

SPECIAL LESSON

Psalm 25 (OSB 24): God as the Good Shepherd

Bible Study Preparation and Materials Needed:

Reflecting on: Psalm 25 (OSB 24) - God as the Good Shepherd

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

Recommended Orthodox Study Bible [HERE](#).

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

Optional Practice

If time permits, begin or conclude this Bible study with an antiphonal Psalm reading. Have students read the psalm aloud in two groups, line by line. Encourage them to hear David's emotion, allowing it to become their own prayer.

Memory Verse:

“Remember Your compassions, O Lord, and Your mercies, for they are from of old. Do not remember the sins of my youth, nor of my ignorance; but remember me according to Your mercy.”

- Psalm 25:6 - 7 (OSB 24)

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 Reflection on Psalm 25 (OSB Psalm 24): God as the Good Shepherd

Psalm 25 (OSB 24)

*1 A psalm by David.**

To You, O Lord, I lift up my soul, O my God.

2 I trust in You; let me not be ashamed;

Let not my enemies laugh at me.

3 For all who wait upon You shall not be ashamed;

Let those be ashamed who act lawlessly in vain.

4 Make known Your ways to me, O Lord,

And teach me Your paths.

5 Lead me in Your truth and teach me,

For You are the God of my salvation,

And on You I wait all the day.

6 Remember Your compassion, O Lord,

And Your mercy, for they are from of old.

7 Do not remember the sins of my youth,

nor of my ignorance;

But remember me according to Your mercy,

Because of Your loving-kindness, O Lord.

8 Good and upright is the Lord;

Therefore He will instruct sinners in His way.

9 He will guide the gentle in judgment;

He will teach the gentle His ways.

10 All the ways of the Lord are mercy and truth

For those who seek His covenant and His testimonies.

11 For Your name's sake, O Lord,

Pardon my sin, for it is great.

12 Who is the man who fears the Lord?

He will instruct him in the way He chooses.

13 His soul shall dwell among good things;

His seed shall inherit the earth.

14 The Lord is the strength of those who fear Him,

And to those who fear Him, His name is the Lord,

And He will show them His covenant.

15 My eyes are always toward the Lord,

For He shall pluck my feet out of the trap.

16 Look upon me and have mercy on me,

For I am only-begotten and poor.

17 The afflictions of my heart have been widened;

Bring me out of my distresses.

18 Look on my humiliation and my pain

And forgive all my sins.

19 Look on my enemies, because they multiply,

And they hate me with unjustified hatred.

20 Keep my soul, and deliver me;

Let me not be ashamed, because I hope in You.

21 The innocent and the upright cleave to me

Because I wait upon You, O Lord.

22 Redeem Israel, O God,

Out of all his afflictions.

Have you ever felt ashamed? Maybe for a mistake you made, maybe for letting someone down, or that your life isn't where it should be. Shame is a heavy burden. It doesn't just weigh on our hearts; it makes us want to hide, find someone else to blame. Yet Psalm 25 shows us a different way. Instead of hiding from God, David brings his shame to God in prayer.

This psalm is for those who feel stuck between guilt and grace. David pleads for guidance, mercy, and protection. He thinks he deserves nothing, but he also knows who God is: full of compassion, love, and truth. When you feel like your past is too messy or your present is taking you to an abyss, Psalm 25 reminds you that God isn't looking for perfection. He's looking for people who trust Him.

"To You, O Lord, I lift up my soul. O my God, I trust in You; Let me not be ashamed; Let not my enemies laugh at me. For all who wait on You shall not be ashamed; Let those be ashamed who transgress without cause." (vv. 1–3)

David starts with a simple act of surrender: he lifts up his soul. He brings his fears, regrets, and hopes to God. He knows that the only way out of shame is through trust. And notice what he says: the people who wait on the Lord will not be ashamed. That's a promise.

Q: *What does it mean to "lift up your soul" to God? Have you ever done that when you felt ashamed?*

Show Me Your Ways, O Lord

"Show me Your ways, O Lord; and teach me Your paths. Lead me in Your truth and teach me, For You are the God of my salvation, and on You I wait all the day." (vv. 4–5)

Shame often makes us feel directionless. It tells us, "You blew it. There's no path forward." But David doesn't wallow in confusion. He asks God to teach him, lead him, and show him what to do next. This is the attitude of a disciple, someone who believes that God's truth is stronger than their mistakes.

St. Anthony the Great said, *"To say that God turns away from the sinful is like saying that the sun hides from the blind."*

Q: *When you feel lost or ashamed, do you tend to isolate yourself, or do you ask God for direction?*

Remember Your Mercy

David knows his past. He doesn't try to pretend he's righteous. But instead of dwelling on what he did wrong, he pleads with God to remember something else:

"Remember Your compassions, O Lord, and Your mercies, for they are from old. Do not remember the sins of my youth, nor of my ignorance; but remember me according to Your mercy, because of Your lovingkindness, O Lord." (vv. 6–7)

This is one of the most powerful prayers in the Bible. David is not asking God to ignore sin. He's asking God to look at him through mercy. The Orthodox Church doesn't pretend that sin doesn't matter. But it constantly reminds us that God's mercy is older and deeper than our sin.

Q: *Do you ever worry that your past mistakes disqualify you from God's love? How does this verse challenge that concern?*

"For Your name's sake, O Lord, pardon my sin, for it is great. Who is the man that fears the Lord? He will instruct him in the way He chooses." (vv. 11-12)

David doesn't pretend to be fine. He says, *"My sin is great."* But he knows something deeper: God's name is greater. His mercy is stronger. His guidance is real.

There is humility in this prayer. David doesn't expect God to help him because he's worthy. He asks for mercy because God's name is merciful. That's the Orthodox way of prayer: to base our requests not on our worthiness, but on God's character.

Q: *What would change in your life if you really believed that God's love is bigger than your worst mistakes?*

The Secret of the Lord

"The Lord is the strength of those who fear Him, and to those who fear Him, His name is the Lord, and He will show them His covenant." (v. 14)

This verse speaks to intimacy. God isn't just a distant judge. He shares secrets with those who seek Him in humility. He draws near to those who honor Him.

In the Orthodox tradition, knowing God isn't just about facts. It's about communion. When we trust God with our shame, He doesn't push us away. He brings us close.

Q: *Have you ever had a moment when you felt God's presence deeply during a time of guilt or sorrow? What was that like?*

"Look upon me and have mercy on me, because I am alone and poor. The afflictions of my heart have been widened; bring me out of my distress. Behold my humiliation and my trouble, and forgive all my sins... Keep my soul and deliver me; let me not be ashamed, because I hope in You." (vv.19-20)

David ends this psalm the way he began: by asking not to be ashamed. But now, his voice is steadier. He has confessed his sorrow. He has remembered God's mercy. He has asked for direction. And now he ends with a final word of trust: *"I hope in You."*

This is the path through shame. Not denial. Not despair. But honest confession, humble prayer, and quiet hope. When you feel too broken to pray, this psalm gives you the words.

Q: *What part of this psalm speaks most directly to where you are in your life right now?*

Let's Reflect

- 1. What does shame usually make you want to do; hide, isolate, pretend, give up? How is David's response in this psalm different?*
- 2. When you're unsure what to do next in life, do you typically turn to God for direction? What might it look like to actually wait on Him?*
- 3. David prays, "Do not remember the sins of my youth." What past choices or moments do you wish you could erase? How does it feel to ask God to remember you according to His mercy instead?*
- 4. This psalm says that God "shows His covenant" to those who fear Him. What does it mean to fear the Lord in a healthy and faithful way?*
- 5. What's one part of this psalm that you want to carry with you this week—maybe a verse, a prayer, or even just a feeling? Why that one?*

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.