

## Reflection & Meditation Article – Psalm 1

By Rev. Tim Ehrhardt from the Book, “Psalms: Anatomy of the Soul” (2019)

*1 Happy are those who do not follow the advice of the wicked, or take the path that sinners tread, or sit in the seat of scoffers; 2 but their delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law they meditate day and night. 3 They are like trees planted by streams of water, which yield their fruit in its season, and their leaves do not wither. In all that they do, they prosper.*

Near my home is a small grove of oak trees. Every chance I get, I stroll through the little forest of majestic trees with their strong trunks, thick bark, and gnarled branches. I must confess that there are four particular trees that I talk to on a regular basis. I call them “Mama Oak,” “Papa Oak,” “Grandfather Oak,” and “Elmer” (“Young Oak”) because they stand together looking like a family. I speak to them for the primary reason that they are good listeners. I also speak to them because, as God’s creation, I have this intuition that they can actually hear me.

In his book The Hidden Life of Trees, veteran forester Peter Wohlleben has written a winsome and fascinating account of what he has learned about trees. His primary thesis is that trees are social—they communicate with and care for each other. Trees planted by streams of water are not a group of individual trees. Rather, through their extensive root system in the ground, they share vital nutrients with each other when one of them is sick; send something akin to electrical impulses with one another to warn of danger; and take ownership of helping the entire forest grow together in health and strength. And they are not in a hurry. Their slow growth is deliberate and careful, a testament to their resilience and longevity. Wohlleben describes this intricate care and communication system as “the wood-wide web.”

As we move through the season of Lent, we are not alone. We do not attempt to shed the old sinful nature by ourselves through sheer willpower. We assist one another. We depend upon the Holy Spirit through the Word of God. We embrace the slow, patient, and deliberate work of soul-craft as we anticipate meeting Jesus.

Prayer: God Almighty, your strength and wisdom are seen in all of creation. May you enable me, together with all your people, to embrace the path of patient righteousness and forsake the way of hurried wickedness. Through Jesus Christ our Lord, in the power of your Holy Spirit, amen.

## 靈修與默想 – 詩篇 1

「1-2 不從惡人的計謀，不站罪人的道路，不坐傲慢人的座位，惟喜愛耶和華的律法，晝夜思想他的律法；這人便為有福！3 他要像一棵樹栽在溪水旁，按時候結果子，葉子也不枯乾。凡他所做的盡都順利。」

我家附近有一片小橡樹林。一有機會，我就會漫步在這片雄偉的小森林中，它們的樹幹粗壯，樹皮厚實，樹枝多節。我必須承認，我經常與四棵特定的樹交談。我稱它們為“橡樹媽媽”、“橡樹爸爸”、“橡樹爺爺”和“埃爾默”（Elmer “年輕橡樹”），因為它們站在一起看起來就像一家人。我與它們交談的主要原因，是他們是很好的傾聽者。我也和它們說話的另一個原因，是它們作為上帝的創造物，我有這樣的直覺：他們實際上可以聽到我的聲音。

資深林務員彼得·沃萊本（Peter Wohlleben）在他的《樹木的隱密生活》（The Hidden Life of Trees）一書中，以迷人而引人入勝的方式講述了他對樹木的了解。他的主要論點是樹木是社會性的——它們互相溝通、互相照顧。溪水所植的樹木並不是一群單獨的樹木。相反，當其中一個生病時，它們透過地下廣泛的根系，相互分享重要的營養物質，相互發送類似電脈衝的東西來提醒有危險，並承擔起幫助整個森林共同健康成長的責任。而且他們並不著急。它們緩慢的生長是有意識和謹慎的，證明了它們的韌性和長壽。沃萊本將這種複雜的護理和通訊系統描述為「全木網路」（the wood-wide web）。

當我們度過大齋期時，我們並不孤單。我們並不是試圖透過純粹的意志力來擺脫舊的罪性。我們互相幫助。我們透過上帝的話語來依靠聖靈。當我們期待與耶穌相遇時，我們擁抱緩慢、耐性和有意識的靈魂工作。

禱告：全能的上帝，您的力量和智慧在所有創造物中都可見。願您使我和您的全體人民一起走上耐性的正義之路，放棄匆忙的邪惡之路。藉著我們的主耶穌基督，靠著聖靈的力量，阿們。