

# A Prayer For Guidance | Psalm 25

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[ 0 : 00 ] All right, please join me today in Psalm 25. That's our Psalm 4 today. As I read, the words will be here on the screen, but please follow along in your Bible. 22 verses, each one start with a different letter, the Hebrew alphabet.

I like that. There's so many things I love about this chapter, and I'm really grateful for an opportunity to get to share it with you. God has worked in my heart through this chapter, and I pray that it's found a place and it will stay there, because I need this.

I need to hear from God, and that we will today as we read this chapter. Follow along with you. Verse number one. Unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul. O my God, I trust in thee.

Let me not be ashamed. Let not enemies triumph over me. Yea, let none that wait on thee be ashamed. Let them be ashamed which transgress without cause. Show me thy ways, O Lord. Teach me thy paths.

Lead me in thy truth and teach me. For thou art the God of my salvation. On thee do I wait all the day. Remember, O Lord, thy tender mercies and thy lovingkindnesses, for they have been ever of old.

[ 1 : 00 ] Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions. According to the mercy, remember thou me for thy goodness sake, O Lord. Good and upright is the Lord. Therefore will he teach sinners in the way.

The meek will he guide in judgment, and the meek will he teach his way. All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth, unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies. For thy namesake, O Lord, pardon my iniquity, for it is great.

What man is he that feareth the Lord? Him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose. His soul shall dwell at ease, and his seed shall inherit the earth. The secret of the Lord is with thee that fear him.

He will show them his covenant. My eyes are ever towards the Lord, for he shall pluck my feet out of the net. Turn thee unto me, and have mercy upon me, for I am desolate and afflicted.

The troubles of my heart are enlarged, O bring thou me out of my distresses. Look upon my affliction and my pain, and forgive all my sins. Consider my enemies, for they are many. They hate me with a cruel hatred.

[ 1 : 59 ] O keep my soul and deliver me. Let me not be ashamed, for I put my trust in thee. Let integrity and uprightness preserve me, for I wait on thee.

Redeem Israel, O God, out of all his troubles. Heavenly Father, I ask that you'll be with us now, Lord, as my church family, Lord, as we get together in your word.

Lord, I pray that you will help us, Lord, in these times, as you have promised to do. I pray that the words of these scriptures, Lord, will find a place in the hearts of all those that are listening.

Lord, I pray that you give those listening understanding, you give me clarity of speech, Lord, that we want to hear from you today. We believe this to be the words of God, and we know that they are very relevant and applicable to our lives.

In Jesus' name I pray. Amen. This is a psalm of David, and you would say that it's a prayer of guidance, and you probably heard that. We're going to look at it, but it's a prayer of guidance, and it's just so filled with emotion that is happening.

[ 2 : 59 ] David is in a dark place, a place of distress, that he needs help to get out of. And so now he has this prayer of guidance unto God, and I find this so helpful. You know, we tell people to pray, but sometimes when we're told to pray, we want more than that.

We want to say, tell me how to pray. What do I need to say? And so we've seen the life of David as we went through the historical books, and now we're seeing the emotions, and we're knowing that he prayed, and now we're knowing exactly what he prayed. And in seeing this, we learn a lot about our God.

We all want to be guided by God, or at least we should, if you're a believer, you should want God to guide your steps in your days. We have decisions to make. Right now, we're making different decisions that we haven't made before. You're having to make different decisions.

People have job situations that are happening in their lives. There's just so many different ways that we, as a church, and as individuals, are making decisions, and we need God to give us guidance.

I don't know if you're like me, but when I was a teenager, I would say that I became obsessed about the will of God. It was a boat that was at the harbor, and if I missed it, I would never get on it again.

[ 4 : 02 ] I was most certain that was the case. I knew if I didn't get to take the right college, I didn't find the right wife, and eventually I'd find myself in a situation where even though I loved God and wanted to do right, I would never be in God's will because I had missed it because I thought it was going to be so tricky and so hard to find.

Some years ago, with the teenagers, we made a funny video talking about how people often mysticize the will of God, and a guy went to his refrigerator one day, and it was filled with butterball turkeys, and then out in his front yard, there's turkeys landed, and he said it was in that moment he knew that God had called him to the country of Turkey.

All right, Brady? I don't think that's what God did in leading you there, but we want to know that God leads and guides us, and so we gravitate to those kinds of those stories because it's inside of us.

We know that we are sheep. I need a shepherd. If he doesn't guide us, if we're left to ourselves, we're just wonder, and so we want him to guide us. I heard it said, and I tried to see if it was true, and from what I can tell, it is true, but the way that most people talk about the will of God and comment at the Christian bookstore, you won't find in books over the last 2,000 years, except maybe in the last 50 years, talking about the will of God so individually like that.

As Americans, we're so independent. What is the will of God for me? They usually spoke about it in terms of obeying God, being obedient to the Scripture, not grieving the Holy Spirit, and something that the will of God would be the same for all of us, and it would be found in the Scripture.

[ 5 : 33 ] It would be to read the Word, to be honest, and all the things that the Bible teaches us. But like so many things, we have a way of trying to overcomplicate it. I heard a quote, and I won't forget it, and I hope you don't as well, and I love it.

It says, It's not how God guides, but whom God guides. The emphasis of this passage, and the emphasis of the Bible, isn't so much how God guides, but it's whom God guides. And that's what David is saying here.

God, I need guidance, and I want to know who is the type of person that you would guide. I want to be the type of person that is led by the Lord. Seniors, I am hurting for you.

This is your, I don't have to explain to you what's going on. I know that everybody posting pictures of their graduation 30 years ago didn't help you any. I don't know what to do to come for you, but you know that you're blessed when you graduated, all right?

And there's no bad version of that. But I, I would, I really challenge you to listen to this chapter here and be the type of person that God can guide. He lays it out here for us.

[ 6 : 34 ] And if I was to, have the opportunity to preach to just our graduates, I'm going to certainly go through this. But if you're a high school graduate or you're a high school senior or you're just a senior in the game of life, a little bit older, everybody in between, we need guidance from God.

We kind of get a glimpse of how the question's going to be answered. And verse number 12, which says, what man is he that feareth the Lord? What man is he that feareth the Lord?

So why was David praying for guidance? If you've been following David in the Bible, you would see he's in situations all the time where he needs guidance. It says here that he's surrounded by his enemies, that his enemies are laying a trap for him.

It says not only do they hate him, they hate him with a cruel hatred. They wanted him to fail. They wanted him to be ashamed. And the psalmist calls himself a sinner and he says, I don't deserve to be helped by God, but you do teach us.

And he doesn't rely on his own goodness, but on the goodness of God. And so this psalm is a picture of a very difficult journey that David is having, but he successfully is led by God.

[ 7 : 38 ] Throughout the chapter, you see the word way over and over again, and you see the word path many times, because I remind you this is a prayer of guidance. So what is David feeling? Let's try to put ourselves in his shoes, or sandals, I guess that would be more appropriate.

So it sounds really good when we say King David. I mean, who wouldn't like to be king anything? Okay, so King David, that sounds good. But also he was a human with emotions. He was a dad with a love for his kids.

He was a fugitive from the law at times, though innocent. He was a leader that people looked to, that was pressure to see how he would respond.

Unfortunately, he was a sinner who had committed adultery with one of his loyal friends' wives. And so that's where we find David. And in the story that we're reading today, which is happening when many of our psalms are written, his son Absalom is in rebellion against him.

David is fearful for his life. He didn't take care of something in his family's life, something that had happened in his family. Absalom was bitter towards this. And because of that, there's a strike now between Absalom and David.

[ 8 : 55 ] And David is estranged from his son. His son is seeking his life. You know, when we think about this story, we picture big Absalom and we picture how he has long hair and he's capable of fighting.

You've probably seen the flannel graph where his hair gets stuck in a tree branch because that's the end of the story for Absalom. But it also reminds you that at one point he was just a child that would have sat on David's knee.

Here's a picture. So obviously, this is not a picture of David and Absalom. But none of the pictures I could find online would have been a picture of David and Absalom. But a son that he loved, that he would have raised, and now has grown up and has a cruel hatred for him.

And other people in the kingdom have turned against him. What a place for David to be in. And so we should be surprised at the feelings that David would have. First of all, verse 2, it says, Oh my God, I trust in thee.

Let me not be ashamed. Let not my enemies triumph over me. We find fear. Later on in verse 19, he's going to say, Consider mine enemies. He's saying, God, I know that I am surrounded by enemies and they hate me.

[ 10 : 05 ] And so he's living in fear. Not only is he living in fear, but that fear he has, he has loneliness. Verse 16, Turn thee unto me and have mercy upon me for I am desolate and afflicted.

I am completely alone. All the people had turned their back on him. And he is fearful of his life and now he is all alone.

And then, he's not in this. Paul says in 2 Timothy chapter 2, verse 4, 16, At my first answer, no man stood with me, but all forsook me. I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge.

Paul knew what it was like to be alone. You know what it's like to be alone. You know what it's like to be fearful. But then we find how these emotions came into his life. David is dealing with guilt and inner turmoil.

Verse 17, The troubles of my heart are enlarged. Oh, bring thou me out of my distress. He is in a mess that he has made. He is, he knows this and he feels incredible guilt.

[ 11 : 09 ] He knows what, he feels, he can imagine, I can only imagine that he is, he could have thought things would have been different for his family. He would imagine what things would have looked like differently if he would have done right, if he wouldn't have committed adultery, if he would have handled things right in his family.

And he's just eat up with guilt and his heart is enlarged and it's bringing him to stress and it's just natural that with fear and loneliness and guilt that there's great confusion. Show me thy ways, Lord.

Teach me thy past. Lead me in thy truth and teach me. For thou art the God of my salvation and thee do I wait all the day. I know we feel this way but David knew that he could call up the God to be taught and to be led and he has a prayer of guidance.

So I have to stand here for you and you'll look at it and I'm amazed by it. I really am. If you were to put shame and guilt and fear and ask people which one of them were they most not wanting to have, you would find that 38% of people said they wanted to avoid shame more than anything else.

31% of them wanted to avoid guilt and 30% of them wanted to avoid fear. And so it's not surprising what's surprising not that personal freedom ambition and doing the right things are valued by Americans it's the risk that our reputation that matters most.

[ 12 : 27 ] What's our biggest cultural fear? It's shame. And that's what David is dealing with. He's just dealing with shame. He's in a dark place and he doesn't know how to get out of it.

He knows how he got there but he knows that he can't get himself out of it. It's as if he's on a mountain with very steep on both sides with no climbing gear and he is absolutely helpless to get himself out of it.

And so then he has a prayer for guidance. So let's look at what is it that David prayed. First thing he says in verse number 1 Unto thee, O Lord do I lift up my soul.

This is wonderful. David knows that even in his own nest that God still cares for him. That God isn't turning his back on him even though he is the one that created it. He knows why he's in the position.

I was thinking through why is it when we're in these positions in our lives that we don't just naturally cry out to God and say God I lift up my soul to you and we avoid going to prayer.

[ 13 : 24 ] I was talking to somebody I love dearly about this yesterday and we made this list of reasons that we don't go to God in prayer during those times where our hearts are being enlarged and we're just full of stress first of all it hasn't worked before and we didn't get an answer.

Why don't we pray in our times of the stress and mess because we feel like sometime before we went to God with a problem and when we got done praying the problem was still there. We said God make this problem disappear and he didn't so prayer did not work the way that we wanted to because we saw prayer to simply go into God to solve that problem.

Secondly we got ourselves into this mess and so we think if we got ourselves into this mess then it isn't God's responsibility to get us out of it and he wouldn't care to help us.

We've done it before and we will do it again. That's another reason that we wouldn't go to God in prayer is because we say why would I even waste time to go to God and say God would you please help me out of this?

Would you please give me guidance on what I need to do? I don't know what my next step needs to be God but would you please help me and would you show me and would you teach me? We don't go to him in those prayers because we say well if he tells me I can't do it we have no self confidence which is a great place to start.

[ 14 : 37 ] We don't think the punishment is over. David could have sat there and said I deserved all this and he could have said he needs to just keep coming I don't have any right to ask God to save me from this I deserve what's coming to me and he just took the affliction and he would not call out to God and we get there sometimes where we just believe that we deserve the bad things that are happening in our lives and that God wouldn't care and we don't pray to him and then we're just not worthy we just think you know I'm fearful and I'm lonely and I'm afraid and I'm confused but I'm not worthy to go to God and have him hear my petitions and ask for guidance and so what are some of the answers to that?

One is the wrong expectation if you say prayer doesn't work because you didn't know what you wanted when you pray that's the wrong expectation you spend time with God in prayer God gives answers and sometimes they're not the answers that you want the time of prayer is not time wasted we should be seeking his face and drawing closer to him it's not asking how God is going to guide us but whom God is going to guide us and going to him and submitting and humbling ourselves as we will see and then you say well he doesn't want to help you because we're in a mess that we made can I remind you that you were in a mess you made when he found you I mean as believers we were all sinners in need of a savior he found us as enemies of the cross when he saved us so the first time he found us we were a mess and every time he could find us we could still be a mess he is not surprised by that or shocked or scared away from us we can go to him and whatever emotional state that we're in and whatever mess that we've made even from the sins of our past and our own doing and say God this is where I'm at right now would you guide me to this he's not going to ask you to clean your life up and then come see him again he wants to help you starting today and turn your life over to him in humility you would say you don't have self confidence to let God guide you out of this or to start doing right because you're dealing with the consequences of your sin and you don't think that you can stop lift up your soul and give your life over to him completely and remember there's no longer any condemnation in Christ

Jesus you're not living according to karma you don't have to continue to wait before you can go to our God look what it says verse number one again so David says I to thee oh Lord do I lift up my soul he knew that he could go to his God and trust him completely he had confidence that God wanted to guide and protect him verse 15 for he shall pluck my feet out of the net so he knows that there's traps for him there's nets set for him and then when people think that is completely beyond any fixing or correction God can pluck his feet from the net and he knows that God will guide him oh bring me out of my distress he knows that where he's at right now he can come out of that is a lie that Satan wants to tell you that what is happening right now is what's always happened is what's always going to happen and that you're never going to get out of where you're at but God can bring you out of your distress we can pray to him for guidance and he says all the paths of the

Lord are mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenant and his testimony all the paths meaning that no matter what path God leads him down it is going to be filled with truth and with mercy God cannot and will not lead you astray we often want God to go to God for answers but we don't often go to know him and to humble ourselves and to let him guide us remember we said the focus should be on whom God guides and not on how God guides it says the meek will he guide in the judgment the meek the humble that's the that's the person that God will guide along the way as if you're walking down a path he can put signs in your way and if you're humble enough to listen to them and say God you know right I don't go that direction because you tell me that and you know better than me that humility will allow him to guide you and if you don't humble yourselves and you hold your things to yourselves then he will not guide you he presents his life completely to

God without reservation Psalm 24 verse 4 kind of contrast it says he that hath clean hands and a pure heart who hath not lift up his soul on the vanity nor squand the seekfully it talks about an idol worshiper somebody that would lift up their soul to something else to give their trust in completely this is the kind message that he would preach at camp in a summer or the seniors about you need to give your life completely over to God and whatever he would have for you to do that is the first step in having him guide you if you need direction you need to make sure you give your life completely over to God Kyle shrieks though not long ago that at a camp I had forgotten to bring plans that we bring along and so I brought out some paper and we said everybody sign the bottom of this piece of paper if you want to say that this blank piece of paper belongs to God without reservation to sign it means there's no conditions God my life belongs to yours completely pastor told us he did that as a teenager and a couch said he never forgot it and

[ 19 : 54 ] I would ask that you do the same thing to you want guidance in God you take a pen and blank piece of paper and say God whatever you tell me to do I'm going to do it and I'm going to say God forgive me I'm not listening to you I'm letting you guide me Lord this is where I'm at emotionally I'm asking you to guide me and give yourself to him and then David is going to plead for God to remember some things and forget some things he's going to say Lord remember your tender mercies but he's also going to say but remember not the sins of my youth it's been said that never a prisoner of any prison cell would beg more earnestly for his life than David did for the pardon of the great offense and the matter of Uriah for it laid heavy upon him you hear it in the psalms the guilt and the shame that he had and that desire for forgiveness and he's saying God would you forget the sins of my youth seems like a hard task for God to do that how can I remember this and forget this but he is such a good God Hebrews 8 12 for I will be merciful to their unrighteousness and their sins and their iniquities will

I remember no more he says that he will forget those things he will forget the sins of David's youth young people when at church when we sit together and you look around you may not know all the stories of the adults that are around you but I can tell you that many of us look back on our youth with remorse for our sins but it isn't what defines us because he has chosen to forget that so when we do choose to look back we look at remorse and we say that's not who we are because we choose to remember his mercies and forget those things and that's what David is praying for there's a new story in the place of those old stories of the sin of our youth there's a story in the place of the righteousness of God in the place of the sins of my youth that I look back on and have remorse there's a new story that's the story of Jesus taking his sins so what are some of the truth that David had to fully embrace for him to make a prayer like this and to mean it

Robbie Zacharias who recently passed away he has a RZIM down an apologist a Christian apologist he had a quote that I love and it's this it says if you're a praying person you must if you're not a praying person you must carry your faith but if you are a praying person your faith carries you and so Christianity can't just be something you carry around in a suitcase but it has to be something that carries you and really believe these things David knew that his sins weren't going to disqualify him from God leading him because he had a faith in God and he was going to act upon it he was going to tell his emotions to follow his thoughts which were going to be placed in God so not only did the past sins of David disqualify him from being led by God but nothing that anybody was doing to him or any of the circumstances keep him from letting God guide him verse 2 oh my God I trust in thee let me not be ashamed let not my enemies triumph over me can I tell you if you think if you're bitter towards somebody today because you think that what they did to you is now keeping you from

God working in your life and leading and guiding you and being the person that God designed you to be in a new creature can I tell you it's not true nobody can do that nobody can derail your life from God's plan and God's will he wants to use your life and so not your sins and not those people and bitterness comes into our lives when we say this is my expectation that God can't use me God doesn't want to guide me and this person is to blame you need to provide forgiveness to them like Joseph did remember when Joseph with his brothers they had sold him into slavery they throw him in a pit and all the horrible things that they had done to him and he looked at them and he says you meant it for evil but God meant it for good because he knew that God could still guide him that no matter what his brothers did God could still work in his life so who is this person that God guides the meek God guides the Lord mercy and truth as such as keep his commandment

God guides the person who lives according to scriptures we said in psalm 23 that green pastures is meaning being fed spiritually which means that if we are to be people that are of the word and in scripture he is not just our atoning savior but he should be our authoritative advisor meaning that in all decisions of pleasing to you and in decisions where there are two things that are pleasing to him we ask him for guidance and we move forward but in decisions where one of them is not pleasing to God we say you are Lord and you have the right to lead and guide us and we look in your scriptures and we live according the scriptures not only that but those that are humble not only senses exercise to discern both good and evil by humbly submitting ourselves to God's word

[ 25 : 04 ] God guides us in our decisions and the things that are clearly laid out for us and in the other matters of life we learn to think biblically and live by principles you won't live out the will of God any more than you know the word of God so we have to be people that live according to scriptures we have to be people that are humble that are meek before God and then there are people that trust the Lord that trust God meaning that you can trust them to make the best decisions the seeker of the Lord is with them that fear him and he will show them his covenant it's how he led the the church to send out their first missionaries the Holy Spirit led them to do that he guides their steps Nehemiah is praying and God moves on their heart people that trust God and they look to him he says in verse 15 and eyes are always towards the Lord and the see in verse 14 the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him David is saying whom is a person that God guides it's a humble person a person obedient to scripture well then

I am going to be a person whose eyes are upon the Lord I am going to be a person that will fear him in the New Testament the way we say there will be people that don't grieve the Holy Spirit that is how God is guiding us today humility should lead us forward today if you're not a believer the guidance that God wants to give you fear and you're out of place and you don't think God can deliver you out of it can I tell you to listen to the words of David and to trust him he can guide you he will be a teacher of sinners he will lower himself to teach sinners and he will guide you and you can put your faith and trust in him today God can forgive you of your iniquity verse 11 for thy name sake O Lord pardon mine iniquity for it is great his iniquity was great but the grace of God is greater where the law entered and the fence might abound but where sin abounded grace did much more abound

Romans 5 20 so no matter what iniquities in life the sins of your youth or your sins of yesterday God can forgive you and he will forgive you you should come to him humbly today and ask him to guide you and put your faith and trust in him God can be trusted to guide us with his word a willingness to obey the first step to spiritual understanding a willingness to obey is the first step towards spiritual understanding John 7 17 if any man will do his will he shall know the doctrine whether it be of God whether I speak of myself if you don't really want to obey God if you are not really wanting to listen to him why would you expect that he would guide you why would you think as you pray to him he would tell you the direction they need to know he you need to come to him humbly and say God whatever you say the answer is to the problem I I have already signed a blank piece of paper I humble myself and I want you to guide me from this knowing that the Lord has a plan for our lives and that his plan is the very best for us is to give us great joy and confidence to seek his will

David says his soul is going to be comforted that his soul will be at ease when he goes to God not fearful not lonely not ashamed not confused but his soul can be at ease let God guide you from where you're at today you find yourself sitting there fear guilt confusion lonely let God guide you the Lord is my shepherd I shall not want he lead me God will guide you today are you in need of guidance are you living according to scripture are you trusting him are you humble David ends this after praying for himself and he says redeem Israel God out of all his troubles he says not just me Lord but other people need this other people need this type of guidance and he prays for other people he prays for people of all the nations would you pray for me for guidance would I pray for you for guidance would we pray that as a God would guide them



David prayed for Israel and we pray for one another and then it says in the next chapter Psalm 26 12 it says my foot standeth in an even place and the congregations will I bless the Lord will that be our testimony when we as a church get back together as a congregation and say you know what I was in a dark place still of fear and guilt confusion and how I was lonely but I cried out to God and he led me and he provided guidance in my life I'm going to pray and then after I pray I'm going to put a few questions up on the screen and I'm going to give you a moment maybe there with your family to talk through those questions and it makes you process and don't move past this if you need guidance in your life pray right now for him to give you guidance if you're an unbeliever call us right now call 770-853-8148 call me I'd love to talk to you how you put your faith and trust in

[ 30 : 27 ] Jesus but as a family look at this prayer of guidance parents talk to your kids about when they get to that place and maybe you're not around how do they get out of it and show them the steps that are in the scripture and if you're there today don't waste another moment pray to God Heavenly Father I pray for my brothers and sisters Lord I don't know where they are at Lord we're scattered all throughout the city but emotionally Lord spiritually we're in different places and I'm praying for those Lord that are dealing with these emotions that they will have a prayer of guidance and that you me