



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 three different types of psalms—praise, thanksgiving, and lament.



Lesson Overview



Come On In

Students will practice the memory verse by spilling out the Memory Verse Cards and putting them in the correct order. Then, they will say the verse aloud to each other and/or to the teacher. (More cards have been added for Lessons 4 and 5. See the Resource DVD-ROM document.)



Activity 1: Praises to God Class Notes

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

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



Activity 2: What Type of Psalm Is It?

Students will listen to different Scriptures and prayers representing the types of psalms and determine what type of psalm it is (praise, thanksgiving, or lament).

Lesson Preparation

WHAT YOU WILL DO

WHAT YOU WILL NEED



COME ON IN

- Print and cut the Spill the Verse Cards from the Resource DVD-ROM for each group of 2–3 students. If possible, print the cards on cardstock.

- Memory Verse Poster
- Spill the Verse Cards for every 2–3 students
- Containers with a lid or small paper bags to hold the cards



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.

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



STUDYING GOD'S WORD

- Study the Prepare to Share section.
- Go Before the Throne.
- Print and cut out the Instrument Pictures from the Resource DVD-ROM.

- Instrument Pictures
- Student Take Home Sheets



WHAT TYPE OF PSALM IS IT?

- Print and cut out one set of What Type of Psalm? Answer Cards from the Resource DVD-ROM for each team or for each student, depending on how you play.
- Print one What Type of Psalm? Scripture and Prayer Sheet from the Resource DVD-ROM for your use.

- What Type of Psalm? Answer Card set for each team or each student
- What Type of Psalm? Scripture and Prayer Sheet



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 lesson key passages along 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 spill the Memory Verse Cards out and put the words from the memory verse in the correct order.
- They will recite the verse aloud to their group and/or for the entire class.

This time at the beginning of class should be used to review the memory verse. We have provided an activity, Spill the Verse, on the Resource DVD-ROM for you to use. 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 Praises to God 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 book of Psalms today. Try not to work ahead. Fill in the blanks as we come to them. I'll let you know when to fill in something.

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

As we study today and fill in our class notes, we will learn more about some of the different types of psalms.

➤ Because of the age and ability of 1st and 2nd graders to read and comprehend, we encourage you to read the Scriptures to the students. However, if you have strong readers, by all means have them participate by reading God's Word.



Studying God's Word

READ THE WORD

► 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.

► As your students fill in the class notes, you may want to write the words and numbers on the board. This will make it easier for them.

Psalm 150

► As you complete the class notes, write the words on the board to help the students with spelling.

We have learned that David was a special man chosen by God. *Refer to Lesson Theme Poster Quarter 1, Lesson 12.* He could play musical instruments; he was a mighty man of war, spoke carefully, and most importantly the Lord was with him. We read that God used David to slay the Philistine giant, Goliath. *Refer to Lesson Theme Poster 1.* And, as king, God gave him special promises. *Refer to Lesson Theme Poster 2.* But, because he was a man, he was also a sinner. He fell into sin and had to ask for God's forgiveness and mercy. *Refer to Lesson Theme Poster 3.* Today we will learn some new things about King David as we take a look at the book of Psalms. David was not only a powerful king and a great fighter, but he was also a very good writer and a musician. King David wrote many of the psalms. The psalms are prayers and hymns that make up the largest book of the Bible. Turn to that book now—the book of Psalms. *Help students with Bibles find the book of Psalms. Encourage students to bring Bibles to class.*

? Take a look in your Bible and go all the way to the end of the book of Psalms. Find the last psalm. Who can tell me how many psalms there are? 150.

Yes—150 different psalms. The psalms were written as songs, hymns, and prayers.

? What word is missing in the circle in the center of your class notes? *Songs.* Fill that word in now.

Aside from the psalms being songs, hymns and prayers, there are many different types of psalms. We are going to look at three types today. Go back to Psalm 150 if you have your Bibles. That's the psalm we are going to start with. The LAST one! Listen as I read it aloud. *Read the psalm emphasizing the word praise!*

EXAMINE THE WORD

Observe the Text

? What is the writer doing? What word did you hear over and over in this psalm? *Praise!*

Yes! This is definitely a praise psalm. There is a picture on your class notes of someone praising God! Do you see it? It is in circle #1. You can finish the word. Fill in the blanks to spell praise. *Put the word on the board to help the students.*

? This psalm says to praise God! It tells us to praise God 12 times! What does praise mean? *Allow discussion. You may want to re-read part of the psalm to help the students put praise into this context.*

Praise can mean a lot of things. It can mean to honor God! To adore God! To glorify God! To worship God! God deserves all of our praise!

I want you to add those words around the girl praising God! See where they go? Praising God can mean a lot of things—these are some of the words that can describe what praise means. Worship, honor, adore, glorify! *Put the words on the board as students complete the class notes.*

I'm going to read parts of Psalm 150 again. Listen carefully and see if you can answer my questions.

? *Read Psalm 150:2a. What should we praise God for? His mighty acts.*

? *Read Psalm 150:3. How should we praise God? Allow discussion. With a trumpet, lute, and harp.*

? What are those things? A trumpet, a lute, and a harp? Look at these pictures. You might recognize these as musical instruments. *Allow discussion. Show Instrument Pictures.*

We are to praise God with music! And David also mentioned a timbrel and flutes. *Show the pictures. These are different from what we see today. They were musical instruments that were used to praise God back in David's time. Allow discussion about the instruments. Pass them around.*

? OK. Now which psalm have I been reading to you? It is the last psalm in the book of psalms. *Psalm 150.*

Discover the Truth

We started with the last psalm in the book of Psalms—Psalm 150. And it ends with a wonderful thought. We are to praise our God for who He is and what He has done. He is mighty and great! God's Word can and will help you to praise Him and give Him glory. You can praise God by reading, reciting, or singing His Word.



READ THE WORD

Psalm 150 is a psalm of praise. Now I'm going to read parts of another psalm to you. I think you'll get what kind of a psalm this is. *Read Psalm 136:1–3 emphasizing "give thanks."*

Psalm 136 1–3

EXAMINE THE WORD

Observe the Text

- ? What do you think? What kind of a psalm is this? Look in circle #2.
Thanksgiving.

Very good! It said to give thanks over and over. The writer wanted to thank our great God!

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

Yes, God is good! Let's write that on our class notes. Find "God is" around the thanksgiving circle and finish the sentence. *Good.*

- ? *Re-read Psalm 136:1–3 emphasizing His mercy endures forever. What does this say about God's mercy? How long will His mercy last? Forever.*

- ? God's mercy endures forever! Mercy is another word for God's love! This psalm is giving thanks to God because His mercy and His love will last forever. He will not change.

Look at the thanksgiving circle again. How will you complete the sentence that begins with "God's mercy"? *Allow discussion. Love. Have one or all of the students read the statements back. Write the word on the board, if necessary.*

- ? What psalm was I just reading? What psalm were we talking about—a thanksgiving psalm? It's on the class notes. *Psalm 136. That's right.*

Discover the Truth

Psalm 136 is a psalm of thanksgiving—giving thanks to God for His mercy and His love; giving thanks to Him because He is good!

The psalm told us that God's love and mercy endure forever. That means He is still loving us and showing us mercy. We should give thanks to Him for all He does for us. We should be thankful—grateful to God. He gives us so many great things!

- ? Tell me some wonderful things you can give thanks to God for every day!
Allow discussion. This can include family, home, parents, pets, health, school, eyes to see, ears to hear, church, pastor, God's Word . . . the list is endless.

We have much to be thankful for, don't we? And God wants us to give thanks to Him for He is good!



READ THE WORD

Well, we have talked about praise psalms and thanksgiving psalms. But sometimes we just don't feel good. Sometimes we don't feel like praising God or thanking Him. Sometimes we are sad or lonely or afraid.

Sometimes things happen that we don't understand. When that happens we might feel like turning to God and crying out to Him. We sometimes want to cry to God and say, "God, why did this happen?" Well the people who wrote the Bible felt that way, too. And when they did, they cried out to God. They wrote a different kind of psalm. It is called a psalm of lament. Can you repeat that word for me? *Lament*. Lament means to cry out to God. Say the word again. *Lament*.

There is a picture of a young boy who looks like he is crying out to God on your class notes. It is in circle #3. Do you see it? I want you to fill in the word "lament" in that circle. That is the next type of psalm we are going to talk about. *Write the word "lament" on the board to help the students with the word.*

- ? What does lament mean? Who remembers? I just said it. *Allow discussion. It means to cry out to the Lord when you are not feeling good.*

I'm going to read a part of Psalm 43. If you have a Bible, turn there. This psalm is a prayer to God. The man who wrote this was sad and discouraged. Listen as I read. *Read Psalm 43:5.*

Psalm 43:5

EXAMINE THE WORD

Observe the Text

- ? The writer said, "Why are you cast down, O my soul?" What do you think that means—cast down? *Allow discussion.*

It means he is sad, feeling low; he probably feels like crying. Maybe something terrible happened. Maybe he doesn't understand why! And he is asking God about it. Why, God? Help me God! He felt like God had cast him off or forgotten him! This is really a psalm of lament. He is crying out to God for help.

- ? Look at your class notes. What do we ask God when we lament and cry out? *Why?* Fill in the blank that starts with "Asking God." The question that we often ask is, "Why?"

- ? This writer was asking God why. And yet this man had hope in someone. Who did he still have hope in? *Re-read Psalm 43:5 emphasizing hope in God. His hope is in God.*

When the writer's soul was feeling sad and downcast, He still had hope in God!

- ? Can someone read the sentence that begins with "Put your hope in . . ." and finish the sentence for us? *Put your hope in God.*

We can always put our hope in God! Even when we are sad and downcast and asking, "Why?"

? And what is the psalm we have been reading out of? What is this psalm of lament we talked about? It's on your class notes. *Psalm 43.*

Discover the Truth

You see? This writer felt bad. He cried out to God. He asked, "Why am I so downcast?" He wrote this psalm of lament. He wondered where God was. But remember, he knew that God was there all along. He knew he had to put his hope in God. He had to trust God's plan for 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, sad, and worried. And in this unhappy mood, he turned to God in prayer. He knew that God would be the one to help him. And he kept his hope in God and kept trusting Him.



What Type of Psalm Is It?

MATERIALS

- What Type of Psalm? Answer Cards
- What Type of Psalm? Scripture and Prayer Sheet

INSTRUCTIONS

You may divide the class into teams or have students play individually. Give each student or team a set of What Type of Psalm? Answer Cards. Read the verses or prayers from the What Type of Psalm? Scripture and Prayer Sheet. Each team/student will determine what type of psalm it is, and hold up the appropriate answer card. You can keep score for correct answers. The types of psalms are lament, praise, or thanksgiving.

We are going to play a game to try and figure out what type of psalm I am reading. I will read some Bible verses and some prayers for you to listen to. You need to figure out what type of psalm or prayer it is. Your choices are **lament, thanksgiving, or praise**. Hold up each of the answer cards as you list them off.

Hold up the appropriate card after I read the passage or prayer. **OK, let's play!** *Play the game. Read the psalms and prayers from the What Type of Psalm? Scripture and Prayer Sheet.*

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 every part of our life. Whether we are praising Him, thanking Him, or crying out to Him in trouble. He is our ever present help in times of need. It is good to give thanks and praise to Him for all He has done.

If time allows, have the students choose one type of psalm and recite their own prayer that reflects that psalm.





Applying God's Word

WHAT YOU HEARD IN THE WORD

? We learned about three different types of psalms—What were they? *Psalms of praise, thanksgiving, and lament.*

The writers of the psalms were inspired by the Lord to write down their songs and prayers. They give us a great 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.

GOD'S WORD IN THE REAL WORLD

The book of Psalms is 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.** *If you have time review these attributes and their meanings, reminding the students this is why we give thanks, praise, and can trust God in times of trouble.*

Our God is great and good. When our hearts don't feel like singing praise, when we are sad and need His help, we can turn to Him in prayer. He will answer. And our hearts will have joy again.

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 and give thanks to Him with all of our heart.



WISE
MERCIFUL
OMNIPOTENT
GRACIOUS

(Refer to Attributes Poster)

➤ Pass out the Student Take Home Sheets and remind the children 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, and cry out to Him in prayer.

