

Psalm 1

Growing deep roots

The psalmist draws a contrast between the 'happy' who resist the temptation to be drawn away from God's ways and the 'wicked'. The former are compared to flourishing and healthy trees, while the latter will be blown away like chaff in the wind.



DISCOVER



'Chat and Catch' is a great way to learn how to speak to God and catch his response. This is a skill that allows us to deepen our root system, recognising God's voice through all of life's noise. Find a quiet space and sit or lie down. Talk to God in your heart, led by the following prompts, allowing space to notice how you can catch God's responses in a thought, a feeling, a mental picture, a wise word from someone else or a Bible verse:

Tell God what sort of week you've had. What do you love about God? Tell him that. Ask God what he loves about you. Now ask how deep and wide God's roots stretch.

LISTEN

Listen to 'Rooted', a song by Kerrie Roberts.



Plant

February is a great time to sow some seeds. Carrots, lettuce, radishes, spinach and tomatoes are all seeds you can start sowing indoors around this time in the UK. See how long it takes for the first sprout of life to show. When it comes times to harvest observe the roots, see how big they are, how they have held the plant into the ground no matter what weather it has had to face.

Bible notes



Psalm 1 is one of the 'Wisdom' psalms that consider the meaning of life and, in particular, the problem of God's people suffering while the wicked prosper. In the psalms, 'the wicked' are those opposed to God and therefore to God's people; 'sinners' are those who are out of step with God, and 'scoffers' are those who are proud at their own self-sufficiency. In today's psalm, these people are described as 'like chaff that the wind drives away' (v.4). They are easily rocked and thrown off course by circumstances. In contrast 'the righteous', those who are in relationship with God, are not self-sufficient. They focus on God's instruction (the 'law'), on living God's way – and God watches over them. This gives them stability and a reason to feel secure and confident in their resilience – a stronger feeling than the translation 'happy' would suggest. There is a picture here of fruitfulness, of the flourishing of healthy plants that have all they need to grow and thrive. This is a common picture in the Hebrew Bible for God's people. It speaks of permanence, rootedness in God, depth and stability of faith. It takes time, nourishment and consistency to grow into a strong tree. The suggestion that God's people prosper is one that we could easily argue with when we consider the suffering that is often part of life. However, it is the deep-rootedness of a tree that enables it to stay standing, to live and eventually to flourish once again. It may not come through adverse circumstances unscathed, but it can still stand firm.

First impressions

- How are your spiritual roots? Deep and healthy? Or shallow?
- If people pulled you up by the roots, what would they see?
- What helps to nurture deep roots?



Pray



(wiggle your toes) We pray for our roots and shoots. Help us to know you more to help us to grow.
(wave your arms gently) We pray for our leaves and branches. Help us to reach out into our world to care and share.
(shake your body) We pray for our fruit. Help us to be like you in all we do. Amen.

LOOK



Trees can be recognised by their leaves and seeds. Learn to identify some trees using the Woodland Trust's app: <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/trees-woods-and-wildlife/british-trees/how-to-identify-trees/>

Reflect on how people can be recognised as being part of Jesus' family by the way we show up. How can you grow and demonstrate your faith? How can you grow deeper roots in God?