


Psalms

Knowing the God of Praise



Lesson 1 Songs of Praise

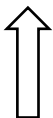
Level 1- Read through the Bible passage prayerfully. As God speaks to you through his word, respond back to him in prayer. What can you praise him and thank him for? What sin do these scriptures prompt you to confess? What do you need to ask God for? How do you need to yield to what God is saying in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

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

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

The Psalms of praise are descriptive songs that praise God for his great attributes and his mighty deeds in general (these include royal psalms about kingship, enthronements psalms, Songs of Zion and covenant renewal psalms).¹



Father, open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your word.
(Ps.119:18)

Read Psalm 103

Scholar's Note

"The Psalms are poetry and the Psalms are prayer. These two features, the poetry and prayer, need to be kept in mind always. If either is forgotten, the Psalms will not only be misunderstood but misused."²

"At their core, the Psalms are prayers and poems by Old Testament believers that have been set to music and sung individually or corporately in Israel."³

1. David, the author of this Psalm, passionately preaches to himself, telling his heart and soul—his whole self—to bless God. To bless God is to speak well of him, to admire and praise him. What are the benefits that David reminds his heart of in verses 3-5?
 - a. One kind of parallelism in Hebrew poetry has the second line in a phrase saying the same thing as the first, but in a different way. We know that here on this earth God doesn't heal all our physical diseases, but he does forgive all our sin (v.3). In what way is sin like a disease? How is healing all our diseases like forgiving all our sin?
 - b. How is *crowns you with steadfast love and mercy* another way of saying *redeem your life from the pit* (v.4)?



In this Psalm we see David preaching to himself, urging his heart to look to who God is and what he has done. When you are down or discouraged— don't just listen to your heart— speak strongly and directly to your heart, truth about God. Praise him for who he is and what he has done.

- ◆ What are all the wonderful truths from this Psalm you can preach to your heart today?

2. Steadfast love is mentioned several times in this Psalm. What do you learn about God's steadfast love from this Psalm?



Reflect on these truths about God’s steadfast love, let them settle into your mind and heart, then respond back to God in prayer. You can use some of the words of David from this Psalm.

Day 2- Read Psalm 33

1. Verse 1-3 tell us that it is fitting for God’s people to praise him— it is our sweet spot, it is what we were created for. What are all the ways you see to praise God in verses 1-3?

For Discussion

The Psalms show us many ways to express our praise to God. Why do you think there is not merely one way to show God our praise? What do the different ways to show our praise to God teach us about him? How would keeping this in mind help your heart when you find yourself critical of other ways to praise God that don’t resonate with you?

2. The rest of the Psalm gives reasons why we should unselfconsciously praise God. Who is God shown to be in each of these sections of verses?

Vs.4-5

Vs. 6-9

Vs. 10-12

Vs. 13-15

Vs. 16-19



Pray through verses 4-16, praising God for who he is.

Digging Deeper:

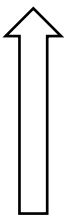
In verse 5b of this Psalm of praise it tells us, *the earth is full of the steadfast love of the LORD.*

In Isaiah 6:3, Isaiah records the seraphim calling out, *Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts' the whole earth is full of his glory!*

In Exodus 33:18-19 Moses asks God to show him his glory, and God says,

I will make all my goodness pass before you and will proclaim before you my name 'The LORD'. And I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy.

Comparing all these verses, what can you learn about what it means that the earth is full of the steadfast love of the LORD?



Thank you, God, for filling the earth with your goodness in so many ways! Your common grace to everyone—the beauty of your world, the love of family, the happiness of friends, the breath in our lungs—are all your goodness to the world! And your special grace to your

people—your favor, mercy, forgiveness, and abundant life that you pour out on us through Jesus!

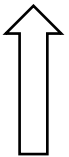
3. Verse 20 shows the collective people of God (**our** soul) waiting for him. We tend to think of waiting as passive, but what verbs do you see in verses 21-22 that show us waiting is active? What does this active waiting produce according to v.21?

a. What truths in v. 20 do we look to as we wait on God?

b. How is God your shield?



Are you waiting on God for something? How do the truths in this Psalm help you as you wait?



God as I wait on you, help me to trust you and put my hope in you—you are my help and my shield! Help me to remember and believe this as I wait.

Day 3- Read Psalm 111

1. How does the Psalmist describe the works of God?



God at work is the theme of this Psalm of praise. We see this theme in other places in the Bible as well. Isaiah 64:4 says, *For since the world began, no ear has heard and no eye has seen a God like you, who works for those who wait for him!* (NLT)

And Jesus says in John 5:17 *But Jesus replied, "My Father is always working, and so am I."* (NLT) We have a God who acts on our behalf! As we wait for God to work and move on our behalf, we can know that he is always at work. Even when it doesn't seem like it, God is working to bring about his redemptive plan in our life and in his world.

- ◆ What God does, and who he is, cannot be separated. What attributes of God do you see in this Psalm? How does who God is impact what God does? What does this mean for your life?
- ◆ The Psalmist says in verse 2, *How amazing are the deeds of the LORD! All who delight in him should ponder them. (NLT)* Write down some of the works of God revealed in his word and then spend some time today pondering one of them. Write out a prayer of praise to God for this work.

2. What fitting responses to God's works can we see or deduce in verses 1, 2, 4, 7-8 and 10?

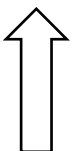
Scholar's Note

Precepts: "[God's] detailed requirements in the lives of his people."⁴



The wondrous, redemptive works of God that the Psalmist looks back to are the first Passover and God's deliverance of his people from Egypt (v.4), his provision for them in the wilderness (v.5), and his establishing them in the Promised Land (v.6). How has God delivered you, provided for you and established you?

- ◆ Spend time now praising God for his work in *your* life.



God you have sent redemption to me through Jesus my Savior! Through the cross you have guaranteed your promise of forgiveness and salvation forever. Holy and awesome is your name! (v.9)

Day 4- Read Psalm 84

Included in the Psalms of Praise are the Songs of Zion. Zion in the Bible refers to Israel, Jerusalem, and Mt. Zion where God's presence dwelt in the temple. The Songs of Zion express praise for God and the longings of God's people to be where he is.

1. How would you describe the Psalmist longing to experience God's presence?
 - a. How is his whole being involved in this longing?



If you have trusted Jesus as your Savior and King, then you are guaranteed God's continual presence with you. Pause now and praise the living God for his indwelling Spirit in you; express your longing to be more aware of God's presence in your life.

Maybe you don't feel a deep longing to be with God. Tell him this too. Ask him to work in your heart and cause you to desire to be with him through his word and prayer.

For Discussion

Sometimes we don't long to be in God's presence because our lives are filled with too many other things. What are things that we let get in the way of spending time with God? What does this say? How will you remedy this?

If you have young children so much of your time and energy is rightfully spent on them. How can you nurture your spiritual life and keep God at the center of your heart as you invest in your children? If this is not your struggle, how can you encourage others?

2. God—addressed as LORD of hosts—is the focus of the song, mentioned four times in twelve verses. This name speaks of God as the great King, sovereign and powerful over all of heaven and earth and their inhabitants. Look at verses 4, 5 and 12. Where

do we find blessing according to this Psalm? How does this fit with the truth that God is LORD of hosts—the sovereign and powerful King?



The pilgrim journey in verses 5-7 goes through the Valley of Baca—the valley of thirst or the valley of weeping—either way the valley of hardship. How has God’s presence strengthened you in times of hardship?



Join the Psalmist in verses 10-11 in praise to God. In verse 10, he says that a day in God’s presence is better than a thousand anywhere else. Tell God how much his presence means to you.

In verse 11 he says God’s favor and honor are like a sun and a shield to him. Tell God what his grace and goodness are to you.

Day 5- Read Psalm 96

Psalm 96 is one of the Royal Songs of Kingship in the Psalms of Praise that celebrate God as King.

1. In this song of worship...
 - a. What kind of mood permeates?
 - b. What knowledge of God is evident?
 - c. How is God’s Kingship exhibited?

d. How is God's creation involved in worship?

2. Verses 1-3 and 7-9 give us a beautiful picture of praise and worship. What is vocalized in these verses?

Sing-

Tell-

Declare-

Ascribe-

a. What do you notice about this worship?



How does the praise and worship in this Psalm challenge your heart to praise and worship God?

For Discussion

More than once in the Psalms, God's people are exhorted to sing a new song! Why a new song? What do you think is the significance of this?

Picture and Ponder

Can you imagine what it will be like when Jesus comes again to reign over the new heavens and the new earth and creation breaks out in praise—the trees of the forest singing for joy!? God's creation declaring his glory in a new way! Isaiah 55:12 adds this *"For you shall go out in joy and be led forth in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall break forth into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.*



Verse 10 reminds us—the LORD reigns! God established the world, and he rules over it. How does this truth reorient your heart when the world seems out of control?

¹ Russel, Walt. *Playing With Fire*. P. 142, NavPres 2000

² Peterson, Eugene as quoted in Russel, Walt. *Playing With Fire*. P. 134 NavPres 2000

³ Russel, Walt. Playing With Fire. P. 135, NavPres 2000

⁴ Moyter, Alec. Psalms By the Day P.317 Christian Focus 2016