

Day Four: "The Psalms"

Welcome to Day Four of *Rooted in Prayer*! Our theme today is "The Psalms".

We recommend that you look through each day's activities ahead of time, so that you can gather or acquire the items that you need. We have listed more ideas than you'll use, because every family is different, with varied interests and abilities. You know what will best work with your child(ren) and can select the best options for each day.

Here are the items needed for each craft, snack, and game in today's plans. The directions for each can be found in this packet.

Crafts:

Carved soap: Ivory (or other very soft) soap, toothpicks, scrap paper

"Dead Sea Scroll and Vase": air-drying or polymer (bakeable) clay, paper cut into strips, tape, writing utensil

Psalm Treasure Box: inexpensive wooden treasure chest, decorating items as desired (paint, markers, gemstones, nail polish, etc.), cardstock cards, writing utensils

Snacks:

"Snack fit for a King" could include cheese, bread, parched grain (wheat berries, seasoning, oil), raisins, fig cakes, and milk or grape juice

Printables:

Choose and print whichever your family will find helpful.

Games:

Musical chairs: chairs, music (suggested links provided, or use your own)

3-D acrostic: sheets of paper, writing utensils, items that begin with the letters written

Dance: music (suggested links provided, or use your own)

Here is a related blog posts that you may find helpful:

<https://beingincommunity.com/shooting-arrows-to-the-heart-of-god/>

Here are some arrow prayers that you may wish to print and post around your home:

<https://orthodoxchristianparenting.files.wordpress.com/2019/05/arrow-prayers.pdf>



“The Psalms” Discussion Questions

Ice-Breaking Question:

Ask everyone to offer an answer.

How was your experience of the stillness challenge today? Was it easy or hard? Did you try any of the arrow prayers, or did you clear your mind?

Discussion Questions:

Today we learned about The Psalms.

- Did you know that the Psalms were in church services?
- Are there some you know about that were missed in the lesson?
- What kinds of situations would work well with arrow prayers?
- Have you ever used an arrow prayer?
- Did you hear an arrow prayer today that you’d like to remember?
- Do you have an idea for another arrow prayer?

New Idea to Consider:

Fr. Thomas Hopko of blessed memory wrote a list of “55 Maxims”, which are simple rules for a good life (like arrow rules!) #10 is “Do acts of mercy in secret.” Why in secret? What sorts of acts of mercy could you do?

A Reminder for the Discussion Facilitator:

We open with a simple question everyone can answer. This is like priming a pump, and will encourage them to speak again -- as long as you and the rest of the group are responsive, friendly and engaged.

We follow with discussion questions, which we hope will lead to thoughtful conversation. Don’t be discouraged if they don’t and follow the kids’ lead and what interests them. Take the kids seriously and try to meet them where they are.

We close with a new idea to consider. If conversation is already going well, you might skip this, but if conversation slows it’s nice to offer something new.



"The Psalms" Activities



Activity overview:

Arts and crafts - carve a bar of soap; create a "clay jar" to hold the "scroll" containing a verse from the Psalms; and/or decorate a treasure chest filled with favorite Psalms

Snack - make and eat a snack fit for King David, including parched grain

Printables - Uncover the secret Psalm by circling other words; match the Psalm to the Divine Liturgy; connect the dotted letters; and/or color Ps. 50:1

Arts and Crafts:

- Ps. 50:12 is a prayer asking God to create a clean heart in us. Invite campers to **carve a bar of soft soap** into a heart (or other shape), using toothpicks as tools.



Begin with a bar of soft soap like Ivory (or part of a bar: they break easily, so a parent could break them in half or cut them into quarters with a sharp knife).



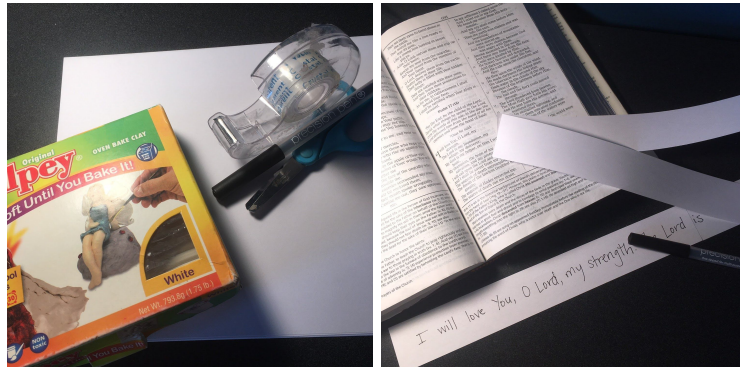
Campers can carve the soap by gently rubbing it with a toothpick. As they carve the soap, encourage each camper to work over a sheet of scrap paper to make cleanup easier (the shavings can be moistened, squeezed, and dried to be recycled into another bar of soap, or they can be pureed with water to create liquid soap). The side of the toothpick will slowly whittle away the soap, shaping it. The point of the toothpick can be used to etch details. Large sections of the soap can be removed if campers sketch a line where they'd like to make a “cut” with the point of the toothpick, then make a row of stab marks down through the soap, following the sketched line. By the time they reach the end of the line, the soap should break off right along the series of stab marks, and the camper can then use the side of the toothpick to gently whittle the new edge to the desired smoothness.

When the soap sculpture is finished, set it aside to “dry out” if it is to be saved as a sculpture, or encourage campers to place theirs at the sink so they can “create clean hands” with their carving. Encourage campers to pray Ps. 50:10: “Create in me a clean heart, o God, and renew a right spirit within me” as they wash their hands with their soap carving.

- Many years ago, people found very old scrolls with the scriptures written on them, tucked into clay jars and hidden in caves. The caves were near the Dead Sea, so they called them the “Dead Sea scrolls”. One of the scrolls had the last third of the book of Psalms written on it! **Create your own way to treasure and hide away the Psalms.** Here are two suggestions:



1. Make your own **“Dead Sea Scroll” in a vase.** Use air-drying or oven-bake clay to create a tube-like vase. Be sure that each camper’s vase has a flat base so that it can stand upright. Use a bit more clay to make a lid for the top of the vase.

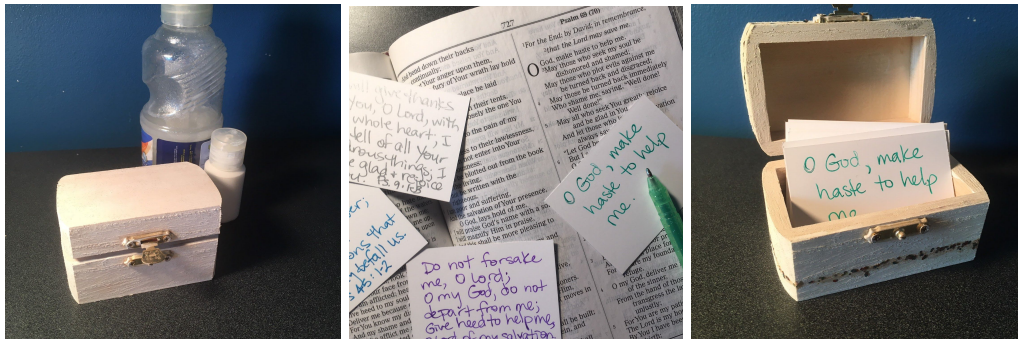


Cut a piece of paper into strips of equal width, in a size that will fit inside the vase. Tape the strips end-to-end to make a very long piece of paper. Invite the camper to write their verse(s) from the Psalms on the long piece of paper.

When the vase and lid have hardened, the camper can roll up their long paper “scroll” and tuck it inside the vase. Put the lid on top, and set the “Dead Sea vase and scroll” somewhere that it will be safe!



2. Purchase a small wooden treasure chest from a craft or dollar store. Allow each camper to decorate their **Psalm Treasure Box** as they wish (options include the use of paint, permanent markers, old nailpolish, glued gemstones, stickers, etc.)



While the treasure chest dries, encourage campers to find favorite verse(s) from the Psalms and copy them onto small cards that will fit inside the treasure chest. When the treasure chest is dry, fill it with the verse cards. Campers can keep their treasure box wherever it will help them to remember the treasures that are found in the Psalms.

Cooking and Snack:

Prepare and eat **a snack fit for a king!** The scriptures tell us that before David was king, when he was going to his brothers who were fighting the Philistines, he brought them cheeses (1 Samuel 17:18). They also tell us that Abigail brought bread loaves, wine, butchered sheep, parched grain, raisins, and fig cakes to David (1 Samuel 25:18). So your “kingly” snack could include cheese, bread, parched grain, raisins, and fig cakes. Drink milk or grape juice with your snack.

“Parched Grain” (roasted wheat berry) recipe:

hard red/winter wheat berries (these are best, but you can use hard white, as well)

olive or coconut oil

favorite seasoning (salt or other)

To make the popped wheat berries, heat the oil in a frying pan. Add the wheat berries and seasoning. Reduce heat to warm and cook, stirring gently, until they are a golden brown. Pour them onto a towel-covered plate (to absorb some of the oil) and allow them to cool. Enjoy!



"The Psalms" Games:

1. The Psalms are songs, so today is a great day to **play musical chairs!** You can use any music you like, but if you want to keep it Psalm themed, you could play the game while listening to kids' music from the Psalms. (For example, this 1990's recording uses a modern translation of the Psalms, set to catchy tunes:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TrCFnDfEcPU>.)
2. **Create a 3-D acrostic** with the word Psalms. Use 6 pieces of paper (any size), each with one letter of the word "Psalms" filling the page. Lay each letter paper down on the floor or table, and spell out the word. Challenge your family to gather an item that begins with each letter (two different "s" items, if possible). See how long it takes you to work together to build this acrostic. If you enjoy the challenge, challenge yourselves to do it again with different items. Or use more paper and create a 3-D acrostic using a different word found in the Psalms, such as "prayer" or "worship" or "mercy".
3. In 2 Kingdoms 6 (2 Samuel 6) we read about how the Ark of the Covenant, a very holy thing that the people of Israel loved because it was a place where God met them in a special way, was brought back to Jerusalem. King David was so very, very happy that the Ark was back with them again, so he sang and danced to welcome the Ark. David played on "well-tuned instruments" and danced before the Lord, because he was so happy that the Ark was coming back to be with God's people again. **Dance along!** Learn an Israeli dance by watching (and dancing along to) this song called "Bim Bam Bom" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_Vz2xTiOOEQ. Then learn to dance the Tzadik Ka'Tamar, an Israeli circle folk dance, here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rsYtGF61dyo>. Apply some of the new dance moves that you learned and create your own dance to this music, which is Psalm 103 sung in the ancient Hebrew, so you get an idea of how it might have sounded for King David to sing these words that he wrote:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=--UABwqWgSg&list=RDedwX4akkCP8&index=8>



Daily Game & Wrap-Up on Zoom

Groups **can play a lot of fun games over zoom. Select a game from this list each day. You can play the same games over again, or you can play a different one each day! (Note that Day Five has different games, because they provide an opportunity to review material. You'll use this list to find games for the first four days.)**

1. Simon Says

Participants should move back from their screens so that we can see their whole bodies. One person is “it” and calls out body parts that campers should touch. If “it” precedes the directions with “Simon says, touch...” then campers should touch that body part. If “it” just says, “Touch your...” without referencing Simon, campers should do nothing. Anyone who touches the body part named without the reference to Simon is out for the rest of that round. Last camper to get out is the new “it”.

2. Hana, Hana, Hana, Kuchi

This game is from Japan, and the name means “Nose, Nose, Nose, Mouth”. In this game, one person is the caller. They always call out, “nose, nose, nose,” and then add another body part, touching that part as they call it out. Other campers follow suit. The caller MAY call out one body part and touch another (for example, “nose, nose, nose, ear” and touch their nose instead of their ear). Campers who follow what is SAID (ear) stay in the round. Campers who follow what is TOUCHED (nose) are out for the rest of the round. The last camper to make a mistake is the new “it”.

3. Horns, Horns, Horns

This game comes from Scandinavia, where reindeer with beautiful antlers are important to the economy, so people value them. The person who is “it” says, “Horns, horns, horns,” and then mentions the name of an animal with horns (or antlers or tusks). Players use their hands to “create” horns like that on their own head. Occasionally, “it” will say, “horns, horns, horns,” and then mention an animal that does NOT have horns/antlers/tusks, but as they say the animal's name, they use their own hands to “create” a horn/horns on their own head. Campers who follow the motions are out for the round, but those who do nothing stay in. The last camper to fall for “it's” tricks is the new “it”.

4. Scavenger hunt

Divide your group into two even teams. The moderator invites campers to find and show items (one at a time) from their house that relate to prayer in some way. (Be sure



that your list contains items every household has on hand! Ideas could include: icon of Christ, your favorite icon, a candle, matches or lighter, holy water, prayer book, service book, cross, etc.) Every team member that finds and brings one of those items to show to the group earns a point for their team. The first one to show their item gets an extra point for their team. The team with the most points at the end of the game wins.

5. Would You Rather

Zoom leader asks campers “would you rather” questions comparing two different things, and invites all campers to answer. Questions for this game are usually silly, ie: “Would you rather hold an earthworm or a cow?”. (Leader may find it helpful to create their list of questions ahead of time.) If desired, the leader could relate a few questions near the end of the time to the day’s learnings. These may not be as silly, but could help campers think over the day’s learnings and engage with them. For example, on Day 1, the Leader could ask, “Would you rather stand very still outside in an ice storm, or on a hot day in a muddy swamp?”

6. I’m Going on a Hike

Each camper has a turn to add something to the list of things they would take on a hike. The first camper may say, “I’m going on a hike, and I’m taking my walking stick.” The second camper would say, “I’m going on a hike, and I’m taking my walking stick, and a granola bar.” The third camper would repeat that and add their own third item. Play continues until everyone has had a turn to add something to the list.

7. Build a Story

Storytelling is a fun way to build group interactions, while building an important life skill. For this activity, the whole group will work together to build a story that has never before been told. The Zoom leader will need to decide how to handle turns and communicate who has a turn, and when, or if it will just be a free-for-all. The leader will explain that everyone in the group will participate as listeners. Then the leader will invite all members to participate as storytellers, if they wish. Group members who wish to help tell the story will each have a turn to tell one sentence. In this way, your group will make up a story on the spot! The leader will begin the story with, “Once upon a time...” The first camper will say, “there was a ____ who ____.” Subsequent campers will add their sentences, one at a time, until the story is finished or everyone has had a turn to contribute. If the story is not finished, the leader can ask volunteers to offer their idea for an ending. If the story finishes before everyone has had a turn, begin a second story.



8. Freeze Dance

Leader plays some of Cece's music so that everyone can hear it and dance. Occasionally, the leader will stop the music, and everyone must freeze. Whoever keeps dancing is out for that round, but those who freeze can dance again when the leader re-starts the music. The last player still in at the end of the round wins the round.



Day 4: The Psalms Activity Page 1

Find these Psalm-related words in the word search below. Then copy each uncircled letter or number, in the order they appear (left to right, top to bottom) to discover a hidden verse!

Bible
blessed
book
David
good
Liturgy

Jesus
mercy
prayers
Psalms
Psalter
rejoice

sad
save
shepherd
songs
sorry
taste

G	I	S	H	E	P	H	E	R	D	V	T	E
Y	T	H	A	S	N	Y	R	R	O	S	A	K
G	R	E	T	L	A	S	P	S	O	G	S	T
R	E	O	T	P	H	V	E	L	G	N	T	O
U	J	E	S	U	S	D	E	R	D	O	E	F
T	O	O	A	P	R	A	Y	E	R	S	R	K
I	I	H	D	E	I	V	L	S	G	O	O	O
L	C	D	E	L	B	I	B	M	1	1	7	O
M	E	R	C	Y	1	D	E	S	S	E	L	B

Copy the uncircled letters and numbers into the blanks to find the hidden verse!

“ _____ ”

_____.” Psalm _____ :



Day 4: The Psalms Activity Page 2

So much of our Divine Liturgy comes straight out of the Psalms! Here are some parts of the Liturgy (on the left side of the page), but the Psalms that go with them (on the right side of the page) have gotten mixed up. Look up each passage in the Orthodox Study Bible, and draw a line to the part of the Liturgy that it best supports!

Choir: “O Lord, save Thy people and bless
Thine inheritance.”

Ps. 50:1

Priest: “Help us, save us, have mercy on us...”

Ps. 70:8

Priest: “An angel of peace, a faithful Guide and
guardian of our souls and bodies, let us ask...”

Ps. 27:9

Priest: “O God, be gracious unto me, a sinner,
And have mercy on me.”

Ps. 117:26

Choir: “Praise ye the Lord from the Heavens. Praise
Him in the highest. Alleluia.”

Ps. 108:26

Choir: “Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord.”

Ps. 148:1

Choir: “Let our mouths be filled with Thy praise,
O Lord...”

Ps. 33:8



I PRAY AND
SING PSALMS.



HAVE

Mercy

on
ME

GOD

PSALM 50:1