


Psalms

Knowing the God of Praise



Lesson 6 *Songs of the Messiah*

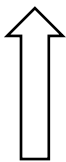
Level 1- Read through the Bible passage prayerfully. As God speaks to you through his word, respond back to him in prayer. What can you praise him and thank him for? What sin do these scriptures prompt you to confess? What do you need to ask God for? How do you need to yield to what God is saying in his word?

Level 2- Read and pray as in level one and do the numbered questions (that follow along with the Bible passage) and the heart questions in the study.

Level 3- Read and pray as in level one. Do the numbered questions and the heart questions as in level 2, as well as the Discussion questions and the Digging Deeper for more in depth study.

Day 1

This week we will be in the Messianic Psalms. These psalms predict or foreshadow the Messiah, who is Jesus. The words *Messiah* (Hebrew) in the Old Testament, and *Christ* (Greek) in the New Testament mean "anointed one". "Anointing implied consecration to high office, not only investing the anointed person with a holy status, but also empowering him for his task... Anointing was the initiating rite for both priests and kings, and on one occasion at least, for a prophet (1 Kings 19:16)."¹ "Anointed one refers to the fact that God promised that One would come who would be specially chosen and anointed as a great King (and priest) [and prophet] for his people."²



Father, as I read these psalms that point to Jesus, please help me to see and understand better, Jesus' life and death. May these truths be precious to my heart.

Read Psalm 2

1. Verses 1 and 2 of this Psalm are quoted in Acts 4:24b-28. (This is where Peter and John and the believers are praying together after Peter and John were let go after being arrested for testifying about Jesus' death and resurrection.)

"Sovereign Lord, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and everything in them, who through the mouth of our father David, your servant, said by the Holy Spirit,

*'Why did the Gentiles rage, and the peoples plot in vain?
The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers were
gathered together, against the Lord and against his Anointed.'—*

For truly in this city there were gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, to do whatever your hand and your plan had predestined to take place.

How does this passage in Acts help us understand what verses 1 and 2 in Psalm 2 ultimately point to—who is God's anointed and who were the kings and rulers set against God's anointed?

2. How does God respond to the raging, plotting, and rebelling of kings, nations and peoples according to verse 4-6?
 - a. What do you learn about God from this?

3. How does God's king warn the rebellious and plotting kings to be wise in verses 10-12?



Verse 3 reveals the natural state of the human heart towards God—we don't want to be bound by God's rule. Yet God binds us with *cords of kindness* and with *bands of love* (Hosea 11:4). This great love and kindness is seen in God's chosen King Jesus who laid down his life for his people to set us free from sin and death. To submit to King Jesus is to cast away the cruel shackles of sin.

- ◆ Giving your life to Jesus means submitting to his rule in your life— Jesus is not only your Savior, but your King. Where do you find yourself rebelling against God's rule in your life? Spend some time confessing this and asking for God's help to see the beauty and goodness of his ways.
- ◆ What comfort do the truths in this Psalm bring you when you see the raging and rebellion of this world?
- ◆ Soak in these verses from Revelation: *The kingdom of this world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever. And the twenty-four elders who sit on their thrones before God fell on their faces and worshiped God, saying,*

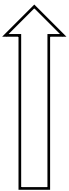
"We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty. Who is and who was, for you have taken your great power and begun to reign. The nations raged, but your wrath came, and the time for the dead to be judged, and for rewarding your servants, the prophets, and saints, and those who fear your name both small and great, and for destroying the destroyers of the earth." Rev. 11:15-18. Praise God!

Day 2- Read Psalm 22

1. On your Scripture page underline the phrases in Psalm 22 that at your first glance point to Jesus.

2. What emotions are expressed in verses 1 and 2?
 - a. King David, the man after God's own heart, and Jesus God's beloved son, both felt forsaken by God. What does this teach you?

3. Despite feelings of abandonment (vs.1-2) and being scorned and mocked (vs. 6-8), we see the Psalmist's feelings turn on the word "yet" in verses 3 and 9. What do verses 3-5 and 9-11 depict?



Father, when I am in distress and not feeling your presence, help me to see where you have proven yourself faithful in others' lives and to remember how you have proved yourself faithful in my life in the past. Help me to live by faith and not by feeling.



Verse 23 calls all who fear the LORD to praise him, glorify him and stand in awe of him. The reason? Because, verse 24 tells us, *he has not hidden his face from him, but has heard, when he cried to him*. In other words, God accepted Jesus' sacrifice. Verse 26 to the end of the Psalm give us a picture of the future Jesus secured for his people, ending with the exclamation- *he has done it*. Jesus accomplished salvation for us! Write your own prayer of praise for what Jesus has done.

Digging Deeper

Hebrews 2 makes the point that Jesus took on flesh like us so that he could die in our place and pay the debt of sin for us. Jesus became our brother; he stood in solidarity with us as a human being even though he was sinless. Hebrews 2:12 quotes Psalm 22:22, attributing it to Jesus and leaving no doubt that this Psalm is about him. It says,

I [Jesus] will tell of your name [God's name] to my brothers [believers]; in the midst of the congregation [believers] I will sing your praise.

In the Psalms Jesus is leading us to praise God. We are in the congregation—we sing and pray the Psalms and we join in with the commitment and devotion they express in and through Jesus.

- How does this impact your heart?

Day 3- Read Psalm 40

Scholar's Note: *Waiting patiently* [v. 1] in Hebrew, is literally "*I waited, waited*". "In Hebrew the doubling of a term conveys intensification and magnitude."³

1. We have seen that the Psalms speak a lot about waiting for God. What does waiting patiently for God bring about at the end of verse 3?

- How does this help you and challenge you when you are *waiting, waiting* for God?

- At the very end of the Psalm in verse 17, David is waiting again. With what truths does he encourage his heart?

- 2. In verse 6, King David tells how God does not delight in burnt offerings or sacrifices. In verse 8 he reveals what God does delight in and therefore what he delights in as well. What is it he delights in?

Digging Deeper

Maybe David remembers the prophet Samuel rebuking King Saul, saying, “to obey is better than sacrifice.” (1 Sam. 15:22b). King David points to the greater King— Jesus, who said his food was to do God’s will (Jn.4:34). Referencing this Psalm, Hebrews gives us a glimpse of the preincarnate Christ—the Word who was in the beginning with God, speaking to God the Father.

Hebrews 10:5-10 *Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said,*

*“Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired,
 but a body have you prepared for me;
 in burnt offerings and sin offerings
 you have taken no pleasure.
 Then I said, ‘Behold, I have come to do your will, O God,
 as it is written of me in the scroll of the book.’”*

When he said above, “You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings” (these are offered according to the law), then he added, “Behold, I have come to do your will.” He does away with the first

in order to establish the second. And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

- How did Jesus delighting to do God's will put an end to the sacrifices that the law required?

Picture and Ponder

"Our pleasure and our duty, though opposite before, since we have seen his beauty, are joined to part no more."⁴



Do you delight to do God's will? If doing God's will is always more duty than delight for you, immerse yourself more into prayer and God's word, reflecting on the truth of how Jesus loves you and sacrificed himself in your place so that you could be forgiven and be with him one day in eternal joy.

David makes many proclamations throughout this Psalm. Join with the Psalmist, praising God for his steadfast love and deliverance.

3. How do verses 9-10 challenge your heart?



What phrase from this beautiful Psalm will you ponder on today?

Day 4- Read Psalm 69

1. On your Scripture pages for Psalm 69, underline the phrases that describe the suffering of David.
 - Which, if any, of these feelings resonate with you?



In suffering and trials and even daily life, how could you make verse 6 into your own prayer?

2. David pleads for God to answer him according to God's steadfast love and abundant mercy. *Steadfast love* (vs. 13,16) is covenant language. God is the covenant keeping God. He has promised that to those who put their faith in him, he will be their Father and they will be his people. Forever. When you plead with God for something, do you ever base your plea on something other than God's own love, faithfulness, and mercy? What wrong things might we misguidedly base our request on?

- a. Why is basing our pleas on God's covenant love the best thing we could do?

For Discussion

How does God's covenant love that David depends on, fit with the suffering he is experiencing?



Make verse 13 your prayer as you wait for God to answer your request:

But as for me, my prayer is to you, O LORD.

At an acceptable time, O God,

in the abundance of your steadfast love answer me in your saving faithfulness.

Digging Deeper

Verse 4 is quoted by Jesus of himself in John 15:25

John 15:23-25 *Whoever hates me hates my Father also. If I had not done among them the works that no one else did, they would not be guilty of sin, but now they have seen and hated both me and my Father. But the word that is written in their Law must be fulfilled: They hated me without a cause.*

A few verses before this in 18-19, Jesus said to his closest followers, *If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.*

- As it becomes more frequent in our culture that Christians are hated for their beliefs how do these scriptures give you courage to withstand hatred and injustice?
- What does thankfulness, humility, and joy, that we see toward the end of this Psalm, amid persecution and suffering demonstrate to the world?
- Jesus said, *they hated me without a cause*. How can we make sure that if we are hated it is *without a cause* like Jesus?

Day 5- Read Psalm 102

1. In verses 1-11 the Psalmist expresses the fleetingness of human life with words like—smoke, shadow, and withering grass. And then in verse 12, we come to a *but you, O LORD*. What phrases in verses 12-28 does the Psalmist use to contrast the brevity of his life, with the eternity of God?
 - a. How does it help us to see this truth?

2. What future events stated in this Psalm comfort us in suffering, trouble, and distress?

Digging Deeper

In verses 23-24 we see Messiah speaking to God and in verses 25-28 we see God the Father answering him. (Again, the book of Hebrews confirms this psalm as speaking of Jesus when it quotes verses 25-27 in Hebrews 1:10-12). Imagine Jesus reading this Psalm throughout his life and knowing that it spoke of him and his life and death.

- How do verses 23-24 show Jesus' humanity?

- How do verses 25-28 show his deity?

- How do you think God's words in this Psalm encouraged Jesus?



Verses 18-20 are yet to happen in all their fulness, yet when Jesus died and rose again, he set this tremendous plan in motion. We who have trusted in Jesus, were the prisoners doomed to die in verse 20—who have now been set free from sin! We are part of that *generation to come, a people yet to be created* in verse 18. This was recorded so that we may declare the name of God and praise him! Write out a prayer of praise to God for his marvelous work now and in the days to come.

¹ Kidner, Derek. Kidner Classic Commentaries, Psalms 1-72, p.32-33 Intersity Press 1973
² Tverberg, Lois. Reading the Bible with Rabbi Jesus: How a Jewish Perspective Can Transform Your Understanding p. 34 Baker Publishing Group
³ Keller, Tim. Songs of Jesus p. 82 Viking 2015
⁴ Newton, John as quoted by Tim Keller in Songs of Jesus, p. 83 Viking 2015

