

## SPECIAL LESSON

### Psalm 1: Choosing the Blessed Path

#### Bible Study Preparation and Materials Needed:

**For the Lesson:** Orthodox Study Bible or Holy Bible: Armenian Church Edition

*Recommended Orthodox Study Bible [HERE](#).*

*Recommended Holy Bible: Armenian Church Edition [HERE](#).*

#### Memory Verse:

**Blessed is the man who walks not  
in the counsel of the ungodly.**

**- Psalm 1:1**

## Bible Study Lesson

### Open with prayer:

Իմաստութիւն Յօր՝ Յիսուս, տո՛ւր ինձ իմաստութիւն, զբարիս խորհել եւ խօսել եւ գործել առաջի Քո՝ յամենայն ժամ. ի չար խորհրդոց, ի բանից եւ ի գործոց փրկեա՛ զիս. եւ ողորմեա՛ Քո արարածոց եւ ինձ բազմամեղիս: Ամէն

Eemasdootyoon Hor Heesoos, door eents eemasdootyoon uzparees khorel yev khosel yev kordz arachi ko hamenayn jham. Ee char khorhrtos, ee paneets yev kordzots prgya zees yev voghormya ko araradzots eents pazmameghees. Amen.

Wisdom of the Father, O Jesus, grant to me the wisdom to think, speak, and do that which is good in Your sight. Save me from all evil and distracting thoughts, words, and deeds. Have mercy upon your creatures and upon me, a great sinner. Amen.

## A Reflecting on Psalm 1: Choosing the Blessed Path

Here we are starting a new academic year full of new plans, new expectations, new paths and choices. The choice for today's Bible Study is to begin with Psalm 1 because it stands like a gate at the entrance to the Book of Psalms allowing our path to this new academic year.

Often there are many paths open wide right in front of us. Choosing the right one sometimes feels overwhelming. Before making our choices we must understand that in reality there are two paths. One leads to life and the other leads to destruction. One leads to fruitfulness and the other to being blown away like dust.

Psalm 1 asks us to look deeper into not just what we believe, but how we walk.

### ***Psalm 1 (OSB)***

*Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly,  
Nor stands in the path of sinners,  
Nor sits in the seat of troublesome;  
But his will is in the law of the Lord,  
And in His law he meditates day and night.*

*He shall be like the tree planted by streams of waters,  
Which shall yield its fruit in its season,  
And its leaf shall not wither,  
And whatever he does shall prosper.*

*Not so are the ungodly, not so,  
But rather, they are like the chaff the wind drives away from the face of the earth.  
Therefore the ungodly shall not rise in judgment,  
Nor sinners in the counsel of the righteous.*

*For the Lord knows the way of the righteous,  
But the way of the ungodly shall perish.*

The very first word **“Blessed”** sets the tone for everything that follows. In Armenian, we say Երանի է - meaning more than just happiness, a desire, a wish. It’s a deep, inner wholeness that flows from walking in communion with God. But notice, the psalm starts with what the blessed person **does not do**.

*“He does not walk... does not stand... does not sit...”* - A slow progression.

Walking with the ungodly: just listening to false advice.

Standing in the path of sinners: getting comfortable with sin.

Sitting in the seat of the troublesome: identifying with those who mock or distort truth.

In the Armenian Church, and other Orthodox traditions as well, sin often begins not with action but with influence of the thoughts that form in our hearts. The Church Fathers teach that thoughts are like birds: you can’t stop them from flying overhead, but you don’t have to let them build a nest in your hair.

**Q: What voices are shaping the way you think? Who or what do you “walk with” online, in your playlists, or friend groups?**

Then we hear what does define the blessed person:

*“His will is in the law of the Lord...”*

That word “law” (in Greek: nomos) doesn’t just mean rules. It means the full teaching of God, the Scriptures, the traditions, the life of the Church. And not just knowing it, but delighting in it. Choosing to be shaped by it. Reflecting on it “day and night.”

In Armenian monastic tradition, this idea of unceasing meditation is central, and not because monks have nothing to do, but because they center everything they do on the presence of God.

**Q: Is there a time in your day when you could create a quiet space to reflect on God’s Word — even just a few minutes? When is it?**

Then comes one of the most beautiful images in all the Psalms:

*“He shall be like a tree planted by streams of water...”*

Lets go back here and recall a song from our childhood: *“Just like a tree that’s planted by the water”*

What is so special about this tree? This is a tree with deep roots; stable, nourished, fruitful. It’s not chasing rain because it’s planted near the source. St. Gregory of Nyssa says that this tree represents a soul rooted in Christ, whose life flows out as fruit in due season. But fruit doesn’t come immediately. There are seasons of slow growth, of unseen change, of dormancy. And still, the leaf does not wither.

*“Whatever he does shall prosper.”* - Not material success, but spiritual fruitfulness.

**Q: What are the moments in your life when you ask God to bring growth, even if you don’t see results yet?**

Then comes the hard truth:

*“Not so are the ungodly, not so...”*

The repetition here is striking, as if to say: pay attention. This is the warning. The ungodly aren’t rooted. They’re not planted deep and are not growing sturdy. They are like tumbleweed thrown into the air and carried away by the wind. This is an image of weightlessness; people with no roots, no anchor, no direction. And the result?

### Close with prayer:

Պահապան ամենայնի Քրիստոս, աջ Քո հովանի լիցի ի վերայ իմ, ի տուէ եւ ի գիշերի, ի նստիլ ի տան, ի գնալ ի ճանապարհ, ի ննջել եւ ի յառնել, զի մի երբեք սասանեցայց եւ ողորմեա՛ Քո արարածոց եւ ինձ բազմամեղիս: Ամէն

Bahaban amenayn Kreesdos, ach Ko hovanee leetsee ee vera eem; ee dveh yev ee keesheree, ee nsdeel ee dan, ee knal ee janabarh, ee nunchel yev ee harnel, zee mee yerpek sasanetsayts yev voghormya Ko araradzots yev eents pazmamyghees. Amen.

O Christ, guardian of all, let Your right hand guard and shelter me, by day and by night, at home and abroad, in sleeping and in waking, that I may never stumble. Have mercy upon Your creatures and upon me, a great sinner. Amen.

*“They shall not rise in judgment...”*

Not because God is cruel, but because they’ve chosen a path that ends in ruin. In the liturgical prayers of the Armenian Church, we often say: “Deliver us from the snares of the evil one and make us worthy to stand before You without shame.”

To stand in judgment means to stand with Christ, not apart from Him.

**Q:** *What does it mean to you that “the Lord knows the way of the righteous”? Does that bring you comfort?*

This psalm is often read on weekdays at the beginning of the Psalter, the Church’s prayer book. That’s because it sets the tone: your life is going somewhere. Your steps matter. And your heart is being shaped by what you walk with, stand by, and sit under.

St. Basil the Great writes: “The beginning of good action is the rejection of bad counsel.”

Psalm 1 doesn’t ask you to be perfect. It asks you to choose your path and keep walking it with God.

*“For the Lord knows the way of the righteous...”*

In other words: **He walks it with you.**

## Reflection Questions

1. What is one influence in your life that may be pulling you off the right path?
2. What does it mean for you to “delight” in the law of the Lord?
3. Do you ever feel more like tumbleweed than a tree? What do you think God would say to you in that moment?
4. Where do you want to grow this year — what “fruit” do you hope God will bring out of your life?
5. Who do you know that lives like a tree planted by the water? What can you learn from them?