**Tree and Chaff**

*Psalm 1*

**Introduction**

1. The Psalms are scripture and are written for our benefit.
   1. ***“For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.” (Romans 15:4)***
   2. They may be written differently (***poetic***), but are substantive and beneficial.
2. The Psalms can be separated into a variety of categories. (**praise, prophecy, history, etc.**)
3. One interesting way the Psalms can be considered is by dividing them all into three *general* categories – Psalms of Orientation, Disorientation, and Reorientation.
   1. **Orientation** – This is how things are in general. (***righteous – rewarded; evil – punished***)
   2. **Disorientation** – It isn’t supposed to be this way. Why is it this way? (***righteous – suffer/struggle; evil – prosper***)
   3. **Reorientation** – Restored to proper balance. Understanding regained. (***God keeps His promises, and does not let the righteous go unnoticed, nor the evil.***)
4. **This can help by understanding how things are, and how we are supposed to be. That because man has choice, and choices have consequences, things can seemingly be temporarily altered. And that ultimately, God’s purposes and promises prevail in the end.**
5. In taking this approach, the first Psalm falls under the *Orientation* category.
   1. This Psalm essentially sets the foundation for all the other Psalms – which makes it seem appropriate that it is the first in the order of collection.
   2. **If we gain a proper understanding of the teaching of this Psalm, receive it with willing and honest hearts, and apply it, we will be sufficiently prepared for eternity.**
6. Righteous and Ungodly **(v. 1-2)**
7. The Righteous man is ***“Blessed”*** (happy; his position is desirable)
   1. The first 3 verses essentially discuss the righteous man. His position is one of happiness. **(The happiness is genuine and sustainable. It is not a result of fleeting possessions.)**
   2. He is blessed because of what he does NOT do, and what he DOES. 🡪
8. The Righteous man does not (*Which means the wicked/ungodly man does*):
   1. Seek counsel from impious people:
      1. **Jeremiah 10:23** – Man cannot effectively find the correct path. Why then would we turn to a man in his own reasoning for guidance?
      2. **Proverbs 14:12** – Man can easily be wrong. The ungodly are definitely going to be wrong, because they live without the Giver of life in their mind.
      3. **Proverbs 1:10-19** – The advice of the ungodly is not even fully understood by themselves. What they do, and suggest, will ultimately cause themselves harm.
         1. **Turning to worldly friends for advice will do you no good, and cause you much harm.**
         2. **Young people must not choose their peers advice above God’s, and their godly parents (cf. Proverbs 1:8-9).**
   2. Linger around sin and sinners (yielding to temptation or even looking for sin):
      1. **1 Corinthians 15:33** – We must not be naïve to think being around evil people will not corrupt us.
      2. **Romans 13:14** – We must not put ourselves in difficult situations 🡪
      3. **Matthew 5:27-30 –** If there is something in our lives that would threaten our stand with God we must get rid of it if at all possible.
      4. ***“Abstain from every form of evil” (1 Thessalonians 5:22)***. – Christians must keep themselves pure.
   3. Blatantly disrespect God:
      1. **This describes one who has completely disregarded God, and cares not for things which are good. He mocks God, and is sacrilegious.**
      2. **Isaiah 5:20** – Those who relish evil are opposed to God.
         1. **This occurs because of an insubordinate desire to fulfill fleshly lusts.**
         2. **To sear their conscience from guilt, they change the label, and forget God.**
      3. **2 Peter 3:3-4** – This depraved mindset has the audacity to mock its own Creator.
   4. There is a progression in ungodliness:
      1. *“There is, first, casual walking with the wicked, or accidentally falling into their company; there is then a more deliberate inclination for their society, indicated by a voluntary putting of oneself in places where they usually congregate, and standing to wait for them; and then there is a deliberate and settled purpose of associating with them, or of becoming permanently one of them, by regularly sitting among them.”* (Albert Barnes)
      2. The first step is sinful initially, but the next step digs a deeper hole, and has more lasting effects.
      3. **Sin always takes you further than you want to go, keeps you longer than you want to stay, and costs you more than you want to pay.**
9. The righteous man DOES (*Which means the wicked/ungodly man does not*):
   1. Delight in God’s word:
      1. **Psalm 19:7-10** – Do we value God’s word as David did?
      2. ***“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled” (Matthew 5:6)***.
   2. Envelopes himself in God’s word:
      1. **1 Timothy 4:13; 2 Timothy 2:15** – Reading God’s word, and giving diligence to know it and use it correctly is a must.
      2. **Psalm 119:9-11** – Sin can only be avoided by taking this action.
10. Tree and Chaff **(v. 3-4)**
11. Righteous = nourished tree.
    1. This tree did not sprout at random, but was specifically planted by water.
    2. Its permanent (trees can’t move) home is by continually flowing water which will provide for its needs.
    3. Consequently, it is healthy and prosperous.
12. Ungodly = useless chaff.
    1. When grain is harvested it must be separated from the husks and particles.
    2. This is accomplished by throwing it up in a windy area. The grain falls back down, but the chaff is driven away.
    3. The chaff is useless to the farmer. It is refuse, and it is easily moved/disposed of.
13. These metaphors are explained 🡪
14. Reward and Punishment **(v. 5-6)**
15. Righteous are rewarded and Ungodly are punished.
    1. **Matthew 25:31-32** – The righteous and unrighteous will not be placed together. They will be separated.
    2. **Hebrews 4:12-13** – We will be judged by God’s word, and it will expose our every secret. We will not stand unless we do what God says!
16. God is not mocked! **(v. 6) (Cf. Galatians 6:7-8)**

**Conclusion**

1. This is a Psalm of *Orientation* because it describes every man, whether good or evil, and reveals their inevitable, and immutable eternal whereabouts.
2. **Because this truth is presented to us, we need only obey it to avoid the devastation of hell, and secure the wonders of heaven!**