

Welcome and Introduction

Hello and welcome to our online worship service, which you can access the video on YouTube by clicking on the link <https://youtu.be/1r-nasT6f3I> or copying and pasting to your browser. I am Pastor Claudio Moises and I am here today with my family to lead today's worship service. I hope and pray you will be blessed and encouraged by the songs we chose and by the word of God that Andrea, my wife, will be sharing with us all. We'll be reading Psalm 84 for us to start.

- ¹ How lovely is your dwelling place, Lord Almighty!**
**² My soul yearns, even faints, for the courts of the Lord;
my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God.**
**³ Even the sparrow has found a home, and the swallow a nest for herself,
where she may have her young — a place near your altar,
Lord Almighty, my King and my God.**
⁴ Blessed are those who dwell in your house; they are ever praising you.
⁵ Blessed are those whose strength is in you, whose hearts are set on pilgrimage.
**⁶ As they pass through the Valley of Baka, they make it a place of springs;
the autumn rains also cover it with pools.**
⁷ They go from strength to strength, till each appears before God in Zion.
⁸ Hear my prayer, Lord God Almighty; listen to me, God of Jacob.
⁹ Look on our shield, O God; look with favour on your anointed one.
**¹⁰ Better is one day in your courts than a thousand elsewhere;
I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God
than dwell in the tents of the wicked.**
**¹¹ For the Lord God is a sun and shield; the Lord bestows favour and honour;
no good thing does he withhold from those whose walk is blameless.**
¹² Lord Almighty, blessed is the one who trusts in you.

This Psalm reflects the author's love and devotion to God. He loves and desires to be in God's presence. His soul delights, yearns and even faints to be in God's holy temple in Jerusalem. The people from all around Israel and Judah would come to worship at the temple in Jerusalem and offer their sacrifices to the God of Jacob. There were many important occasions and celebrations like the Feast of the Tabernacles, The Passover, The Hanukkah (the Feast of the Lights), which is still celebrated today by the Jewish people and it is close together with our Christmas celebrations. Many would travel long distance in order to be at House of the Lord. **"My heart and my flesh cry out for the living God"**. He also mentioned how blessed we are when we put our trust in the Lord alone. He satisfies our longings and renews our strength. **"Better is one day in our courts than a thousand elsewhere; I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of the wicked.** Like the psalmist we also long to be in God's presence and we delight in God's word.

Let's pray

Our mighty God we love your presence and we delight in your truth. We come to this place to worship you and to exalt you above every other name. There is no other place we'd rather be than in your presence Lord, daily! Only you God alone are worthy of our

praise and worship because no one else can satisfy our souls like you do. It's our desire to honour and worship you with all our hearts and souls. Would you please come and fill us afresh with your Holy Spirit as we praise, worship and mediate in your truth. May our faith be renewed and strengthened by your love and faithfulness. Lord God, bless this worship service we offer to you. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen

Song 1 – This is my Desire – by Hillsong United

<https://youtu.be/mZGzu6oI9b4> Click on the link or copy and paste to your browser in order to hear and follow the song on YouTube.

*This is my desire to honour You
Lord, with all my heart I worship You
All I have within me I give You praise
All that I adore is in You*

*Lord I give you my heart
I give you my soul
I live for you alone
Every breath that I take
Every moment I'm awake
Lord have Your way in me*

Song 2 – Lord, I need You by Matt Maher

<https://youtu.be/LuvfMDhTyMAvb> Click on the link or copy and paste to your browser in order to hear and follow the song on YouTube.

*Lord, I come, I confess
Bowing here I find my rest
Without You I fall apart
You're the One that guides my heart*

*Lord, I need You, oh, I need You
Every hour I need You
My one defence, my righteousness
Oh God, how I need You*

*Where sin runs deep Your grace is more
Where grace is found is where You are
Where You are, Lord, I am free
Holiness is Christ in me*

*So teach my song to rise to You
When temptation comes my way
When I cannot stand I'll fall on You
Jesus, You're my hope and stay*

Preaching and Teaching

Like a Tree (Psalm 1) by Andrea Moises

Introduction

Since I moved here to this neighbourhood I can't stop looking at the tall trees in front of my new home. Every day, as the weather gets colder, with rain and strong winds, they gradually lose their leaves as well as their beauty. In despite of that, they remain calm, sturdy and strong. I was then reminded of the tree described in Psalms 1 and the comparison the psalmist makes between the person whose delight is in the law of the Lord with that perfect tree. Let us read the whole Psalm since it only contains 6 verses and it will be the foundation of what the Lord has placed in my heart to share with you today.

- ¹ Blessed is the one
 who does not walk in step with the wicked
or stand in the way that sinners take
 or sit in the company of mockers,
² but whose delight is in the law of the Lord,
 and who meditates on his law day and night.
³ That person is like a tree planted by streams of water,
 which yields its fruit in season
and whose leaf does not wither—
 whatever they do prospers.
⁴ Not so the wicked!
 They are like chaff
 that the wind blows away.
⁵ Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment,
 nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous.
⁶ For the Lord watches over the way of the righteous,
 but the way of the wicked leads to destruction.

Let us pray:

Father God, thank you for your word that is here to guide us and draw us close to you. Please help us to meditate upon your truth so that we can be totally free from our own concepts and ideas. May your Holy Spirit speak to us in a way we can understand and be willing to obey, being renewed and transformed, following Jesus' way. In His name I pray, amen.

I love reading Psalms because it is a collection of poems, hymns and prayers, which were read and recited by the Jewish people as their expression of faith as well as their emotions, from joyous celebration and thanksgiving to prayers or songs of lament and even bitterness. This is when we can identify with their authors and on the same way, we can be free to show God how we feel. The book of Psalms can help us to give voice to our deepest feelings, so I highly recommend you to read it and enjoy its poetic language, with all your heart and your mind. There are 150 of them, written by ordinary people like David, Moses, Asaph and the sons of Korah. Life is not always a bed of roses and I think this season we've been going through with the pandemic it is a clear example of that. In the middle of Psalm 1 we have the metaphor of a tree, illustrating how the righteous man is different from the wicked. We have been justified before God by the blood of Jesus that was shed on the cross to set us free from sin so we could have been made

righteous like him, not because we're perfect and have no mistakes but because we are justified by His amazing grace. To be blessed and happy like that person described in the first three verses of Psalm 1 we need to be...

I – Rooted in God

“...but whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who meditates on his law day and night.” Psalm 1:2 In addition to that tree being planted by streams of water, it certainly has deep roots. According to my research, under ideal soil and moisture conditions, roots have been observed to grow to more than 6 meters deep. In the same way we need to grow deep in the word of God. Psalm 1, verse 1 and 2 say that instead of sitting in the company of mockers (whatever is contrary to God's way), either through conversations we have with friends or things we watch or hear, the righteous delights himself in the law of the Lord, meditating on it day and night. What are we doing to delight ourselves in the law of God? In the whole scriptures? In the truth? Jesus said he is the way, the truth and the life. If we long to have a meaningful life we need to delight and rejoice ourselves in the presence of our Saviour, Lord and faithful friend. Only being rooted in Him and in His word we can grow strong. The more time we spend with Christ, the more we become like Him.

II – Persevering Through the Storms

Just like a tree we also face different seasons in life. I find fascinating that despite of the weather, either freezing cold or boiling hot, which makes me remember of the time we used to live in Iraq, when the temperature went up to 50 degrees Celsius in the summer! Trees are sturdy and strong. This week in special I've been admiring how the three trees in front of our home stand firm against the strong wind, blowing away their leaves and their beauty. Still they remain placid. How do we face the storms of life? I remember facing a harsh season in my life, about ten years ago, when we'd just moved to Iraq and I had just started working as a teacher in an international school. One day, as I was walking through the corridor towards a classroom, my mobile phone rang and it was an international phone call from my auntie in Brazil to tell me that my middle brother, who was about to turn 30, had just taken his own life. As I listened to the words of my aunt, on the other side of the line, it seemed the ground had been taken away from my feet. However, I just held on firm, knowing there was no sub-teacher that day, and I had two more periods to teach, I then carried on teaching my students. All I have to say is that If I hadn't been rooted in the presence of the living God and His word, I wouldn't have made it through that day or that season of pain and grief. What do you do when the storms of life come on your way? How do you react when you face opposition, family problems, financial struggles or health issues? To whom you run to for help? Is it God, the source of all strength and wisdom or 'false comfort' like food, old habits or addictions? ***“The Lord is a refuge for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble. Those who know your name trust in you, for you, Lord, have never forsaken those who seek you.” Psalm 9:9-10 “In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.” John 16:33***

III – Branching out and Being Fruitful

We are blessed so we can bless others, reaching out in love and compassion, offering comfort and shelter like a tree. God has placed in each one of us a different gift so we can use it to bless others around us. ***“The righteous is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither-whatever they do prospers.” Psalm 1:3*** According to the metaphor of this verse the righteous

person will produce fruit in the right season. We can be this righteous person if we intentionally choose to delight ourselves in the word of God and meditate upon it. What does it mean? It means we think of it, we speak about it, we sing of God's love, and we act on it. That doesn't mean we are super heroes and that we do not feel the pains of life. Of course we do, but we actually use our suffering as an opportunity to share about God's amazing grace. The grace that enables us to move on, enduring the storms of life, forgiving others as well as receiving God's forgiveness, trusting in Him, every and each day of our lives. ***"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law."* Galatians 5:22,23.** The world is hungry for this kind of fruit and we who love God can bless others with it. Our family, our children, our parents and all the spheres of society need this fruit. Have you been kind enough, gentle, peaceful and loving to those around you?

Conclusion

Let us not forget that only through the blood of Jesus we can be made righteous. Only in His presence and on the meditation of His word we are able to grow deep... Being rooted in His truth; persevering through the storms, branching out and being fruitful.

Response Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Thank you for showing us through Psalm 1 that to be blessed is to find true happiness; happiness that is found in you and in your word. Help us not to walk according to the way of the wicked world we live in, unaware and therefore far away from your principles. Would you please give us the daily guidance of your Holy Spirit to discern what is right, delighting ourselves in your presence so we can be like a sturdy tree, firmly rooted in the truth, not only surviving, but thriving. Would you help us to bare fruits, reflecting you through whom we are and what we have. May the words of our mouth and the meditation of our hearts be pleasant to you. Please enable us to be a blessing to others through our thinking, our words and actions. In Jesus' precious name we pray, Amen

Song 3 – Oceans by Hillsong United

https://youtu.be/dy9nwe9_xzw - Click on the link or copy and paste to your browser in order to hear and follow the song on YouTube.

*You call me out upon the waters
The great unknown where feet may fail
And there I find You in the mystery
In oceans deep
My faith will stand*

*And I will call upon Your name
And keep my eyes above the waves
When oceans rise
My soul will rest in Your embrace
For I am Yours and You are mine*

*Your grace abounds in deepest waters
Your sovereign hand will be my guide
Where feet may fail and fear surrounds me*

*You've never failed
And You won't start now
Spirit lead me where my trust is without borders
Let me walk upon the waters
Wherever You would call me
Take me deeper than my feet could ever wander
And my faith will be made stronger
In the presence of my Saviour*

Oh, Jesus, you're my God!

*I will call upon Your name
Keep my eyes above the waves
My soul will rest in Your embrace
I am Yours and You are mine*

Final Prayer and Apostolic Blessings

Let us finish our service by reading the Priestly Blessing in Numbers 6:22-27

²² The Lord said to Moses, ²³ “Tell Aaron and his sons, ‘This is how you are to bless the Israelites. Say to them:

²⁴ ““The Lord bless you
and keep you;

²⁵ the Lord make his face shine on you
and be gracious to you;

²⁶ the Lord turn his face toward you
and give you peace.””

²⁷ “So they will put my name on the Israelites, and I will bless them.”

Have a blessed week and see you next Sunday!