

Preview of Psalms

The Book of Psalms simply means "book of praise." Unlike most books in the Bible, numerous authors wrote these psalms over an extended period of time. Five men are specifically named as authors. David, of course, was the principal writer. He is named as the author of about seventy-three of the psalms (including Psalm 72 and 127, which are called psalms for Solomon in some Bibles). Asaph authored another twelve of the psalms (Psalm 50, 73-83). Three men are named as the author of one psalm each: Heman (Psalm 88), Ethan (Psalm 89), and Moses (Psalm 90).

The Psalms have a universal appeal to mankind. They bare the human soul, yet they breathe a heavenly atmosphere. Some of them pulse with praise, devotion, and adoration to the Lord. Others ring with the cry of holy revenge against the enemies of God (remember, these are expressions of Old Testament saints) and the shout of victory. Still others throb with a wail of despair, sorrow, or repentance. In all our experiences, we can find in this beautiful collection some echo of our innermost feelings, some answer to our need, or some prospect for our future.

The Psalms represent a significant portion of what we call the Poetic books of the Bible. They are, of course, Hebrew poetry. Like English poetry, it stimulates the thoughts and the imagination. Its lines, which contain a wealth of meaning concisely stated, often employ dynamic figures of speech and delightful repetition. Instead of manipulating the sounds of language (as in the rhythm and rhyme of English poetry), Hebrew poetry uses parallelism and repetition of related ideas in similar word groupings. In antithetic parallelism, two or more lines express opposite thoughts, as in Psalm 1:6. In synthetic parallelism, two or more lines express a buildup of thought, as in Psalm 1:3.

The Word of God

Lesson Scope: [Psalms 19 and 119](#)

Lesson Focus

When was the last time you stopped to marvel at the authority, the endurance, and the unity of the Scriptures? They hold for each believer an ever-increasing awe and respect, for here we find God's will communicated to mankind.

The world's futile attempts at a meaningful existence confirm our need of a solid Rock to stand on. How could we safely find our way from earth to glory without the moorings that the light of Scripture alone can impart? The Bible has all the practical charts and maps we need for each day of the journey.

God has kindly and patiently revealed Himself to man. Nature points unmistakably to a sovereign Creator, giving God praise. Yet beyond that praise, God desires unwavering faith and full obedience from each member of the human race.

We cannot imagine life without God's written Word to us. We would have no purpose, orientation, or goals. And yet, for as openly as we may use it, do we appreciate it as the treasure that it truly is? Does our appreciation move us to action to the extent that others can testify that we live by the Book? Obedience is the acid test that convinces God and man of our true love for Him.

God gave His Word for the inspiration and well-being of mankind. Fruitfulness is determined by how a child of God accepts and applies the Word to his life.

Lesson Aim: To strengthen our love and appreciation for the Word of God.

Theme Verses: [2 Timothy 3:16-17](#). All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

Lesson Text

"The Law of the LORD Is Perfect"

Psalm 19:7-14 ⁷ The law of the LORD *is* perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD *is* sure, making wise the simple. ⁸ The statutes of the LORD *are* right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD *is* pure, enlightening the eyes. ⁹ The fear of the LORD *is* clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD *are* true *and* righteous altogether. ¹⁰ More to be desired *are they* than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. ¹¹ Moreover by them is thy servant warned: *and* in keeping of them *there is* great reward. ¹² Who can understand *his* errors? cleanse thou me from secret *faults*. ¹³ Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous *sins*; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression. ¹⁴ Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer.

"I Will Delight ... in Thy Statutes"

Psalm 119:1-16 ¹ Blessed *are* the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the LORD. ² Blessed *are* they that keep his testimonies, *and that* seek him with the whole heart. ³ They also do no iniquity: they walk in his ways. ⁴ Thou hast commanded *us* to keep thy precepts diligently. ⁵ O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes! ⁶ Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy commandments. ⁷ I will praise thee with uprightness of heart, when I shall have learned thy righteous judgments. ⁸ I will keep thy statutes: O forsake me not utterly. ⁹ Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed *thereto* according to thy word. ¹⁰ With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments. ¹¹ Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee. ¹² Blessed *art* thou, O LORD: teach me thy statutes. ¹³ With my lips have I declared all the judgments of thy mouth. ¹⁴ I have rejoiced in the way of thy testimonies, as *much as* in all riches. ¹⁵ I will meditate in thy precepts, and have respect unto thy ways. ¹⁶ I will delight myself in thy statutes: I will not forget thy word.

"Thy Word Is a Lamp Unto My Feet"

Psalm 119:97-105 ⁹⁷ O how love I thy law! it *is* my meditation all the day. ⁹⁸ Thou through thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies: for they *are* ever with me. ⁹⁹ I have more understanding than

all my teachers: for thy testimonies *are* my meditation. ¹⁰⁰ I understand more than the ancients, because I keep thy precepts. ¹⁰¹ I have refrained my feet from every evil way, that I might keep thy word. ¹⁰² I have not departed from thy judgments: for thou hast taught me. ¹⁰³ How sweet are thy words unto my taste! *yea, sweeter* than honey to my mouth! ¹⁰⁴ Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way. ¹⁰⁵ Thy word *is* a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path. [Psalm 119:111-112](#) ¹¹¹ Thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage for ever: for they *are* the rejoicing of my heart. ¹¹² I have inclined mine heart to perform thy statutes always, *even unto* the end.

Questions for Study

"The Law of the LORD Is Perfect"

1. List ways in which the Word of God supplies the needs of man's soul.
2. What are the results of taking God at His Word?

"I Will Delight ... in Thy Statutes"

3. In what ways does God unfold His will to man?
4. Discuss issues that test our obedience to God.
5. What steps must we take to remain holy in a wicked world?

"Thy Word Is a Lamp Unto My Feet"

6. List helps for finding delight in our personal devotions.
7. Contrast human reasoning with godly wisdom.
8. Name some traditions that preserve Biblical principles.

Analyzing the Passage

God's Word is perfect, sure, right, pure, clean, true, and righteous (Psalm 19:7-9). The number seven in Scripture symbolizes perfection. The Word provides a perfect, comprehensive way to meet every need of the soul.

The warning in Psalm 19:11 is enlightenment that keeps one from harm. The ongoing "washing of water by the word" (Ephesians 5:26) is the action illustrated by the youth in Psalm 119:9.

Meditation is more than a hurried glance at Scripture. In Psalm 19:14 it signifies solemn pondering and even murmured assent. In Psalm 119:97 it includes the aspects of reflection, devotion, and prayer.

Principles and Applications

"The Law of the LORD Is Perfect"

1. The Word of God perfectly meets man's every need (Psalm 19:7-9). Man is a helpless, hopeless creature without God. But as man reaches out to God, he bears testimony to the abundance and completeness of God's provisions. Nature points man to God, but is not able to convert man. Many worldly counselors pose as having the answers, but their advice is far inferior to meditating on God's testimonies, and it will not save us in time of trouble. God's Word saves us from sin, from yielding to temptation, from discouragement, and from pride.

2. The Word of God is satisfying and rewarding for those who keep its precepts (Psalm 19:10-11). Daniel experienced God's approval, a clear conscience, and physical wellness as he refused the king's meat. We experience peace as we have a clear, open relationship with God. The fear of the Lord gives us strong confidence as we make God's standards our rule of faith and practice. The rules and applications of our church further assist us with practical direction and spiritual safety.

3. The Word makes man aware of his accountability to God (Psalm 19:12-14). Understanding that we will answer to God for "the deeds of the body" should produce carefulness in our Christian walk. "To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (James 4:17). We have been taught many right applications to truth. For these also, we will be held accountable.

"I Will Delight ... in Thy Statutes"

4. The Word reveals God's will for man (Psalm 119:1-8). Whether young or old, single or married, poor or rich, weak or strong, we should ask ourselves what God's will is for our lives. As the author of the highest standard, God reveals answers that we can trust and should follow. The Bible has the right answers to the most difficult issues we are facing.

5. Man is responsible to obey God's Word (119:1-8). Hearing God's Word preached does not leave us with the option to take it or leave it. God expects the promptness in our obedience that we generally expect of our children. This requires faith, for as God asked Abraham to offer up Isaac, God today holds choices before us that test whom we will serve. "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you" (John 15:14).

6. Following God's Word is the path to a holy life (Psalm 119:9-16).

God does not promise health and wealth, but the blessings of following God's Word are as predictable as God Himself. Life is a series of choices between becoming either more like God or more like the world.

"Thy Word Is a Lamp Unto my Feet"

7. The Word of God needs to be the center of our devotion (Psalm 119:97-104). What holds your keenest interest? Is it the newspaper or magazine on Saturday evening, or is it your Sunday school lesson? Can you keep your business involvements out of your mind during worship services? Does God get the prime of your time and resources or only the leftovers?

Discuss the message together after the service. It will inspire you and increase your burden for the cause of truth.

8. Praise and gratitude to God is the response of those who find meaning in the Word of God (Psalm 119:97-104). An attitude of thankfulness yields manifold blessings. Our gratitude grows when we thank the Lord for all that we have been delivered from. We are humbled to realize that we have received many more spiritual benefits than we deserve when we consider the persecution others are facing.

9. Personal meditation on the Word gives wisdom that supersedes human reasoning (Psalm 119:97-104). We need and covet godly wisdom, for our own souls are at stake. Our families, our church, and the preservation of truth are also at stake. The world and many professing Christians may mock at our convictions on separation, insurance, or communication technology, but wise men know that the presence of God is much more valuable than anything we can gain from the world.

10. Following God's Word produces a way of life that becomes the heritage of the faithful (Psalm 119:105, 111-112). The Rechabites did not refuse wine only because their father had established the pattern. Rather, they understood that this tradition helped them maintain holiness and separation. Traditions that help us preserve Scriptural principles must be valued highly if we expect our children to enjoy the church life we have today.

Important Teachings

1. The Word of God perfectly meets man's every need (Psalm 19:7-9).
2. The Word of God is satisfying and rewarding for those who keep its precepts (Psalm 19:10-11).
3. The Word makes man aware of his accountability to God (Psalm

19:12-14).

4. The Word reveals God's will for man (Psalm 119:1-8).
5. Man is responsible to obey God's Word (Psalm 119:1-8).
6. Following God's Word is the path to a holy life (Psalm 119:9-16).
7. The Word of God needs to be the center of our devotion (Psalm 119:97-104).
8. Praise and gratitude to God is the response of those who find meaning in the Word of God (Psalm 119:97-104).
9. Personal meditation on the Word gives wisdom that supersedes human reasoning (Psalm 119:97-104).
10. Following God's Word produces a way of life that becomes the heritage of the faithful (Psalm 119:105, 111-112).

Answers to Questions

1. List ways in which the Word of God supplies the needs of man's soul. The Word provides a proper understanding of right and wrong. It points out the way to salvation and a life led by the Spirit of God. It gives us help to overcome temptation, discouragement, and pride. The Bible shows us the only safe way to reach our goal of heaven.
2. What are the results of taking God at His Word? God indicates His approval on our lives by giving us a clear conscience. We receive an increased understanding of and accountability to truth. Godly fear gives us confidence in our Christian walk. Obedience to the Bible and the applications the church has made brings spiritual safety.
3. In what ways does God unfold His will to man? We read the Scriptures personally and hear God speak through our conscience. We worship collectively and hear the Word preached. We hear the church make practical applications to truth. We observe the orderliness and infinite wisdom of God's design in Creation. God takes us through difficult experiences that highlight the need to reach beyond ourselves to the Superintendent of our lives.
4. Discuss issues that test our obedience to God. Pressure is on us to accept and trust in the insurances that the world offers. The government offers various subsidies. We face pressure to embrace communication technology at the expense of separation, holiness, and the pilgrim-and-stranger concept. We face the temptation to bow down to the god of materialism.
5. What steps must we take to remain holy in a wicked world?

Do not consider the directives of Scripture and the voice of the church as mere options. Maintain clear lines of separation from the world. Achieving a peaceful end is the result of "choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season" (Hebrews 11:25).

6. List helps for finding delight in our personal devotions. Gratefully consider how readily we have the Word at our fingertips.

Others would give much more than we do for a complete Bible in order to obtain a single page. Do all that it takes to overcome distractions. Spend enough time to be thoroughly inspired. Sincerely seek God's purpose for your life above all else.

7. Contrast human reasoning with godly wisdom.

Human reasoning says man is inherently good and is improving indefinitely. The Bible says the "heart is deceitful ... and desperately wicked" (Jeremiah 17:9). Human reasoning explains that children have a certain disorder, while Proverbs teaches that "the rod of correction shall drive it far from him." Human reasoning says you need a lot of advertising in your business, while godly wisdom trusts God to provide.

8. Name some traditions that preserve Biblical principles.

Our plain clothes and plain vehicles express simplicity, humility, and uniformity. Our tradition of good works for necessary uses promotes the principle of working with our hands and the stranger-and pilgrim concept. Our reluctance to accept new technology safeguards us against acculturation.

Summarizing the Lesson

God faithfully revealed Himself to men until His Word was completely written. Man was able to reach out to God long before the Bible was complete. Now we who hold it in its entirety have a solemn responsibility, coupled with a promise: "Blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book" (Revelation 22:7).

Research Guide

Read the chapter titled "The Bible" in *Doctrines of the Bible*.