

# SONGS FOR ALL SEASONS FROM THE PSALMS

## The Significance of Songs Selected Scriptures



### LET'S BEGIN HERE

The Bible is chock full of songs. Songs of celebration and sorrow. Songs of magnificent victory and quiet reflection. Songs of thanksgiving, of praise, of dedication, as well as songs of disappointment and grief. Down through the centuries of the illustrious history of the Hebrews, songs were used to unify and rally those whose hearts overflowed with joy. The songs didn't cease when Messiah came—in fact, they intensified! From His birth until His final hours, songs rang out. Just before Jesus and His disciples left the Upper Room, they sang a hymn (Matthew 26:30). We Christians continue the tradition and have done so for almost twenty centuries. This message will take a quick safari through Scripture, discovering just how significant songs have been throughout time.



### LET'S DIG DEEPER

#### 1. The Constant Presence of Songs

In the beginning, God created the foundations of the earth and “the morning stars sang together and all the angels shouted for joy” (Job 38:7). At the voice of God in creation, the stars and angels sang to Him. And it was very good!

Long before Adam drew his first breath, the angelic hosts assembled to sing praises to the Creator of heaven and earth. And long after earth passes away and God ushers in His new creation, all heaven will still be singing—singing a new song to the Savior of the world (Revelation 5:9–12).

From beginning to end, creation to re-creation, music fills God's story. The Bible is replete with salvation's songs, showing us that the Lord's people are a singing people. The instinct of faith is to sing, and God's people have long shared their faith, privately and corporately, through song.



### Quotable

*Are you waiting  
for a great  
voice before  
you sing?  
God hears  
your heart.*

*So sing!*

—Charles R. Swindoll



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# SONGS FOR ALL SEASONS FROM THE PSALMS

## The Significance of Songs *Selected Scriptures*

### 2. A Brief Biblical Survey

With the introduction of Jubal (Genesis 4:21), the ancient father of musicians, a line of musical tradition commenced that runs throughout Scripture. The first to play string and wind instruments, Jubal passed along his talent to all music makers to come. In Exodus 15, we hear echoes of an ancient song of gratitude for the Lord's deliverance of Israel from Pharaoh's army.

But the glory days of Hebrew song didn't begin until David picked up his harp. From his days as a shepherd tending his father's flock to his reign as king over Israel, David composed a body of hymns that make up the bulk of Israel's hymnbook, the Psalms. In Israel, King David assigned the temple musicians with their duties as they led God's people in worship (1 Chronicles 25). David's son Solomon assumed the role as king and chief songwriter for temple worship. Solomon alone composed more than one thousand songs (1 Kings 4:32)!

Though creation began with a joyful chorus, the Old Testament ends with a warning of judgment (Malachi 1–4) and a deafening silence from heaven. As the curtain closed on the Old Testament, the mood was dark and the strains of faith, hope, and joy were replaced with silence and shadows.

As God lifted the curtain in the New Testament, music again filled creation. After Gabriel's announcement that Mary would give birth to the Christ, the young girl sang a song of praise to the Lord (Luke 1:46–55). As God ushered Messiah onto center stage, the angels again sang a joyous song (2:14). All the way through Messiah's ministry, even to His last meal with His disciples, Jesus sang (Matthew 26:30). And the New Testament closes with a finale of eternal praise to the Lord (Revelation 5:13).



#### A CLOSER LOOK

##### *No Joy, No Song*

When the people of Judah were exiled to Babylon in 586 BC, they lost more than their access to the Promised Land. They also lost their joy. Under the torments of their captors, God's people mourned the lack of God's blessing in their lives. They wondered how they could sing songs of praise for the land God had given them—the memory of that place was just too painful for a people in a foreign land and under God's judgment (Psalm 137:4). The question remains a potent one today. The Bible refers to people of faith as strangers in search of a better, heavenly country (Hebrews 11:13–16). We, like those exiles of old, sometimes mourn what could have been if our sin had not tainted God's creation. We must remember, however, that our hope is in God and in the redeemed world to come—a truth that remains vibrant even when the songs stick in our throats.



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# SONGS FOR ALL SEASONS FROM THE PSALMS

## The Significance of Songs *Selected Scriptures*



### LET'S LIVE IT

God's revelation begins and ends with a song. And we are encouraged to sing of Him and His marvelous grace, not only to each other but to the people of the world. You cannot read the Bible without developing a profound appreciation for the gift of song to the experience of faith.

Three principles emerge for us to consider as we embark on our study of six favorite psalms.

1. **Since the beginning, songs have been present and blessed of God.**  
*Challenge:* We're to be sensitive to them! As we sing, we must also think, worship, celebrate, learn, and listen to the Lord.
2. **The purpose of songs has always been wide and varied.**  
*Challenge:* Broaden your taste! Christianity is not just a verbal faith!
3. **God loves songs—He reserved the longest book in His Word for songs.**  
*Challenge:* We must become students of His songbook of hymns!

What is your song today—a song of joy, a song of sadness, a song of praise, a song of gratitude? Will you turn your song into a prayer to our gracious God?



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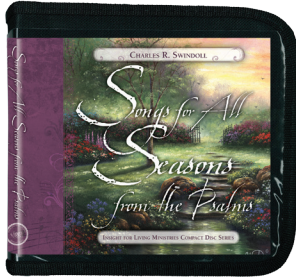
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# SONGS FOR ALL SEASONS FROM THE PSALMS

The Significance of Songs  
*Selected Scriptures*



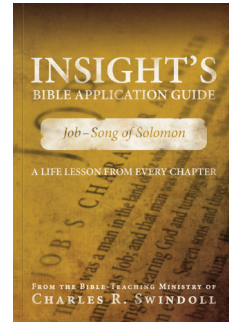
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# SONGS FOR ALL SEASONS FROM THE PSALMS

## A Song of Single-Mindedness

### Psalm 1



#### LET'S BEGIN HERE

Among all the books of antiquity, none has touched the human heart more profoundly than the *Psalms*. The title in the Hebrew Bible is *Tehillim*, which means “praises.” This title clearly reflects the prevailing theme of 150 inspired songs. With intense passion, the psalmists composed lyrics that reflect the full spectrum of emotions . . . from the soaring heights of ecstasy to the dregs of despair and grief. From the joys of forgiveness, gratitude, celebration, and triumph to the opposite extremes of shame, fear, disappointment, and defeat. Amazingly, there is a psalm for nearly every mood and circumstance. Small wonder the psalms have found lodging in the lives of peasants and kings, patriots and traitors, presidents and prisoners, scholars and children, sinners and saints.

The first psalm extols the virtues of single-mindedness by emphasizing the danger of compromise. The godly life is placed in bold contrast to the ungodly . . . one leading to true happiness and the other to tragic destruction. Single-mindedness keeps the believer on the right track.



#### LET'S DIG DEEPER

##### 1. Our Age-Old Struggle

Before we plunge into the psalm, let's understand that it addresses one of our longtime battles in life: *our tendency to compromise with wrong*, which is seldom a quick plunge. More often, it's a slow, quiet, unnoticeable erosion. So what's the solution? To remain single-minded, focused. To refuse the tendency to rationalize and overlook even the first seeds of sin that drop into the soil of our lives.

As we open the Lord's songbook, a wonderful word greets us: *blessed*. “How blessed is the man” begins the lyric in Psalm 1. This simple word invites us into the book of Psalms and lays out the only two paths we can take in life: the path of righteousness or the path of wickedness.



#### Quotable

*We are  
to remain  
God-centered  
and God-focused.*

*He is to  
remain the hub  
of our hearts.*

— Charles R. Swindoll



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# SONGS FOR ALL SEASONS FROM THE PSALMS

## A Song of Single-Mindedness

### *Psalm 1*

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#### 2. The Life of the Godly (Psalm 1:1–3)

As we journey into this wisdom psalm, we discover that it contrasts the godly (blessed) and the ungodly (wicked). The *godly* are those who live in right relationship with God through faith. The godly love the Lord and His way and have made an unswerving commitment to live by God's Word. The *ungodly*, or "wicked," on the other hand, reject the Lord and His righteous decrees and live as if God didn't exist at all.

In verse 1, the psalmist began by explaining that God blesses the godly for what they *don't* do: they don't walk in wicked counsel, stand with sinners, or sit with scoffers. In these three lines, the psalmist used a form of parallelism that intensifies the level of involvement with the ungodly, from casual involvement to actively conspiring with the ungodly. God blesses the godly for steering clear of even casual involvement with the wicked.

In verse 2, the psalmist emphasized two elements of the godly life: the godly delight in God's Law and meditate on it at all times. The godly flood their minds with the living words of Scripture; they read, memorize, and apply God's Word each day.

In verse 3, the psalmist likened the godly to a flourishing tree with roots digging down into the soil of Scripture, nourished by a thriving relationship with God. Even in old age, the godly person who has invested his or her life in what is eternal will still bear fruit for God.

#### 3. The Life of the Ungodly (Psalm 1:4–6)

The last half of Psalm 1 paints the grim portrait of the life lived apart from God. The ungodly are like chaff with no roots, no value, no eternal contribution (Psalm 1:4). They float from one fleeting pursuit to another and eventually blow away.

The ungodly may have some material success, but they won't experience genuine, lasting fulfillment. And those who turn their backs on God will face judgment in the life hereafter.



# SONGS FOR ALL SEASONS FROM THE PSALMS

## A Song of Single-Mindedness

### *Psalm 1*



#### A CLOSER LOOK

##### *A Godly Mind-set*

The descent into fruitlessness doesn't happen all at once. It takes place slowly, one step and one decision at a time. Watch the progression in Psalm 1. Walking day after day in wicked patterns will lead to standing still. And the longer we stand for sin in our lives, the more useless we'll become—like a dried up vine in parched soil. On the other hand, we can live a thriving, fruitful life by following God's ways. And it all begins in our minds. As we read, study, pray, and memorize God's Word, He will begin to renew our minds. As we sink our roots down deep in biblical soil, our actions and attitudes will begin to bear evidence of the Holy Spirit's presence in our lives. Like a strong oak tree, we will be prepared to withstand the trials and temptations that will come our way.



#### LET'S LIVE IT

What is the message of Psalm 1 in a nutshell? *Multiplied happiness comes from being single-mindedly committed to the Lord.* Genuine happiness comes from wise, God-centered living. Have you been on a lifelong search for happiness? Listen to the psalmist. He has pointed all of us to God's Word to find the key to a blessed life. Following God's plan leads to blessedness, no matter the circumstances.

**Which of your attitudes, priorities, actions, or feelings do not honor the Lord? How much time do you spend meditating on God's Word?**



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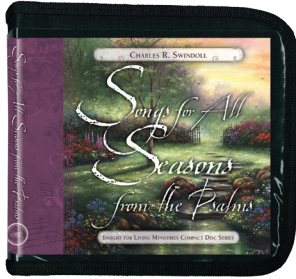
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A Song of Single-Mindedness

*Psalm 1*



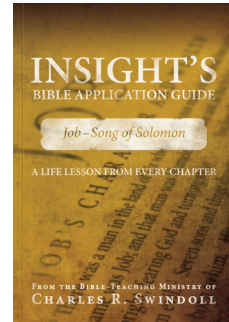
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# SONGS FOR ALL SEASONS FROM THE PSALMS

## A Song for Times of Crisis

### Psalm 13



#### LET'S BEGIN HERE

Who hasn't felt alone and abandoned? Who cannot remember times when God seemed far away? Who doesn't understand when a friend suffers a "panic attack"? Who hasn't asked, "O Lord, how long?" If those four questions strike a note of relevance, you'll have no difficulty identifying with David's feelings as he composed Psalm 13. Appropriately identified by serious students of the Psalms as a psalm of lament, it was conceived in the womb of woe. But, as we shall see, all was not lost. The psalmist may have begun on his face, but he wound up on his feet. Let's find out what made the difference.



#### LET'S DIG DEEPER

##### 1. The Background: Why the Lament?

As we begin examining this psalm, it doesn't take long before we sense in David despondency or depression. Maybe that is why many are drawn to this and other psalms on our blue days. In Psalm 13, David felt forgotten, invisible to God's all-seeing eyes, and we wonder why. Unfortunately, the background of this psalm remains a mystery. We do know, however, that some of David's darkest days came before he took the throne of Israel. God used trials to shape David into a man of spiritual maturity and inner strength and to prepare David for the immense task of leading Israel.

Perhaps David wrote Psalm 13 at the apex of Saul's threats. In 1 Samuel 18, David had just killed Goliath, the Philistine prize-fighter, and had become the hero of Israel. As a result, the people started singing David's praises, and his popularity surpassed Saul's. King Saul's jealousy bubbled until it boiled over, and he set his mind on murdering David (1 Samuel 18:9–15). From that time on, David was the object of Saul's diabolical plan. Though innocent before God and loyal to King Saul, David had to run for his life, hiding in the hills of Judah like an animal.



#### Quotable

*One of the  
quickest ways  
to complicate  
a mess is to  
jump in with  
both feet and  
try to do it all  
without God.*

— Charles R. Swindoll



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# SONGS FOR ALL SEASONS FROM THE PSALMS

## A Song for Times of Crisis

### *Psalm 13*

#### 2. The Experience: How Did David React? (Psalm 13:1–6)

Psalm 13 records David's raw feelings of depression. Hunted and haunted by the madman Saul, David must have entertained doubts at times. David surely must have mentally replayed his experience before the prophet Samuel as oil ran down his face. Here was the king-elect living like a beast, running for his life. Imagine David slumped beside some bushes, hidden beside a boulder on a lonely mountain, dirty and exhausted, wondering if the chase would ever end.

In the first two verses, David fell on his face and wondered: *Has God completely forgotten me? Does He even care anymore? Will I have to take things into my own hands? Should I deal with my enemies instead of waiting for God?*

In verses 3 and 4, David got up on his knees and lifted his eyes to heaven. David remembered that though he *felt* like God had abandoned him, he *knew* that the Lord was near. David expected God to act and to protect His anointed king. The psalmist realized that he needed to view life from God's perspective if he wanted to make it through his trials.

In the third section, verses 5 and 6, David not only lifted his eyes to heaven, he lifted his heart to heaven as well. Even though Saul was still on the prowl and death pursued David throughout the Judean wilderness, David chose to praise the Lord and trust in His abundant grace.



#### A CLOSER LOOK

##### *A Prayer of Desperation*

"How long, O Lord, will you ignore me? My heart is broken, and my body is about to give out. Come quickly, O Lord, and help me!" How many times have we prayed this kind of prayer? Though we plead, sometimes God's answer comes to us slowly. For years, David sought God's deliverance while he ran from King Saul. Though David nearly capsized in a sea of fear, God did protect David. And not only that, but the Lord used Saul's threats to humble David and prepare him to rule over Israel. When we face devastating sorrow or debilitating fear, let's remember the Lord is trying to draw us to Him and develop our faith. Though He may seem far away, our God will never forget or forsake us. Through the pain God allows in our lives, He will develop our maturity and deepen our faith so we can handle the tasks He plans to give us.



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# SONGS FOR ALL SEASONS FROM THE PSALMS

A Song for Times of Crisis

*Psalms 13*



## LET'S LIVE IT

Now that we have examined Psalm 13, what lingering lessons can we apply to our lives? This song teaches us that God designs our trials specifically for us, not for our surroundings. The Lord wishes to train us and mold us, and He uses the distressing circumstances of life as His tools. In doing so, He deals bountifully with us.

What trials have challenged your faith? Did they draw you closer to God or push you further away from Him? How have you matured through your trials?



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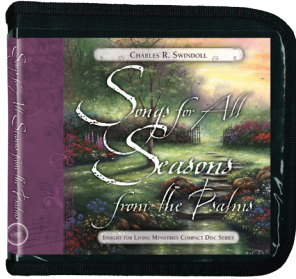
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A Song for Times of Crisis

*Psalms 13*



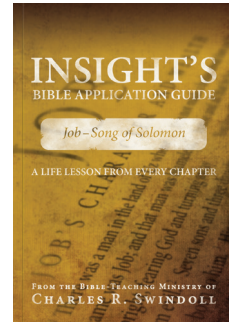
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# SONGS FOR ALL SEASONS FROM THE PSALMS

## A Song of Sovereignty

### Psalm 46



#### LET'S BEGIN HERE

Ever felt the ground move under your feet? Know what it's like to pitch from side to side in a small boat on strong seas? While some people could answer Yes! to both questions, most of us only imagine such experiences.

Still, sooner or later we all face trials that take on cataclysmic proportions. Left unchecked, fear runs its course and has a way of bringing us to a point of helplessness. If you've felt the pinch of life's uncertainty or if you're stuck between a rock and a hard place, then Psalm 46 is for you.

This psalm provides help for the helpless. No matter how bad life may seem, God is in control. And because He's sovereign, He's a perfect refuge and place to hide when life comes unglued.

Why is God's sovereignty such a help to us? We'll see in Psalm 46 how the Lord's sovereign power puts our fears to rest and instills triumphant confidence.



#### LET'S DIG DEEPER

##### 1. What Is Sovereignty?

God's sovereignty is His supreme authority in the universe. He reigns with absolute control over every event and individual (Daniel 4:17, 25, 35; 1 Timothy 6:15). Several of God's attributes contribute to His sovereignty: His *omniscience* means that He knows everything, and He has unlimited understanding and wisdom. His *omnipotence* gives Him complete power to do whatever He wishes. His *omnipresence* means that no place or person escapes His notice or stands outside His reach. And His *eternal nature* makes Him unbounded by any time constraints. All of these attributes contribute to His sovereignty.

Though God's sovereignty weaves its way through His dealings with creation, the word rarely appears in Scripture. One instance, in Psalm 103:19, proves that nothing takes God by surprise. He does everything according to His own will (Psalm 115:3; Ephesians 1:11).



#### Quotable

*Not sure about  
the future?*

*Welcome to  
the club. But*

*this much we  
know for certain:*

*God is sovereign.*

— Charles R. Swindoll



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# SONGS FOR ALL SEASONS FROM THE PSALMS

## A Song of Sovereignty

### *Psalm 46*

God is perfectly holy, in total control, and therefore completely reliable. That's sovereignty. That's God! And that's the foundation on which Psalm 46 stands.

## 2. The Sovereign God Delivers Us (Psalm 46:1–11)

Psalm 46 begins with a confession of trust in our strong God, which the second and third stanzas echo in two affirming refrains (Psalm 46:7, 11). Psalm 46 opens and closes focused on our sovereign God—the only one able to help in times of trouble.

The first three verses of this psalm show that God not only provides perfect protection in a calamity, but He also gives us the inner strength necessary to endure life's most daunting odds. In those times, we shouldn't fear because God shelters us, strengthens us, and stays close to us.

Psalm 46:4–7 continues the theme of relying on God's strong presence. This stanza zooms in on Jerusalem, the city of God, which represents those who live in covenant relationship with Him. For the people of faith, God's presence brings comfort amid the darkest of circumstances.

The closing verses, Psalm 46:8–11, urge believers to look at and ponder what God has done and will do. As God's people review His faithful acts, they find evidence of His care, protection, and sovereign control. The “destruction” mentioned in verse 8 refers to God's righteous judgment against people who perpetuate evil, violence, and war. One day, the Lord will destroy every evil foe, along with their weapons of warfare, and bring lasting peace to the world. As a result of God's sovereign justice and love, we can be quiet and let God be God! The Lord commands heaven's mighty army, and one day all nations and all people will give Him due honor.



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# SONGS FOR ALL SEASONS FROM THE PSALMS

## A Song of Sovereignty

### Psalm 46



#### A CLOSER LOOK

##### *Letting Go of Fear*

Fear grips and guides many in these uncertain times. The twentieth century celebrated the progress of humanity resulting from our own rational and scientific giftedness. The twenty-first century has seen that dream fail in disastrous conflicts and loss of true community. Today's people see little we can rely upon. This modern-day condition creates a perfect opportunity for truths such as we see in Psalm 46. When our world is in upheaval, we have Someone we can rely upon. God is still in heaven. He has retained His power and strength. And He remains deeply engaged with His creation. Because our refuge is in God, the One to whom we can run in terrible times, we can set fear aside. Let us not be afraid of governments or disease or neighbors. Instead, just as God is a strong refuge, let us be a people of strength, a people who offer refuge to others in a world turned upside down.



#### LET'S LIVE IT

Tired of striving? Concerned about the future? Great! You're right where God wants you. Are you ready to trust His sovereignty and accept His help and His strength? Sometimes He allows us to get to the end of our rope, so we discover that He's what we have needed all along.

**What battles are you facing right now? Do fear, anxiety, and worry hinder you from experiencing God's blessing? How?**



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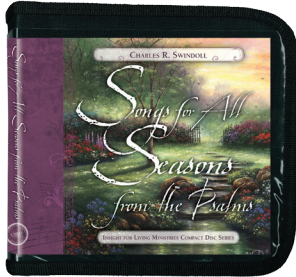
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A Song of Sovereignty

*Psalm 46*



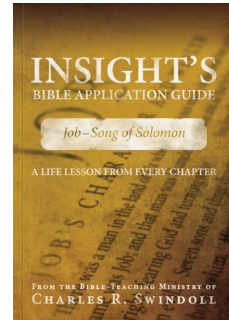
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MM04

# SONGS FOR ALL SEASONS FROM THE PSALMS

## Two Songs for Moms and Dads

*Psalms 127–128*



### LET'S BEGIN HERE

Let's face it. Families today are in trouble. Our society used to honor values like faithfulness, honesty, integrity, moral purity, and kindness. Now, however, our society seems indifferent, even hostile, to the mainstays that once promised stability.

To make matters worse, most families spend little time actually *being* a family. The race to keep pace with technology, the pressure to take part in every extracurricular activity, and the drive to possess more stuff all splinter valuable hours for investing in what matters most at home.

No matter the endeavor, without God as our guide, we'll eventually veer off course and end up lost at sea like ships with faulty rudders. We need God to correct our course.

Psalms 127 and 128 provide the encouragement we need to put the Lord at the helm of our families, and they show that blessings come if we keep Him at the center of our lives and endeavors.



### LET'S DIG DEEPER

#### 1. A Quick 'n' Dirty Analysis

It's no surprising revelation to anyone when this statement is made: "Today's family is in trouble." But let's refrain from pointing fingers. No perfect family exists because no perfect person exists. No matter how good and committed and dedicated we may be, we're fallen creatures, and we give birth to fallen creatures. The pollution that invaded creation when Adam and Eve disobeyed God in the garden has corrupted every person and every family.

Even though our society is advancing with ever-increasing high-tech gadgets and state-of-the-art medical techniques, deep within the human heart the most profound evil resides. But in spite of our polluted hearts—our sin nature—God's Word and His grace change us. As we put His truth into action by the power of the Spirit, God makes us better wives, husbands, and parents.



### Quotable

*Children are  
not tax deductions.*

*They're not  
interruptions.*

*They are gifts.*

*They are  
God's reward.*

— Charles R. Swindoll



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# SONGS FOR ALL SEASONS FROM THE PSALMS

## Two Songs for Moms and Dads

### *Psalms 127–128*

Psalms 127 and 128 paint a lovely mural covering one scene of the home after another. Each psalm represents a progression of family life as time unfolds, as life is lived with one another, as God views each stage of family life.

#### **2. A Divinely Provided Progression (Psalms 127–128)**

King Solomon opened Psalm 127 with a warning. If God is not guiding each endeavor, our efforts have little or no value. God must remain the essential factor in each life-stage, from singleness to marriage to parenting. Without Him, happiness and security are mirages. The Lord graciously superintends and gives prosperity and protection. To deny Him access to family life is to forfeit His blessing and invite disaster.

In the busyness of starting a family, it's easy to lose sight of what really matters: our relationship with God. In the early years of marriage and parenting, we allow crazy schedules to crowd out our time with the Lord. And once God loses His place in our daily routines, survival eventually becomes the dominant mode.

In response to our efforts at self-sufficiency, God gives the quiet miracle of new life: children. Children are a gift and a reward—they come from Him and reveal His generous blessing. When we raise our kids with this awareness, we honor the Lord. And when we raise them to become godly adults, we pass along the heritage of blessing to the next generation.

In Psalm 128, Solomon showed us the responsibilities we must embrace as a family in order to partake of God's blessings—we must fear the Lord and walk in His ways (Psalm 128:1). The Lord's blessing first comes in a profound satisfaction in our work and in God's provision for our families. As we teach our kids to respond with gratitude to God's grace and provision, their faith will flourish.

As each family obeys the Lord and receives His blessing, each family will reap the reward of faithfulness! Parents find fulfillment as the source of love and nurture (the vine), and kids, full of promise and potential (olive shoots), learn to walk faithfully with God.



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# SONGS FOR ALL SEASONS FROM THE PSALMS

## Two Songs for Moms and Dads

*Psalms 127–128*



### A CLOSER LOOK

#### *Worry or Blessing?*

Psalm 127 contrasts the anxieties of life (Psalm 127:1–2) with the blessings of life (127:3–5). Those who love life and give life to others will find themselves surrounded by gifts—their children. While many today do desire and yearn for children, it has become increasingly common for couples—even Christian couples—to choose to remain childless. Such a choice, when made despite good health and reproductive ability, is akin to becoming a fruit tree that bears no fruit. It denies the nature that God gave us at creation—not to mention His command to humanity to be fruitful and multiply (Genesis 1:28). Our commitment to have children in the context of marriage mirrors our confession of new life in Jesus. When physically capable couples affirm life by giving it, they also affirm their commitment to others outside of themselves—a commitment that stands at the very heart of our Christian faith (Matthew 22:39).



### LET'S LIVE IT

Getting our families back on course takes some reflection. The psalmists wanted us to examine the place God holds in our individual lives and in the everyday lives of our families. Take some time right now to reflect on both areas, getting as accurate a picture as you can.

#### Priority 1: Your God

Is the Lord your first priority? Do you have a healthy fear of Him? Do you have established times of prayer and meditation on His Word? Does He take first place in your career; your ministry; your political, financial, and social decisions?

#### Priority 2: Your Family

How is your relationship with your spouse? Does your husband or wife receive the time and care he or she needs and deserves? Do you pray together? What about your kids? Do you invest time in their lives so they'll reverence the Lord and walk in His ways when they're grown? Are you committed to regular church involvement with your entire family?

**Are you trying to bless yourself, or are you allowing the Lord to bless you and your family?**



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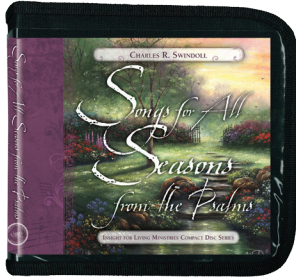
# SONGS FOR ALL SEASONS FROM THE PSALMS

Two Songs for Moms and Dads

*Psalms 127–128*



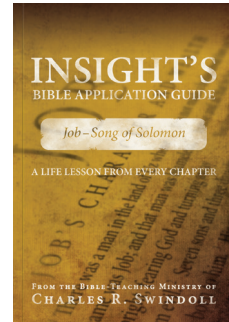
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# SONGS FOR ALL SEASONS FROM THE PSALMS

## A Song of Reassurance

### Psalm 139



#### LET'S BEGIN HERE

How fitting that our study in God's songbook should end on the high note of Psalm 139! This psalm celebrates God as the omniscient and omnipresent Lord, the Creator-God, and the Holy One. But the psalmist, David, didn't praise God for merely abstract qualities—he saw the nearness and personal love of the almighty God.

So many people today desperately need to hear that the God of Scripture is a personal, loving, caring God. So many forces conspire to make us feel unseen, unimportant, insignificant, and uncared for. Technology separates us from the human voice and human touch. Busyness erodes our relationships, stealing the time we need to really know and be known by those we love.

While our impersonal world makes us wonder if we really matter, Psalm 139 tells us that we *do* matter—we matter to God. The Lord watches over us intently, He probes the deepest recesses of our hearts, and His love always reaches us no matter how far we stray. As we prepare to learn this last song in our study, let's quiet our minds and silence the messages from the world that tell us we don't matter. Let's join David and listen to God's truth instead, resting and delighting in His care.



#### LET'S DIG DEEPER

##### 1. One of Today's Most Pressing Struggles

In a world that demands perfection on the athletic field, in the business world, and in every area of pursuit, one mistake can leave us feeling rejected, worthless, and *insignificant*. Psalm 139, however, gives us courage because it cancels out the negative public opinions that clamor for our attention and bring us down. Psalm 139 declares that we are *not insignificant* but *deeply loved* by God.



#### Quotable

*God closes off  
all the escape  
routes and then  
puts His hand  
on us in our  
inescapable  
situations.  
That's a  
good thing.*

—Charles R. Swindoll



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# SONGS FOR ALL SEASONS FROM THE PSALMS

## A Song of Reassurance

### Psalm 139

#### 2. Four of Today's Most-Often-Asked Questions (Psalm 139:1–24)

Though no one knows for certain when or why David wrote this psalm, he obviously needed reassurance that God recognized David's devotion. The psalmist put his thoughts into four stanzas of six verses each that flow seamlessly together. These four stanzas communicate four questions that all human beings ask at least once in their lifetimes.

1. **How well does God know me? (Psalm 139:1–6)** This question addresses the problem of identity. When we feel insignificant and struggle with our identity, we can find reassurance in how closely God pays attention to us and how well He knows us. David answered this question by saying, *God is all-seeing and all-knowing*.
2. **How close is God to me? (139:7–12)** This question reveals the problem of loneliness. When we feel lonely and unsure of God's nearness, we will find in these verses that *God is always present*. He cares deeply for us.
3. **How carefully has God made me? (139:13–18)** This question speaks to the problem of self-image. When our self-image suffers from unkind comparisons, we can take comfort in how carefully God made each one of us. *God is truly all-creative*.
4. **How much does God protect me? (139:19–24)** This question exposes the problem of worry. When we worry about evil and its assaults on God's people, we can rest in God's righteousness, guidance, and protection. Remember: *God is holy*.



#### A CLOSER LOOK

##### *Be Honest with God*

David expressed an honest desire for God to act against his enemies. In the Bible, *hatred* most often indicates rejection. So David, believing himself on God's side, prayed for the Lord to act in a way that would affirm the king's position. In short, David wanted to reject those that God rejected. We have no access to the results of David's prayer—no knowledge whether or not God acted on His servant's behalf. Instead, we have David's cry for God to search him and direct his thoughts. David was open to correction, but the possibility of being wrong didn't stop him from praying what was in his heart. We sometimes tiptoe around God, afraid to share with Him our deepest desires. But humility doesn't require that we walk on eggshells. David's strongly worded prayer encourages us to express our thoughts to God, while always doing our best to stay in accord with His will.



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# SONGS FOR ALL SEASONS FROM THE PSALMS

## A Song of Reassurance

### Psalm 139



#### LET'S LIVE IT

Though the wonderful music of Psalm 139 has ended, its inspiring melody lingers on. So many truths about God's care and closeness wash over our souls, but two overarching lessons will challenge us to reflect deeply on our own lives.

First, *because we are creatures and He is our Creator, we must allow Him to search us and reveal anything in our lives that dishonors Him.* This includes anything from leaving Him out of our lives to not treating others as God's precious creatures. We must let God uncover sin and lead us into the light of His love and grace.

Second, *the only logical response to God's greatness is to invite Him to lead and have complete control, no matter what that may mean.* This could mean a radical reorienting of priorities or finally trusting in Jesus for your salvation. Through Christ's death, God has made a way for you to have eternal freedom from the penalty of sin (Romans 6:22–23). God created you, loves you, and wants to spend eternity with you.

**Are you feeling overwhelmed today trying to balance time with your spouse and kids, the checkbook, and family meals? Will you turn to the Lord and trust that He cares for you and wants to meet all of your needs?**



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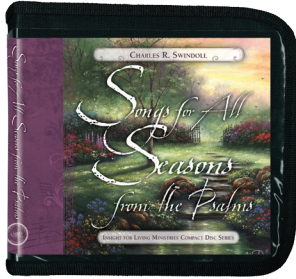
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A Song of Reassurance

*Psalms 139*



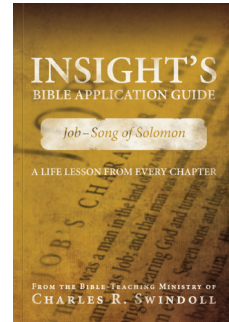
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