utters lies to his neighbor; with flattering lips and a double heart they speak.” (vv. 1–2)

**“LORD, keep us safe. Always protect us from such people.”
(v. 7 ICB)**

“Save” is another word for “rescue.” God rescues us from trouble and sin, and he comforts us in our suffering. Where do you need God to save you?

PSALM 13

A Prayer for When You Are Tired of Waiting for God to Help

“How long, O LORD? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me? How long must I take counsel in my soul and have sorrow in my heart all the day? How long shall my enemy be exalted over me?” (vv. 1–2)

“But I have trusted in your steadfast love; my heart shall rejoice in your salvation.” (v. 5)

When we are in trouble, it can seem like God isn’t listening to our prayers. David wants God to do something right now! He wants to know “How long?” We can ask those questions too. But in the end we can turn to God, like David did, and say that we trust in “your steadfast love.” God can help us wait patiently for the answer to our prayer and to trust God does hear us when we call.

God Is Bigger Than Our Troubles

READ PSALM 8

When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him? (vv. 3–4)

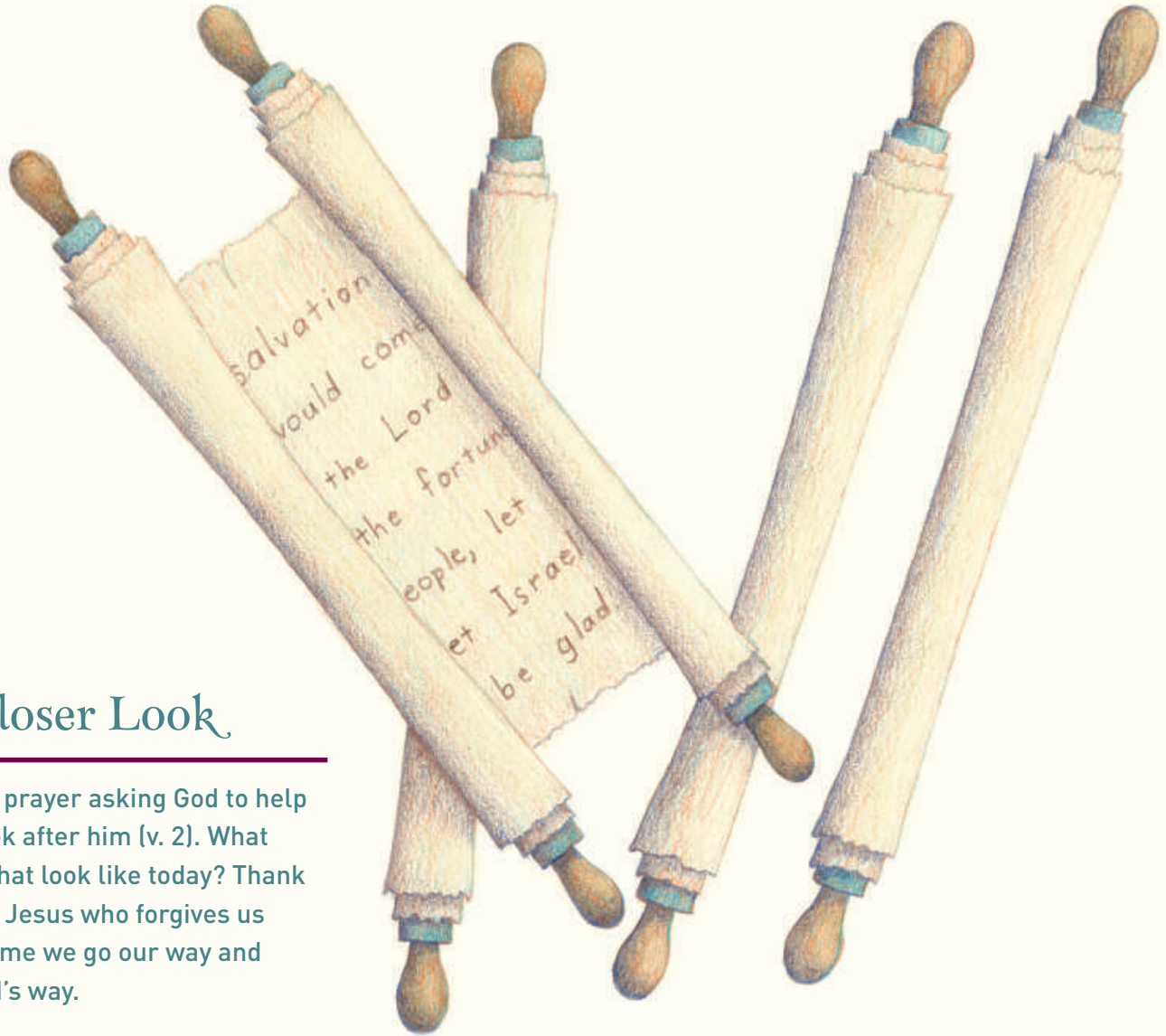
Right in the middle of the psalms that help us pray our troubles, this psalm reminds us how big and powerful God is. He is bigger than any trouble we face. The psalm writer, awed by creation, celebrates the glory and majesty of the Creator. In the New Testament, the writer of Hebrews quotes this psalm and tells us Jesus is the “Son of Man” that David is writing about (Hebrews 2:5–9). Isn’t it good to remember Jesus in the midst of our trouble? Jesus lived through difficult days and understands what it feels like to lose friends, be disappointed, made fun of, and even beaten. But Jesus is also the King of the whole world. He rose from the dead and now he sits at the right hand of the Father, praying for us (Hebrews 7:25). This Jesus says to you, “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28 NIV).

On a clear night, go outside and look at the stars. How small we are compared with the vast reaches of space! Jesus spoke and this world came into being. How powerful must God be to create the planets, stars, and galaxies of outer space! He is more powerful than your troubles and will help you when you ask.



A Closer Look

Write in your journal all of the things you can think of in this world that are bigger than you are. Then next to each one write, "God is bigger than _____." Use this list to remind you God is more powerful and bigger than anything in the universe, and he cares for you.



A Closer Look

Write a prayer asking God to help you seek after him (v. 2). What might that look like today? Thank God for Jesus who forgives us every time we go our way and not God's way.