

## Psalm 51

CHARACTERS: Nathan, David, All

SETTING: bare stage

RUN TIME: 2 minutes/page

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Psalm 51

NATHAN: David wrote this Psalm after I, the prophet Nathan, came to him after he had committed adultery with Bathsheba.

V: Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love;

ALL: according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions.

V: Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin.

ALL: For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me.

V: Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight;

ALL: so you are right in your verdict and justified when you judge.

V: Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.

ALL: Yet you desired faithfulness even in the womb;

V: you taught me wisdom in that secret place.

ALL: Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean;

V: wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.

ALL: Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones you have crushed rejoice.

V: Hide your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquity.

ALL: Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.

V: Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me.

ALL: Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.

V: Then I will teach transgressors your ways, so that sinners will turn back to you.

ALL: Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God,

V: You who are God my Savior, and my tongue will sing of your righteousness.

ALL: Open my lips, Lord, and my mouth will declare your praise.

V: You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it;

ALL: you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings.

V: My sacrifice, O God, is a broken spirit;

ALL: a broken and contrite heart you, God, will not despise.

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## Psalm 52

CHARACTERS: David, Doeg, Asaph, All

SETTING: bare stage

RUN TIME: 2 minutes/page

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Psalm 52

V: For the director of music after Doeg the Edomite had gone to Saul and told him:

DOEG: David has gone to the house of Ahimelek.

V: Why do you boast of evil, you mighty hero? Why do you boast all day long, you who are a disgrace in the eyes of God?

ALL: You who practice deceit, your tongue plots destruction;

ASAPH: it is like a sharpened razor.

V: You love evil rather than good, falsehood rather than speaking the truth.

ALL: You love every harmful word, you deceitful tongue!

V: Surely God will bring you down to everlasting ruin:

ASAPH: He will snatch you up and pluck you from your tent;

ALL: he will uproot you from the land of the living.

ASAPH: The righteous will see and fear; they will laugh at you, saying,

V: Here now is the man who did not make God his stronghold but trusted in his great wealth and grew strong by destroying others!

ALL: But I am like an olive tree flourishing in the house of God;

V: I trust in God's unfailing love for ever and ever.

ALL: For what you have done I will always praise you in the presence of your faithful people.

V: I will hope in your name, for your name is good.

## Psalm 53

CHARACTERS: David, Fool, All

SETTING: bare stage

RUN TIME: 2 minutes/page

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Psalm 53

V: The fool says in his heart

FOOL: There is no God.

V: They are corrupt, and their ways are vile; there is no one who does good.

ALL: God looks down from heaven on all mankind

V: to see if there are any who understand,

ALL: any who seek God.

V: Everyone has turned away; all have become corrupt;

ALL: there is no one who does good, not even one.

V: Do all these evildoers know nothing?

ALL: They devour my people as though eating bread;

V: they never call on God.

ALL: But there they are, overwhelmed with dread, where there was nothing to dread.

V: God scattered the bones of those who attacked you;

ALL: you put them to shame, for God despised them.

## Psalm 54

CHARACTERS: David, All, Asaph

SETTING: bare stage

RUN TIME: 1 minute

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Psalm 54 (HCSB) Book 2

*Before you read: Read 1 Samuel 23:19-25. If you were David, how would you feel about being betrayed? Why did the Ziphites have to gain by snitching on David? What did they have to lose?*

ASAPH: David wrote this when the Ziphites had gone to Saul and said, "Is not David hiding among us?"

V: Save me, O God, by your name; vindicate me by your might.

ALL: Hear my prayer, O God; listen to the words of my mouth.

V: Arrogant foes are attacking me; ruthless people are trying to kill me—

ALL: people without regard for God.

V: Surely God is my help; the Lord is the one who sustains me.

ALL: Let evil recoil on those who slander me; in your faithfulness destroy them.

V: I will sacrifice a freewill offering to you; I will praise your name, Lord, for it is good.

ALL: You have delivered me from all my troubles, and my eyes have looked in triumph on my foes.

## Psalm 55

CHARACTERS: David, All

SETTING: bare stage

RUN TIME: 2 minutes/page

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Psalm 55

*Before you read: Check out 2 Samuel 3:17 -39. Could this Psalm be about Joab because he assassinated Abner in cold blood? (Joab was David's cousin and the commander of his army) If so, how will this change how David delivers his lines?*

V: Listen to my prayer, O God, do not ignore my plea;

ALL: hear me and answer me.

V: My thoughts trouble me and I am distraught because of what my enemy is saying,

ALL: because of the threats of the wicked;

V: for they bring down suffering on me and assail me in their anger.

ALL: My heart is in anguish within me; the terrors of death have fallen on me.

V: Fear and trembling have beset me; horror has overwhelmed me.

ALL: I said, "Oh, that I had the wings of a dove! I would fly away and be at rest.

V: I would flee far away and stay in the desert;

ALL: I would hurry to my place of shelter, far from the tempest and storm.

V: Lord, confuse the wicked, confound their words, for I see violence and strife in the city.

ALL: Day and night they prowl about on its walls; malice and abuse are within it.

V: Destructive forces are at work in the city; threats and lies never leave its streets.

ALL: If an enemy were insulting me, I could endure it;

V: a foe were rising against me, I could hide.

ALL: But it is you, a man like myself, my companion, my close friend,

V: with whom I once enjoyed sweet fellowship at the house of God, as we walked about among the worshipers.

ALL: Let death take my enemies by surprise;

V: let them go down alive to the realm of the dead, for evil finds lodging among them.

ALL: As for me, I call to God, and the Lord saves me.

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V: Evening, morning and noon I cry out in distress, and he hears my voice.

ALL: He rescues me unharmed from the battle waged against me, even though many oppose me.

V: God, who is enthroned from of old, who does not change— he will hear them and humble them, because they have no fear of God.

ALL: My companion attacks his friends; he violates his covenant.

V: His talk is smooth as butter, yet war is in his heart;

ALL: his words are more soothing than oil, yet they are drawn swords.

V: Cast your cares on the Lord and he will sustain you;

ALL: he will never let the righteous be shaken.

V: But you, God, will bring down the wicked into the pit of decay;

ALL: the bloodthirsty and deceitful will not live out half their days.

V: But as for me, I trust in you.

## Psalm 56

CHARACTERS: David, All, Asaph

SETTING: bare stage

RUN TIME: 2 minutes/page

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Psalm 56, 1 Samuel 21:10-15

*Before you read: Read 1 Samuel 21:10-15. How will David's acting like a madman influence how his lines are read?*

ASAPH: David wrote this Psalm when the Philistines had seized him in Gath after he fled from Saul.

V: Be merciful to me, my God, for my enemies are in hot pursuit; all day long they press their attack.

ALL: My adversaries pursue me all day long; in their pride many are attacking me.

V: When I am afraid, I put my trust in you. In God, whose word I praise—

ALL: in God I trust and am not afraid. What can mere mortals do to me?

V: All day long they twist my words; all their schemes are for my ruin.

ALL: They conspire, they lurk, they watch my steps, hoping to take my life.

V: Because of their wickedness do not let them escape;

ALL: in your anger, God, bring the nations down.

V: Record my misery; list my tears on your scroll— are they not in your record?

ALL: Then my enemies will turn back when I call for help.

ALL: By this I will know that God is for me.

V: In God, whose word I praise, in the Lord, whose word I praise—

ALL: I trust and am not afraid. What can man do to me?

V: I am under vows to you, my God; I will present my thank offerings to you.

ALL: For you have delivered me from death and my feet from stumbling,

V: that I may walk before God in the light of life.

## Psalm 57

CHARACTERS: Asaph, David, All

SETTING: bare stage

RUN TIME: 2 minutes/page

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Psalm 57

*Before you read: Read 1 Samuel 22:1-2. Before the second read through, read 1 Samuel 24. David hid in a cave both times. How would the reading be different depending on which incident David wrote this Psalm in response to? Which incident do you think preceded the penning of this Psalm? Why? Daniel was thrown into a den of lions (Daniel 6). If he had access to this Psalm, which verse do you think brought him comfort?*

ASAPH: David wrote this Psalm when he had fled from Saul into the cave.

V: Have mercy on me, my God, have mercy on me, for in you I take refuge.

ALL: I will take refuge in the shadow of your wings until the disaster has passed.

V: I cry out to God Most High, to God, who vindicates me.

ALL: He sends from heaven and saves me, rebuking those who hotly pursue me—

V: God sends forth his love and his faithfulness.

ALL: I am in the midst of lions; I am forced to dwell among ravenous beasts—

V: men whose teeth are spears and arrows, whose tongues are sharp swords.

ALL: Be exalted, O God, above the heavens; let your glory be over all the earth.

V: They spread a net for my feet— I was bowed down in distress.

ALL: They dug a pit in my path— but they have fallen into it themselves.

V: My heart, O God, is steadfast, my heart is steadfast;

ALL: I will sing and make music.

V: Awake, my soul! Awake, harp and lyre! I will awaken the dawn.

ALL: I will praise you, Lord, among the nations; I will sing of you among the peoples.

V: For great is your love, reaching to the heavens; your faithfulness reaches to the skies.

ALL: Be exalted, O God, above the heavens; let your glory be over all the earth.



## Psalm 58

CHARACTERS:

SETTING: bare stage

RUN TIME: 2 minutes/page

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Psalm 58

V: Do you rulers indeed speak justly? Do you judge people with equity?

ALL: No, in your heart you devise injustice, and your hands mete out violence on the earth.

V: Even from birth the wicked go astray; from the womb they are wayward, spreading lies.

ALL: Their venom is like the venom of a snake,

V: like that of a cobra that has stopped its ears,

ALL: that will not heed the tune of the charmer, however skillful the enchanter may be.

V: Break the teeth in their mouths, O God;

ALL: Lord, tear out the fangs of those lions!

V: Let them vanish like water that flows away;

ALL: when they draw the bow, let their arrows fall short.

V: May they be like a slug that melts away as it moves along,

ALL: like a stillborn child that never sees the sun.

V: Before your pots can feel the heat of the thorns—

ALL: whether they be green or dry—the wicked will be swept away.

V: The righteous will be glad when they are avenged,

ALL: when they dip their feet in the blood of the wicked.

V: Then people will say,

ALL: Surely the righteous still are rewarded; surely there is a God who judges the earth.

## Psalm 59

CHARACTERS: Asaph, David, All, Traitor

SETTING: bare stage

RUN TIME: 2 minutes/page

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Psalm 59

ASAPH: David wrote this Psalm after Saul had sent men to watch David's house in order to kill him.

V: Deliver me from my enemies, O God;

ALL: be my fortress against those who are attacking me.

V: Deliver me from evildoers and save me from those who are after my blood.

ALL: See how they lie in wait for me!

V: Fierce men conspire against me for no offense or sin of mine, Lord. I have done no wrong,

ALL: yet they are ready to attack me. Arise to help me; look on my plight!

ASAPH: You, Lord God Almighty, rouse yourself to punish all the nations;

ALL: show no mercy to wicked traitors.

V: They return at evening, snarling like dogs, and prowl about the city.

ALL: See what they spew from their mouths—

V: the words from their lips are sharp as swords, and they think,

TRAITOR: Who can hear us?

ALL: But you laugh at them, Lord; you scoff at all those nations.

V: You are my strength, I watch for you;

ALL: You, God, are my fortress, my God on whom I can rely.

V: God will go before me and will let me gloat over those who slander me.

ALL: But do not kill them, Lord our shield, or my people will forget.

ASAPH: In your might uproot them and bring them down.

ALL: For the sins of their mouths, for the words of their lips,

V: Let them be caught in their pride.

ALL: For the curses and lies they utter, consume them in your wrath,

ASAPH: Consume them till they are no more.

V: Then it will be known to the ends of the earth that God rules

ALL: They return at evening, snarling like dogs, and prowl about the city.

ASAPH: They wander about for food and howl if not satisfied.

V: But I will sing of your strength, in the morning I will sing of your love;

ALL: for you are my fortress, my refuge in times of trouble.

V: You are my strength; I sing praise to you;

ALL: You, God, are my fortress, my God on whom I can rely.