

Studying the Psalms



An Introduction to the Psalms

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The Book of Psalms

I. The Nature of the Book of Psalms

A. The name.

1. "Psalms" is from the Greek title denoting songs adapted to music on stringed instruments. Its title in the original Hebrew simply meant "praises," denoting the general theme of the Psalms.
2. "In Hebrew this book was called 'Praises,' 'Book of Praises,' or 'Prayers.' Later it became known as the 'Book of Psalms.' In the New Testament it is called by this name by our Lord (Luke 24:44), by Paul (Acts 13:38), and by Luke (Luke 20:42) This name was used by those who produced the Septuagint Version of the Old Testament..." (William S. Deal, *Baker's Pictorial Introduction to the Bible*, 143).
3. "The book of Psalms was gradually collected and came to be known as the Sepher Tehillim ('Book of Praises'), because almost every psalm contains some note of praise to God. The Septuagint (Greek Old Testament) uses this Greek term Psalmoi as a title for this book, meaning poems sung to the accompaniment of musical instruments, and this word is the basis for the English terms 'psalter' and 'psalm'" (*Nelson's Complete Book of Bible Maps & Charts*, 175).

B. The character of the book.

1. "The book of Psalms is the largest and perhaps the most widely used book in the Bible. It explores the full range of human experiences in a very personal and practical way. Written over a lengthy period of Israel's history, the tremendous breadth of subject matter in the Psalms includes topics such as jubilation, war, peace, worship, judgment, messianic prophecy, praise, and lament. The Psalms were set to the accompaniment of stringed instruments and served as the temple hymnbook and devotional guide for the Jewish people...
"The psalms were originally individual poems. With the passing of time these were collected to form smaller books and the book of Psalms in its present form comprises five of these smaller books" (Nelson's, *ibid.*).
2. "The Psalms are mostly lyrical poetry, that is, poetry adapted to the harp or lyre; to be used in connection with instrumental music; to be sung not read...Lyric poetry is, for the most part, an expression of deep feeling, and has its foundation in feeling or emotion...the authors of that poetry were inspired to prepare and transmit to future times that which, in all ages, would express the feelings of true devotion, and which might be permanently employed in the praises of God" (Albert Barnes, *Barnes Notes on the Old Testament, Psalms Vol. I*, xix-xxi).
3. "While most of the Bible is God's voice calling to His creatures, the book of Psalms is mankind's voice raised to the Lord. As the various writers expressed their personal feelings, desires, and needs, the Spirit of God led them to strike the chords of sensitive hearts universally" (Rubel Shelly, *A Book-by-Book Study of the Old Testament*, 78).

- a. Someone has suggested the five books of the Psalms are really a tribute to the five books of Moses (Genesis - Deuteronomy), the Pentateuch. The law is the five-fold book of God to His people while the Psalms respond by being the five-fold book of the people to God.
 - 1) Book 1 (Psa. 1-41). Corresponds with Genesis having much to say about man.
 - 2) Book 2 (Psa. 42-72). Corresponds with Exodus having much to say about redemption.
 - 3) Book 3 (Psa. 73-89). Corresponds with Leviticus and emphasizes worship.
 - 4) Book 4 (Psa. 90-106). Begins with the psalm of Moses and corresponds with Numbers stressing wandering.
 - 5) Book 5 (Psa. 107-150). Corresponds with Deuteronomy and offers thanksgiving for the Divine faithfulness with emphasis on the the word of God. Psalm 119, the longest of all the psalms, has as its theme "the word of the Lord."
- b. "Perhaps the central thought of this book of praise is 95:6-7. 'O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our Maker. For He is our God; and we are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand'" (Johnny Ramsey, *The Book of Psalms*, 3).
4. "Through the ages, man has found in poetry a means of expressing the deepest, most profound, and intensive feelings of the human heart. In the Psalms the Hebrew poets expressed these emotions for themselves and for the nation...when we read them we find that they expressed them for ourselves as well...In the Psalms one finds expressed the eager yearning and longing for God's presence; prayers and songs of joyous trust and praise; cries of burning complaints and bitterness against and toward enemies; times of doubt and despair; yet throughout all experiences which produced these emotions, there is dependance on God. To appreciate the Psalms, one must enter into and share the spirit of the Psalmist" (Homer Hailey, *Bible Class Notes - The Psalms*, 1).

II. The Author

- A. The book of Psalms is a compilation of the songs of various Hebrew authors including, according to the superscriptions heading many of the psalms, Moses (90), Asaph (50, 73-83), Sons of Korah (42; 44-49; 84-85; 87-88), Heman the Ezrahite (88), Ethan the Ezra-hite (89), Solomon (72; 127), and David (writer of at least 73 of the psalms) while the rest are anonymous.
- B. The book is commonly referred to as belonging to David because he wrote about half of the psalms.
 1. The headings attribute 73 to him but he probably wrote more (cf. Psalm 2 with Acts 4:25-26 and Psalms 105 and 96 with 1 Chron. 16:7-36).
 2. He is known as "the sweet psalmist of Israel" (2 Sam. 23:1; cf. also 1 Sam. 16:18; 2 Sam. 6:5,15; 2 Chron. 7:6; 29:25; Amos 6:5).

3. He arranged the temple song service (1 Chron. 25) and also commissioned men including Asaph, Ethan, Heman and Jeduthun, to compose songs for the temple worship (1 Chron. 15:19; 16:4-6; 25:1; cf. Kings 4:31; 1 Chron. 2:6; 26:1).
- C. "No other book of the Bible has as many different authors as does Psalms. Seventy-three psalms are attributed to David in the superscriptions, and an additional two, Psalms 2 and 95, are ascribed to David in the New Testament. In addition to the seventy-five by David, twelve are ascribed to Asaph, a priest who headed the service of music. Ten were by the sons of Korah, a guild of singers and composers, and other psalms are ascribed to Solomon, Moses, Heman the Ezrahite and Ethan the Ezrahite, Fifty of the psalms are anonymous, although some of these are traditionally ascribed to Ezra" (*Nelson's*, 175).

III. The Date

- A. "The Psalms were written over a long period of time, perhaps 600 years" (*The Shaw Pocket Bible Handbook*, 196).
- B. "The time covered by Psalms is a long span. They reach from the days of Moses in the wilderness to the days of the prophets Haggai and Zechariah. While the range of writing extends over many hundreds of years, it is remarkable how little variation there is in the general expressions of the writers and the truths they taught" (Deal, 143).
- C. "The earliest individual psalm is probably that of Moses (Ps. 90); the latest is probably Psalm 137, which could not have been written before the sixth century B.C. Though many of the psalms were written and collected during the Davidic era, or shortly thereafter, the final compilation of Psalms was probably not complete until the latter half of the fifth century B.C. during the time of Ezra and Nehemiah (450-425 B.C.)" (*Nelson's*, 175, 177).

IV. Characteristics of the Book of Psalms

- A. Five divisions. The book of Psalms is a collection of five smaller books of songs each of which ends with a doxology—a hymn of praise to God.
 1. The divisions are as follows:
 - a. Book I: Psalms 1-41.
 - b. Book II: Psalms 42-72.
 - c. Book III: Psalms 73-89.
 - d. Book IV: Psalms 90-106.
 - e. Book V: Psalms 107-150.
 2. "The book is divided in the Hebrew into five minor books or collections, sufficiently marked in their character, and so indicated at the close of each as to make it every way probable that these may have been published, so to speak, in the form of different books, or that the latter were additions to the first collection or volume" (Barnes, xiii-xiv).
 3. G. Campbell Morgan believes the key to the content of each division or book is found in the closing doxologies "and an examination of these will reveal a certain conception of God, and an attitude of the soul in worship resulting from such a conception" (*Notes on the Psalms*, 9-10).

B. Psalm headings.

1. Many of the psalms have superscriptions before the actual poetry which have generated much debate over their origin and authenticity.
2. Although not inspired, they are undoubtedly of ancient origin because they were in existence when the Septuagint (Greek) Version of the Old Testament was translated (280-180 B.C.). By that time many of the words concerning the musical score and musical instruments were unknown, implying a much earlier source.
3. These headings indicate:
 - a. Authorship.
 - b. Occasion of the psalm (cf. 34; 51; 52; etc.).
 - c. Their intended use (cf. 30; 92; etc.).
 - d. The type of psalm—a prayer, meditation, etc. (cf. 32; 42-45; etc.).
 - e. Musical instructions.
 - 1) To the choir director.
 - 2) The tune to which the psalm was to be played (cf. 22; 56-57 ; etc.).
 - 3) The musical instruments to use in accompaniment (cf. 4; 5; 6; 8; 54-55; 81; etc.).

V. Types of Psalms

- A. Individual and communal lament psalms, or prayers for God's deliverance (3-7; 12; 13; 22; 25-28; 35; 38-40; 42-44; 51; 54-57; 59-61; 63; 64; 69-71; 74; 79; 80; 83; 85; 86; 88; 90; 102; 109; 120; 123; 130; and 140-143).
- B. Thanksgiving psalms consisting of praise to God for His gracious acts (8; 18; 19; 29; 30; 32-34; 36; 40; 41; 66; 103-106; 111; 113; 116; 117; 124; 129; 135; 136; 138; 139; 146-148; and 150).
- C. Enthronement psalms which describe God's sovereign rule (47; 93; and 96-99).
- D. Pilgrimage psalms which were sung by worshipers as they traveled to Jerusalem to celebrate the Jewish festivals (43; 46; 48; 76; 84; 87; and 120-134).
- E. Royal psalms which portray the reign of the earthly king as well as of the heavenly king of Israel (2; 18; 20; 21; 45; 72; 89; 101; 110; 132; and 144).
- F. Wisdom psalms which instruct the worshiper in the way of wisdom and righteousness (1; 37; and 119).
- G. Imprecatory psalms in which the worshiper invokes God's wrath and judgment against His enemies (7; 35; 40; 55; 58; 59; 69; 79; 109; 137; 139; and 144).
- H. Messianic psalms.
 1. Many of the psalms specifically anticipate the life and ministry of Jesus who came centuries later as the promised Messiah.
 2. "Next to Isaiah, the Book of Psalms is the most expressive of the Messianic prophecies and message in the Old Testament. The light of the covenant, to be fulfilled in the coming Messiah, here shines with an extra brilliance" (Deal, 147).
 3. The Messianic prophecies in the psalms take a variety of forms and refer to Christ in a variety of ways.
 - a. Typical Messianic. The subject of the psalm is in some respects a type of Christ (34:20; 69:4,9).

- b. Typical Prophetic. Language is used which describes the psalmist's present experience but which points beyond his own life and becomes historically true only in Christ (22).
- c. Indirectly Messianic. At the time of the psalm's composition, it referred to a king or the house of David in general but it awaited final fulfillment in Christ (2; 45; 72).
- d. Purely Prophetic. Refers solely to Christ without reference to any other son of David (110).
- e. Enthronement. Anticipates the coming of God and the consummation of His kingdom in the person of Jesus Christ (96-99).

VI. The Uses of the Book of Psalms

A. The Jews.

1. The psalms were originally designed to be a hymnal for use in the temple and synagogue worship.
 - a. Musicians were provided to worship God in the temple and the psalms were composed to be used there.
 - b. The book of Psalms became a manual and guide for the devotional life of the Jews.
2. According to the Mishnah, certain psalms were recited on certain days of the week in the temple: "The following are the Psalms that were chanted in the Temple. On the first day, they used to say, 'The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and they that dwell therein' (Psalm 24). On the second day, they used to say, 'Great is the Lord and highly to be praised, in the city of our God, His Holy mountain' (Psalm 48). On the third day, they used to say, 'God standeth in the congregation of God, in the midst of the judges He judgeth' (Psalm 82). On the fourth day, they used to say, 'O Lord, Thou God to whom vengeance belongeth, shine forth' (Psalm 94). On the fifth day, they used to say, 'Sing aloud unto God our strength, shout aloud to the God of Jacob' (Psalm 81). On the sixth day, they used to say, 'A Psalm. A song for the sabbath day (Psalm 92). A Psalm, a song for the time to come, for the day that will be all sabbath and rest for everlasting life" (via "Interesting Facts About The Book Of Psalms," Stuart Dauermann, *Jews for Jesus Newsletter*).

B. First century Christians.

1. The early church recognized the value of the psalms in praising God and expressing their faith and trust in Him and used them in their public worship (cf. Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; Jas. 5:13).
2. "After Jesus had instituted the Lord's Supper, he and the Twelve sang a hymn (Matthew 26:30). This consisted of the latter half of the Hallel (or Hallelujah) psalms (Psalms 115-118), which the Jews sang after eating the Passover meal" (John T. Willis, *The Way of Life Series: Insights from the Psalms*, Vol. I, 1).
3. "Christ's favorite Old Testament section must have been Psalms because He quoted from it more often than any other book!" (Ramsey, 3).

4. "That Psalms was a favorite book of the first-century believers is shown by the fact that of the New Testament's 283 direct quotations from the Old Testament, 116 are from Psalms" (Irving L. Jensen, *Jensen's Survey of the Old Testament*, 272).
- C. Christians today.
1. It is important to remember that the psalms were also written for our benefit (Rom. 15:3-4; cf. Psa. 69:9).
 2. "The book of Psalms is a record of deep religious experience...It is the guide of young believers; and it becomes more and more the companion, the comforter and the counsellor, as the believer moves along through the varied scenes of life, and as grey hairs come upon him, and as the infirmities, which pre-intimate the approaching close of all things, press him down" (Barnes, xlii).
 3. "In these busy days, it would be greatly to the spiritual profit of Christian men if they were more familiar with the Book of Psalms, in which they would find a complete armoury for life's battle, and a perfect supply for life's needs. Here we have both delight and usefulness, consolation and instruction. For every condition there is a Psalm, suitable and elevating. The Book supplies the babe in grace with penitent cries, and the perfected saint with triumphant songs...He who is acquainted with the marches of the Psalm-country knows that the land floweth with milk and honey, and he delights to travel therein" (Charles Spurgeon, *Treasury of David*, Vol. 6; preface).

VII. Some Teachings Found in the Book of Psalms

- A. "Underlying the psalmist's outlook is the concept of the power of God. God is in control of this universe. Although it may appear at times that things have gotten out of hand, this is not so. God is beyond our knowing, but we are not beyond his power..."
- "God's providence, or effective working, is also prominent in the book. He works like a master craftsman, weaving his will in and out of our free choices, so that in the end we have a blend of divine and human activity. Indeed, he works in our free choices as well, accomplishing his own good purposes..."
- "The tenderness of God is constantly emphasized. Like a father who pities his children, or a hen who gathers her chicks under her wings, so God deals with us..."
- "God is also depicted as just. No wrongs will go unrighted. No evil done to God's people is unseen. In due time, all will be made right..."
- "The proper response of God's people is also evident. We are to live lives of prayer, praise, humility, thanksgiving, and faith..."
- "The beauty of the world, the value of life, the goodness of the natural order, and the sheer joy of living are also described. From the grass that grows beneath our feet to the loftiest thoughts in our heads or the highest stars in the sky, the majesty that God wrote into the world is undeniable" (*Shaw's*, 197-198).
- B. "1. The Psalms furnish mankind, especially those who love God, with a sort of emotional guidance. They plumb the depths of man's nature and bring up almost every color of feeling and expression. They serve as a guide in the emotional patterns much as other portions of Scripture do for faith and actions..."

"2. The Psalms also abound in devotional warmth and energy. One can always find there the inspiration for deep meditation, high resolve, and the finest of noble ambitions. No other portion of the Scriptures is so filled with devotional materials and expressions as this book...

"3. In the Psalms there are little additions to great historical facts—for instance, that of Joseph being bound in fetters while in prison and being tried by God's word (105:17,18). Apparently the rock from which Moses got water in the wilderness was a 'flint' rock (114: 8)...

"4. Another great area is the deep psychological insight into the nature of mankind... Almost every psychological problem in normal life may be found in the Psalms...

"5. Every great doctrine in the Bible is either taught, expressed, or implied in the Psalms. Such basic doctrines as sin, atonement (by sacrifice), guilt, forgiveness, justification, restoration, repentance, confession, cleansing from sin...faith, and the mercy of God are found in this great fountain of truth...

"6. Every attribute or characteristic of God as the Divine Being is found here. The moral attributes of holiness, justice, mercy, truth, goodness, and righteousness, as well as the personal attributes of eternity of being, spirituality, omnipotence (all-powerfulness), omniscience (infinite knowledge), omnipresence (presence everywhere), immutability (unchangeableness) are ascribed to God in many places.


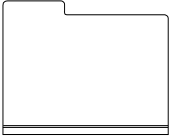
"7. Every phase of religious experience is either described or anticipated in the Psalms. Such experiences as sin, guilt, repentance, confession, forgiveness, cleansing, restoration, faith, joy, peace, grace, hope, love...are all found in abundance" (Deal, 148-149).

VIII. Psalms and the New Testament

- A. There are 116 direct quotations from the Psalms in the New Testament.
- B. Many Messianic prophecies from the Psalms find their fulfillment in the New Testament.
 1. The Son of God (2:7; Matt. 3:17).
 2. Praised by children (8:2; Matt. 21:15-16).
 3. Ruler of all (8:6; Heb. 2:8).
 4. Rises from death (16:10; Matt. 28:7).
 5. Forsaken by God (22:1; Matt. 27:46).
 6. Derided by enemies (22:7-8; Luke 23:35).
 7. Hands and feet pierced (22:16; John 20:27).
 8. Lots cast for clothes (22:18; Matt. 27:35-36).
 9. Bones unbroken (34:20; John 19:32-33,36).
 10. Accused by false witnesses (35:11; Mark 14:57).
 11. Hated without cause (35:19; John 15:25).
 12. Delights in God's will (40:7-8; Heb. 10:7).
 13. Betrayed by a friend (41:9; Luke 22:47).
 14. The eternal King (45:6; Heb. 1:8).

15. Ascends to heaven (68:18; Acts 1:9-11).
16. Zealous for God's house (69:9; John 2:17).
17. Given vinegar and gall (69:21; Matt. 27:34).
18. Prays for enemies (109:4; Luke 23:34).
19. His betrayer replaced (109:8; Acts 1:20).
20. Rules over His enemies (110:1; Matt. 22:44).
21. A priest forever (110:4; Heb. 5:6).
22. The chief stone of God's building (118:22; Matt. 21:42).
23. Comes in the name of the Lord (118:26; Matt. 21:9).

Lesson One: Psalms of Praise

<h2>Lesson Text</h2> <p>Psalms 100; 139; 148; 36; 45</p>
<h2>Daily Bible Reading</h2>  <p>Monday Psalm 100</p> <p>Tuesday Psalm 139</p> <p>Thursday Psalm 148</p> <p>Friday Psalms 97 and 36</p> <p>Saturday Psalms 47 and 65</p>
<h2>Lesson Concept</h2>  <p>INSPIRED SCRIPTURES Praising God</p>

Psalm 100

1. How is God to be praised? By whom is God to be praised?
2. For what reason is God to be praised?

Psalm 139

3. What characteristics of God are emphasized in this psalm?
4. What effect do each of the characteristics of God you have listed above have on a person?

Psalm 148

5. Since this psalm calls upon the entire creation to praise God, what reasons does it give as to why He should be praised?
6. In what way(s) do such things as the sun, moon, stars, fire and hail, snow and vapor, stormy wind, etc., praise God?

Psalm 36

7. Summarize the main features in the character of the wicked set forth in verses one through four.
8. In contrast to the wicked, what characteristics of God stand out in verses five through nine?
9. How is the psalmist’s prayer (vv. 10-12) related to each of the preceding sections?

Psalm 65

10. In the following verses, find different functions of divinity for which God is to be praised.
 - a. Verses 1-4.
 - b. Verses 5-8.
 - c. Verses 9-13.

Lesson Two: Psalms of Guidance

Lesson Text

Psalms 23; 15;
125; 11; 133

Daily Bible Reading



Monday
Psalm 23

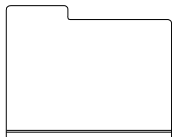
Tuesday
Psalm 15

Thursday
Psalm 125

Friday
Psalm 11
1 Corinthians 3:11-17

Saturday
Psalm 133
John 10:11
1 Peter 5:4

Lesson Concept



INSPIRED SCRIPTURES

Following God's word
for guidance

Psalm 23

1. In what way could God be described as a "shepherd?"
2. What is the meaning of the phrase "I shall not want" in relation to God as a shepherd?
3. What is the basic lesson this psalm teaches?

Psalm 15

4. Recalling the significance of the tabernacle, what is the significance of the question in verse one? How does such a question relate to us?
5. What characteristics are presented in this psalm of one who is fit to be in the presence of God? What promises are given to the one who is fit to be in God's presence?

Psalm 125

6. To what does the psalmist liken those who trust in the Lord? Why?
7. What is the "scepter of wickedness?" (v. 3) Over what will it not be found?
8. What does the Lord do to those who are good? What is the fate of those who turn aside from the Lord and His ways?


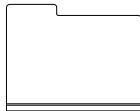
Psalm 11

9. In whom is one to trust?
10. What does verse three mean by the statement "If the foundations are destroyed, What can the righteous do?"
11. What do the eyes of the Lord behold? What is God's attitude toward the wicked?

Psalm 133

12. What is recommended in this psalm?
13. What are some of the "good" and "pleasant" consequences of brethren dwelling together in unity?

Lesson Three: Messianic Psalms

<p>Lesson Text</p> <p>Psalms 2; 16; 22; 110</p>
<p>Daily Bible Reading</p>  <p>Monday Psalm 22</p> <p>Tuesday Psalm 16</p> <p>Thursday Psalm 11</p> <p>Friday Psalm 110</p> <p>Saturday Psalm 2 Acts 2:25-36</p>
<p>Lesson Concept</p>  <p>INSPIRED SCRIPTURES Describing the Messiah to come</p>

Psalm 2: The Reign of God’s Anointed

1. Describe the plot of the world rulers. Do you see evidence of a similar conspiracy among the people of today? What are the chances of such a plot succeeding?
2. What is meant by the phrase “His anointed” in verse two?
3. What New Testament application is made of verses one through three? (See Acts 4:23-28)
4. What is God’s reaction to the plot of the world rulers? Why does He laugh? Does the plot prevent Him from establishing His kingdom?
5. What was God’s “decree?” What is the New Testament fulfillment of this decree? (See Luke 3:22; Acts 13:32-33; Heb. 1:2, 5; Rev. 2:26-37; 12:5; 19:15)
6. What advice is given at the close of the psalm?

Psalm 16: The Resurrection of the Christ

7. Discuss this psalm in light of the New Testament commentary supplied in Acts 2:22-32 and Acts 13:35-37.
8. Discuss the extent to which this psalm applies to David himself. What in it goes beyond David’s experience so that it must be applied to him only as a type of the Messiah?
9. What can be learned from this psalm with regard to:
 - a. Relationship with God?
 - b. The value to be placed on God?
10. What is Sheol? Why would the soul of the “Holy One” not be left in it or allowed to “see corruption?”

Psalm 22: The Sufferings of the Christ and the Glories That Follow

11. Though this psalm deals with the suffering of David, since his sufferings are repeated with even greater intensity in Jesus Christ, compare the following verses in this psalm about the suffering of David with the New Testament passages that speak of the suffering of Jesus.

- a. Verse 1 with Matthew 27:46.
- b. Verse 7 with Matthew 27:39.
- c. Verse 8 with Matthew 27:43.
- d. Verse 16 with Matthew 27:35 and John 20:25.
- e. Verse 18 with Matthew 27:35 and John 19:24.
- f. Verse 22 with Hebrews 2:12.

11. Summarize, in your own words, the predominant theme of each of the two main parts of this psalm. (vv. 1-21 and vv. 22-31)

12. Relate the two parts of this psalm to 1 Peter 1:11.


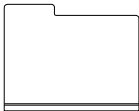
Psalm 110: King and Priest

13. Point out the New Testament fulfillment of this psalm by comparing:

- a. Verse 1 with Matthew 22:41-46; Acts 2:33-36; 1 Corinthians 15:25f; Hebrews 1:3; 8:1; 10:11-14 and 1 Peter 3:22.
- b. Verse 4 with Hebrews 5:5-10 and Hebrews 7.

14. Discuss the significance of verses one through four and their application to Jesus Christ.

Lesson Four: Instructional Psalms

<h2>Lesson Text</h2> <p>Psalms 1, 37; 119 127; 128</p>
<h2>Daily Bible Reading</h2>  <p>Monday Psalm 119</p> <p>Tuesday Psalm 1</p> <p>Thursday Psalm 37</p> <p>Friday Psalm 127</p> <p>Saturday Psalm 128</p>
<h2>Lesson Concept</h2>  <p>INSPIRED SCRIPTURES Following God's instructions</p>

Psalm 1: The Way of the Righteous

1. Describe the character of the righteous man as set forth in verses one and two.
2. Contrast the fate of the wicked to that of the righteous. What is the reason(s) for the difference between the fate of the wicked and that of the righteous?

Psalm 37: A Psalm for the Fretful

3. What problem is set forth in verse one and dealt with in this psalm? Why would one envy evil-doers? (cf. Psalm 73:8-9)
4. What reason is repeatedly given through this psalm as to why one need not fret because of evil-doers and why theirs is certainly not an enviable position?
5. What counsel is given in this psalm for one's life in view of what may be expected from God?

Psalm 119: The Importance of God's Word

6. Since this psalm teaches the importance of understanding the word of God, what do the following verses teach about understanding God's word?
 - a. Verse 34.
 - b. Verse 73.
 - c. Verse 144.
 - d. Verse 104.
 - e. Verse 130.
7. Seeing that this psalm teaches a number of principles of good Bible study, what do the following verses teach in respect to studying God's word?
 - a. Verse 15.
 - b. Verse 16.
 - c. Verse 97.

8. Since this psalm shows the word of God to be the answer to man's problem with sin, what do the following verses teach about how God's word can keep one from sinning?
 - a. Verse 11.
 - b. Verse 133.
 - c. Verse 128.



Psalm 127: The Blessings From Following God

9. What seems to be the main point of verses one and two?
10. What is meant in verse two by the phrase "To eat the bread of sorrows?"
11. How are children "a heritage from the Lord?"
12. What is meant by the following phrases found in verse four?
 - a. "Arrows in the hand of a warrior?"
 - b. "Children of one's youth?"

Psalm 128: The Blessings From Fearing God

13. What seems to be the overall theme of this psalm?
14. What illustrations are used to show how one who fears the Lord will be blessed?
15. Can any application be made of this psalm today?

Lesson Five: Psalms of Nature

<h2 style="margin: 0;">Lesson Text</h2> <p style="margin: 10px 0;">Psalms 19; 33; 8</p>
<h2 style="margin: 0;">Daily Bible Reading</h2>  <p style="margin: 5px 0;">Monday Psalm 19</p> <p style="margin: 5px 0;">Tuesday Psalm 33</p> <p style="margin: 5px 0;">Thursday Psalm 8</p> <p style="margin: 5px 0;">Friday 1 Corinthians 11:3</p> <p style="margin: 5px 0;">Saturday Psalm 65</p>
<h2 style="margin: 0;">Lesson Concept</h2>  <p style="margin: 5px 0;">INSPIRED SCRIPTURES Learning about God through nature</p>

Psalm 19: God’s Works and Words

1. List the two ways in which God has revealed Himself that this psalm sets forth.
2. Name the characteristics, values and uses of God’s law as found in verses 7 through 11.
3. Name and explain the two types of sins specified in verses 12 and 13.
4. Summarize the prayer of verses 12 through 14 in relation to what precedes it.

Psalm 33: The Reign of God in His Creation

5. How is the earth “full of the goodness of the Lord?” (v. 5)
6. How were the heavens made? How should the earth’s inhabitants respond to that fact?
7. What characteristics of God are emphasized in the following verses?
 - a. Verses 10-12.
 - b. Verses 13-14.
 - c. Verses 15-17.
 - d. Verses 18-19.

8. In what way is the Lord “our help and our shield?” (v. 20)
9. Upon whom does the mercy of the Lord rest? Why?

Psalm 8: The Glory of God in His Creation

10. According to this psalm, why is God worthy of praise?
11. What is it that makes man’s position such a marvel to the psalmist?
12. What is man’s position in relation to the rest of creation? How does this correspond with his God-given responsibilities in Genesis 1:26-28?

Lesson Six: Psalms of Repentance

Lesson Text

Psalms 6; 32; 38; 51

Daily Bible Reading



Monday
Psalm 6

Tuesday
Psalm 32

Thursday
Psalm 38

Friday
Psalm 51

Saturday
Psalms 102 and 130

Lesson Concept



**INSPIRED
SCRIPTURE**
Changing man's
relationship with God

Psalm 6: A Prayer in Time of Adversity

1. Why was the psalmist seeking the mercy of God?
2. What is the primary meaning of verse five?
3. What, in the psalm, showed the psalmist to be suffering?
4. What resulted when the Lord heard this prayer?
5. How does this psalm illustrate an attitude of penance?

Psalm 32: Rejoicing in Forgiveness

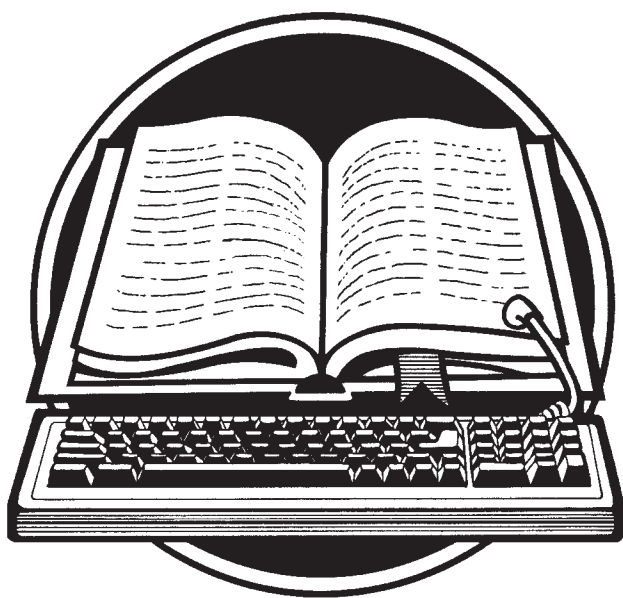
6. What is the theme of this psalm as set forth in verses one and two?
7. What were the results of the "silence" of verses three and four? Contrast the "silence" with the confession of verse five. Describe David's state of mind during each of these periods.
8. What caused David to confess his sin? What does he recommend after finding forgiveness for himself?
9. How does God provide refuge? What are some results of that refuge?
10. What advice does David give to others in verses eight and nine?
11. What are some results of trusting in the Lord?

Psalm 38: A Prayer of David in Time of Chastening

12. What is chastening? What did the psalmist desire concerning it?
13. What were the direct results of the Lord's chastening?
14. Who were the psalmist's enemies? What characteristics did they possess?
15. Since the psalmist regarded the Lord as the source of his chastening, does that mean that God is the source of man's suffering? Explain.
16. How was the Lord his "salvation?"

Psalm 51: David's Prayer of Repentance

17. What prompted the writing of this psalm?
18. What is the chief lesson to be learned from this psalm?
19. What is meant in verse five when David says he "was brought forth in iniquity" and that "in sin" his mother conceived him?
20. What are some natural consequences of one who has been forgiven by God?



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