



4

Praises to God

Key Theme

- God is worthy of our praise.

Key Passages

- Psalm 150 (Praise); Psalm 136 (Thanksgiving); Psalm 43 (Lament)

Objective

Students will be able to:

- Give examples of different types of psalms—praise, thanksgiving, lament.



Lesson Overview



Come On In

page 5

Students will place a bookmark at Psalms 43, 136, and 150.

Students will practice the memory verse by unscrambling words on the Memory Verse Review Sheet then reciting the verse to each other or to the class.



Activity 1: Praises to God Class Notes

page 5

Students will fill out the Praises to God Class Notes as you study the lesson. Pass out the class notes before you begin to teach.



Studying God's Word

page 5

The book of Psalms is a collection of praises to our God. It gives us many, many reasons and ways to praise God, thank Him, and worship Him.



Activity 2: Psalm Concentration

page 9

Students will turn over, read, and try to match verses printed on cards from Psalms with verses that are from the same type of psalm—praise, thanksgiving, or lament.

Lesson Preparation

WHAT YOU WILL DO



COME ON IN

- Cut paper into strips for each student to mark today's study passage in Psalms 43, 136, and 150.
- Print the Memory Verse Review Sheet from the Resource DVD-ROM for each student.



PRAISES TO GOD CLASS NOTES

- Print one Praises to God Class Notes from the Resource DVD-ROM for each student. Keep the answer key for your use.



STUDYING GOD'S WORD

- Study the Prepare to Share section.
- Go Before the Throne.



PSALM CONCENTRATION

- Print and cut apart one set of Psalm Concentration Cards with game directions from the Resource DVD-ROM. Print cards on cardstock if possible.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED

- Memory Verse Poster
- Paper strips
- Memory Verse Review Sheet for each student

- Praises to God Class Notes
- Praises to God Class Notes Answer Key
- Pencils

- Student Take Home Sheets

- Psalm Concentration Cards



Memory Verse

2 Samuel 7:22 Therefore You are great, O Lord God. For there is none like You, nor is there any God besides You, according to all that we have heard with our ears.

➤ **Pace your lesson!** Use the clocks to mark the time you want to finish each section. This will help you stay on track and finish on time. You may need to shorten or drop sections as necessary.





Prepare to Share

SCRIPTURAL BACKGROUND

Prepare to teach by preparing your heart. Read the key passages listed above with this background.

Psalms is a book of prayers and hymns meant to draw our attention from ourselves and to our mighty God. The beautiful poetic structure of the psalms allows their impact to be felt across the language barrier. Rather than the rhyming structure we are so familiar with in the West, these poems are written with structural elements that often occur in couplets that compare or contrast ideas. This is called parallelism since the ideas run parallel to one another.

One example of this occurs in Psalm 106, which is a psalm of thanksgiving. Verse 2 declares, “Who can utter the mighty acts of the Lord?” This statement is followed by “Who can declare all His praise?” Notice that the same idea is repeated in the couplet. Another couplet can be observed in Psalm 106:4, where the psalmist is calling God to remember him. Psalm 106:5, 106:6, and 106:7 all illustrate triplets—the idea in each verse is restated three times. As you study the psalms, you will notice some of the parallels will be opposites of one another.

Through all of the poetic language, the psalms are meant to offer praise to God. The psalms teach us how to worship God with our words. The psalms made up the “hymnbook” for Jews. To the Jews, the title simply meant “praises,” and that is what the psalms were used for—songs of praise. Most of the psalms emphasize man’s position before the infallible, incomprehensible, holy God. This sets God in His rightful place—as Ruler over the affairs of the world and all mankind. As the psalmist speaks, God is exalted and His attributes are set before us like a magnificent banquet that we can feast on to feed our souls.

God’s sovereignty is constantly affirmed by the psalmists as they offer Him thanks and praise, as they cry out to Him for help, or as they boldly claim their confidence in what He will do in the future. The psalms have been classified into various groupings, but the lesson today will look at three common types of psalms in three particular chapters: Psalm 150—singing praises, Psalm 136—giving thanks, and Psalm 43—lamenting or crying out for help.

Psalm 150 is the final psalm in the book of Psalms and ends a series of psalms dedicated to praising the

sovereign creator God (Psalms 146–150). Psalm 150 shouts that all things should praise the Lord. It lists where to praise Him—in His sanctuary and in the firmament. This gives the impression that all of heaven (firmament) and earth (sanctuary) should praise the Lord. We praise Him for His mighty acts, for His excellent greatness, and with music, song, and dance (Psalm 150:2–4). The psalmist then declares that everything that has breath should praise the Lord! This is a fitting end to a book of songs and hymns to the almighty God. God’s honor and majesty have been presented throughout this book, and considering the wonder of who He is, we are moved to burst forth in praises to Him with the psalmist, who ends the Psalm, “Praise the Lord!”

Undoubtedly, Psalm 136 is a psalm of thanksgiving to God for His enduring mercy. This is made clear with the common refrain in verses 1, 2, 3, and 26—“Oh, give thanks to the Lord, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever.” The psalmist rejoices at God’s care as he is reminded of God as Creator and as Deliverer of the Israelites from their bondage in Egypt. In fact, the repeated refrain, “His mercy endures forever,” may have been spoken by the people in responsive worship. We, too, ought to give thanks to God for delivering us from our bondage to sin through Christ’s work on the Cross! For those who are in Christ, His mercy truly endures forever.

The Bible tells of men who praised and honored God with thanksgiving. But it is also an honest Book that looks frankly at the hearts of men—through good and bad circumstances—and the emotions that are often revealed through these occasions. The psalms cover the entire range of human emotions, feelings, sentiments, and sensitivities. The mood of Psalm 43 is far different from that of Psalm 150 or Psalm 136. Chapter 43 is a psalm of lament—or crying out to God. In this psalm, the psalmist pleads to God for deliverance and seeks to understand the unjust situation he finds himself in. His plea is urgent and his heart seems to be desperate, but he does not lose sight of the fact that because God is his inheritance and his exceeding joy, his hope must rest in Him (Psalm 43:5).

As you teach the lesson this week, point to these different types of psalms as a way to show the students how to offer worship to God. Whether we are praising and thanking Him in the good times, recalling His faithfulness and mercy, or crying out to Him in times of anguish, He alone is always worthy of our praises.

HISTORICAL/APOLOGETICS BACKGROUND

The psalms were originally organized into five books, but they have been assembled into one book today, often referred to as the Psalter. Many of the psalms include inscriptions that tell us who wrote the poem, who was to perform, when it was to be performed, what tune they were to be set to, and occasionally the circumstances under which it was written. Psalms is the longest book in the Bible—150 chapters—and some say the most diverse. As you read this book, you will see many different subjects discussed including God, war, sin and evil, judgment, worship, praise, repentance, and prophecies of the Christ.

Among the writers are Moses, David, Asaph, the sons of Korah, and Solomon. Some of the psalms have been attributed to Ezra, even though he is not named as the writer. Although there were many human writers, we know that the ultimate author was the Holy Spirit. This is clearly affirmed by Peter when he spoke of the Spirit's role in guiding holy men to record these words (2 Peter 1:19–21).

In 2 Samuel 23:1, David is referred to as the “sweet psalmist of Israel.” Knowing that David was a man after God's own heart (1 Samuel 13:14; Acts 13:22), we can look to these writings as a model for our own worship

of the Lord. They can be used to praise and thank God in times of personal devotion as well as to minister to the souls of others as you “let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord” (Colossians 3:16).

For more information on this topic, see the Online Resource Page.



BEFORE THE THRONE

Gracious Lord, I praise your name. Thank you for this study of Psalms. I am reminded that I have so much to praise you for. You are mighty and kind. You are sovereign and personal. You are my Redeemer. Thank you for who you are and what you've done. Give me the energy and passion I need to teach my students this lesson well. Help me to model good prayer habits using the Psalms as my guide. Thank you for the reminder that when we don't feel like praying because we're down, that's exactly when we need to come to you! To you be the glory!



COME ON IN

As students arrive . . .

- They will mark their Bibles at Psalms 43, 136, and 150 with strips of paper.
- They will say the memory verse after they unscramble the words on the Memory Verse Review Sheet.

This time at the beginning of class should be used to review the memory verse. We have provided an activity sheet on the Resource DVD-ROM for you to use. Students should unscramble the letters of the missing words and then recite the verse to you or another student. Each week the verse will get harder to unscramble. You may have other ideas and ways to encourage your students to memorize the verse.



After all the students arrive, pray with them before beginning the lesson.



REVIEW

Using the Lesson Theme Posters provided with each lesson, quickly review the previous lesson(s) with your students. Take 5 to 10 minutes to reinforce the important truths the students have heard so far in your class.

Ask the children questions about the previous lessons as you display the Lesson Theme Posters. Reflect briefly on the passages you read, bringing the objectives and themes back into focus. This will refresh the truths in your students' minds and maintain continuity as you teach through the lessons.



Praises to God Class Notes

MATERIALS

- Praises to God Class Notes for each student
- Praises to God Class Notes Answer Key
- Pencils

INSTRUCTIONS

Print the class notes for each student. Pass them out at the beginning of class. Have students fill in the blanks as you study the lesson.

We will be completing these class notes as we study the Bible passages. Try not to work ahead. I'll let you know when to fill in something.

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

When we finish filling in our class notes, we will know more about the book of Psalms in the Bible.



Studying God's Word

READ THE WORD

We have learned that David was a special man chosen by God. The Bible tells us that David was handsome, strong, and courageous; he could play musical instruments; he was a mighty man of war, spoke carefully, and the Lord was with him. He was also a sinner. He fell into sin and had to beg for God's forgiveness and mercy. Today we will see another side of King David

Psalm 150

► Use the History of Israel Poster included with your teacher kit to show your class where the biblical accounts you study chronologically fit into this timeline.

► After completing each point on the class notes, have the students re-read the statement together or call on individual students to read it.

as we take a look at the book of Psalms. You see, David was also a very good writer and a musician. In fact, David wrote many of the psalms—prayers and hymns that make up one of the books of the Bible. Turn to that book now—the book of Psalms; it’s near the middle of your Bible.

- ? Take a look in your Bible. Who can tell me how many psalms there are? *150.*
Yes—150 different psalms. The psalms were written as songs, hymns, and prayers. There are many different types of psalms. They are pretty easy to tell apart. We are going to look at three types today. Turn to Psalm 150. Let’s read it together. *Divide the passage for members of the class to read aloud.*

EXAMINE THE WORD

Observe the Text

- ? What would you say this writer is trying to do here—and trying to get us to do? *Praise the Lord.*
- ? So what type of psalm is this? *A praise psalm.*
Yes! This is definitely a praise psalm—a psalm designed to praise the Lord. *Have students fill in #1 on their class notes—praise.*
- ? Where does the writer tell us to praise God? *Psalm 150:1. In His sanctuary; in His mighty firmament.*
Yes. It says to praise God in His sanctuary and praise Him in His mighty firmament. God is to be praised everywhere. In heaven and on earth. All things should praise God.
- ? Why was God to be praised? Keep looking at the psalm in your Bible. *Psalm 150:2. For His mighty acts, for His excellent greatness. Have students answer # 2 on their class notes—acts, greatness.*
- ? How was God praised in this psalm? *Psalm 150:3–5. With trumpet, lute, harp, timbrel, dance, stringed instruments, flutes, and cymbals.*
- ? At the very end of the psalm what does it tell us? What should praise our Creator God? *Psalm 150:6. Let everything that has breath praise the Lord!*

Discover the Truth

We started with the last psalm in the book of Psalms. And it ends with a wonderful thought. We are to praise our holy, Creator God for who He is and what He has done. When you want to praise God and aren’t sure how to do that, just find one of these praise psalms and read it out loud. You will soon realize that God’s Word will help you to praise Him and give Him glory! Look at #3 on the class notes. How will you fill that in? *Have students fill in #3 on their class notes—read it out.*



READ THE WORD

OK. Now turn in your Bibles to Psalm 136. This is another type of psalm. Take a look at the psalm title and the first two verses.

Psalm 136

? What type of psalm do you think this might be? What was the writer doing when he wrote this psalm? *Thanking God.*

That's right. It was written to give God thanks. Fill in #4 on the class notes. Let's read the psalm. *Have students fill in #4 on their class notes—thanking. Divide the passage for members of the class to read aloud.*

EXAMINE THE WORD

Great job reading that psalm. Now let's take some time to look at it closer by asking some questions.

Observe the Text

? Why should we give thanks to God? *Psalm 136:1. He is good! His mercy endures forever.*

? How is God described? *Psalm 136:2–3. God of gods! Lord of lords!*

He is the only Creator God. He is sovereign over everything that happens. And He is good! And we should give thanks to Him always.

This writer is remembering some of the great things God had done. He starts at the very beginning. *Re-read Psalm 136:5–9.*

? What are these verses talking about? *Creation.*

? That's right. What are the specific things the writer mentions about creation? *The earth, the great lights, the sun, the moon, and stars.*

Yes. God created the heavens and the earth and all that is in them. We should thank God for His creation! Fill in #5 on your class notes. *Have students fill in #5 on their class notes—creation.*

The writer remembered another great time in the history of the Israelites. Look at Psalm 136:10–13. *Re-read Psalm 136:10–13.*

? What was the writer remembering here? *When God led His people, the Israelites, out of Egypt.*

That's right. The writer was remembering some of the wonderful things God had done for him. And he was thanking God for the things He had done throughout history.

Discover the Truth

The writer remembered the great things God had done. He remembered that God's mercy endures forever. God is faithful. God had provided for them. And for all of these things, the writer was giving thanks to God!

God is reminding us through this psalm that we, too, should remember the great things He has done for us. When we think this way—remembering the blessings of the past—it is easy to have a grateful heart and give thanks to God. He blesses us every day, often in ways we don't even realize. Reading the psalms of thanksgiving will lift our hearts and soon we will be giving thanks to Him like the psalmist who wrote this song of thanksgiving.

- ? How would you answer #6 on your class notes? Allow discussion. Have students fill in #6 on their class notes—thank, done.



READ THE WORD

The Bible gives us many examples of men who praised and honored God with thanksgiving. And we should try to do the same because our God is a mighty God. But there are times when our hearts just don't feel like singing. And God knows that. The people who wrote the Bible sometimes felt the same way. Our next type of psalm is a psalm of lament. To lament means to cry out and ask why. The writers of these psalms often felt bad, sad, or discouraged. We can feel that way sometimes, can't we? Turn to Psalm 43. This is a psalm of lamentation. The writer isn't feeling very cheerful. He is crying out to the Lord. Often the writers of the psalms asked God, "Why?" Why are things going the way they are? Why aren't things going well? Why did it seem God had forgotten them? How long would God seem so far away from them?

Psalm 43

Let's read Psalm 43. Read Psalm 43. Divide the passage for members of the class to read aloud.

EXAMINE THE WORD

We can feel like this at times, right? Let's look at these verses closer and see what God is telling us through them.

Observe the Text

- ? This psalm is a prayer. This writer was turning to God in a time of trouble. What did we call this type of psalm—when someone is crying out to the Lord and asking why? Allow for answers. A psalm of lament. Have students fill in # 7 on their class notes—lament.
- ? And how were the writers of these psalms of lament feeling? What does lament mean? They felt bad, sad, and were crying out to the Lord.
- ? So how would you complete #8 on your class notes? Bad, sad, cry.
- ? Who was this man's strength? Psalm 43:2. God.
- ? God was his strength. Yet, what does he think the Lord had done to him? Psalm 43:2. Cast him off.

That's right. He was pleading to the Lord God who was his strength. Yet he believed that the Lord God had cast him off and forgotten about him. He wondered why God would allow him to be mourning—or crying—because of his enemies. Why didn't God come to his rescue? He was feeling so low!

- ? But the writer hadn't given up on God. Look at verse 3. What did he ask God to send? God's light and truth to lead him.

? He felt so low yet look what he said about God in verse 4. What did he call God? *His exceeding joy.*

Yes. The writer was down and low, asking God why? Yet he said that he would go to the altar of God, his exceeding joy, and there he would praise God.

Discover the Truth

You see? This writer felt bad. He cried out to God. He wrote this psalm of lament. He wondered where God was. Yet, he knew that God was there all along. He knew God was his exceeding joy. In fact, God was the only one who could help him.

We can learn from this. God knows our hearts may sometimes get sad. And God wants us to come to Him in prayer, like the writer of Psalm 43 did. He was lamenting—or crying out to God. He was cast down, worried. And in this sad mood, he turned to God in prayer. He knew that God would be the one to help him.

We should turn to God in prayer as well. When we are truly feeling down, low, sad, afraid—there is only one place to find joy again. And that is in God!

Take a look at #9 and #10. How would you answer them?

Have students answer #9 and #10 on their class notes—prayer, God.



Psalm Concentration

MATERIALS

- Psalm Concentration Cards

INSTRUCTIONS

Print and cut apart the Psalm Concentration Cards from the Resource DVD-ROM. If you have a large class, you may need two sets of cards. Place the cards face down on the floor or table. Students will try to match the cards according to the type of psalm category each verse would fit into best. Each verse is from a psalm of thanksgiving, praise, or lament. They will take turns reading and trying to match the cards.

We are going to play Psalm Concentration. These cards have verses on them. I want you to read the cards you turn over. If the verses are from the same type of psalm—thanksgiving, praise, lament—you keep the cards. You'll take turns around the table reading the cards and trying to match

them. The cards won't have the same verses on them. The match will be if the two cards are giving thanks, praise, or crying out to the Lord. *Play the game.*

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

The book of Psalms is full of wonderful poems, songs and prayers that men wrote to God. Some are happy—like the psalms of thanksgiving and praise. Some are not—like the psalms of lament. God wants us to come to Him in all circumstances. Whether we are praising Him, thanking Him, or crying out to Him in trouble. He is our ever present help in times of trouble, and in times of rejoicing. And it is good to give thanks and praise to Him for all He has done.





Applying God's Word

WHAT YOU HEARD IN THE WORD

This lesson has shown us the beauty of three different types of psalms—psalms of praise, thanksgiving, and lament. The writers of the psalms were inspired by the Lord to write down their songs. They give us an excellent example of how we can talk or sing or pray to God with words of thanks, praise, and even sadness. God wants us to come to Him about everything in our lives. He promises to be our strength.

Wise

Merciful

Omnipotent

Gracious

(Refer to Attributes Poster)

GOD'S WORD IN THE REAL WORLD

The book of Psalms is really a collection of praises to our God. It gives us many, many reasons to praise God, thank Him, and worship Him. God has done so many wonderful things for us. He blesses us each day; He forgives us; He offers salvation to those who believe; He is wise, good, kind, merciful, and powerful. He is the Creator of the entire universe and He gives us breath each day. *Review these attributes and their meanings.*

Remember, as we saw in Psalm 43, even when our hearts don't feel like singing praises, when we are sad and need His help, we can turn to God in prayer. He will answer. And we will return to the joy and hope that is found only in Him.

The book of Psalms reminds us that God is worthy of all of our worship. He alone is worthy of our praise. And He is pleased when we worship Him with all of our heart.



► Pass out the Student Take Home Sheets and remind the students to practice the memory verse this week.



MEMORY VERSE

2 Samuel 7:22 Therefore You are great, O Lord God. For there is none like You, nor is there any God besides You, according to all that we have heard with our ears.



GROUP PRAYER TIME

- Praise God for giving us a book that helps us to praise Him better.
- Ask God to remind us to use the psalms when we want to praise Him, thank Him, or cry out to Him in prayer.