

Lesson 85

Praises to God

Psalms contains songs and prayers of praise, lament, and thanksgiving.

Studying God's Word

Don't forget! Review the Optional Supplements and determine where you can use them.

Introduction

We have learned a lot about David. He was chosen by God to be the king of Israel after Saul. He was brave, strong, and courageous. The Bible tells us that he was a man after God's own heart, but he was still a sinner.

Slide #3

Slide #4

Refer to Lesson 83 Theme Poster. David fell into sin with Bathsheba and ended up breaking God's commandments. But when Nathan the prophet pointed out David's sin, David repented and begged God for forgiveness and mercy. We looked at David's plea in Psalm 51, and God forgave David.

Refer to Lesson 84 Theme Poster. Although he was forgiven, David still faced consequences for his sin. God warned him that he'd have trouble in his family. This came true when David's son Absalom murdered his own brother and then tried to take the kingdom away from David.

Did Absalom succeed? What happened to him in the battle? Absalom lost the battle against David, and he was killed by David's men when he was hanging in a tree.

Absalom faced consequences for his sin, too. But he did not show a heart of repentance toward God or others as his father did. David grieved for his son Absalom, and God brought David back to Jerusalem to rule.

In addition to being a shepherd, warrior, musician, and king, David was one of many writers of the psalms.

Refer to the Books of the Bible Poster. Find Psalms on the Books of the Bible Poster. What kind of book is it? Poetry.

Psalms is a book of prayers and hymns meant to draw our attention to our mighty God. The psalms teach us how to worship God with our words. The psalms were the "hymnbook" for the Hebrew people, and they used them as songs of praise. Some worship songs today are based on the psalms, too!

Did you know that the book of Psalms contains the longest and the shortest chapters in the Bible? Yes/no.

Does anyone know what they are? Allow guesses. Psalm 119—longest; Psalm 117—shortest.

Psalm 119 is the longest chapter in the Bible. Can anyone guess how many verses it has? Allow guesses.

It has 176 verses! Psalm 119 is all about God's Word.

Psalms of Praise

Wait to pass out the Class Notes until the end of the Psalms of Thanksgiving section.

Now turn to Psalm 117, the shortest chapter in the Bible. Here's a fun fact while you're turning there. Psalm 117 is also the middle chapter of the whole Bible! There are 1,189 chapters in the whole Bible, and Psalm 117 is chapter 595.

How many verses does it have? Two.

Slide #5

Slide #6

Psalm 117:1-2

Who will read those for us? Assign a reader.

This psalm is an example of one of three types we will look at today: psalms of praise, psalms of lament, and psalms of thanksgiving.

Which of the three is it? Psalm of praise.

This is definitely a praise psalm—a psalm designed to worship the Lord.

Refer to the Attributes of God Poster. What two attributes, or qualities, of God are mentioned in verse 2? Steadfast love and faithfulness. Choose students to read the definitions of loving and faithful from the poster.

We can use this psalm to offer more praises to God. Let's try reading it again, but with two different attributes of God from the poster.

What two attributes should we use? Allow students to choose two attributes. Read Psalm 117 again, substituting the new attributes for steadfast love and faithfulness. You may need to change the form of the word (e.g., merciful to mercy) for it to make sense in the psalm. Repeat with other attributes, if desired.

It is easy to praise God using the psalms, isn't it? Let's look at another example of a psalm of praise. Turn to the very last chapter in the book of Psalms.

What is the last chapter? 150.

Psalm 150:1-6

Slide #7

Slide #8

Let's read it together. Assign readers.

What would you say this writer is trying to do—and trying to get us to do? Praise the Lord.

Where does the writer tell us to praise God in verse 1? In his sanctuary and his mighty heavens.

It says to praise God in his sanctuary and praise him in his mighty heavens. God is to be praised everywhere—in heaven and on earth.

Why is God to be praised? For his mighty deeds and his excellent greatness.

We can praise God for his mighty deeds (what he has done) and for his excellent greatness (who he is).

How was God praised in this psalm? What instruments are listed? Psalm 150:3–5. With trumpet, lute, harp, tambourine, dance, strings, pipes, and cymbals.

That's a long list! How many of you are learning to play an instrument? Show of hands or allow answers.

You can praise the Lord on your instrument! We can also praise God with singing. Remember, the psalms were the hymnbook of the Israelites and were sung as praises to God, and we still sing them today! We can worship and praise God through music, singing, and prayer.

At the very end of the psalm, who should praise the Lord? Everything that has breath.

That means you and me! If we're breathing, we should praise the Lord! He alone is worthy of praise.

Psalms of Lament

Slide #9

Refer to the Lesson Theme Poster. So, there are many psalms that give praise to the Lord. The next type of psalm is a psalm of lament. A lament means to cry out and ask why. Many writers of the psalms were in trouble and cried out to God. Did you know that David wrote a psalm during the trouble with Absalom? Turn to Psalm chapter 3.

Look at the note before verse 1. When did David write this psalm? When he fled from Absalom his son.

Psalm 3:1–8

Slide #10

Slide #11

Slide #12

David was forced to flee from Jerusalem with his family and trusted guards. This was a scary time! Who will read verses 1–8? Assign readers. Who was rising up against David in verse 1? His foes.

Foes is another word for enemies. David had his own son Absalom trying to kill him and take over the throne, and many others joined Absalom against David. David had a lot of enemies trying to get him! What did David ask God to do for him in verse 7? Save him. What did David say belongs to the Lord in verse 8? Salvation. David understood that God was his only hope in times of trouble. This is an important lesson for us. Will we have times of trouble, too? Yes. Who should we turn to for help? God.

That's right. When we're in trouble, God is the one we should turn to.

Let's look at another example of a psalm of lament.

Psalm 43:1-5

Slide #13

Slide #14

Slide #15

Turn to Psalm 43. The writer, we're not told who, isn't feeling very cheerful. He is crying out to the Lord and asking some "why" questions. Let's see if you can spot them. Assign readers or you read the chapter.

How many why questions did you see? Four.

Good job! There are two in verse 2 and two in verse 5. What is the first one? Why have you rejected me?

And the second question in verse 2? Why do I go about mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?

What are the two why questions in verse 5? Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me?

These questions show that the writer felt like God had rejected him. He felt alone. He was mourning, or sad, because he felt crushed and burdened by the enemy.

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

What did he call God in verse 4? His exceeding joy.

The answer to his questions is at the end of verse 5. What does he need to have in God? Hope.

Yes. The writer felt bad and was asking God, "Why?" He wrote this psalm of lament when he wondered where God was. Yet, he knew that God was there all along. He said he would go to the altar of God, his exceeding joy, and would praise God. He knew that his only hope and salvation was in God.

We can all learn from this. We don't always feel like praying or worshipping God when we're scared, sad, or lonely. But God knows our hearts may be sad sometimes, and he wants us to come to him in prayer, like the writer of Psalm 43 did. There is only one place to find joy again, and that is in God!

Psalms of Thanksgiving

Now turn in your Bibles to Psalm 136. This is our third type of psalm.

Psalm 136:1–3

Slide #16

Who will read verses 1–3? Assign a reader. If you have time, you may choose to read the whole psalm.

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. It's a psalm of thanksgiving.

Why is the writer giving thanks to God? What attribute of God endures forever? His steadfast love.

Yes. God's steadfast love endures forever. This is the same attribute we read being praised in Psalm 117.

In the rest of the psalm, the writer thanks God for his creation and his deliverance over enemies in the past. He remembered the great things God had done. 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 God thanks. He blesses us every day, often in ways we don't even realize.

Who would like to share something you're grateful to God for? Allow discussion or share some personal examples.

Pass out the Class Notes.

Reading the psalms of thanksgiving can help us remember to thank God for who he is and what he has done.

Slide #17

Let's go to our Class Notes and fill in the three types of psalms we learned. Who will read #1? Choose a reader. Praise. Have students complete #1.

Who will read #2? Choose a reader. Lament. Have students complete #2. And #3? What's the third one? Choose a reader. Thanksgiving. Have students complete #3.

Writers of the Psalms

We have covered three types of psalms, but there are more. While God is the ultimate author of the psalms, he directed different men to write them over hundreds of years. Some psalms have a little inscription, or note, that tells us who wrote it, what event was happening, or what kind of song it is or what tune to use.

From these notes in the psalms, how many writers do you think we know about? Allow guesses.

We'll use our Class Notes to find the answer! Let's do #4 together. Everyone turn to Psalm 18.

Who will read the note for that psalm? It's the text before verse 1. Assign a reader.

Who wrote this psalm? David.

Slide #18

Slide #19

King David wrote at least 73 of the 150 psalms! We've already looked at two others by him, Psalm 51 and Psalm 3. Go ahead and write David on the blank next to Psalm 18. Have students complete #4.

When did he write this psalm? When the Lord rescued him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul.

This note mentions the choirmaster, so it was meant to be sung for worship. It tells us the author, David, and the event in his life that led to his writing.

Slide #20

Slide #21

Let's divide up the remaining psalms to look up for #5-10 in the Class Notes. You will look up the psalm, read the note, and write the name of the author in the blank. When you're finished, we'll review the answers together. Assign students, either individually or in groups, to one of the psalms in #5-10 and have them find the author. When everyone is finished, choose students to read the answers for the rest of the class to fill in. For competitive options, have all students race to each psalm in a sword drill and complete the answers together, or have individuals/groups race to find their assigned writer.

If you have time, you may have them read the note to the class. You may discuss that Psalm 45 was likely written for a royal wedding (a love song) and Psalm 127 was a song of ascent, which Hebrew people sang on their way up to Jerusalem.

Including David, how many authors did you find? Seven.

Sometimes several writers worked together, as we saw in Psalm 88 with the sons of Korah and Heman. We don't have the names of all the writers who composed these songs, but we know these seven. This collection of songs and prayers is the largest book in the Bible, so we know praise and worship are important to God. It should be important to us, too!

Application

Slide #22

Refer to the Lesson Theme Poster. We started our lesson by looking at psalms of praise, which are used to worship God in music and song. When you want to praise God and aren't sure what to say, just find one of the praise psalms and read it out loud to God. The psalms will help you worship God!

Then we read psalms of lament, where the writers were crying out to God and asking why things were happening. They understood that God was the one to turn to in times of trouble and sadness. When you feel sad or scared, you can pray a psalm of lament to God and ask him for help.

Then we looked at reasons we can thank God—for who he is and the things he has done. You can thank God for the prayers he has answered or the ways he has blessed you. You can share those things with others to give glory to God.

Lesson Review

We all learn best with review and repetition! We encourage you to play a lesson review game.

Bible Baseball

Students will answer questions and run the bases!

Materials

Review Questions (included in lesson)
Three chairs set out for bases
Optional: gift wrap tube and a large balloon

Instructions

Print one copy of the Review Questions for your use. Set out chairs as bases. Have the students line up by the home base area facing you (at the pitcher's mound). Each student up to "bat" will have a chance to answer a review question. If he can answer it correctly, let him run the bases. If he can't answer correctly, give the answer and ask him to go to the end of the line and try again.

You may want the students to sit on the chair at each base while they wait to run to the next base or have them run all the way around and return to the line. Repeat the questions until all the students have run around the bases.

For some added fun, you can use a gift wrap tube as a bat and toss a large balloon for students to hit after they answer each question.

Box Toss

Students will answer review questions then toss the beanbag at the holes in the box to gain points for their team.

Materials

Review Questions (included in lesson)
Medium-sized cardboard box
Scissors or knife
Four beanbags
Masking tape

Instructions

Print one copy of the Review Questions for your use. Use scissors or a knife to cut two or three holes in the bottom of the box. Make sure they are large enough for a beanbag to easily pass through. Label each hole with a point number: 5, 10, and 15. Use masking tape to make a tossing line several feet away from the box.

Divide the class into teams. Have the teams line up behind the line across from the box. Give each team two beanbags. Alternate asking each team a review question. Students who answer correctly will toss the beanbags at the target holes in the box to earn points for their team. If they answer incorrectly, they may toss the beanbags for fun without the points counting. Students will go to the end of the line after tossing the beanbags. Keep score for both teams. Continue play until all questions have been answered correctly and students have all had a chance to toss the beanbags.

Draw Dice

Teams will answer questions and complete a simple drawing to win. Who will finish their drawing first?

Materials

Review Questions (included in lesson)
One drawing area for each team (paper, white board, etc.)
Pencils or white board markers
One die

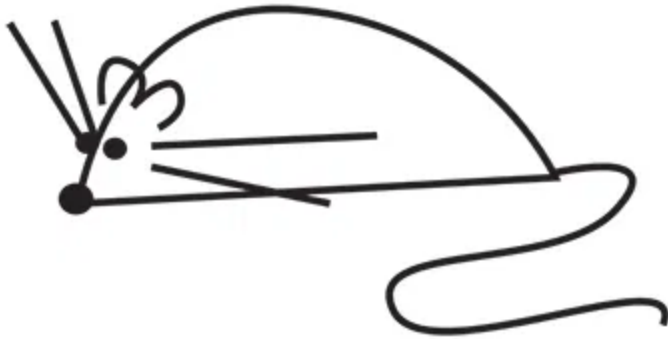
Instructions

Print one copy of the Review Questions for your use. Divide the class into two teams. Give each team a sheet of paper and a pencil, or divide the white board in half. Draw a mouse on the board as an example.

Ask the first team a question from the lesson. If they answer correctly, have them roll the die.

To begin drawing their mouse, each team must wait until they get a six. They will then draw the mouse's body on their paper or the board. After they have drawn the body, as they give correct answers to the questions, they can

continue to draw the other parts of the mouse according to the numbers they roll.



They can draw according to the numbers below:

6 = body

5 = nose

4 = whiskers

3 = eyes

2 = ears

1 = tail

Continue giving each team a turn to answer a question and roll the die. Repeat the questions as necessary. The first team to finish their mouse wins.

You may choose to draw a simple object from the lesson, such as a crown, an open Bible, a fish, etc. Be sure to assign numbers (as above) to each part of the object to be drawn before the game begins.

Four in a Row

Students will answer questions and add a marker for their team onto the grid. Which team will be the first to get four in a row?

Materials

Review Questions (included in lesson)

Masking tape

Red and black paper circles or other markers for each team

Instructions

Print one copy of the Review Questions for your use. Use masking tape to make a 16-section grid on the floor. The grid should be four sections wide by four sections long. Each section should be equal in size. Use eight red circles and

eight black circles cut from construction paper or other markers for the two teams.

Divide the students into two teams. Give each team eight markers. They will take turns answering the questions. If they answer correctly, they can put a marker in a square on the grid. The first team to get four markers in a row wins the game.

Goofy Golf

Hit the sock with the noodle? Teams must work together to answer the questions and putt to get a hole-in-one in this crazy golf game!

Materials

- Review Questions (included in lesson)
- Swimming noodles or rolled up newspapers
- Rolled up socks
- Masking tape
- Ten sheets of paper
- Markers

Instructions

Print one copy of the Review Questions for your use. Use the markers to number sheets of paper 1–10 (use more or less depending on class size and time). Tape down the sheets of paper around the room in a random pattern to form a golf course. You may want to add chairs as obstacles in the path.

Divide the class into teams. Give each team a rolled up sock and a swimming noodle. Ask the first student a review question from the lesson. If he answers correctly, allow him to use the noodle to drive the rolled up sock toward the first sheet of paper labeled #1. Continue with the next team. Take turns allowing team members to answer questions and continue putting the socks along the course to each hole, continuing from where the last teammate left off. The sock must touch or roll over the sheet of paper to consider it in the hole. The first team to reach the tenth hole wins.

Pick a Point

Answer the questions correctly to earn the right to pick a point.

Materials

- Review Questions (included in lesson)
- Small paper strips
- Cup or basket

Instructions

Print one copy of the Review Questions for your use. Write various numbers in increments of 5 or 10 on strips of paper to use as point cards. Put the point cards into the cup or basket. Divide students into teams of 4–5 students each. Have each team take turns answering a review question. After each correct answer, let a member of the team draw a point card from the cup.

The number of points on the cards will vary, so the score will have nothing to do with how skilled one team might be. Keep track of each team's points. If time allows, repeat the questions!

Racetrack

Who will reach the checkered flag first? Teams will race to the finish by answering review questions.

Materials

Review Questions (included in lesson)
White board or chalkboard
Markers/chalk
Optional: paper cutouts for each team (cars, animals, circles, etc.),
tape/poster putty

Instructions

Print one copy of the Review Questions for your use. Draw a racetrack on the board. It may be as simple as a straight horizontal path or a curvy circle. Label "Start" and "Finish" (with a checkered flag) at either end of the track. Add numbers along the track (e.g., 1–10) at equal intervals between Start and Finish. The numbers will be used as placement points for the racers as they progress along the track.

Divide the class into teams. You may draw a different symbol (e.g., stick figure, circle, X or O) to represent each team at the Start, or use paper cutouts as team markers and stick them to the board with tape/poster putty.

Ask the first team a review question. If they answer correctly, move their marker or redraw their symbol along the track at #1. If they answer incorrectly, give the next team a chance to answer and move to the first number. If they do not know, give the answer and ask that question again later. Continue to alternate asking review questions and moving teams' markers along the racetrack according to the numbers along the track. The first team to reach the Finish wins!

Toss for It

How many points? Toss for it! Students answer the questions and toss the beanbag to earn points for their team.

Materials

Review Questions (included in lesson)

A deck of numbered cards, or numbers and "wild" written on index cards

One beanbag

Masking tape

Two baskets or containers for cards

Instructions

Print one copy of the Review Questions for your use. Place several rows of numbered cards facedown with a few inches between them to form a grid pattern (make sure to put several wild cards or Jokers down, too). Use the masking tape to make a tossing line several feet from the cards.

Divide students into teams and have them line up behind the tossing line. Ask the first student a review question. If he gives the correct answer, have him toss the beanbag onto a card. Turn the card over to reveal the points he receives for his team. Face cards or word cards are 10 points each. Wild or Jokers are also 10—plus another turn. All other cards are face value.

Have the student pick up his card and put it in the team's basket to be counted at the end of the game. Next team's turn. If a student gives an incorrect answer, he should go to the end of the line. Give the answer and repeat that question later. Continue taking turns until all the questions have been answered. Add more cards to the grid if necessary.

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