

Questions

Study Procedure: Read the scripture references before answering questions. Unless otherwise instructed, use the Bible only in answering questions. Some questions may be more difficult than others but try to answer as many as you can. Pray for God’s wisdom and understanding as you study and don’t be discouraged if some answers are not obvious at first. Do not read the study notes for this lesson until AFTER you have completed your questions.

Day One: Vocabulary Review.

1. Unscramble the following words to get the correct vocabulary word for the definitions:
 - a) vocadate _____ a person who stands in favor or in support of another
 - b) shiganu _____ great suffering from worry, grief or pain
 - c) trailfy _____ weakness
 - d) vaneresieg _____ complaints of unfair treatment
 - e) cantfingisi _____ important, meaningful
 - f) chatw _____ a definite period of time

Review of Psalms 88-96.

2. In which psalm can you find the benefits of “dwelling” or “abiding” in the presence of God?

3. Which psalm was written by Moses, according to the small print at the beginning of it?

4. Which psalm was written by Ethan? _____
5. Which psalm was written by Heman? _____
6. Write down a few of the verses from this lesson that were most meaningful to you.



Day Two: Read Psalms 97 and 98.

1. Psalm 97 described the awe-inspiring presence of God. Read the following description of God’s meeting with Moses on Mt. Sinai from Exodus 19:16-20. Beside each underlined word, write down a verse from Psalm 97 that agrees with that description of the presence of God.

(16) Then it came to pass on the third day, in the morning, that there were thunders and (a) lightnings v. _____, and a (b) thick cloud v. _____ on the mountain; and the sound of the trumpet was very loud, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled. (17) And Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain. (18) Now Mount Sinai was completely in smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in (c) fire v. _____. Its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain (d) quaked v. _____ greatly. (19) And when the blast of the trumpet sounded long and became louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him by voice. (20) Then the LORD came down upon Mount Sinai, on the top of the mountain. And the LORD called Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up.

2. Which verses warned about the foolishness of worshiping anything other than the Lord who obviously was far superior to all other gods? _____
3. From the last verses of Psalm 97, list the benefits of loving the Lord.

4. Psalm 98 is similar to Psalm 96 from the last lesson. Both call for the singing of a new song in thanksgiving for the wonderful works of God.
 - a) List the instruments mentioned in vs. 4-6: _____

 - b) List nature’s noisemakers that were called to add their praises: _____



Day Three: Read Psalm 99, 100, and 101.

1. What was emphasized three times in Psalm 99 about God and used as a summary of each section? _____

2. Match each section of Psalm 99 with its “time” reference below:
 - a) God in the Present, all powerful _____
 - b) God in the Past, faithful to speak to His people Israel _____
 - c) God in the Future, fulfilling His promise of justice for Israel _____
3. Fill in the blanks of these familiar lines from Psalm 100. Try to do it without peeking!
 - a) v. 1 Make a _____ noise to the LORD, all you lands!
 - b) v. 2 Serve the LORD with gladness; Come before His presence with _____
 - c) v. 3 Know that the LORD; He is _____; it is He who has made us, and not we ourselves; we are His people and the _____ of His pasture.

- d) v. 4 Enter into His gates with _____, and into His courts with _____.
Be thankful unto Him and bless His name.
- e) v. 5 For the LORD is _____; His _____ is everlasting, and His _____ endures to all generations.
4. In Psalm 101, King David had set a standard for good behavior for himself and those around him. From verses 1-4, list his personal goals. _____

5. Using David's words in Psalm 101:5-8 write a "help wanted" ad that he might have used to locate suitable employees or counselors.



Day Four: Read Psalms 102 and 103.

1. Psalm 102 is classified as a penitential psalm, a psalm that contains sorrowful expressions of pain and sadness put in prayer form before the Lord. Find the verses in which these problems are listed:
- | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| a) burning bones _____ | e) sleeplessness _____ |
| b) weak heart _____ | f) bothered by enemies _____ |
| c) no interest in eating _____ | g) abandoned by God _____ |
| d) weight loss _____ | |
2. At what verse does the "tune" change from sadness to praise and why? _____

3. Answer the following from verses 12-28.
- a) What verses could be called "messianic" because they describe the coming Christ?

- b) What verse mentions a future condition of the heavens and earth? _____

4. Read Psalm 103. In it, David urges the reader to “forget not all His benefits.” List below, giving the references, several of the benefits we enjoy as God’s children. _____

Day Five: Read Psalms 104 and 105.

1. Read Psalm 104. It has been described as a creation hymn, praising God as the Creator of all. Beside each item listed below, find one or more verses that describe its creation or preservation by God.
 - a) The heavens—planets, sun, moon, stars _____
 - b) The atmosphere—clouds, wind, and rain _____
 - c) The oceans and other bodies of water _____
 - d) The vegetation on earth _____
 - e) Land animals _____
 - f) Man _____
 - g) Sea creatures _____

2. The psalmist is so excited about the wonders of creation that he even calls on God to rejoice with him. Find the verse that describes that. _____

3. If Psalm 104 were a “Hymn of Creation,” Psalm 105 might be called a “Hymn of History.” Read through it carefully. Write beside each section of verses anything new to you or something you want to know more about.
 - a) vs. 7-12 _____

 - b) vs. 13-15 _____

 - c) vs. 16-22 _____

 - d) vs. 23-25 _____

 - e) vs. 26-36 _____

 - f) vs. 37-41 _____

 - g) vs. 42-45 _____

4. Now take a few minutes and read the notes for this lesson.

Notes

God Is Great! (Psalms 97-105)

First Impression (Psalm 97)

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It is a common belief that first impressions are important. Psalm 97 describes God's first meeting with Israel on Mt. Sinai, and what an impression He made on them there! [See Exodus 19.] They had been given three days' notice to get prepared and then warned not to come too close. God came down, and the mountain caught fire. It was soon covered with smoke, and the lightning and thunder resounded so that the ground actually shook and trembled with God's presence. The people were in such awe that they wanted Moses to do the talking: "You speak to us and we will hear; but let not God speak to us lest we die." And Moses said to the people, "Do not fear; for God has come to prove you, and that the fear of him may be before your eyes, that you may not sin" (Exodus 20:19 and 20). Psalm 97:2-6 described all this, and the psalmist pointed out the main lessons. First, God alone is to be worshiped: "Let all be put to shame who serve carved images... For You, Lord, are most high above all the earth" (7-9). The second point the psalmist made was that if we love God, then we should hate evil (10). The benefits God awarded for those two actions were deliverance from the hand of the wicked, light for the feet, and gladness for the heart (10,11). For all that, the psalmist urged: "Rejoice in the Lord, you righteous, and give thanks at the remembrance of His holy name" (12).

A New Song (Psalm 98)

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Even God must get tired of the same old thing. Several psalms, like this one, have encouraged God's people to "sing to the Lord a new song!" [See Psalms 33:3; 40:3; 96:1; 144:9; 149:1.] What makes a song new? It becomes new when it is put in your own words or sung with a recent example of God's goodness in your mind. Freshness would be a good definition of "new." What has following God meant in your life recently? Praise Him for that.

In the early verses of Psalm 98 the psalmist gave examples of the "marvelous things" God had done. He had brought Israel to victory and made known His salvation and righteousness to the whole earth. In verses 4-8 the call was given to "all the earth" to "break forth in song" to the Lord. That was a strange invitation. Can the earth praise its Creator? Well, according to Romans 8:19-22, it can surely make noise: "For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God... because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now." The psalmist wanted the earth to change its groan to a grin

so that the sea would roar while the river clapped in anticipation of what the Lord would do next. And what was that exactly? The Lord was going to return to judge the earth. For those who loved Him, that would be great news. At last, real justice and lasting peace would come to all civilizations. But for the ungodly, it would be tragic. For in the presence of a holy God, unholiness would not go unnoticed or unpunished. That is a truth that still needs to be told. Too many do not know that a judgment awaits the enemies of God.

God Is Holy (Psalm 99)

Psalm 99 has a repeating line: “*God is Holy.*” In verses 1-3, He is described as holy right now and always! Verses 4 and 5 depict a future revelation of His holiness as He fulfills His promises to Israel. The last section, verses 6-9, looks back to the past where He showed His holiness and the people responded with obedient hearts. Three men were named who exhibited personal holiness in their willingness to pray—Moses, Aaron, and Samuel. None were perfect in the sense of being sinless (8), but their lives could be described as “holy” because, as the word “holy” meant, they were willing to be separate, apart from worldly attachments, to be available for God’s use. “Holy” also shares a meaning with “wholly” and can mean “complete” or “healthy.” God is holy because He is complete, needs nothing, and is distinct from all others. He calls us to be holy as His followers, unattached to the world and available for His purposes. Could your life be described as holy?

The Greatest Praise (Psalm 100)

This psalm is frequently sung in churches and called “The Great Doxology.” “Doxology” comes from two words meaning “words” (*logos*) of “praise” (*doxa*). To praise (*doxa*) means literally “to show forth.” How do we show the people around us and express to God Himself that we think He is wonderful? Three ways are mentioned here:

1. “*Serve the Lord with gladness*” (1-2). Going cheerfully about the duties of the day will certainly get the attention of others and please the One being served!
2. Submit (3) “*Know that the Lord, He is God; it is He who has made us, and not we ourselves; we are... the sheep of His pasture.*” The second way to show forth God’s greatness is to willingly submit to His plans and purposes. When we cheerfully submit, others see that we believe God is worthy of our obedience and that we think He has the wisdom to be trusted to direct our lives.
3. Say it (4, 5). “*Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise.*” Put what you feel in words and tell God privately and others publicly about God’s great goodness, mercy, and truth. People will not automatically

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Personal Choices (Psalm 101)

The determination of David in Psalm 101 to express his dedication to the will of God was emphasized with the repeated use of “I will” and “I shall.” Much different than what we see in public leadership today, David knew that he must get his personal life in line before he could be the king God intended him to be in public life. He said in verse 2, *“I will behave wisely in a perfect way.”* To be perfect before the Lord does not mean never to sin, but it does mean to be sincere and without **pretense**. The Apostle John called it *“walking in the light”* (1 Jn.1:5-10). How do we stay *“in the light”* of what pleases God? Here is the advice of this psalm:

1. Be careful about what you let your eyes see (3). How appropriate this is in our day when almost no movie, video, television program, stage, or computer screen is safe from overexposure to violence, **vulgarity**, or nudity.
2. Be careful about what your ears hear (5). Allowing others to speak slander of your neighbors without stopping them is far from “perfect” living. This also could be applied to listening to ungodly music lyrics or any other source of unwholesome language.
3. Be careful in picking your friends (6, 7). David declared that he would be selective about his close associations. There is truth in the statement, “You become like those you are around.”

pretense -a deceptive or false action or appearance

vulgarity -indecent; showing of poor taste or manners

Surrendered, Yet Suffering (Psalm 102)

From the beginning, the psalmist made clear he was in trouble: *“Hear my prayer, O Lord, and let my cry come to You...Do not hide your face from me...answer me speedily.”* He physically suffered: *“My heart is stricken...my bones cling to my skin...I lie awake”* (3-7). He suffered emotionally, feeling persecuted and abandoned: *“My enemies reproach me all day long;...for You have lifted me up and cast me away”* (8-11). Then, suddenly, he looked up, *“But You, O Lord, shall endure forever”* (12). He looked past his present pain to a future hope: *“For the Lord shall build up Zion; He shall appear in His glory, He shall regard the prayer of the **destitute**, And shall not despise their prayer.”* No suffering in the life of a child of God lasts forever. Paul wrote: *“For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared to the glory which shall be revealed in us”* (Romans 8:18). The psalmist realized that it was important to write down the hope he had realized: *“This will be written for the generation to come, that a people yet to be created may praise the Lord”* (18). What was that future hope that comforted him? He saw the coming of Messiah to

destitute -extremely poor

soothe prisoners, save the dying, and bring unity to the world (19-22). There was a brief return to present pain, however; which was not unusual since we can only momentarily escape continuing pain: *“O my God, do not take me away in the midst of my days”* (24). The psalmist reasoned that since God was not limited by time, He did not have to cut short the life of one of his own. After all, God laid the foundation of the earth and would one day roll it up like an old garment and change it (25-26). Such a God could certainly be trusted to continue His care of one sick servant! Looking beyond present suffering to the goal ahead and our God who cares can help us endure what we must in the present.

**More
Gratitude
(Psalm 103)**

“Bless the Lord, O my soul,” David began. The word “bless” came from the Hebrew *bahrack* which meant “to kneel” in order to show **homage** or honor to someone. *“Forget not all His benefits,”* the psalm continued (2). The positive side of “forget not” is “to remember,” and David was great at remembering. Here is David’s list of some of the benefits of being in God’s family:

- (v. 3) Forgiveness of all sins; healing of all diseases
- (v. 4) Rescue from destruction; being crowned with mercy
- (v. 5) Satisfaction of appetite and renewed strength

One of the most wonderful gifts of God is forgiveness. *“The Lord is merciful and gracious...He has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor punished us according to our iniquities”* (8-10). Isn’t that great news! How much mercy can we have? *“For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward those that fear Him”* (11). How far away has He removed our sins? *“As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us”* (12). For such great love and mercy, David needed extra help to express his praise. He called on the angels to help along with *“all His works”* to *“bless the Lord!”* (20-22).

**Creation
Hymn
(Psalm 104)**

In another acknowledgment of God as the Creator of all that exists, this psalm described that early work. *“O Lord my God, You are very great”* (1). How great? He stretched *“out the heavens like a curtain.”* That was an interesting description in light of the discovery in recent years that the universe is still expanding—very much like a curtain being stretched. Next, the vast power of God to lay the foundations of the earth and to set boundaries for the oceans was praised (3-9). How loving of God to provide a water supply throughout the earth so that every wild beast and bird of heaven could be satisfied! (10-13). The staples that man would need—wine, oil, and bread—

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homage -expression of high regard, honor

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were likewise gifts from God (14, 15). For the marking of seasons and organizing of daily work God created the moon and sun to move with mathematical **precision** (19-23). Like the psalmist we should shout: “O Lord, how **manifold** are Your works! In wisdom You have made them all” (24). From the smallest fish to the largest dinosaur [See the description of Leviathan in Job 41.], they all depend on God to “give them their food in due season” and determine their life-span (27-30).

precision -exactness;
accuracy

At this point, the psalmist was so overwhelmed that he expressed his hope that God Himself would “rejoice in His works” (31)—which we can be sure He does! A lifetime is not long enough to express praise for such a God, but like the psalmist, let us make every effort to use the time we have to do just that! (33-35).

manifold -many

The Covenant-Keeper (Psalm 105)

As Psalm 104 praised God as Creator, Psalm 105 praised God as the Covenant-Keeper: “He is the Lord our God...He remembers His covenant forever” (8). The covenant to which he referred was the covenant with the nation Israel that began with God making a covenant [serious pledge or promised agreement] with Abraham. This covenant was to apply to the descendants of Abraham, too, and so the psalmist mentioned Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph. He recounted the beginning of that family line, the promise of the special land (9-12), protection from enemies (13-15), and the famine that caused the growing family to go down to Egypt where Joseph had been set up, in spite of the evil intent of his brothers, as the one who would save his whole family, as well as Egypt, from starvation (16-23). Egypt later forgot the help of Joseph and enslaved that family, but God still did not forget His covenant with them. He sent Moses and Aaron to perform signs to gain their release (26-36). His covenant favor was so great that they left Egypt with riches and health, protected from the harsh elements of the desert and “satisfied with the bread of heaven” till at last they came into their promised land among the Gentiles (37-44). The psalmist’s last statement emphasized the simple request that God had made to His people in return for all His covenant-care: “That they might observe His statutes and keep His laws.” Though often they failed in their part—“Praise the Lord!” (45)—He never failed in His!

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Pulling It Together

This lesson began with Psalm 97 which described God’s first appearance to Israel. The psalms that followed detailed the characteristics of God revealed there: holiness, righteous judgment, creative greatness, and covenant love. The other psalms made clear what our response should be to such greatness: thanks, praise, humility, and obedience. Ask God to show you which ones you need to practice.