

## ORIGINAL ARTICLE

### The Human Between the Weakness of Nature and the Consolation of God in the Book of Psalms

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*“What is man that You are mindful of him, And the son of man that You visit him? For You have made him a little lower than the angels, And You have crowned him with glory and honor. You have made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet.” (Psalm 8:4–6, NKJV)*

يُعدُّ سِفْرُ الْمَزَامِيرِ واحداً من أعمق النصوص الشعريَّة والرُّوحية في الكتاب المقدَّس، لما يكتفئه من تجلِّية للتَّجربة الإنسانيَّة في صراعتها بين ضعف الطبيعة البشريَّة واستيافها الدائم إلى الله. فهو يُمثِّل مرآة للنفس البشريَّة في تأرجحها بين الخوف والرَّجاء، وبين الألم والبُحث عن تعزية الله.

ويُظهِر السَّفْرُ الإنسانَ لا كِبَطْلٍ فائقِ القُدرة، بل كمخلوقٍ ضعيفٍ يحملُ محنودية الجسد ونقَل الرِّمان، مع ما يجده في الله من ملجأ يردُّ إليه سكينته وقوته.

كما يُمكنُ النَّظْرُ إلى سِفْرِ الْمَزَامِيرِ كَنَشِيدٍ يتشكَّل صداه في قلب الإنسان الواقف بين ضفتي الضعف والرَّجاء؛ حيثُ يتجلى سرُّ الطبيعة البشريَّة التي تتحنى ولا تُسحق، وتضعف ولا تنهار، لأنها تستنجد إلى إله يدعُ المنكسرين في قلوبهم، ويحول الضعف نفسه إلى ينبوع قوة متجددة.

وإنطلاقاً من هذا المفهوم، تتناولُ هذه المقالةُ بيانات تصوُّر سِفْرِ الْمَزَامِيرِ لضعف الإنسان، والكيفية التي يُعلنُ فيها أنَّ هذا الضعف لا يَفُودُ إلى الموت، بل يتحوَّل إلى مضمارٍ لعمَلِ الله الذي يبدِّله إلى قوةٍ ورَّجاءٍ.

**Dutch:** Het Boek der Psalmen wordt meegeteld als de meest poëtische en spirituele teksten in het Heilige Schrift want het onthult de menselijke ervaring in zijn strijd tussen de zwakte van de menselijke natuur en zijn continue verlangen naar God. Het is een weerspiegeling van de menselijke ziel die schommelt tussen angst en hoop, en tussen pijn en de zoektocht naar de troost van God. In diens pagina's verschijnt de mens niet als een bovenmenselijke held, maar als een fragiel wezen die de beperkingen van het lichaam en het gewicht van tijd draagt, en desondanks een toevlucht in God vindt die hem rust en kracht teruggeeft. Het Boek der Psalmen is tevens een lofzang die weergalmt in de hart van de mens die tussen de oevers van zwakte en hoop staat. De mysterie van de menselijke natuur die buigt maar niet wordt verbrijzeld wordt aldaar onthuld; het verzwakt maar stort niet in omdat het op een God steunt die gebroken harten troost en zwakte omzet in een fontein van hernieuwde kracht. Dit artikel behandelt hoe het Boek der Psalmen de zwakte van de mens schetst en hoe het verkondigt dat deze zwakte niet tot de dood leidt maar een veld voor het werk van God wordt die het omzet in kracht en hoop.

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**English:** The Book of Psalms is counted among the deepest poetic and spiritual texts in the Holy Scripture, for it reveals the human experience in his struggle between the weakness of human nature and his continuous longing for God. It is a mirror of the human soul as it swings between fear and hope, and between pain and the search for the consolation of God. In its pages, man appears not as a superhuman hero, but as a fragile being who bears the limitation of the body and the weight of time, yet he finds in God a refuge that restores to him tranquility and strength. And the Book of Psalms is also a canticle that resounds in the heart of man standing between the two banks of weakness and hope. There the mystery of human nature, that bows but is not crushed, is revealed; it weakens but does not collapse, because it rests on a God who sustains the broken of heart and turns weakness itself into a fountain of renewed strength. From here, this article treats how the Book of Psalms portrays the weakness of man, and how it proclaims that this weakness does not lead to death, but becomes a field for the work of God who turns it into strength and hope.

**French:** Le Livre des Psaumes compte parmi les textes poétiques et spirituels les plus profonds des Saintes Écritures, car il révèle l'expérience humaine dans sa lutte entre la faiblesse de la nature humaine et son aspiration constante à Dieu. Il est le miroir de l'âme humaine oscillant entre crainte et espoir, entre souffrance et quête de la consolation divine. Dans ses pages, l'homme n'apparaît pas comme un héros surhumain, mais comme un être fragile, portant le poids du corps et du temps, et trouvant en Dieu un refuge qui lui rend sérénité et force. Le Livre des Psaumes est aussi un cantique qui résonne dans le cœur de celui qui se tient entre faiblesse et espoir. Là se dévoile le mystère de la nature humaine qui s'incline sans se briser ; qui faiblit sans s'effondrer, car elle repose sur un Dieu qui soutient les cœurs brisés et transforme la faiblesse elle-même en une source de force renouvelée. Cet article examine comment le Livre des Psaumes dépeint la faiblesse de l'homme et comment il proclame que cette faiblesse ne conduit pas à la mort, mais devient un terrain d'action pour Dieu qui la transforme en force et en espoir.

**German:** Das Buch der Psalmen gehört zu den tiefpoetischen und geistlichen Texten der Heiligen Schrift, denn es offenbart die menschliche Erfahrung im Ringen zwischen der Schwäche der menschlichen Natur und der beständigen Sehnsucht nach Gott. Es ist ein Spiegel der menschlichen Seele, die zwischen Furcht und Hoffnung schwingt, zwischen Schmerz und der Suche nach dem Trost Gottes.

Auf seinen Seiten erscheint der Mensch nicht als übermenschlicher Held, sondern als zerbrechliches Wesen, das die Begrenztheit des Körpers und die Last der Zeit trägt und dennoch in Gott eine Zuflucht findet, die ihm Ruhe und Stärke zurückgibt.

Das Buch der Psalmen ist auch ein Lied, das im Herzen des Menschen erklingt, der zwischen den beiden Ufern von Schwäche und Hoffnung steht. Dort offenbart sich das Geheimnis der menschlichen Natur, die sich beugt, aber nicht zerbricht; die schwach wird, aber nicht zusammenstürzt, weil sie auf Gott ruht, der die Zerschlagenen im Herzen stützt und die Schwäche selbst in eine Quelle erneuerter Kraft verwandelt.

Von hier aus behandelt dieser Artikel, wie das Buch der Psalmen die Schwäche des Menschen darstellt und wie es verkündet, dass diese Schwäche nicht zum Tod führt, sondern zu einem Feld für das Wirken Gottes, der sie in Stärke und Hoffnung verwandelt.

**Greek:** Το Βιβλίο των Ψαλμών συγκαταλέγεται ανάμεσα στα βαθύτερα ποιητικά και πνευματικά κείμενα της Αγίας Γραφής, καθώς αποκαλύπτει την ανθρώπινη εμπειρία στον αγώνα της ανάμεσα στην αδυναμία της ανθρώπινης φύσης και τη διαρκή λαχτάρα του ανθρώπου για τον Θεό. Αποτελεί καθρέφτη της ανθρώπινης ψυχής, η οποία ταλαντεύεται ανάμεσα στον φόβο και την ελπίδα, ανάμεσα στον πόνο και την αναζήτηση της θείας παρηγοριάς. Στις σελίδες του, ο άνθρωπος δεν παρουσιάζεται ως υπεράνθρωπος ήρωας, αλλά ως εύθραυστο ον που φέρει τα όρια του σώματος και το βάρος του χρόνου· κι όμως, μέσα στον Θεό βρίσκει καταφύγιο που του αποκαθιστά τη γαλήνη και τη δύναμη. Το Βιβλίο των Ψαλμών είναι επίσης ένας ύμνος που αντηχεί στην καρδιά του ανθρώπου, ο οποίος στέκεται ανάμεσα στις δύο όχθες της αδυναμίας και της ελπίδας. Εκεί αποκαλύπτεται το μυστήριο της ανθρώπινης φύσης που κάμπτεται αλλά δεν συντριβεται· εξασθενεί αλλά δεν καταρρέει, διότι στηρίζεται σε έναν Θεό που υποστηρίζει τους συντετριμμένους την καρδιά και

μετατρέπει την ίδια την αδυναμία σε πηγή ανανεωμένης δύναμης. Από αυτή την προοπτική, το άρθρο αυτό εξετάζει πώς το Βιβλίο των Ψαλμών παρουσιάζει την ανθρώπινη αδυναμία και πώς διακηρύσσει ότι αυτή η αδυναμία δεν οδηγεί στον θάνατο, αλλά γίνεται χώρος ενεργείας του Θεού, ο οποίος τη μεταμορφώνει σε δύναμη και ελπίδα.

**Swedish:** Psaltaren räknas som en av de mest djupgående poetiska och andliga texterna i den Heliga Skrift, eftersom den blottlägger människans erfarenhet i hennes kamp mellan den mänskliga naturens svaghet och hennes kontinuerliga längtan efter Gud. Den fungerar som en spegel för människosjälens när den rör sig mellan fruktan och hopp, samt mellan smärta och sökandet efter Guds tröst.

I Psaltarens texter framträder människan inte som en övermänsklig hjälte, utan som en bräcklig varelse som bär kroppens begränsning och tidens tyngd, men som trots detta finner en tillflykt i Gud, vilken återger henne både frid och styrka.

Psaltaren är också en lovsång som resonansmässigt klingar i människans hjärta, stående mellan de två stränderna av svaghet och hopp. Där uppenbaras mysteriet med den mänskliga naturen, som böjs men inte krossas, som försvagas men inte faller samman, eftersom den vilar i en Gud som upprättar dem som är förkrossade i hjärtat och som förvandlar själva svagheten till en källa till förnyad kraft.

Utifrån detta behandlar denna artikel hur Psaltaren skildrar människans svaghet och hur den förkunnar att denna svaghet inte leder till döden, utan blir ett område för Guds verksamhet, där han omvandlar svagheten till styrka och hopp.

### **The Psalms Reveal the True Face of Man**

The Book of Psalms does not conceal human frailty; rather, it sets it before us with complete honesty, serving as a mirror for the soul. It reminds us that a person's life is like grass that withers, a fleeting shadow, and a passing dream. These images, drawn by the Psalmist, are not intended to discourage the spirit, but to lead it into a humility that brings true insight.

The Psalm says: *“What is man that You are mindful of him? And the son of man that You visit him?”* (Psalm 8:4, NKJV), expressing the soul's astonishment before God's love and His attentive care despite human weakness and perishability. The Psalmist continues to portray the fragility of human life: *“Indeed, You have made my days as handbreadths, And my age is as nothing before You; Certainly every man at his best state is but vapor”* (Psalm 39:5, NKJV). Likewise, he affirms, *“Man is like a breath; His days are like a passing shadow.”* (Psalm 144:4, NKJV), and again *“You carry them away like a flood; They are like a sleep.”* (Psalm 90:5, NKJV) (that is, like a dream they become). Through these images, Scripture reveals the shortness and swift passing of life, calling us to humility before God and reminding us that life is not measured by the length of days or by human strength, but by closeness to God and the fulfillment of the purpose for which we were created.

If man is already fragile and transient, his weakness becomes even more evident when he faces distress, fear, and the pressures of daily life. This is openly acknowledged in the Psalms: *“Out of the depths I have cried to You, O Lord”* (Psalm 130:1, NKJV); *“Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am weak; Heal me, O Lord, for my bones are troubled; My soul also is greatly troubled”* (Psalm 6:2–3, NKJV); *“Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am in trouble; My eye wastes away with grief; My soul and my body also. For my life is spent with grief, and my years with sighing; My strength fails because of my iniquity, and my bones waste away”* (Psalm 31:9–10, NKJV); *“My heart pants, my strength fails me; As for the light of my eyes, it also has gone from me”* (Psalm 38:10,

NKJV); “*Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God*” (Psalm 42:5, NKJV); and “*I am weary with my groaning; All night I make my bed to swim; I drench my couch with my tears*” (Psalm 6:6, NKJV). These cries and inner struggles not only reflect a despairing weakness, but also reveal a deep consciousness of man’s need for God, who is the refuge and the strength for every broken heart.

And also: “*For my soul is full of troubles, And my life draws near to the grave*” (Psalm 88:3, NKJV); “*How long, O Lord? Will You forget me forever? How long will You hide Your face from me?*” (Psalm 13:1, NKJV); and “*Do not hide Your face from me in the day of my trouble; Incline Your ear to me; In the day that I call, answer me speedily*” (Psalm 102:2, NKJV). These expressions reflect man’s recognition of his shortcomings before daily problems and his urgent need to meet God who restores to him his joy, peace and strength.

### **Weakness Does Not Lead to Death ... But to The Bosom of God Who Consoles**

When man is broken and has a broken heart, the presence of God appears as consolation and strength that restore life to him: “*The Lord is near to those who have a broken heart, And saves such as have a contrite spirit*” (Psalm 34:18, NKJV); “*My flesh and my heart fail; But God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever*” (Psalm 73:26, NKJV); and “*My soul clings to the dust; Revive me according to Your word*” (Psalm 119:25, NKJV). Here a deeper spiritual truth is revealed: although man is frail and perishable, he finds in God his unfailing support, and through the cry of the broken heart, strength and hope are renewed. Despite the many images of human weakness, the Book of Psalms never leaves man in darkness. Man is weak, yes... but he is never abandoned. The Lord draws near, dries every tear, and transforms the very wound into a window through which the light of joy enters.

Thus the Psalmist says: “*What is man that You are mindful of him?*” (Psalm 8:4, NKJV). In these words, he affirms that human dignity does not arise from man himself, but is a divine gift bestowed when God created him in His own image. Although man is weak and his life is brief, God placed him in a position of great honor: “*You have made him a little lower than the angels, And You have crowned him with glory and honor.*” (Psalm 8:5, NKJV). God also appointed him as ruler over the whole creation, over animals, birds, and fish. This lordship is not an innate human power but an honor entrusted to him by God, who made him steward over the works of His hands. The Fathers teach that man’s dignity was not bestowed because he is the strongest or the longest-lived, but because God willed that he serve as His representative on earth. Thus, despite man’s fragility and weakness, God raised him as a king upon the earth, crowning him with glory and creating him in His image and likeness. The New Testament deepens this understanding by linking the Psalm to the Lord Jesus Himself. Saint Paul, in the Epistle to the Hebrews (Hebrews 2:6–9), interprets the phrase “*You have made him a little lower than the angels*” as referring to the Incarnation of Christ, who willingly took on a state lower than the angels in order to restore to humanity its lost glory. Through His humility, the Lord Jesus assumed our nature so that He might raise and exalt it with Him, and by His redeeming work, He restored to man the dignity forfeited in the fall. Thus, the Psalm offers a dual vision: man is weak and limited, yet honored with sovereignty and divine favor, an honor ultimately fulfilled and perfected in Christ, who restored humanity to its true standing before God the Father.

And in His saying “*The Lord is near to those who have a broken heart*” Psalm 34:18 (NKJV) says: “The Lord is near to those who have a broken heart.” This is as if He whispers: when your heart is broken, do not think that God moves away; God’s nearness to the brokenhearted does not mean that His presence is conditioned by suffering; rather, brokenness removes the veil of self-sufficiency, allowing the person to experience God’s nearness more deeply and more clearly. Here we understand that God’s consolation is not an escape from pain, but a presence amid it. He is the hand that holds man when he is unable to stand, and the voice that raises him when his strength is diminished. Similarly, another psalm says: “You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore” (Psalm 16:11, NKJV). This means that the soul that places its weakness before the Lord no longer experiences spiritual emptiness, because God Himself fills the inner void with lasting joy and living communion. The weakness of man, as presented in the Book of Psalms, is not a pit that plunges him into death, but a way that leads him to the bosom of God where consolation becomes life. As the Psalm says: “*In the multitude of my anxieties within me, Your comforts delight my soul*” (Psalm 94:19, NKJV).

### **How Does God Turn Weakness into Strength?**

The greatness of the Book of Psalms is that it does not leave a person caught between his weakness and the consolation of God. Instead, it shows how God works within that weakness until the weakness itself becomes a source of strength. In the Psalms, we see a person confronting his broken self and his deepest wounds, yet he is invited into dialogue with God, and in this encounter, the spiritual transformation begins. The Psalmist in Psalm 42 says, “*Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God*” (Psalm 42:5, NKJV). These words reflect the soul’s movement between despair and hope. Yielding under distress is not the end, but the beginning of the spirit’s ascent when the Word of God enters this inner dialogue. The heart that was bowed down becomes a heart that stands, praises God, and finds its hope in Him.

Psalm 116 shows a practical model for how God transforms weakness into strength: “*You have delivered my soul from death, My eyes from tears, And my feet from falling*” (Psalm 116:8, NKJV). Here the consolation of God appears through the deliverance of the soul from despair, the deliverance of the heart from sorrow, and the deliverance of the body from stumbling. God’s work is not limited to one part of the person but embraces the whole being. When the soul is healed, that healing is reflected in the body, the soul rises, and the path before the person becomes illuminated. In this way, “The Psalms do not present a theoretical philosophy about weakness and strength; instead, they show the reality of a living relationship with God and how it transforms human weakness”. This wording makes the meaning clearer and better connects the theological idea with its practical spiritual dimension.

The Psalm highlights the ongoing duality between brokenness and hope, where man is prompted to face his weakness with faith. “*Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God; For I shall yet praise Him for the help of His countenance*” (Psalm 42:5, NKJV). These words clearly explain that the weakness of human nature is not a fault to be denied, but a reality to be embraced by faith, so it becomes an opportunity for profound spiritual maturity.

## *B. Said*

The theological dimension of divine consolation adds true depth. God is not a spectator of human weakness, but the One who declares, “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble” (Psalm 46:1, NKJV). He acts according to His own attributes, such as mercy, faithfulness, love and justice. Divine consolation is not a psychological substitute, but a living expression of God’s character in a person’s life. It turns faith into a real encounter and restores inner balance. A person then discovers that his true worth is not found in his abilities or strength, but in his life with God and in receiving the grace of salvation. The Psalms do not offer a theoretical philosophy about weakness and strength. They reveal the reality of a living relationship with God and its effect on human frailty. In this relationship, weakness becomes a doorway to strength, brokenness becomes an opportunity for spiritual maturity, and tears become a fountain of lasting joy.

## **Conclusion**

At the end, we say: The Book of Psalms is a path of spiritual healing. It is the prayer of the weak who find their strength in God. It is the book of the real person, who does not pretend to be strong, but admits his weakness so that God may turn that weakness into a hymn. In the Psalms, we learn that weakness is not shameful, but a place where we meet God; that distress is not death, but a moment when God comes close; and that our inability is not the end, but the beginning of new strength. In God’s presence, a person becomes a heart that knows how to weep, how to cry out, and how to stand up again. In the end, the very experience of weakness becomes a hymn of victory, because God alone knows how to enter our weakness and make from it a song of strength and hope.