



The Songs of Jesus: A Year of Daily Devotions in the Psalms

Timothy J. Keller, Kathy Keller

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Renowned pastor and *New York Times* bestselling author Timothy Keller writes the book his readers have been asking for: A year-long daily devotional, beautifully designed with gilt edges and a gold ribbon marker.

The Book of Psalms is known as the Bible's songbook—Jesus knew all 150 psalms intimately, and relied on them to face every situation, including his death.

Two decades ago, Tim Keller began reading the entire Book of Psalms every month. *The Songs of Jesus* is based on his accumulated years of study, insight, and inspiration recorded in his prayer journals. Kathy Keller came to reading the psalms as a support during an extended illness. Together they have distilled the meaning of each verse, inviting readers into the vast wisdom of the psalms.

If you have no devotional life yet, this book is a wonderful way to start. If you already spend time in study and prayer, understanding every verse of the psalms will bring you a new level of intimacy with God, unlocking your purpose within God's kingdom.

The Songs of Jesus: A Year of Daily Devotions in the Psalms Details

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From Reader Review The Songs of Jesus: A Year of Daily Devotions in the Psalms for online ebook

David says

Really, really, really good. Fantastic, gospel centered guide through the psalms.

Kevin Halloran says

Read full review and read sample devotional [here](#).

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The newest book from Tim and Kathy Keller is The Songs of Jesus: A Year of Daily Devotions in the Psalms. The Songs of Jesus digs into a beloved portion of Scripture to share daily devotions with corresponding prayers. It is Tim and Kathy Keller's second book together (the first was The Meaning of Marriage).

Each day begins with a portion of the Psalms (sometimes an entire psalm, but never more than a dozen verses), a devotional thought of about 150 words, and a short prayer. These prayers, "should be seen as 'on?ramps,' not as complete prayers. The reader should follow the trajectory of the prayers and keep going, filling each prayer out with personal particulars, as well as always praying in Jesus's name (John 14:13)."

The Kellers recommend using the devotional three ways:

The simplest way is to read the psalm and the meditation slowly, and then use the prayer to begin praying the psalm yourself.

The second way to use the devotional is to take the time to look up the additional scriptural references that are embedded in the meditation and sometimes in the prayer.

The third way to use the devotional is to journal through it while keeping three questions in mind:

Adore—What did you learn about God for which you could praise or thank him?

Admit—What did you learn about yourself for which you could repent?

Aspire—What did you learn about life that you could aspire to, ask for, and act on?

The Songs of Jesus among other Devotionals (particularly Jesus Calling)

Why choose the book of psalms? The Kellers share their reasoning:

"Many find modern devotionals to be either too upbeat or too sentimental or too doctrinal or too mystical because they reflect the perspective and experience of just one human author. The psalms, by contrast, give us a range of divinely inspired voices of different temperaments and experiences."

In addition to a love for the Psalter (which is like a swiss-army knife for our prayer lives), I have a hunch that at least part of the motivation behind this book was to provide a healthy alternative to the controversial, yet immensely popular devotional Jesus Calling by Sarah Young.

In Kathy Keller's review of Jesus Calling, she called it "unhelpful and to be avoided" because Young writes

from the first-person perspective of Jesus and admits to doubting Scripture's sufficiency (in the introduction she states: "I knew that God communicated with me through the Bible, but I yearned for more. I wanted to hear what God had to say to me personally on a given day.").

Another critique was that Jesus Calling appeals too much to the experiential at the expense of the doctrinal—which is where the book of Psalms fits in perfectly as a book that so beautifully interweaves both rich doctrine with a wide range of human emotions. Keller's review continues, "If you want to experience Jesus, learn how to find him in his Word. His real Word."

The Songs of Jesus will lead readers to Jesus through His Word and through praying His Word back to Him.

My recommendation

My first thought as I flipped through The Songs of Jesus was, "This wasn't what I expected." Being a big fan of Tim's writing, I found myself craving more Scriptural and cultural insights than the 150ish word devotional and 50ish word prayer can offer. This disappointment dissipated when I remembered the purpose of the book: to help readers meditate on the Psalms and pray them to know and experience Jesus. In other words, I was focused on the on-ramp instead of the highway.

The Songs of Jesus are a rich collection of devotions that are clear and straight to the point, getting to the heart of each Psalm and helping readers think through them practically and prayerfully. Diligent readers and those who journal through it will feast on the richness of the Psalter and rejoice as they behold and commune with the Savior who so faithfully embodied the psalms.

Don Whitney says in Praying the Bible that many Christians are bored in prayer because they pray the same old things about the same old things. If taken to heart and diligently prayed, The Songs of Jesus will fight against this boredom and fill our minds and hearts with fresh thoughts and prayers to our Lord.

I expect this volume to expand Keller's already wide readership base by offering an accessible and top-notch alternative to Jesus Calling. While I typically don't like the daily devotional format, I will keep The Songs of Jesus close at hand for my wife and I to sing and pray the songs of Jesus together.

Title: The Songs of Jesus: A Year of Daily Devotions in the Psalms

Author: Timothy and Kathy Keller

Publisher: Viking

Year: 2015

Rating: 5 Stars

Aharon says

An excellent tool to read and reflect the psalms on a day by day basis.

Luke says

Wonderful devotional I read in 2016. Read more than one page several days! For someone wanting a guide

to the Psalms, a great resource that breaks them down into bite-sized bits. Gives some great insights. Includes verses from hymns and poems. As you would expect from Keller, a tremendous and encouraging book!

Lexi says

A great resource for bite-sized reflections on the Psalms

Barnabas Piper says

The benefit of reflecting on Psalms for a year is remarkable. Consistently visiting verses about pain, praise, God, His people, and promise is so powerful for one's faith, and the insights that the Kellers offer are deep and rich too.

Cindy Rollins says

This is a great devotional which I started last November and finished almost within a year. It covers the entire book of Psalms, my favorite Bible book. Even as I say that I feel that maybe we shouldn't have favorites but I do. The Kellers, Tim and Kathy, join together to create a devotional that does not get bogged down in illustrations. Each day has a passage from the Psalms, some days it is a whole Psalm, often a partial one, a short discussion of the verses, and a prayer.

I like to read a short devotional every day after my own personal devotions but I generally stick to old favorites such as Streams in the Desert or My Utmost for His Highest. This book will definitely go into the rotation.

yoon says

Daily devotionals beautifully written by Tim + Kathy Keller. Best way to start the day and whet my appetite for His word and time of prayer.

Jackie Eason says

While this devotional can be helpful for studying the Psalms, I found it to be pretty shallow as a devotional. There isn't much content for each day. Also, if Psalms were spread out over several days, often there wasn't much continuity despite all of the passages being from the same chapter. I found a lot of application to be a bit fruity (and sometime even a BIG stretch from what I saw from the text). If you wanted to understand the Psalms, I wouldn't recommend this. If you wanted an additional resources alongside other resources, this could be helpful. I just don't find one or two paragraphs followed by a short prayer to be enough content for deep devotional study and comprehension.

Ian says

I've spent 2016 in the Psalms and this is one of the sources I used to embellish my understanding of these fabulous "songs of Jesus." I'm a huge fan of Tim Keller's biblical teaching that I knew he and Kathy would provide wonderful insights.

The Kellers covered many of the Psalms across multiple days. Typically, they would provide 5-10 verses of the Psalm, a short 150 word devotional and relevant closing prayer. There was a gem of wisdom on most days that helped shine some insight into God's character.

They share in the Introduction the following:

"We are not simply to read psalms; we are to be immersed in them so that they profoundly shape how we relate to God. The psalms are the divinely ordained way to learn devotion to our God."

And this devotional does indeed help the reader to immerse themselves in the Psalms. Rarely did I simply walk away upon meditating on the day's reading rather it would lead me to greater praise, reflection and desire for the Lord.

If you are planning to immerse yourselves in the Psalms may I encourage you to grab a copy of "The Songs of Jesus."

Jonathan Cliff says

I do not normally think highly of devotional books. They tend to get tiresome and the degree of sameness grows old quickly.

Those two things did not happen. Both the Kellers and the Psalmist took me on a journey through hard times and victories. I'll never forget the learnings and thankfulness imparted through this small daily devotional.

A+ all day long!

Gumble's Yard says

Very well written daily devotional which proceeds through the Psalms in order, and has a commentary and prayer to accompany every day's reading.

Mark says

I am so grateful for this, the best devotional I have read in the last 30 years. The approach of the Kellers is refreshingly practical, very devotional. It illustrates what it means to "preach the Gospel to yourself." Every

day is a constant reminder of God's character and Jesus' actions and thoughts toward us. They honor God's word through recalling sound exposition and then, every day, they "bring it home" with an intimate prayer.

Hilary Forrest says

I really enjoyed Tim Keller's book on the Psalms this year. In the beginning I followed his suggestion to journal with the Adore, Admit and Aspire reflections before I read what he had written on the Psalm or portion of a particular Psalm for the day. When I did that method I really benefited.

Graham Heslop says

It seems harsh to award such a low rating to a book that I know - from numerous conversations - has enriched and encouraged many Christians. Personally I have found Keller's succinct devotions and prayers a help, a rewarding resource, and often the much-needed injection of biblical truth to cope with life, with its mundanity and myriad challenges.

However, I have found Keller's light-handedness on the Psalter quite frustrating and (more seriously) a little irresponsible. What Keller models in this wonderful collection of theological treasures is loose Bible handling and the all too common approach today of spiritualising Scripture. I cede that this is a devotional, and not a technical commentary, but that doesn't waive the need for us to be mindful readers of Scripture, carefully considering the context of passages and asking the important questions about situation and original meaning.

I would not discourage anyone from purchasing a copy of this book and working through it. You will be helped in your Christian, challenged by your sin, reminded that Jesus is worthy of all praise, and moved to heartfelt and thoughtful prayer. However, you won't be helped in knowing how to read the Psalms (or any part of the Bible for that matter) yourself and translating that into prayer
