A Study of Psalms

Psalm Chapter 1

Vocabulary:

 participate: join in

 mock: make fun of

 meditate: think about over and over

 bears: produces

A. People who obey God

 God blesses the people who obey His law. God’s followers don’t choose to walk on the pathway that evil people do. They don’t stand around listening to advice from godless people. God’s followers don’t sit and participate with people who mock God and His people. Instead, they refuse to spend time with those who are evil.

 People who love God are happy to obey God’s law. It gives them joy. God told Joshua to continue to read God’s law and to think about the law day and night. When we meditate on God’s law, it becomes part of us.

 People who obey God are like a tree planted by a stream. This tree is healthy and bears much fruit. When we read God’s word and obey Him, we grow in God and become like Him.

Read Joshua 1:8 (page 220), Psalm 1:1-3(page 568), Psalm 17:4(page 575), Psalm

 26:5(page 582), Psalm 40:8 (page 593),Psalm 92: 12-15 (page 631)

 Psalm 119:47-48 (page 649), Proverbs 4:14(page 671)

B. Sinful People

 Sinful people are not like people who obey God. Psalm 1 describes them as straw that can be blow away in the wind. They are not stable. God will judge them and their lives will be over. God watches over the lives of those who believe in Him.

Read Psalm 1: 4-6(page 568)

Questions

1. Who does God bless?

2. What things do godly people NOT do?

3. What do people who love God think about God’s law and the bible?

4. How are God’s people like a tree?

5. How are sinful people different?

Psalm Chapter 2

Vocabulary:

 Messiah: promised and expected savior or deliverer

 anointed: dedicated to serve God

 rejected: did not accept

 refuse: will not

 echo: to say something again

A. The Messiah rejected

 This is a Messianic Psalm. Although it refers to events of the time, it also talks about Jesus, the coming Messiah. The first part of this Psalm tells how evil people and nation rejected God’s anointed king. The anointed king in this Psalm is King David but it also refers to Jesus who was rejected by the Jewish people and those who refuse to believe.

Read Psalm 2: 1-3 page 568

B. The Lord laughs

 Even though people and nations choose to reject Jesus, God laughs at them. He laughs at their plans and their decisions because God knows all things. God knows that the day is coming when He will judge the world. God is angry that people have rejected His King, Jesus His Son.

Read Psalm 2: 4-6, Psalm 37:13(page 590)

C. The Messiah triumphant

 In verse 7, the Psalmist makes a clear reference to Jesus, God’s son. “You are my son. Today I have become your Father”. This statement is echoed in the New Testament when God’s voice proclaims “This is my Son, and I love him”.

 Verses 8 and 9 mentions what the Son and King will receive. All the nations will belong to him and He will control them. In Matthew 28, Jesus talked to His disciples after He rose from the dead. Jesus told his disciples that all authority in heaven and earth are given to Him. In Ephesians, Paul says that God has placed all things under Christ’s rule. This includes all nations and authorities.

Read Psalm 2:7-9 (page 568), Matthew 3: 17 (page 1037), Matthew 28:18 (page

 1069), Ephesians 1:20-22 (page 1239)

D. The Lord’s council to kings.

 The last part of this Psalm is a message to the kings and rulers on earth. The Psalmist warns the kings to be wise and to serve and respect the Lord. Jesus himself said that people should honor the Son as they honor God, the Father.

 The kings and nations should obey the Son. Ultimately, Jesus will judge the world.

Read Psalm 2: 10-12, John 5: 22-23(page 1134)

Questions

1. Why is this called a Messianic Psalm?

2. What does God laugh about?

3. What will the Son and King receive?

4. At the end of this Psalm, what are the kings counseled to do?

Psalm 3

God’s Protection

Vocabulary:

 fleeing: escaping or running away from someone

 anguish: sorrow

 shield: metal armor used in battle to protect against arrows or swords

 battles: wars

 avenger: someone who fights for you

 foe: enemy

A. David’s complaint

 King David wrote this Psalm when he was fleeing from his son, Absalom. Absalom and his followers were trying to kill David so that Absalom could become king. David called out to God in his anguish. So many people were against David. They even said that God would not help him.

Read 2 Samuel 15: 12-13, 2 Samuel 16: 5-8, Psalm 3: 1-2

B. David’s comfort

 Like a shield, God had protected King David in the past. He knew that God was with him. God had destroyed David’s enemies before. God had answered his prayers and helped him in many battles. David trusted God so much that he could sleep with confidence. He knew that God would take care of him.

Read 2 Samuel 7:9, Psalm 3: 3-6, Psalm 28:7

C. David’s cry

 David called out to the Lord to save him from his enemies. David wanted the Lord to be His avenger against foes. David understood that only God could save him. We too can trust God through all our difficulties. He is our shield and our salvation.

Read Isaiah 43:11-12, Psalm 3: 7-8

Questions

1. What was happening to King David when he wrote this Psalm?

2. Why did King David call God “a shield”?

3. What did King David want God to do?

4. Who can save King David, and us?

Psalm 8

The Astronomer’s Psalm

Vocabulary:

 glorified: to honor with praise

 passage: scripture

 handiwork: what is made or created

 marred: damaged

 majesty: supreme greatness

A. God, the great creator

 King David begins this Psalm by praising God and giving Him glory. God is glorified in heaven and on earth. Even children give praise to God. Jesus Himself quoted this passage in Matthew Chapter 21. Jesus was healing people at the temple and a group of children began to shout “Hosanna to the Son of David”. When the Pharisees got angry, Jesus reminded them that children and infants would praise Him. In fact, children’s praises can stop God’s enemies. In 1 Corinthians, Paul says that God often uses the weak to shame the strong.

In verse 3, King David returns to his praise of God. He can see God’s handiwork in the beautiful moon and stars in the heavens.

Read Psalm 8: 1-3, Matthew 21: 16, 1 Corinthians 1:27

B. Man, God’s creation

 David wonders aloud why God cares so much for us. These verses, while referring to humans, are also talking about Jesus. In Genesis, we can see that God created us in the very likeness of God. He created us and gave us authority over every creature on earth. Of course, sin has marred our authority.

 The author of Hebrews uses this Psalm to talk about Jesus. When Jesus came to earth in human form, He was made “a little lower than the angels” just as we are. As a human, Jesus Christ died for us. Now Jesus has been given back His glory and His crown. God has placed everything on earth and in heaven under the control of Jesus His Son.

 King David finished his psalm exactly as he started it. Again he praises God for His majesty.

Read Genesis 1: 26-28, Psalm 8: 4-9, Hebrews 2:5-9

Questions

1. How does King David start this Psalm?

2. In what situation did Jesus quote this Psalm?

3. How were we created?

4. How does the author of Hebrews use this Psalm in reference to Jesus?

5. How does King David end this Psalm?

Psalm 16

Resurrection of the Messiah

Vocabulary:

 steadfastness: always there, never ending

 fellowship: having friendship, meeting together

 surround: be around

sufficiency: all we need

 assurance: to be sure or certain about something

A. Faith in God

 In this Psalm, King David starts by asking God for safety. This request is based on David’s faith and God’s steadfastness. David acknowledges that God gives him everything that is good. As David says in a later Psalm, God is all that he needs in heaven and earth.

 David enjoys the fellowship of those who love God. God’s love will surround those who love Him. But people who follow other gods will have nothing but trouble.

Read Psalm 16: 1-4, Psalm 32: 10

B. God is our sufficiency

 God gives David and us everything that we need. We should be thankful for all He has done. God gives us direction by His Spirit and through God’s word, the bible. Because God is faithful, we can always feel secure.

Read Psalm 16: 5-8, Psalm 73: 23-26

C. Assurance of resurrection

 This part of the Psalm relates to the coming Christ. In fact, both apostles Peter and Paul referred to this Psalm when they preached about Jesus. When Peter spoke to the Jewish crowd in Acts, he used this scripture to say that David talked about Jesus. As this Psalm says, his body did not rot in the ground. Jesus Christ rose from the dead.

Paul also used this passage when he taught about Jesus. King David died and was buried. His body did rot away but God raised Jesus from the dead. Because Jesus died and rose from the dead, we too will be made alive again.

Read Psalm 16: 9-11, Acts 2: 25-28, Acts 13: 35-37, 1Cor. 15: 21-22

Questions

1. How did King David begin this Psalm?

2. What will the people who don’t love God get?

3. What does it mean that God is our sufficiency?

4. How does God give us direction?

5. Whose body did not “rot in the ground”? Why not?

Psalm 19

Knowing God through sky and scripture

Vocabulary:

 reveal: show

 presence: existence

 priceless: you cannot put a price on – worth more than any money

 immoveable: something that you cannot move

 redeemer: one who saves

A. God revealed in creation

 In this Psalm, King David writes about God revealing himself to man in two ways: in creation and in God’s word. In creation, God reveals Himself in all that He made. We can see His presence all around us. God rules over the day and night. In the day, we can see the sun. At night, we can see the moon and stars above. Although these objects do not speak, their very presence declares God, the Creator. In Romans, Paul says that God eternal power can be seen in all that He created. Because of this, people have no excuse for not believing in God.

Read Psalm 19: 1-6, Psalm 74: 16-17, Romans 1: 20

B. God revealed in His word

 God reveals Himself in His laws and commands. His laws are perfect and can be trusted. In Psalm 12 we read that the words of the Lord are perfect. They are like the purest silver and the purest gold. Because they are perfect and can be trusted, God’s laws give us strength and make us wise. God’s laws and commands are always right and never change. These laws give us joy. Like a shining light in a dark room, God’s laws help us to understand and to see God more clearly. God’s laws are priceless. They are more valuable than the best gold. God’s laws are more pleasing than the sweetest honey from a honeycomb.

Read Psalm 12.6, Psalm 19: 7-10, Psalm 93:5, Psalm 111:7

 God gives us directions when we read His laws and commands. God’s law tells us what is wrong. Through His laws, we learn how to obey God and live godly lives.

 Sometimes we try to hide our sins. But God knows us. He knows us even better than we know ourselves. When we confess our sin, God always forgives us.

God can keep us from falling into sin. So we should continue to pray, read God’s word and trust in Him.

Read Psalm 17:4, Psalm 19: 11-13, Psalm 25:11, Psalm 119:33, Psalm 139: 5-7

 Proverbs 29:18, 1John 1:9, Jude 1:24

 King David ends this Psalm by asking God to accept his words and thoughts. David’s desire is for God to be pleased and glorified. A large rock is something that is immoveable. It is firm and steady. This is a perfect picture of who God is. He is immoveable, perfectly steady and always with us. God is our Redeemer.

Read Psalm 18:2, Psalm 19: 14

Questions

1. What are the two ways that God reveals Himself?

2. Why does Paul say that people have no excuse for not believing in God?

3. What do God’s laws give us?

4. What does God’s law tell us?

5. Why can’t we hide our sin?

Psalm 22

The Victorious Sufferer

Vocabulary:

 reflects: shows us

 utters: says

 anguish: deep pain

 cry out: to say something out loud when sad or worried

 mocked: made fun of

 pierce: to put a hole in something

 cast lots: similar to using dice

A. Forsaken Sufferer

 This Psalm by King David reflects David’s feelings through all his difficulties. However, this Psalm also reflects Jesus’ feelings as He went to the cross for our salvation. In fact, Jesus utters the words from verse one when He was on the cross. “My God, My God, why have you deserted me?” Because Jesus was fully human, He felt the pain and anguish of being separated from God, His Father. In the second verse, David cries out to God day and night. Jesus spent an evening in the garden of Gethsemane crying out to God to deliver Him from death.

Read Psalm 22: 1-2

 Although King David was in anguish, he still trusted in God. God had always saved him and the people of Israel in the past. As Jesus prayed in the garden, He trusted that God’s will was perfect and necessary to save the world.

Read Psalm 22: 3-5, Matt. 26:39

 David wrote that people were against him. They hated him. They made fun of him. The people mocked his faith in God. When Jesus was on the cross, the Jewish leaders made fun of Jesus using words that were very similar to verse 8 in this Psalm.

Read Psalm 22: 6-8, Matt. 27: 38-46

 King David continued to trust God because he knew that God took care of him even as baby. King David asked God to be with him in the midst of his enemies. His enemies were like lions who are trying to kill him. Jesus’ enemies also wanted Him to die.

Read Psalm 22: 9-13, Matt. 26: 22-23

 King David wrote about how he felt physically because of his suffering. His strength left him, his mouth was so dry. David described his mouth as being so dry that his tongue stuck to the roof of his mouth. Jesus echoed this physical dryness of His mouth when He said,” I am thirsty”. Jesus said this as He hung on the cross.

Read Psalm 22: 14-15, John 19: 28

 King David wrote that sinful people were after him. “They have pierced my hands and my feet.” This is a clear reference to what happened to Jesus on the cross. The soldiers nailed Jesus’ hands and His feet to the cross. David also wrote about people dividing up his clothes and casting lots. When Jesus was on the cross, the soldiers cast lots for His clothing. King David continued this passage of the Psalm by asking God to save him.

Read Psalm 22: 16-21, Matt. 27: 33-37

B. Delivered by God

 Although King David was suffering, he still took the time to praise God. Not only did David praise God but he encouraged the people of Israel to praise and worship God. David knew that God heard his prayers and cared for David in his suffering. In Hebrews 5, we read that Jesus prayed to God and God answered Him.

Read Psalm 22: 22-26, Hebrews 5:7

C. We will worship God

 King David wrote that people of all nations will bow before God and worship Him. After Jesus died on the cross, God brought Jesus back to life. Jesus is our risen savor who is alive today. One day everyone in heaven and earth and under the earth will kneel and worship Jesus.

Read Psalm 22: 27-31, Philippians 2: 8-11

Questions

1. How does the first verse of this Psalm relate to Jesus?

2. What did Jesus do in the garden of Gethsemane?

3. How did the Jewish leaders mock Jesus while He was on the cross?

4. What did Jesus say that indicated that His mouth felt like David’s?

5. What did the soldiers do to Jesus and to His clothing?

6. What will people from every nation do?

Psalm 23

The Good Shepherd

Vocabulary:

 compassion: to feel pity for

 shepherd: takes care of sheep

 laid down: to die

 spring: water underground

 restore: to give back again

 bold: brave

 overflows: more than can fit into a container

 Jesus spent time talking to people about God and healing them of sickness. When He saw the crowds, Jesus felt compassion. Jesus thought that they were like sheep who had no shepherd. Later in the gospel of John, Jesus said that He is the good shepherd. Jesus is the good shepherd who laid down His life for His sheep, for you and me.

Read Matt. 9: 36, John 10: 11-15

A. A Shepherd provides

 King David knew all about shepherds. As a young man, he took care of his family’s sheep. David begins this Psalm by saying that the Lord is his shepherd. The Lord gives us everything that we need. In Luke, Jesus told His disciples not to worry. God provides everything. In fact, God even cares about birds and flowers. If God cares for small animals and plants, He cares even more for us.

 Jesus, the Good Shepherd, leads us to quiet waters. The book of Revelations tells us that Jesus, the Shepherd leads us to springs of living water- eternal life.

Jesus restores our souls. When we sin, God restores our relationship with Him by forgiving our sins. God guides us through the Holy Spirit and His word. In Psalm 119, we read that God’s word guides us like a lamp. When Jesus was talking to His disciples, He told them that God would send the Holy Spirit who would teach us all things.

Read Psalm 23: 1-3, Psalm 119:105, Luke 12: 22-32,1John 1:9, Revelations 7:7

B. The Shepherd protects

 Even when we go through difficult times, we don’t need to be afraid. God is always with us. Hebrews 13: 5-6 tells us that God will never leave us. Because of this, we can be bold and not afraid.

 Shepherds protect their sheep using their rods and staffs. Rods were used to defend the sheep from wolves. But rods were also used to discipline the sheep. In Proverbs and Hebrews, we read that God disciplines or trains the people that He loves. Shepherds use staffs to keep the sheep together and to rescue sheep from harm. As the Good Shepherd, Jesus comforts us with His rod and staff.

 “You prepare a feast for me in the presence of my enemies”. Even when we have problems, God is with us giving us all we need. Jesus Himself says that in this world we will have trouble. But the good news is that Jesus has already won the battle against Satan and this world. God gives us so much that it overflows! In fact, Ephesians 3:20 says God does more than we can even imagine.

Read Psalm 23: 4-5, Psalm 118: 6-7, Proverbs 3:12, John 16:33, Ephesians 3: 20,

 Hebrews 12:6, Hebrews 13: 5-6

C. The Shepherd keeps us

 God loves us and will continue to love us forever. Because of God’s love, we will live with Him forever. Jesus even told His disciples that there were rooms in God’s house for them and for us. Jesus promises that we will be with Him in heaven.

Read Psalm 23: 6, Psalm 100:5, John 14: 1-3

Questions

1. When Jesus saw the crowd, what did He feel? What did He call the people?

2. What does the Lord give us?

3. What kind of water does Jesus lead us to?

4. How does God restore our souls?

5. How does God guide us?

6. What is the purpose of a rod and a staff?

7. What does Jesus promise us?

Psalm 32

God’s forgiveness

Vocabulary:

 accountable: responsible

 confess: to tell what you do that is wrong

 path: the way that we go

 stubborn: refuse to do what you are supposed to

 surround: be all around

A. We are forgiven

 People are blessed who have their sins forgiven. God forgives all the evil things we do. Because of Jesus, God does not hold us accountable for our sins.

Read Psalm 32: 1-2, Psalm 85: 2-3, 2Cor. 5:19

B. We should confess our sins

 When we sin and don’t confess, we hurt ourselves. We become weaker because our relationship with God isn’t good. We need to be honest before God. If we say that we don’t sin, we are lying. God is faithful. God promises to forgive our sins when we confess our sins to Him.

Read Psalm 32: 3-7, 1John 1: 8-10

C. God’s instruction

 God promises to teach us how to live our lives for Him. God loves us and will guide our path. We shouldn’t act like mules or horse. These animals need to have metal in their mouths in order to control them. We shouldn’t be stubborn like these animals.

 People who won’t obey God and continue to sin will have trouble. But God promises to surround believers with His love. Because God loves us so much, we should be thankful and joyful to God. God blesses the people who trust in Him.

Read Psalm 32: 8-11, Psalm 25: 8-9, Prov. 16: 20, James 3:3

Questions

1. Why doesn’t God hold believers accountable for their sins?

2. What happens when we don’t confess our sins?

3. What happens when we do confess our sins?

4. What does God promise?

5. How should we respond to God’s love?

Psalm 37

Blessed are the meek for they will be given the earth

Vocabulary:

 worldly standards: what non-believers value

 prosper: to succeed in getting things

 plot: plan something bad

 steadfast: will not end

 temporary: not permanent

A. Put your faith in the Lord; don’t envy evil people

 In this Psalm, King David compares evil people with those who trust in God. Sometimes it seems that evil people are winning. They cheat and make money. By worldly standards, they appear to prosper. We should not be jealous of them. We should not envy them for their possessions. What they have will not last. It is like the grass that dries up in the hot sun.

Instead, we should trust in the Lord. He is our safe place. God promises to care for us like a shepherd cares for his sheep. When our delight or joy is in the Lord, God will give us our hearts desire. Commit your life to the Lord. God will make His plans for our life succeed. Turn your worries over to God because He cares for you. But we need to be patient and wait for the Lord.

Read Psalm 37: 1-8, Psalm 62: 8, Proverbs 16: 3, Proverbs 23:17, Isaiah 40: 11,

 Isaiah 58:14, 1Peter 5:7

B. Comparison between evil and godly people.

 Even though evil people seem to have so much, God will reduce their importance. Ultimately, He will remove them from the land. In contrast, God will give the land to humble people. Jesus talked about this in the gospel of Matthew. He said that meek or humble people are blessed and will be given the earth.

 Sinful people plot to harm godly people. These people are so angry that they grind their teeth. But God laughs because He knows that sinful people will be judged. Sinful people want to get rid godly people but they will only be harmed themselves.

 Godly people may not have the riches of sinful people. However, it is better to respect God and have little than to be rich with trouble. God will take care of those who love and trust Him. When trouble comes, God will give those who follow Him what they need. Sinners borrow and never pay back but the godly give generously.

Read Job 24:24, Psalm 11:2, Psalm 9:16, Psalm 35:16, Psalm 37: 9-22,

 Prov. 15:16, Matt. *5*:5

C. Counsel for the godly

 The Lord is pleased with those who fear Him and trust His steadfast love.

He makes their steps secure. Even when we stumble into sin, God keeps us from falling. God has never deserted us in the past and never will in the future. God supplies all our needs. As a result, we can give to others freely and without fear.

 We should turn away from evil and be obedient to God. God loves those who do righteous deeds and remain faithful to God. When God’s words are in our hearts, our feet do not slip. When we obey God, our words are full of wisdom. Evil people want to destroy godly people but God will protect His followers.

Read Psalm 11:7, Psalm 37:23-33, Psalm 147:11, Matt. 12:35, Phil. 4: 19

 Put your hope in the Lord and obey Him. God’s promises are true. Sometimes it appears that evil people succeed but their power is temporary. Remember that those who obey God and seek peace have a future in heaven. But evil people have no future. God saves those who trust in Him and keeps them safe.

Read 1Chronicles 5: 20, Psalm 37: 34-40

Questions

1. Who does King David compare in this Psalm?

2. What will happen to “successful” evil people?

3. When our joy is in the Lord, what will happen?

4. What will God give to humble people?

5. What does God promise when trouble comes to us?

6. Why can we give to others freely and without fear?

Psalm 51

A Psalm of repentance

Vocabulary

 mercy: to not give someone a punishment they deserve

 take away: remove

hyssop: a plant whose branches were used to apply blood

 wipe away: completely remove

 contrite: to feel very sorry about something you did

A. Prayer for forgiveness and confession of sin

 King David wrote this Psalm after he had sinned with Bathsheba. David asked God to have mercy on him. God loves us and has compassion. God keeps His promises with His people. David understood that God loved him and asked Him to take away his sin. David wanted to be clean. In Hebrews, we learn that Christ’s death and resurrection cleanses us from our sin and its guilt. Christ’s blood makes us pure.

 David couldn’t forget his sin. He knew that he really sinned against God. David sinned against God because he didn’t show love to his neighbor. He didn’t honor Bathsheba and her husband. Jesus Himself said that the most important commandments were to love God and your neighbor.

 David understood that he was a sinner. In Romans, we read that everyone sins. No one compares to God’s glory. David understood that God even knew him before David was born.

 David wanted God to clean him with hyssop. Moses used a hyssop branch to apply blood to the people of Israel. The blood was used to cleanse the people of their sins. David wanted the Lord to forgive him and wipe away his sins. Isaiah the prophet tells us that God promises to wipe away our sin and remember them no more. In Acts, Peter tells the crowd that if they turn from their sins, the Lord will wipe them away.

Read Psalm 51: 1-9, Psalm 106:45, Isaiah 43: 25, Matthew 22: 37-40, Acts: 3: 19,

 Romans 3: 23, Hebrews 9:14, Hebrews 9: 19 & 22,1 John 1:7

B. Prayer of renewal

 David asks God to make his heart clean. Like David, we know that only God can make our hearts clean. Even though David knew that God loved him, he was still afraid that God would leave him. But God promises that He will never leave us or desert us. David wanted to feel joy again – the joy of his salvation. When we realize what God has done for us, we are filled with joy.

 David understood his sin and wanted to help others who stumbled into sin. In the book of James we read that it is good to help others who fall into sin. Even though David’s sin was great, he knew that God saved him and would take away his guilt.

Read Deuteronomy 31: 6, Psalm 35:9, Psalm 51: 10-14, Prov. 20:9, John 15:3,

 James 5: 20

C. God accepts a contrite heart

 David wanted to praise God for His love and mercy. During Old Testament times, priests would sacrifice animals and shed their blood for the sin of the people. But David knew that God wanted a different sacrifice. God desires humility and mercy in His followers. God wants us to have sorrow for our sins. He wants us to repent and turn away from our sins. King David ends this Psalm by asking God to bless the people of Israel.

Read Psalm 51: 15-19, Isaiah 57:15, Micah 6: 6-7

Questions

1. When did King David write this Psalm?

2. What makes us pure from our sin and guilt?

3. Who did David really sin against?

4. How was the hyssop branch used? Why did David want it used?

5. Even though David knew that God loved him, what was he afraid of?

6. Instead of an animal sacrifice, what does God desire from us?

Psalm 84

Longing to be with the Lord

Vocabulary:

 restless: cannot keep still

 endure: to keep going even when things are difficult

 harsh lands: lands that are difficult like deserts

 withhold: do not give

A. The joy of worshiping in God’s house

 The Psalmist starts this psalm by sharing his excitement at worshiping in God’s temple. In Psalm 27, King David also desires to live and worship in God’s house. God loves us to enjoy being with Him. In the Beatitudes, Jesus says that the people that hunger and thirst after righteousness will be satisfied. To hunger and thirst means to desire very strongly. This psalmist says that his soul or whole being cries out for God.

 God cares for and loves those people who worship Him. But the Psalmist tells us that God even cares for small and unimportant birds like the sparrow. In Matthew, Jesus tells us that sparrows are not worth much but God cares for them. These unimportant birds find their homes in God’s house. This Psalm also tells us about swallows. These birds are restless and always flying but they have nests in God’s temple.

Read Psalm 27: 4, Psalm 84: 1-4, Matt. 5:6, Matt. 10: 29-31

B. Blessed are the people who travel to worship God

 Jewish people of the Old Testament worshiped God in His Temple. Many people had to travel for long distances. They had to endure a long journey through harsh lands. Even in the desert, God provided His people with water. As these people continue on their journey, they get stronger until they reach God’s temple.

Read Psalm 84: 5-7

C. Prayer and expression of trust

 The psalmist asks for blessings on the king whom God had placed to keep them safe. God Himself is our shield who protects us.

 The writer of this psalm shows his love of worshiping God. One day spent in God’s presence in worship is far better than one thousands days spent doing other things. God keeps us safe. He blesses us. God doesn’t withhold good things to those who love and obey Him. In Romans, we read that God works for the good of all who love Him.

Read Psalm 84: 8-12, Romans 8:28

Questions

1. What is the psalmist excited about?

2. When we hunger and thirst after righteousness, what does Jesus say will happen?

3. How did God provide for the people of Israel on their journey?

4. What does the psalmist compare one day of worshiping God to?

5. What does Romans 8:28 tell us about God’s promise?

Psalm 91

A Psalm of security

Vocabulary:

 abide: to remain

 invaders: enemies who try to attack

 rejected: did not accept

 longed: desired

 When we rest or abide in the Lord, He will keep us safe. In the Gospel of John, Jesus tells His disciples to abide or remained joined to Jesus. If we remain connected to Jesus, He will answer our prayers. When we have trouble, God will keep us safe.

A fort is used to keep cities and armies safe from invaders. God is like a fort to us. He keeps us safe. Although we will have trouble and sickness, God will always protect us. Like a mother hen, God will keep us safe under His wings. King David sought the safety of God’s wings. Jesus even talks about this desire to keep us safe. In Matthew, Jesus was talking to some Pharisees. Although the Jewish leaders rejected Him, Jesus longed to take care of them as a hen protects her chicks.

Read Psalm 27:5, Psalm 57:1, Psalm 91: 1-4, Matthew 23:37, John 15: 7

 If we rest in God, we do not have to fear. We don’t have to fear that someone will harm us. We don’t have to fear problems in the night. We don’t have to fear sickness. If we abide in God and obey His command, we can live without fear. Why? Because God is love and perfect love drives fear away.

God will protect and He will repay any evil done to us.

Read Psalm 91: 5-8, 1 John 4:18

 When we trust God, He will keep us safe from any harm. In fact, God promises to send His angels to care for us. Even Satan believes this to be true. When Satan tried to tempt Jesus, he used this passage to get Jesus to call on the angels for help. Jesus told Satan not to test the Lord. God will protect us even from lions and poisonous snakes.

 God promises to save those who love Him. In John Chapter 15, we read that God’s command is to love. God wants us to love Him and to love one another.

When we call out to God, He will answer. He will be with us in times of trouble. Paul understood this. He told Timothy that God would save him from every evil attack.

Read Psalm 34:7, Psalm 91: 9-16, Matthew 4:6, John 15: 10-12, Hebrews1:14,

 2 Timothy 4:18

Questions

1. What will happen when we rest in the Lord?

2. How is God like a fort and a mother hen?

3. Because God is love, what emotion is driven away?

4. What does God say about His angels?

5. What does God promise to those who love Him?

Psalm 103

A Psalm of Praise

Vocabulary:

 provide: give

 soar: to fly or glide in the sky

 deserve: to be worthy of something, something you earn

 temporary: for a short time

 creation: everything that God made

A. Personal reason for praise

 This is a Psalm of praise. We should praise God because of who He is. He is a holy God. We praise God because He takes care of us. In 1 Peter, we read that we can give God our worries and concerns because He cares for us. We praise God because He forgives our sins through Jesus. God helps us when we are sick. We praise God because He saves us from death and gives us eternal life. When we pray in Jesus’ name, God will provide all that we need. Because of God’s provision, we can be strong like an eagle. As Isaiah tells us, when we trust God, He will give us strength to soar like an eagle. We can praise God because He is fair and cares for those who are treated poorly. He keeps us safe in time of trouble.

Read Psalm 9:9, Psalm 103: 1-6, Isaiah 40: 31, John 3:16, John 14: 13-14,

 Acts 13: 38, 1 Peter 5:7

B. Universal reason for praise

 God told Moses His plan to save the Israelites from the Egyptians. We can praise God because He is tender and kind. He is gracious and slow to anger. God is faithful and full of love. God forgives us and doesn’t give us the punishment we deserve.

 God’s love for us is higher than the heavens. He loves us and wants us to respect Him. We can praise God because He removes our sin. Like a father, God is tender and kind to those who love and respect Him. God knows us so well. He knows us because He created us. The life of a human being is only temporary. But God’s love will last forever. When we obey God, we know that He loves us and He will always do what is best for us.

Read Genesis 1:27, Exodus 6:13, Exodus 34: 6-7, Deuteronomy 8:6,

 Psalm 103: 7-18

C. All His creation praise God.

 God rules His kingdom from heaven. All God’s creation praises Him. Even God’s angels in heaven praise God. All believers who obey and serve God praise Him. In fact, everything that God has created should praise God. God is great and worthy of all our praise.

Read 1 Chronicles 16:25, Psalm 103: 19-22

Questions

1. What are some reasons that we should praise God?

2. When we pray in Jesus’ name, what will God do?

3. What does Isaiah say will happen when we trust God?

4. How high is God’s love for us?

5. How is God’s character like a father?

6. Who praises God?

Psalm 119

The Law of the Lord

Vocabulary:

 seek: look for, try to find something

 took care of: fulfilled, met, satisfied

 keep from: prevent

 take the time: using the time you have

 corrects: disciplines

 stand firm: continue

 (God’s) will: what God desires for us

 focus on: concentrate on

 ridicule: make someone feel bad

A. Blessed are they who keep God’s law

 People who trust God and obey Him will be blessed. They trust God with all their hearts. Remember what Jesus said about the most important commandments. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and mind. When we seek God with all our hearts, we obey Him and live as God desires. We know that what God desires is fair. Although we cannot obey God perfectly, Jesus has obeyed perfectly. When we trust in Him, God sees Jesus’ perfection instead of our imperfection. Jesus took care of the law’s requirements.

Read Psalm 119: 1-8, Matthew 22: 37-40, Romans 8:4

B. How can we keep God’s law?

 How can we keep our lives pure? We need to live by God’s word. In the gospel of Luke, Jesus said that people who hear God’s word and obey it are blessed. In this Psalm, the author says that he has hidden God’s word in his heart to keep him from sinning. How do we hide God’s word in our heart? We can do this by memorizing passages of the Bible.

 We can keep God’s law by understanding it better. God teaches us about Himself through the Holy Spirit. As we see God working in our lives, we can be joyful as we continue to obey Him. We can understand God’s law better when we take the time to think about God’s word. When we remember God’s word, we can better understand how we should live.

Read Psalm 119: 9-16, Luke 11: 28, John 14:26

C. Help us to understand more

 The Psalmist asks God to continue to bless him as he obeys God. We should continue to seek for a deeper understanding of who God is. As Moses writes in Deuteronomy, when we seek the Lord with our whole heart and soul we will find Him.

God corrects prideful people because they don’t obey His commands. Even when people make fun of us for our beliefs, we must stand firm in our faith. We must continue to remember God’s word.

Read Deuteronomy 4:29, Psalm 119:17-24

D. Prayer for strength and knowledge

 The author of this Psalm asks for direction when he is suffering. He asks for understanding. One of the ways that we can understand God better is to remember what He has already done. When we think of all God has done for us, we see how He directs our lives.

 Like the Psalmist, sometimes we are sad. Often we want to do something good but we don’t. Sometimes we know we are doing something wrong but we still do it. When we disobey God, we feel sad. But God will give us strength and teach us through His word.

Read Psalm 64:9, Psalm 66:5, Psalm 119: 25-32, Isaiah 28:26, Romans 7: 19-25

E. God will teach and direct us.

 We want to obey God and live our lives for Him. Many times we don’t understand His direction and will for our lives. God wants us to come to Him in prayer. He has given us the Bible and the Holy Spirit but we should continue to ask for God’s guidance. We need to ask God to help us focus on Him instead of on worldly things.

Read Psalm 119: 33-40, 1John 2: 15-16

F. God promises salvation

 God’s love is faithful. He has promised to save us. As we trust God with His promises, we don’t have to worry when people ridicule us. Because God is faithful and full of love, we can confidently share our faith with other people. Because God loves us, we can love Him and His commandments.

Read Psalm 13: 5, Psalm 119: 41-48, Psalm 136: 1-3

G. God’s law is a source of comfort.

 God’s word gives us comfort. When we suffer, we can be comforted because God keeps us alive. We can remember God’s promises when people turn against us. Even during the night when we can’t sleep, we can think about God’s laws and promises.

Read Psalm 119:49-56

H. God is everything we need.

 God is all that we need. Therefore, our desire is to obey His word. We should follow God with all our hearts. Everything in life is a choice. We must choose to follow God’s commands. Regardless of the situation, we must remember to obey God. We should give thanks to God because His decisions are always fair. In our lives, we should gather together with fellow believers.

Read Psalm 119: 57-64

I. Understanding comes from suffering

 We learn more about God through trusting in God’s commands. Before the Psalmist trusted God, he chose to disobey Him. Now he obeys God’s word.

 God is good. No matter what people may do to us, we can trust in God’s word. Although suffering is difficult, suffering can help us grow in the knowledge of God. Jesus suffered for us. In fact, Hebrews 5:8 says that Jesus learned obedience through suffering.

Read Psalm 106:1, Psalm 119: 65-72, Hebrew 5:8

Vocabulary:

 dust: very small bits of soil or ground

 more fully: better, to a greater degree

 pay back: have revenge, get even

 hardship: very difficult times

 facing: has to endure

 stand up: resist, defy

 flaws: blemishes, things that make something not perfect

J. God’s faithfulness shows through His laws and promises

 God made us with His own hands. In Genesis, we read that God made man from the dust and breathed life into him. God made us and He is our Father. When we ask to know God better, He will help us understand. As we understand God more fully, other people can be encouraged as they see our faith.

 God’s laws and promises are always right. Even when we have to suffer, God is always faithful. Hebrews tells us to endure the hard times because God uses them to train us. God’s faithful love will comfort us during these times. God gives tender love to all who love Him. God will take pay back the people who hurt us. God will keep those who obey Him safe but will show revenge to the proud.

 As we understand God more fully and obey His commands, we can help others learn about God. This section ends with the Psalmist asking God to help him follow God with his whole heart.

Read Genesis 2:7, Psalm 31:23, Psalm 119: 73-80, 2 Corinthians 1:3,

 Hebrews 12:7

K. Resting in God’s promises through trouble

 The Psalmist is going through many difficulties and hardship. But even as he struggles and grows tired, he still looks to God for comfort. Paul describes this situation in his letter to the Corinthians. Although Paul had been facing major difficulty, he did not lose hope. In this Psalm, we read that our hope is in God’s word. Scripture gives us strength and hope.

 Evil people may try to harm us. They may do things to try to make us turn away from God. We can cry out to God and He will hear us. Because God is faithful, we know that we can trust Him. Because of His steadfast love, we can choose to obey His commands.

Read Psalm 55: 17, Psalm 119: 81-88, Romans 15:4, 2Corinthians 4:8-9

L. God’s commands are perfect

 God’s word last forever. God created or breathed life into all scripture. The purpose of God’s word is to teach us, correct us, and make our lives complete.

God made everything in heaven and on earth. In the same way, God made all scripture. But while grass and flowers all only temporary, God’s law continues forever. In Matthew 24, Jesus says that while the heavens and earth will pass away, Jesus’ words will never end.

 We can endure suffering when we delight or enjoy God’s word. Because we belong to God and obey Him, He will save us. Even when evil or godless people tried to destroy us, we should concentrate on God’s word. God’s commands are perfect and always available to us.

Read Psalm 119: 89-96, Isaiah 40: 8, Matthew 24:35, 2 Timothy 3:16

M. God’s word gives us knowledge.

 As we spend more time reading and thinking about God’s word, we begin to truly love it. God’s commands give us knowledge and make us wiser than ungodly people. If we continue allowing the Holy Spirit to teach us, we can increase in our godly wisdom. When we rely on God’s word to lead us, we will follow God’s path. God’s word is so precious – it is sweeter than honey.

Read Psalm 119:97-104

N. God’s word directs us.

 God’s word is like a lamp. It shows us the way to go. God brings light into our darkness. God asks us to obey His word and live as he wants. We should respond to God’s word and His love with praise. We should even praise God when people are trying to destroy us or even when we do wrong things. God’s commands fill our lives with joy. The Lord God rules- let us be filled with joy.

Read Deuteronomy 11:22, 1 Chronicles 16:31, Psalm 56:4, Psalm 119: 105-112

O. God is our safe place.

 The Lord is our safe place. He is like a shield that protects us from harm. When God made His covenant with Abram, God told Abram that He would be a shield. We can put our hope in God’s word.

 We must resist evil and the devil. As James says, we need to obey God and stand up to the devil. When we resist evil, we are able to obey God better. We can turn our concerns over to God because He cares for us. But God hates those who do evil and refuse to obey Him. We should have respect for God and His laws.

Read Genesis 15:1, 2 Samuel 22:3, Psalm 119: 113-120, Proverbs 6: 16-19,

 James 4:7, 1 Peter 5:7

P. God rescues us from the proud.

 When we obey God, He protects us. His word has no flaws. God will rescue us from the proud. God has promised to save us. We may get tired as we seek God’s help. But we know that God will save us. God loves us and longs to keep us safe under His wings.

 As we seek to obey God, we need to understand His word better. Fortunately, God has given us His Holy Spirit. As Jesus told us, God has sent the Holy Spirit to teach us all things.

 God’s commands are more important than gold. They are more valuable than pure gold. So we look to God’s commands to show us how to live.

Read 2 Samuel 22:31, Psalm 91:4, Psalm 119: 121-128, John 14:26

Vocabulary:

 pant: stick out your tongue and breath

 mercy: to not give punishment even though we deserve it.

 mock: make fun of

 in times of need: when we have trouble

Q. Our steps are directed by God’s word

 God’s word is perfect and wonderful! Therefore, we desire to obey it. God’s word is clear and gives us direction like a light. Jesus says that He is the light of the world. When we follow Him, we have His light to guide us. That light gives us life.

 The Psalmist says that he pants like a dog for God’s commands. The idea of panting for the Lord is also described in Psalm 42. In this Psalm, the author compares panting after God to a deer panting for streams of water. In both instances, panting means that we desire and need something. This need is something that we can’t live without. This should be our response to God and His word. We should desire it as if we can’t live without it.

 Because God loves us, He shows us mercy. God teaches us how to live through His word. Through His word and the Holy Spirit, sin does not have to control our lives. Although evil people may treat us badly, God will repay them for all they have done.

Read Deuteronomy 32:35, Psalm 42:1, Psalm 119: 129-136, John 8:12

R. God’s words and commands are always right.

 God’s laws are always fair and right. They can be trusted. God’s law gives us strength and makes us wise. We may get angry because other people choose to ignore God’s words. But we know that God’s promises are true.

 We may not be important to the world but we are to God. In 1 Corinthians 1 we read that chooses the foolish and the weak to shame the world. So when people mock us, we must continue to obey His law. Even though we have troubles, God’s word can delight us.

Read Psalm 19:7, Psalm 119: 137-144, 1Corinthians 1:27

S. We can cry out to God in prayer

 In this section, the Psalmist cries out to the Lord. God hears us when we call out to Him for help. God will save us in times of need. King David says that he called out to God and God heard his cry. Even though we are in trouble and call out to God, we should still remain obedient to God’s word.

Read 2 Samuel 22: 7, Psalm 34: 17, Psalm 55: 16-17, Psalm 119: 145-146

 God doesn’t want us to worry about anything. Instead God wants us to tell Him everything both good and bad. We should be constant in prayer. In this Psalm, the author prays both morning and night. He thinks about God’s word over and over again.

Read Psalm 119: 147-148, Philippians 4: 6

 God hears our prayers because He loves us. Nothing can separate us from God’s love. Even though people turn against us, still God’s commands and promises are true.

Read Psalm 119: 149-152, Romans 8:38

T. God’s word is true and right.

 Even when we are suffering, we can receive strength from God’s word. God promises to be with us and to save us. Evil people choose to disobey God and His word. But God’s word tells us that God loves and cares for us. We can trust that God’s word is true and will last forever.

Read Psalm 119: 153-160

U. God’s word gives us joy.

 God’s word gives us joy. But it also causes us to tremble. We tremble because we realize that God is holy. But we are full of joy because we know how much God loves us. We are full of joy because we know that God’s promises are true.

 When we love God’s word, He will give us His peace. When we pray to God, He gives us His peace. God’s word keeps us from stumbling. We love and obey God’s word because we know He will save us. God knows everything about us. He knows when we rise and sleep. He knows our very thoughts.

Read Psalm 119: 161-168, Psalm 139: 1-6, 14, Philippians 4: 6-7

V. God hears our prayers.

 God hears our prayers. If we ask for understanding, God will give it. God has given us His Holy Spirit who will teach us and help us to understand God. God will save us as He has promised.

 God’s praise should be continually on our lips. We should live our lives to honor and give glory to God. At times we may struggle and choose the wrong way, but the Lord is our Shepherd. He will guide us back to a path of obedience.

Read Psalm 119: 169-176, John 14: 26

Questions

1. How can we keep God’s law?

2. Who will teach and direct us?

3. How can we understand God more?

4. When we have difficulties, what should we do?