

Sunday, February 16, 2025

Scripture Reading: Psalm 1

We can learn a lot from trees: they're always grounded but never stop reaching heavenward. —Everett Mamor

Have you ever stood beneath an enormous tree and had someone take a photo? Compared to the mighty oak or redwood, you looked so small and insignificant.

I have had the pleasure of seeing up close and personal a number of mighty tree species. For example, the sequoias and redwoods of California, the Sitka spruce of Oregon, enchanting weeping willows along the canals of eastern China, the magnificent banyan trees of India. Perhaps you have some favorite memories of trees. You might remember a special tree from your childhood.

The psalmist is thinking of a tree. It is standing tall and proud by the riverside. Its roots delve deep into the soil, drawing life-sustaining water from the ever-flowing stream. This tree is not just surviving; it is thriving. Its leaves are lush and green, and its branches heavy with fruit in due season.

For David, this tree, so vibrant and full of life, stands as a beautiful metaphor for the life of a believer who is rooted in God's Word.

Just as the tree flourishes by the water, we, too, are called to thrive by immersing ourselves in the word of God. The streams of water represent the life-giving, sustaining power of Scripture. When we meditate on God's word day and night, allowing it to nourish and guide us, we become like that tree — stable, strong and fruitful.

Of course, like us, trees face storms from time to time. But a tree with deep roots stands firm. In the same way, when our lives are deeply rooted in the word of God, we, too, can withstand trials and temptations. The psalmist promises that our "leaves do not wither" — even in times of drought or hardship.

There's more! A tree that yields fruit in its season is *fulfilling its purpose*, providing nourishment and shade to those around it. As we grow in our faith and understanding, our lives will naturally bear fruit — acts of kindness, love, patience and joy — that bless others and glorify God.

Let's redouble our efforts to stay deeply rooted in God's word. Let's draw from the wisdom and strength of God. Let's commit to making the study and meditation of Scripture a priority. By doing so, we will become like the mighty oak, or the redwood, sequoia, willow or banyan tree. We will bear fruit in season, our leaves never withering.

—Timothy Merrill

Prayer: O Lord, may I delight in your word and meditate on it day and night, so that I might stand tall and firm, reflecting the beauty and strength of a life deeply rooted in you. Amen.

Daily Bible Readings

- Sunday:** Exodus 21-24
- Monday:** Exodus 25-27
- Tuesday:** Exodus 28-31
- Wednesday:** Exodus 32-34
- Thursday:** Exodus 35-37
- Friday:** Exodus 38-40
- Saturday:** Psalms 16-18

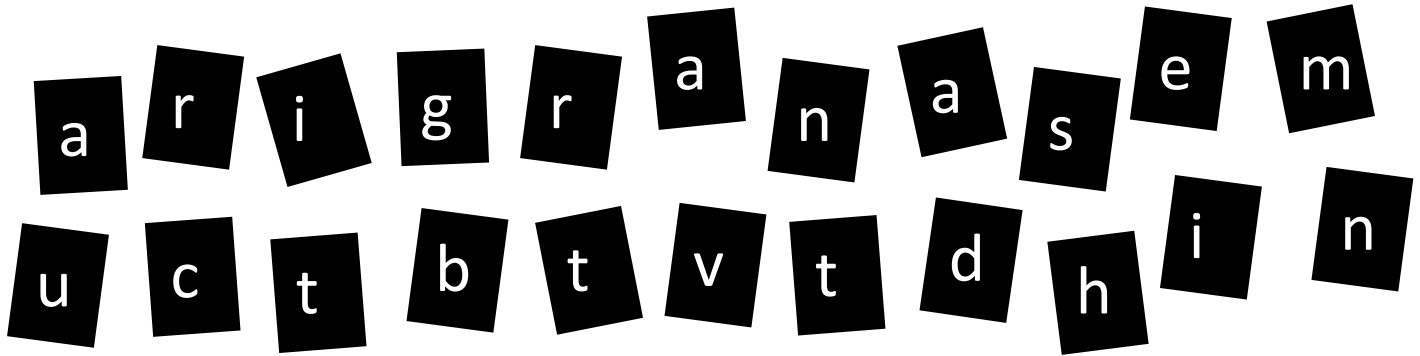
Verse to Remember

My God is my rock, in whom I take refuge. He is my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.

—Psalm 18:2 (NIV)

SCRAMBLED LETTERS

Directions: Arrange the letters below in the grid as needed to make a collection of intersecting words. Use each letter only once (some letters repeat — for example, “a” and “t”).



NOTE: There are a number of different ways to arrange the letters into intersecting words on this grid.

Biblical Brain Baffler: “Out of the eater came something to eat. Out of the strong came something sweet.” This riddle was posed by Samson. The full story can be found in the book of Judges. See Judges 14:14.

Solution:
 Bees making a honeycomb inside the carcass of a lion. See Judges 14:18.