



*Psalms
From
the
Heart*

By Chariane Quille

Sample

Psalms from the Heart

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—Psalms 1-10—

Psalm 1: Stay Connected

Psalm 2: Tables Turn

Psalm 3: Rest and Revive

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Soup 'n' Psalms...

Soup 'n' Psalms is my favourite time of day during these winter months. I sit at the kitchen table with a steamy bowl of soup, looking out the window as the sun starts to peer higher in the sky and cheers us with its rays. I read a Psalm and ponder about what those penned words of long ago mean to me personally—today.

Somehow just reading these prayers and words from this king who knew more than his share of hardship, helps boost me up with the tools I need for my own work and service for Jesus, as well as stirs me to do the same: I find myself leaving the table with an urge to pray and commune heart-to-heart with the One that heard and answered David's prayers time and again.

I enter my room alone and commit myself, my family, my work, my day, and my future into Jesus' hands. Ah! I feel ready then to tackle the day, knowing I've just used the best strategy for success and progress—and good health too, leaving the worries with the One who can actually do something about them.

However, I wanted to do more than just read through the book of Psalms. I wanted to absorb them; to really think about the concepts each one was trying to express. Although I can read a Psalm from the Bible a thousand times—or any Bible verse—and get something new from it each time, I wanted to at least focus on one or two aspects of the passages read that morning. I wanted to put myself in a position of heart and mind for something specific to stand out to me. I wanted to take the time to pause and notice one aspect that it expressed, and then write about it, as a way to further remember and enjoy it.

In this devotional book I've written down the prose, thoughts, personal anecdotes and reflections that each Psalm inspired in me, or brought to my memory that I'd written in the past—based on the particular facet of a Psalm that I was savouring... along with my soup.

Maybe some of what I've written here will bring the Book of Psalms to life for you as well, as you read it together with these personal memoirs. And I'm sure you'll notice your own unique jewels from the Psalms as you do.

Psalm 1: Stay Connected

Pure Connection

A thousand voices keeping me from You
They yell out the way I ought to go,
And what I ought to do, they seem to know.
What am I to do? What do I choose?

When at last I find my way through
The brambles of opinions galore
That push, press and stress,
“You have to do more!”
And I find that rare tranquillity
With none else, just You and me
It is the only thing that seems right
But getting there is a daily fight.

When our hearts and minds get a pure connection
Everything seems to fall in to place
I no longer struggle in exasperation
Your voice all else can replace.

Like leaves that fall from the trees each year
Flutter away and can no longer hold on,
I too may crumble and wither, I fear
If my connection to Your sap-source is gone.

Psalm 1:2-3 But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

Connected

Our property happens to be the hub and access point for the Internet connection and telephone wires for several houses. One day, as had happened countless times before, a pair of telephone wire fix-it men knocked on our door. However, after they left, we were without Internet for the next 10 days. For us that's a problem, as both my husband's and my work rely on it. People were waiting for prompt replies or work would slow down or halt—and they would be clueless as to why the sudden silence.

When we called the company, we were put in the queue for servicing. It was to take one or two weeks until it would be our turn. What had they done to our connection? We found out later.

During that time, there were other struggles to contend with. Some issues with our children had peaked, and at long last I took some time alone with the Lord to ask Him a string of questions. My husband would do the same. We would compare notes and hopefully find solutions.

One thing the Lord asked of me was something I had long kissed good-bye to, and that by all circumstances would seem utterly impossible: Stop everything each day—during the day—for a good long while, to pray, read the Bible, connect and commune with Him. I read at night sometimes, when I wasn't needed for mother duties throughout the night. But to stop during the day, while the kids did whatever ... I really didn't see it as being doable.

"If you want me to do this, You're going to have to work some kind of miracle—I don't see how it can be a reality," I told Him. Do this on top of all the kids' care, teaching, cooking, cleaning, and my work as well that had to get woven in to each day. But I was desperate, and eager to grasp at anything to bring a solution.

As I was having this prayer time in a tent outside, and I made the decision to say yes, not worrying about how it could actually work out, I heard a comforting voice. It was a man saying to my husband, "I've come to fix your Internet."

Something in his tone made me feel at peace. He climbed the ladder and took care of the problem. He then explained, "Someone has come and taken your line and given it to someone else. I'm going to give it back to you, and they'll just have to come back again and do the job right."

Our connection was working, and somehow I knew there was something more to it than that. My connection with the Lord was getting hooked up again. Life had just been too busy to really stop, breathe, listen, and look up.

I pray each day alone and with my family. I read the Word with my children. I read many of the online articles and posts. My work involves a lot of Word-based reading material and Spirit-led writing and prophecy. But there's something different about stopping for just me-time. Just me and Jesus, absorbing things that are just for me. Luxury.

When you are a mother, with constant needs to tend to, you put your own needs aside so many times that eventually you save yourself the trouble and stop wishing for and attempting to enjoy things for yourself anymore. But Jesus wanted me to connect—my heart to His.

Peace and relief in our children's situation was felt as I attempted each day to spend some "just Jesus and me" time. There was a marked difference from that time on in the problems we were facing—especially on the days I managed to take time to stop and have quiet, focused reading and meditation time.

The other day I was about to read something to the children. Two of them were eager to listen, but one of them darted out of the room, as if the sight of a book triggered an eject button. He chose to go off to play. I was sad. I wanted to have a nice time teaching them something. I looked forward to this time.

This boy is happy to play with me, he loves my cooking and is vocal with his appreciation, he's obedient, and he's glad to romp around outside together. He's very glad to hug and cuddle, and he's thankful that I'm there to comfort him when he's hurt. So it's not that he doesn't like me, and he knows he needs me. But it seemed lately he didn't want to listen or absorb anything I wanted to impart—in books or verbally. And that leaves a hole in our relationship.

The thought came to me, "Am I being that way with Jesus? I like to have Jesus around. I'm glad He can fix up my hurts. I depend on Him being there for me when I pray and have a need. I like to praise Him and think He's just great. I like to know that I'm pleasing Him and I try to obey Him. But am I willing to take the time to sit in the student seat and to let Him instruct me and read His Word, to study it, to focus?"

It's really hard to do. There's so much else to think about. My mind is like a dozen machines, trying to keep everything going and keeping track of everything. There are a lot of jokes about guys not understanding how a woman's mind works, and they have to learn tolerance and understanding. A woman might, in a moment of intimacy, say the most unrelated things—because there is so much going on in her mind!

But for some of us women, at least for me, I have to not give in to negative comparing with guys' seeming luxury of being able to face things one at a time, focus on one job at a time. Seems so relaxing! To compensate for the many jobs I have to fill—all simultaneously—the

Lord gave me a complex mind-machine that can juggle several things at once, keeping mental track, data, and stats of everything.

So for me to take the time to stop all those thinking machines, put everything on pause, put my motor in “park” and focus on something that is only for me—not for the kids, the house, our marriage, the work, for others, and so forth—is a real change of gears. The experience with my son, who for that week wanted to do anything—as long as it wasn’t to listen and learn anything—gave me a clear picture of how Jesus must feel. My son has changed now, and so have I.

Until then, I thought it was good enough to tell Jesus I love Him, to be serving Him, to be working for Him, to be His intimate mate. But my not stopping to let Him instruct and teach me, and to take time to really get to know Him personally, was leaving a hole in our relationship. I needed to do more than just read Word-related material quickly to take in spiritual facts. Like meeting with a close friend over a meal. The food intake isn’t the main thing you are there for, but the fellowship and the knitting of hearts.

I’m forming new habits and schedules now. I tell the kids, “It’s my Jesus time now.” And most of the time it works out, and they respect it. After all, it’s baked into their day and expected of them—to have time daily to read and pray. If I don’t do it too, how will they learn to make it a life habit and reap the wonderful benefits?