

Volker Schunck

You hear me

*because of their crying
I stand up and help all
who are longing for me
(Psalm 12)*

You hear me

My Psalms

Volker Schunck



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About me



I live in Dresden, Germany. First I was a merchant, then I studied theology for a few years. Through my engagement with Zen I became aware of the Christian mysticism. Meanwhile I go my own way. Faith is for me not only a world-view but a mode of being.

My Christian faith and my experiences in meditation influence my everyday life, in which I try to be attentive. My books arise from this spirit too.

Introduction

We are living in troubled times. Terror and disasters have shocked Germany and the world. But we needn't to despair when we think of tomorrow. Therefore not because God lives.

These experiences haven't only made the authors of the psalms in the bible, but countless humans experienced comfort and hope for their lives through the psalms. Yes, that is true, I'm not alone but in God's hand.

I know many people who can't do anything with the bible, but who in spite of that love and honor the psalms. Here people "like you and me" talk, cry, shout, sue, pray and despair, of themselves, of their life situations, of God. That is no smart talk from the pulpit, but here in many texts it is about pure survival.

I myself loved the psalms all my life. I cried and hoped with the authors of the psalms – and they with me. They gave me words when my voice was choked by tears, they let me believe, when I was in despair of God.

The psalms are not political correct or conform to society, but come directly from the heart of the praying man. They frankly say and mean it so: “Pest and Cholera”, “death and doom” for the enemies, for the powerful and godless. That is pre-Christian, pre-humanistic, archaic.

Let’s face it, mostly we push it aside, are too good socialized and well-mannered, but in our darkest hours we forget that we are Christians, we forget “make peace without weapons” and “love your next”. Then we become wild and uncivilized.

There is a lot in us, what slumbers under our blank polished surface. It still breaks in the Psalms through the surface of the language. When it became too violent for me, I weakened it.

I translated the psalms, which you can find here by myself. In doing so, I was more interested in my own experiences of faith, which influenced my translation of the psalms, than in textual accuracy. I interpreted the psalms that way that everybody can pray them. God opens his arms for every human, who comes in his distress to him – no matter if Skeptic, Jew, Muslim or Christian.

Let yourself be touched by the psalms. I would be glad, if they could help you *right then* to talk to God, when your life circumstances have made you speechless.

God bless you, my friends!

Yours Volker

Psalm 1

You are lucky, if you live different as they, who mock everything what is holy for you, because they don't believe in God. Their so called "good" advices have no meaning to you, because you know the bible and God lives in your heart.

You are like a tree, who doesn't know thirst, because he stands right next to a river. What you do is meaningful and has value and permanence.

But they, who don't believe in God have no anchor in their lives. They are like leaves which the wind blows in all directions. Neither they have permanence in God's community nor in God's judgment. God carries the believers in his heart but forgets the godless.

Psalm 3

Oh God, I have so many enemies, so many people are against me! Many say of me: God doesn't help him. But you, Lord, are my protection, and you give me back my dignity, that I can walk my way upright with my head lifted up.

My soul calls to the Lord, you hear me from the beyond of the mountains. I lie and sleep and awake, for I am in your hand. Therefore I am not afraid of my enemies gathering against me.

Come on, Lord, help me, my God! Let my enemies run out of breath, that their talking against me is reduced to silence. You help me, Lord. Bless all who believe in you.

Psalm 4

Listen to me when I call to you, God. Lord, you give me justice, and you comfort me in my fear. Be merciful to me and listen to my prayer!

You people with power, how long do you want to spit in my face? You stroke yourselves in your self-complacent vanity over your overeaten bellies and pervert the facts as you like.

But watch out! Don't underestimate the power of God, who listens to my prayers and protects my ways.

My brothers and sisters, if they make you see red, don't let your anger grow to hatred, but open your hearts in the silence in front of God. If possible, don't do wrong and hope in the Lord.

Many of us have already given up hope that the good will win in the end.

Lord, fill us with your presence, and let your face shine upon us, that we may hope again.

The powerful trust in their social position in society, but you fill my heart with joy.

So I can sleep peacefully. You alone are my fortress and confidence, what already can people do to me.

Psalm 5

Lord, hear my words, please give me your attention! Open yourself to my crying, my Lord and my God. I want to pray to you.

Lord, still in the early morning you want to hear my voice; still in the early morning I will come to you and listen to you.

You are not a God, who likes an evil heart; who is evil, cannot see your face.

The prigs cannot exist in front of you; you are an enemy of all evildoers.

You knock off all liars; the bloody-minded and the malicious are a horror to the Lord.

But I want to go in your house, because I have experienced your goodness, to marvel at your holyness in devotion.

Lord, guide me with your justice, so that my enemies marvel; clear your way for me. They are unreliable backbiters; their hearts are evil. What they say is not good and life-giving, but brings death, because they talk with forked tongues..

Condemn them, God that they self fall in the pit, which they have digged for others. Make them to outcast because of their crimes, for they don't want to convert to you.

But let all rejoice, who trust in you; they praise you eternally, because you protect them; let all be happy, who love your name.

For you, Lord, bless all who love justice; your forgiving love is their shield.

Psalm 6

O Lord, don't punish me in your anger, and don't strike me in your grudge. Lord, be merciful to me, for I am weak; heal me, Lord, for my soul is in fear, my soul is in great fear. O you, Lord, how long will it still go on like this?

Turn to me, Lord; save my soul; remember yourself to your goodness! For the dead can't think of you, and they also can't thank you.

I am so tired; I have cried the whole night long until I was empty.

I walk bowed over, my grief has made me old; I'm ducked by fear.

Leave me finally alone, you criminals; for the Lord hears my crying, the Lord hears my despair.; he makes my sorrows to his own.

Therefore my enemies must go down and the fear of God comes over them, yes, out of the blue they will go down.

Psalm 8

Lord, our God, your glorious name is testified by the glory of creation, the whole heaven praises you!

You make the small children and babies powerful by listening to the praise of their mouths, to ashame your enemies, that the enemies and murderers perish.

I'm astonished, when I look to the sky, the moon and the stars, they are the work of your hands. What is the human, that you remember him and that you care about him?

You crowned us with the same dignity and glory which you possess by yourself.

You put the work of your hands at our feet, we have the responsibility for your creation in our hands: The oceans and regions with all animal and dying species, how fragile is your creation.

Lord, our God, how glorious is your name at
the whole world!

Psalm 11

I trust the Lord. Your warnings are still in my ears: Fly like a bird to the mountains. Watch, the godless already put their arrows on the arches to kill you underhand. They are ruthless and stick at nothing. They have razed decency and morality, the foundations of human's life, to the ground. What can I already do against them alone?

But God you are in heaven, and you can see in every human's heart. You prove your believers a lot, but the godless are an aversion for you, because they are egoistic and only look after number one and have forgotten you and their next. They will perish in the storms of life because they do not believe in you.

God, you are righteous and love righteousness. When will I finally see your face?

Psalm 12

Help me, Lord! Who still ask for your will, who still believes these days in you at all? They talk trash, they delude each other, these snake tongues. We set the tone, because we are in authority, God is an illusion.

So the oppressed and poor in society are deluded by the opinion-makers. But especially because of their crying I stand up and help all, who are longing for me, promises God, the Lord.

The words of the Lord are pure like white snow and shine like the morning star.

You Lord want to protect them and us too against the oppressors, from eternity to eternity. Because the godlessness is always increasing. Therefore we ask for your shelter. We are in your hand!

Psalm 13

Lord, how long will you still forget me? How long will you still hide your face from me? How long shall still fear and sorrows eat me? How long do my enemies still have the upper hand?

Look at me and listen to me, Lord, you my God! Enlighten my dull eye, because my longing for death eats me, so that my enemies will not become more powerful, and that they can triumph in their malicious joy, that I go under.

But I hope for your mercy, my heart is glad, because it knows, how much you like to help.

I want to sing for you Lord, because you do so good to me.

Psalm 14

The fools are convinced by heart: There is no God. They are spoiled and their character is an anathema to me, because there is nobody who does good.

God looks from heaven at the humans to see if somebody is smart and asks for him. But they all are unable to do good and go their own ways, there is nobody who does good, not one.

Are these racketeer not ashamed to exploit the believers? They do not reckon with God at all. They will still tremble, for God is on the side of his followers.

You want to exploit the poor, but God is his hope.

Oh God, how much I long for your face! When will you finally free me?

Psalm 15

Lord, who will live in your house? Who will stay near you?

Who, who is spotless and who does the right and who tells the truth wholeheartedly.

Who does not badmouth others to harm them, and who does not insult his next.

Who does not honor the godless, but who honors those, who honor God.

Who adheres to what he has sworn, even if it is to his disadvantage.

Who is not a loan shark and who does not accept a bribe to harm the innocent.

Who acts in this way will be well.

Psalm 16

Protect me, Lord, for I trust you.

So I talked to the Lord: You are my Lord, only you are precious to me. I like those who believe in you. How holy and glorious they are!

But those who don't know you and chase the gods of this world, will not find fulfillment. Their goals are not mine, for they are no examples for me.

The Lord is my most precious property, my fate is in his hand. I am on to a winner with God. I praise God, he is my counselor; my heart longs for him at night.

I always must think of you Lord, you are by my side and don't let me go down.

Therefore my heart rejoices, for I am in your hand with heart and soul. You will not allow

that I go down, and you will not dispose my
soul to death. You show me the way to life.
You are by my side means: Joy, plenty, love,
for good and all.

Psalm 22

My God, my God, why did you leave me? I'm crying, but you are so far away. My God, I cry day and night to you, but you don't answer.

You are holy, God. Our praises are too little to do justice to you. Already my ancestors trusted in you. They hoped for you and you helped them. They cried to you and you saved them, you didn't disappoint their hopes.

But I, I crawl like a worm in the dirt, all laugh at me and despise me. They blaspheme about me and shake their heads because I still believe in you: "Maybe God can help you, because you have not any other friends."

You gave me my life, and I believe in you for as long as I can remember. Please, don't hide yourself no longer in front of me, because I suffer agony.

They threaten me from all sides and I am in deep water. I crawl on all fours. I can't defend myself any longer, because I have no more power and my tongue sticks to my palate. They have surrounded me like dogs and try to finalize me. They lick greedily their lips because of the little I still have to survive.

But fortunately you are still there, Lord, quickly, come and help me, you are my strength! Don't let my soul break in loneliness, save me from the loan sharks and cutthroats.

Look all at me, such is my God. I am one of the poorest, but God has shown me his face and has opened his ears for me. My misery has touched him. The whole world shall hear my praise.

I wish Lord, that you help all the poor as well as me, and that you liberate them from their

misery. They shall eat until they are satisfied that they praise you, Lord, and live forever.

But not only his people and the poor humans will praise God, but all the godless and all rich men all over the world will bend their knees in front of him and worship him. God's kingdom embraces the whole world. One will speak of his justice from generation to generation until the end of time.

Psalm 23

You are my shepherd, I will miss nothing. The water tastes sweeter and the grass looks greener in your presence, Lord.

You let laugh my soul, and because you are you, your way is good.

When my tent was nearly torn, I was not afraid, you were as close to me as never before.

I don't care about my enemies. Because you bless me, I cannot hate.

I have experienced your plenty all my life, until I see you face to face.

Psalm 28

When I call to you, Lord, you my refuge, don't be silent that I can live.

Hear my plead, I cry to you, I lift my hands for your help. Don't annihilate me together with the godless and evildoers, who pretend to be friendly with their next, but mean it badly in their heart.

Give them what they deserve for their evil deeds coming from an evil heart. For they neither honor what the Lord does, nor his whole creation; therefore he will break them and won't heal them again.

The Lord helps me with his strenght.

Help all, who believe in you and bless them from eternity to eternity.

Psalm 42

Like a human who is dying of thirst, my heart is crying to you, God.

My heart is thirsty for God, the living God. When do I finally meet you face to face? My tears are my daily bread, because my enemies always ask me: Where is your God?

When I realize that, my heart is crying, for I'm longing for my friends at home. Together with them I want to praise you in the service. Here I'm foreign.

My heart, why are you so sad, why do you worry so much?

Trust in God! For I will still thank him, that he is with me and helps me.

My God, my heart is sad, for I must constantly think of you here in the outland. I'm going

down here, I'm drowning in sadness.
Nevertheless: You promised me your goodness,
and at night I pray to you God, you my life.
God you are my rock, why have you forgotten
me? Why do you allow, that my enemies make
me such sad? They mellow me, when they ask
me daily: Where is your God?

My heart, why are you so sad, why do you
worry so much? Trust in God! For I will still
thank him, that he is with me and helps me.

Psalm 46

God is my refuge and strength. He helped me very often, when I had a lot of trouble. Therefore I'm not afraid, even if the world goes down and I'm in deep water.

God lives in me, therefore I needn't to be afraid. My heart is grounded in God. God already helps me in the early morning.

They, who don't know God, get discouraged and don't have inner stability.

God helps me and protects me. Come all here, be still and know God.

Psalm 54

Help me, God, for your good name's sake, give me justice by your power. God, listen to my prayer, accept my words. For prigs work against me, and power-hungry people try to harm me; They don't know God.

Look all at me, such is my God, the Lord keeps me alive. He will turn the evil of my enemies against themselves.

Scare them by standing by me with your faithfulness! Than I want to give you my joy and praise your name, because it has comforted me so much. You save me from all my misery, that I can triumph over my enemies.

Psalm 70

Hurry God to save me, help me, Lord! That they who want to kill me become ashamed. Hurry God to save me, help me, Lord! That they, who want me to go down, move back and themselves get mocked.

Shame on them, who point with their fingers at me.

In contrast they who ask for your will and know that your love heals us, shall be glad and cheerful in you, and who always praise you: High praise be to God.

I'm miserable, I'm poor.

God, hurry to me, for you are my helper and saver. God, don't come too late!

Psalm 82

God stands in his community and is judge about you, who you have made yourselves to gods. My brothers and sisters, how long do you want judge unjust and prefer the godless to the god-fearing? Advocate for the right of the poor and orphans and help the oppressed and needy to their justice. Save the powerless and poor and free them from the violence of the godless.

But they don't let them tell anything and don't have respect for anything; they continue to walk in darkness; the fundamental values of the nation are in danger.

Indeed I said: You are like gods, and children of the highest; but you will die like normal people and you will go down like other tyrants.

God, set off and judge the world; for all nations are in your hand.

Psalm 88

Lord, God, you my redeemer, I cry to you day and night. Open your heart for my prayer; bow yourself to me, that you can hear my crying. For my soul suffers, and I am threatened by death. People look at me like at someone who must die; I am a human who has no help. I am like the dead, left like the slain in the graves, whom you don't think anymore, and who you don't touch with your hand. You have pronounced me dead, banned in darkness. Your anger depresses me; I am in deep water.

You has made my friends to strangers; I am a horror for them. I am captured and cannot get out. I am bowed because of my misery. Lord, I cry to you daily; I lift up my hands for your help. Are you going to do miracles to the dead, will the dead resurrect and thank you?

Will one talk about your goodness in the graves and about your faithfulness in decay?

Will one see your miracles in darkness, or your justice in the forgotten neverland?

Nevertheless: I cry to you, Lord, my prayers wake the morning.

Why do you cast me out, Lord, why do you hide your face from me? I am miserable and powerless, because you have cast me out; I suffer, because you frighten me, I have nearly no hope. Your anger lies on me; my fear of you presses me down. I feel crowded by you daily, as if I am drowning. It is up to you, that my friends and my kin avoid me, because my misery is a horror for them.

Psalm 113

Halleluja! Praise the Lord, praise the Name of the Lord!

The Name of the Lord be praised, from now on to eternity! From sunrise to sunset the Name of the Lord be praised!

The Lord is superior to the pagans, his glory is as far as heaven.

Who is similar to God? Who is above everything and look after the little ones in heaven and on earth. Who rights the powerless from dust and who pulls the poor out of the mud to make them equal to the powerful and the famous. He makes the woman, who cannot get a baby, to a happy mother. Halleluja!

Psalm 121

I raise my eyes and look up to the mountains.

I know from up there beyond the mountains
my help is coming.

My help comes from God who made the earth
and the sky.

I remember.

He will not let me slip. God does not sleep but
protects me.

The Lord protects me in the heat of the life.
His goodness lets me keep a clear head.

Lord, protect me with body and soul. As you
went along with me in the past, be with me
tomorrow and bless what I do forever.

Psalm 127

If the Lord does not bless your life plans, all your planing is senseless.

If the Lord does not protect you, to protect yourself is senseless. It is senseless, to worry yourself from morning to night; for God gives everything to his friends in sleep.

Behold, children are a gift of the Lord. To have many children means to be strong. You are lucky, if you have many children, who stand by you! Then they will help you in your old age and you are not alone in the world.

Psalm 139

Lord, you study me and know me.

You know if I sit or if I get up; you understand my thoughts from afar If I walk or lie, you are with me and see all my ways. You know before, what I want to say. You protect me from all sides and hold your hand over me. The experience of your presence is wonderful for me and too high; I can't understand it.

I can't hide from you. If I fly into heaven, so you are there. If I go to hell, so you are there too. If I take the wings of dawn to hide at the utter ocean, you would lead and guide me there too. If I say: Darkness shall hide me! So even the night must be light around me. For even darkness is not dark with you, the night shines with you like the day, darkness is like light with you.

You created me with every fibre in my mother's womb. I thank you, that you created me so wonderful. All your works are wonderful, I know that now. You know me, although my origin finally is a wonder. Your eyes saw me, although I didn't still exist, you know my future, although it lies ahead of me.

How precious are your thoughts to me, God! You have so many thoughts! They are more numerous than the sand grains of this world. When I wake up, you are my first thought.

Oh God, may you annihilate the godless, which are greedy for my blood! For they blaspheme your name, and they are hostile to me without reason. I hate, who hate you, Lord. It saddens me, that they are against you. My hate is real; they have become enemies to me.

Study me with body and soul, God, study my
deepest motives. When I am on a bad way,
take me back on your good, eternal way.

Psalm 142

I plead and cry with my voice to the Lord. I unburden myself to the Lord and show him my misery.

When I am afraid, you care about me.

My neighbors try to trap me.

They live indifferently alongside me and pretend not to know me. I am still attached to them; but nobody cares about me.

Lord, I cry to you: You are my hope, I only can live still through you.

Listen to my lamentation, for they torture me; save me from my chasers, for they are too powerful to me. Free me from my fear, that I can thank you. If you help me, those who have a sense for justice, will again back me up.

Psalm 148

Halleluja! Praise the Lord, praise the Lord in the height! Praise him, all his angels, praise him, you heavenly armies. Praise him, sun and moon, praise him you shining stars! Praise him, all sky and its life-giving water! All shall praise the name of the Lord, for by his word they were created. He holds the whole cosmos in his hands, everything goes in an orderly fashion.

Praise the Lord on earth, you whales and the depth of the oceans. Fire, hail, snow and steam, thunder and storm, signs of your power; mountains and hills, fruit-trees and cedars; wild and tame animals, worms and birds; you powerful in the world and all nations; ruler and judges; young wives and young men; the old together with the young!

All together shall praise the name of the Lord;
for only his name alone is holy, it alone is
worth to be praised, up to the ends of earth, up
to the last corner of heaven. Halleluja!

Psalm 150

Halleluja! Praise the Lord in heaven, praise him in all his power!

I praise you for your deeds, I praise you Lord, because you are very beautiful.

Praise him with drums and trumpets, praise him with songs and prayers.

Praise him with your deeds, praise him all days. Every soul praise the Lord! Halleluja!