



Praying THE PSALMS

A PRAYER OFFERED AFTER READING PSALM 98
BY SHEILA LUTZ

I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart; I will recount all of your wonderful deeds. I will be glad and exult in you; I will sing praise to your name, O Most High (v. 1, 2).

○ Lord, my God, You are so generous to me. When I am afflicted, You are gracious to me. When I am in need, You lift me up. When I am oppressed by enemies, be they physical or emotional, circumstantial or others, or attacks by the enemy on my spirit, You are my stronghold. You turn the enemies back — whatever and whoever they are — and You look upon me with love, justice, and fairness. You do not forsake those who put their trust in You.

O Most High, as I read Your Word, You tell me to imitate You. You teach me that I am to tell others of Your marvelous deeds. I am to sing Your praises and rejoice before You — and others — as I recount Your salvation. I can bear other's burdens.

If I say, "What does that mean — really?," I am not at a loss. When I do not understand, I trust in You. You show me how Your Word lives in me and how Your Spirit enables me to help. You care for me when I am in pain. As I care for others who are sick or in pain, it may result in pain

for me as well, but I can continue to care for them because You always care for me. I love them, because You love each of us more. You judge me with justice and empathy. Part of bearing another's burdens is to be sympathetic and just — to have a loving, listening ear — not one that is critical and judgmental. Your Word teaches me. It gives me a relationship with You, God.

How You fill me with Your presence! Sometimes I can share a ministry of presence, just by being there, sitting with a heart that is hurting. At other times, I can sing of Your love and recount Your marvelous deeds. As You have made Yourself known to me, I can make myself known to others — even more, I can make You known to others: I can share how You brought me through my pain; You will ever be with them in times of need and trouble; their needs are never too great for You to tend; and Your love for them will never perish.

Oh Lord, Most High, You are too marvelous for even these simple words. *Q*

I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart; I will recount all of your wonderful deeds. I will be glad and exult in you; I will sing praise to your name, O Most High. Amen and Amen!