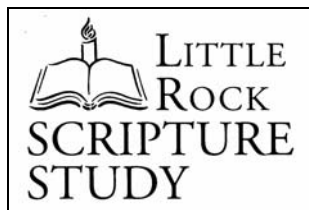


Church of the Holy Spirit



Extra Readings PSALMS I - Lesson 6

More Wisdom Psalms Psalms 32, 34, 37, 49 Psalms for All Seasons, pages 63-76

Q2

Psalm 32:1

¹ Of David. A maskil. I

^a Happy the sinner whose fault is removed,
whose sin is forgiven.

Q3

a) John 9:1-3

^{1 b} As he passed by he saw a man blind from birth. ^{2 c} His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" ³ Jesus answered, "Neither he nor his parents sinned; it is so that the works of God might be made visible through him."

a [Psalm 32] An individual thanksgiving and the second of the seven Penitential Psalms (cf Psalm 6). The opening declaration—the forgiven are blessed (Psalm 32:1–2)—arises from the psalmist's own experience. At one time the psalmist was stubborn and closed, a victim of sin's power (Psalm 32:3–4), and then became open to the forgiving God (Psalm 32:5–7). Sin here, as often in the Bible, is not only the personal act of rebellion against God but also the consequences of that act—frustration and waning of vitality. Having been rescued, the psalmist can teach others the joys of justice and the folly of sin (Psalm 32:8–11).

b [9:1–10:21] Sabbath healing of the man born blind. This fifth sign is introduced to illustrate the saying, "I am the light of the world" (John 8:12; 9:5). The narrative of conflict about Jesus contrasts Jesus (light) with the Jews (blindness, John 9:39–41). The theme of water is reintroduced in the reference to the pool of Siloam. Ironically, Jesus is being judged by the Jews, yet the Jews are judged by the Light of the world; cf John 3:19–21.

c See the note on John 5:14, and Exodus 20:5, that parents' sins were visited upon their children. Jesus denies such a cause and emphasizes the purpose: the infirmity was providential.

b) Psalm 32:3-5

^{3 d} As long as I kept silent, my bones wasted away;
I groaned all the day.

⁴ For day and night your hand was heavy upon me;
my strength withered as in dry summer heat. Selah

⁵ Then I declared my sin to you;
my guilt I did not hide.

I said, "I confess my faults to the LORD,"
and you took away the guilt of my sin. Selah

Psalm 51

^{1 e} For the leader. A psalm of David,

² when Nathan the prophet came to him after his affair with Bathsheba.

I

³ Have mercy on me, God, in your goodness;
in your abundant compassion blot out my offense.

⁴ Wash away all my guilt;
from my sin cleanse me.

⁵ For I know my offense;
my sin is always before me.

⁶ Against you alone have I sinned;
I have done such evil in your sight

d I kept silent: did not confess the sin before God.

e [Psalm 51] A lament, the most famous of the seven Penitential Psalms, prays for the removal of the personal and social disorders that sin has brought. The poem has two parts of approximately equal length: Psalm 51:3–10 and Psalm 51:11–19, and a conclusion in Psalm 51:20–21. The two parts interlock by repetition of "blot out" in the first verse of each section (Psalm 51:3,11), of "wash (away)" just after the first verse of each section (Psalm 51:4) and just before the last verse (Psalm 51:9) of the first section, and of "heart," "God," and "spirit" in Psalm 51:12,19. The first part (Psalm 51:3–10) asks deliverance from sin, which is not just a past act but its emotional, physical, and social consequences. The second part (Psalm 51:11–19) seeks something more profound than wiping the slate clean: nearness to God, living by the spirit of God (Psalm 51:12–13), like the relation between God and people described in Jer 31:33–34. Nearness to God brings joy and the authority to teach sinners (Psalm 51:15–16). Such proclamation is better than offering sacrifice (Psalm 51:17–19). The last two verses ask for the rebuilding of Jerusalem (Psalm 51:19 [20–21]).

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That you are just in your sentence,
blameless when you condemn.
^{7a} True, I was born guilty,
a sinner, even as my mother conceived me.
⁸ Still, you insist on sincerity of heart;
in my inmost being teach me wisdom.
^{9b} Cleanse me with hyssop, that I may be pure;
wash me, make me whiter than snow.
¹⁰ Let me hear sounds of joy and gladness;
let the bones you have crushed rejoice.

II

¹¹ Turn away your face from my sins;
blot out all my guilt.
¹² A clean heart create for me, God;
renew in me a steadfast spirit.
¹³ Do not drive me from your presence,
nor take from me your holy spirit.
¹⁴ Restore my joy in your salvation;
sustain in me a willing spirit.
¹⁵ I will teach the wicked your ways,
that sinners may return to you.
¹⁶ Rescue me from death, God, my saving God,
that my tongue may praise your healing power.
¹⁷ Lord, open my lips;
my mouth will proclaim your praise.
^{18c} For you do not desire sacrifice;
a burnt offering you would not accept.
¹⁹ My sacrifice, God, is a broken spirit;
God, do not spurn a broken, humbled
heart./bible>

III

^{20d} Make Zion prosper in your good pleasure;
rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.
²¹ Then you will be pleased with proper sacrifice,
burnt offerings and holocausts;
then bullocks will be offered on your altar.

John 3:20-21

²⁰ For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come toward the light, so that his works might not be exposed. ²¹ But whoever lives the truth comes to the light, so that his works may be clearly seen as done in God.

Romans 6:22-23

²² But now that you have been freed from sin and have become slaves of God, the benefit that you have leads to sanctification, ^e and its end is eternal life. ²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Q4

Psalm 34:8

⁸ The angel of the LORD, who encamps with them,
delivers all who fear God.

Exodus 14:19-22

¹⁹ The angel of God, who had been leading Israel's camp, now moved and went around behind them. The column of cloud also, leaving the front, took up its place behind them, ^{20f} so that it came between the camp of the Egyptians and that of Israel. But the cloud now became dark, and thus the night passed without the rival camps coming any closer together all night long. ²¹ Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the LORD swept the sea with a strong east wind throughout the night and so turned it into dry land. When the water was thus divided, ²² the Israelites marched into the midst of the sea on dry land, with the water like a wall to their right and to their left.

Q5

Psalm 34:12-19

^{12g} Come, children, listen to me;
I will teach you the fear of the LORD.
¹³ Who among you loves life,
takes delight in prosperous days?
¹⁴ Keep your tongue from evil,
your lips from speaking lies.
¹⁵ Turn from evil and do good;
seek peace and pursue it.
¹⁶ The LORD has eyes for the just
and ears for their cry.

^e Sanctification: or holiness.

^f The cloud now became dark: the light which it ordinarily cast at night would now have been a help to the Egyptians; its present obscurity serves as a shield for the Israelites. However, the reading of the original text here is not quite certain.

^g Children: the customary term for students in Wisdom literature.

^a A sinner, even as my mother conceived me: literally, "In iniquity was I conceived," an instance of hyperbole: at no time was the psalmist ever without sin. Cf Psalm 88:15, "I am mortally afflicted since youth," i.e., I have always been afflicted. The verse does not imply that the sexual act of conception is sinful.

^b Hyssop: a small bush whose many woody twigs make a natural sprinkler. It was prescribed in the Mosaic law as an instrument for sprinkling sacrificial blood or lustral water for cleansing. Cf Exodus 12:22; Lev 14:4; Numbers 19:18.

^c For you do not desire sacrifice: the mere offering of the ritual sacrifice apart from good dispositions is not acceptable to God. Cf Psalm 50.

^d [19(20–21)] Most scholars think that these verses were added to the psalm some time after the destruction of the temple in 587 B.C. The verses assume that the rebuilt temple will be an ideal site for national reconciliation.

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- ¹⁷The LORD'S face is against evildoers
to wipe out their memory from the earth.
¹⁸When the just cry out, the LORD hears
and rescues them from all distress.
¹⁹The LORD is close to the brokenhearted,
saves those whose spirit is crushed.

Q6

Luke 1:46-55

- ⁴⁶And Mary said: ^a
"My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord;
⁴⁷my spirit rejoices in God my savior.
⁴⁸For he has looked upon his handmaid's lowliness;
behold, from now on will all ages call me blessed.
⁴⁹The Mighty One has done great things for me,
and holy is his name.
⁵⁰His mercy is from age to age
to those who fear him.
⁵¹He has shown might with his arm,
dispersed the arrogant of mind and heart.
⁵²He has thrown down the rulers from their thrones
but lifted up the lowly.
⁵³The hungry he has filled with good things;
the rich he has sent away empty.
⁵⁴He has helped Israel his servant,
remembering his mercy,
⁵⁵according to his promise to our fathers,
to Abraham and to his descendants forever."

Q7

Psalm 37:7

- ⁷Be still before the LORD;
wait for God.
Do not be provoked by the prosperous,
nor by malicious schemers.

^a [46–55] Although Mary is praised for being the mother of the Lord and because of her belief, she reacts as the servant in a psalm of praise, the Magnificat. Because there is no specific connection of the canticle to the context of Mary's pregnancy and her visit to Elizabeth, the Magnificat (with the possible exception of v 48) may have been a Jewish Christian hymn that Luke found appropriate at this point in his story. Even if not composed by Luke, it fits in well with themes found elsewhere in Luke: joy and exultation in the Lord; the lowly being singled out for God's favor; the reversal of human fortunes; the fulfillment of Old Testament promises. The loose connection between the hymn and the context is further seen in the fact that a few Old Latin manuscripts identify the speaker of the hymn as Elizabeth, even though the overwhelming textual evidence makes Mary the speaker.

Psalm 27:14

- ¹⁴Wait for the LORD, take courage;
be stouthearted, wait for the LORD!

Psalm 40:2

- ²I waited, waited for the LORD;
who bent down and heard my cry,

Psalm 62:2

- ²My soul rests in God alone,
from whom comes my salvation.

Isaiah 40:31

- ³¹They that hope in the LORD will renew their
strength,
they will soar as with eagles' wings;
They will run and not grow weary,
walk and not grow faint.

Lamentations 3:25-26

- ²⁵Good is the LORD to one who waits for him,
to the soul that seeks him;
²⁶It is good to hope in silence
for the saving help of the LORD.

Q9

Psalm 37:3

- ^{3b}Trust in the LORD and do good
that you may dwell in the land and live secure.

Psalm 37:9

- ⁹Those who do evil will be cut off,
but those who wait for the LORD will possess the
land.

Psalm 37:11

- ¹¹But the poor will possess the land,
will delight in great prosperity.

Psalm 37:29

- ²⁹The just will possess the land
and live in it forever.

Psalm 37:34

- ³⁴Wait eagerly for the LORD,
and keep to the way;
God will raise you to possess the land;
you will gloat when the wicked are cut off.

^b [3,9,11,22,27,29,34] The land: the promised land, Israel, which became for later interpreters a type or figure of heaven. Cf Hebrews 11:9–10,13–16. The New Testament Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3–12; Luke 6:20–26) have been influenced by the psalm, especially their total reversal of the present and their interpretation of the happy future as possession of the land.

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Genesis 12:1-7

¹The LORD said to Abram: "Go forth from the land of your kinsfolk and from your father's house to a land that I will show you.

²"I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you;

I will make your name great, so that you will be a blessing.

^{3 a}I will bless those who bless you and curse those who curse you.

All the communities of the earth shall find blessing in you."

⁴Abram went as the LORD directed him, and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he left Haran. ^{5 b}Abram took his wife Sarai, his brother's son Lot, all the possessions that they had accumulated, and the persons they had acquired in Haran, and they set out for the land of Canaan. When they came to the land of Canaan, ⁶Abram passed through the land as far as the sacred place at Shechem, by the terebinth of Moreh. (The Canaanites were then in the land.) ⁷The LORD appeared to Abram and said, "To your descendants I will give this land." So Abram built an altar there to the LORD who had appeared to him.

Isaiah 60:21

²¹Your people shall all be just, they shall always possess the land, They, the bud of my planting, my handiwork to show my glory.

Matthew 5:5

^{5 c}Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the land.

Q11

Psalm 49:8-10

^{8 d}One cannot redeem oneself,

a Shall find blessing in you: the sense of the Hebrew expression is probably reflexive, "shall bless themselves through you" (i.e., in giving a blessing they shall say, "May you be as blessed as Abraham"), rather than passive, "shall be blessed in you." Since the term is understood in a passive sense in the New Testament (Acts 3:25; Gal 3:8), it is rendered here by a neutral expression that admits of both meanings. So also in the blessings given by God to Isaac (Genesis 26:4) and Jacob (Genesis 28:14).

b Persons: slaves and retainers that formed the social aggregate under the leadership of Abraham; cf Genesis 14:14.

c Cf Psalm 37:11, "...the meek shall possess the land." In the psalm "the land" means the land of Palestine; here it means the kingdom.

d One cannot redeem oneself: an axiom. For the practice of redemption, cf Job 6:21-23. A play on the first Hebrew word of Psalm 49:8,16 relates the two verses.

pay to God a ransom.

⁹Too high the price to redeem a life; one would never have enough

¹⁰To stay alive forever and never see the pit.

Romans 3:24-26

²⁴They are justified freely by his grace through the redemption in Christ Jesus, ²⁵whom God set forth as an expiation, ^e through faith, by his blood, to prove his righteousness because of the forgiveness of sins previously committed, ²⁶through the forbearance of God—to prove his righteousness in the present time, that he might be righteous and justify the one who has faith in Jesus.

Ephesians 1:7-8

⁷In him we have redemption by his blood, the forgiveness of transgressions, in accord with the riches of his grace ⁸that he lavished upon us. In all wisdom and insight,

Q12

Psalm 49:14-15

¹⁴This is the destiny of those who trust in folly, the end of those so pleased with their wealth. Selah
¹⁵Like sheep they are herded into Sheol, where death will be their shepherd. Straight to the grave they descend, where their form will waste away, Sheol will be their palace.

Q13

Psalm 49:11-15

¹¹Anyone can see that the wisest die, the fool and the senseless pass away too, and must leave their wealth to others.
¹²Tombs are their homes forever, their dwellings through all generations, though they gave their names to their lands.
¹³For all their riches mortals do not abide; they perish like the beasts.

¹⁴This is the destiny of those who trust in folly, the end of those so pleased with their wealth. Selah
¹⁵Like sheep they are herded into Sheol, where death will be their shepherd. Straight to the grave they descend, where their form will waste away, Sheol will be their palace.

e Expiation: this rendering is preferable to "propitiation," which suggests hostility on the part of God toward sinners. As Paul will be at pains to point out (Romans 5:8-10), it is humanity that is hostile to God.

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Ecclesiastes 5:14

¹⁴ As he came forth from his mother's womb, so again shall he depart, naked as he came, having nothing from his labor that he can carry in his hand.

Sirach 11:18-19

¹⁸ A man may become rich through a miser's life, and this is his allotted reward:

¹⁹ ^a When he says: "I have found rest, now I will feast on my possessions," He does not know how long it will be till he dies and leaves them to others.

Q14

Psalms 49:21

²¹ For all their riches, if mortals do not have wisdom, they perish like the beasts.

Psalms 62:11

¹¹ Do not trust in extortion; in plunder put no empty hope. Though wealth increase, do not set your heart upon it.

Proverbs 3:13-14

¹³ ^b Happy the man who finds wisdom, the man who gains understanding!
¹⁴ For her profit is better than profit in silver, and better than gold is her revenue;

Matthew 6:33

³³ But seek first the kingdom (of God) and his righteousness, ^c and all these things will be given you besides.

Colossians 1:26-27

²⁶ the mystery hidden from ages and from generations past. But now it has been manifested to his holy ones, ²⁷ to whom God chose to make known the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; it is Christ in you, the hope for glory.

a Cf the parable of the rich man, Luke 12:16–21.

b [13–24] Wisdom, or understanding, is more valuable than silver and gold. Its fruit is long life, riches, honor and happiness (Prov 3:13–18). Even the creation of the universe and its adornment (Genesis 1) were not done without wisdom (Prov 3:19–20). It is the life of the soul and gives security in work and in repose (Prov 3:21–24).

c Righteousness: see the note on Matthew 3:14–15.

Q15

Luke 4:16-30

¹⁶ ^d He came to Nazareth, where he had grown up, and went according to his custom ^e into the synagogue on the sabbath day. He stood up to read ¹⁷ and was handed a scroll of the prophet Isaiah. He unrolled the scroll and found the passage where it was written:

¹⁸ "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, ^f because he has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, ¹⁹ and to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord."

²⁰ Rolling up the scroll, he handed it back to the attendant and sat down, and the eyes of all in the synagogue looked intently at him. ²¹ He said to them, "Today this scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing." ^g ²² And all spoke highly of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his mouth. They also asked, "Isn't this the son of Joseph?" ²³ He said to them, "Surely you will quote me this proverb, 'Physician, cure yourself,' and say, 'Do here in your native place the things that we heard were done in

d [16–30] Luke has transposed to the beginning of Jesus' ministry an incident from his Marcan source, which situated it near the end of the Galilean ministry (Mark 6:1–6a). In doing so, Luke turns the initial admiration (Luke 4:22) and subsequent rejection of Jesus (Luke 4:28–29) into a foreshadowing of the whole future ministry of Jesus. Moreover, the rejection of Jesus in his own hometown hints at the greater rejection of him by Israel (Acts 13:46).

e [16] According to his custom: Jesus' practice of regularly attending synagogue is carried on by the early Christians' practice of meeting in the temple (Acts 2:46; 3:1; 5:12).

f The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me: see the note on Luke 3:21–22. As this incident develops, Jesus is portrayed as a prophet whose ministry is compared to that of the prophets Elijah and Elisha. Prophetic anointings are known in first-century Palestinian Judaism from the Qumran literature that speaks of prophets as God's anointed ones. To bring glad tidings to the poor: more than any other gospel writer Luke is concerned with Jesus' attitude toward the economically and socially poor (see Luke 6:20,24; 12:16–21; 14:12–14; 16:19–26; 19:8). At times, the poor in Luke's gospel are associated with the downtrodden, the oppressed and afflicted, the forgotten and the neglected (Luke 4:18; 6:20–22; 7:22; 14:12–14), and it is they who accept Jesus' message of salvation.

g Today this scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing: this sermon inaugurates the time of fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy. Luke presents the ministry of Jesus as fulfilling Old Testament hopes and expectations (Luke 7:22); for Luke, even Jesus' suffering, death, and resurrection are done in fulfillment of the scriptures (Luke 24:25–27,44–46; Acts 3:18).

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Capernaum.”^a ²⁴ And he said, “Amen, I say to you, no prophet is accepted in his own native place. ²⁵ ^b Indeed, I tell you, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah when the sky was closed for three and a half years and a severe famine spread over the entire land. ²⁶ ^c It was to none of these that Elijah was sent, but only to a widow in Zarephath in the land of Sidon. ²⁷ Again, there were many lepers in Israel during the time of Elisha the prophet; yet not one of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian.” ²⁸ When the people in the synagogue heard this, they were all filled with fury. ²⁹ They rose up, drove him out of the town, and led him to the brow of the hill on which their town had been built, to hurl him down headlong. ³⁰ But he passed through the midst of them and went away.

a The things that we heard were done in Capernaum: Luke’s source for this incident reveals an awareness of an earlier ministry of Jesus in Capernaum that Luke has not yet made use of because of his transposition of this Nazareth episode to the beginning of Jesus’ Galilean ministry. It is possible that by use of the future tense you will quote me..., Jesus is being portrayed as a prophet.

b [25–26] The references to Elijah and Elisha serve several purposes in this episode: they emphasize Luke’s portrait of Jesus as a prophet like Elijah and Elisha; they help to explain why the initial admiration of the people turns to rejection; and they provide the scriptural justification for the future Christian mission to the Gentiles.

c A widow in Zarephath in the land of Sidon: like Naaman the Syrian in Luke 4:27, a non-Israelite becomes the object of the prophet’s ministry.

Luke 6:20-21

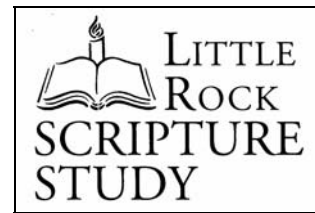
²⁰ ^d ^e And raising his eyes toward his disciples he said:

“Blessed are you who are poor,
for the kingdom of God is yours.

²¹ Blessed are you who are now hungry,
for you will be satisfied.

Blessed are you who are now weeping,
for you will laugh.

Church of the Holy Spirit



d [20–49] Luke’s “Sermon on the Plain” is the counterpart to Matthew’s “Sermon on the Mount” (Matthew 5:1–7:27). It is addressed to the disciples of Jesus, and, like the sermon in Matthew, it begins with beatitudes (Luke 6:20–22) and ends with the parable of the two houses (Luke 6:46–49). Almost all the words of Jesus reported by Luke are found in Matthew’s version, but because Matthew includes sayings that were related to specifically Jewish Christian problems (e.g., Matthew 5:17–20; 6:1–8, 16–18) that Luke did not find appropriate for his predominantly Gentile Christian audience, the “Sermon on the Mount” is considerably longer. Luke’s sermon may be outlined as follows: an introduction consisting of blessings and woes (Luke 6:20–26); the love of one’s enemies (Matthew 6:27–36); the demands of loving one’s neighbor (Luke 6:37–42); good deeds as proof of one’s goodness (Luke 6:43–45); a parable illustrating the result of listening to and acting on the words of Jesus (Luke 6:46–49). At the core of the sermon is Jesus’ teaching on the love of one’s enemies (Luke 6:27–36) that has as its source of motivation God’s graciousness and compassion for all humanity (Luke 6:35–36) and Jesus’ teaching on the love of one’s neighbor (Luke 6:37–42) that is characterized by forgiveness and generosity.

e [20–26] The introductory portion of the sermon consists of blessings and woes that address the real economic and social conditions of humanity (the poor—the rich; the hungry—the satisfied; those grieving—those laughing; the outcast—the socially acceptable). By contrast, Matthew emphasizes the religious and spiritual values of disciples in the kingdom inaugurated by Jesus (“poor in spirit,” Matthew 5:5; “hunger and thirst for righteousness,” Matthew 5:6). In the sermon, blessed extols the fortunate condition of persons who are favored with the blessings of God; the woes, addressed as they are to the disciples of Jesus, threaten God’s profound displeasure on those so blinded by their present fortunate situation that they do not recognize and appreciate the real values of God’s kingdom. In all the blessings and woes, the present condition of the persons addressed will be reversed in the future.