

Responding with Praise

A study of some of the Psalms in Section I

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These study guides have been designed to assist you in the “Three R’s of your own Bible study – reading, receiving, and responding. You are welcome to print out the whole series. If you wish to print out only one lesson at a time, choose that option from your printer.

Please feel free to use these materials for your own personal use or with a small group, remembering to give credit where credit is due.

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Lesson 1

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**Oh, the joys of those who do not follow the advice of the wicked,
or stand around with sinners, or join in with mockers.
But they delight in the law of the LORD, meditating on it day and night.**
Psalm 1: 1 – 2 (NLT)

Can God be known or is He a distant deity? Is He silent or is He expressive? Is the only means by which we can know something about this Supreme Being through the world around us, through His creation? The first two poems in the Book of Psalms clearly explain to us that God can be known through His Word – Psalm 1, and that He can be known through His Son – Psalm 2. These 2 songs are foundational to the whole rest of this ancient song book. Hebrew poetry is not focused on rhythm or rhyme, but on the development, the repetition and recapitulation of an idea. As you begin your study, there are 2 important things to keep in mind. This poetry is to be experienced more than analyzed and the balance of thought, not sound, is the goal. God is waiting to hear your response of praise today.

READ - PSALMS 1 & 2

Read each of these Psalms over slowly. Try to read them in several different translations. Copy each of them in your own handwriting. Absorb the thoughts and the images as they are described. Don't hurry to get to the study time - this may be the best part of the lesson!

REFLECT -

The Circumstances -

We do not know the author of the first Psalm, but in Acts 4: 24 – 26 David is quoted as the author of Psalm 2. What do you think might have occurred to motivate these 2 poems?

The Psalm – Summarize or title the sections of both Psalms.

Psalm 1 –

1 – 3
4 – 6

Psalm 2 –

1 - 3
4 - 6
7 - 9
10 - 12

The Content –

1. What are the important words & word pictures in Psalm 1? Try to define them.
2. How many contrasts are in Psalm 1? Do they help you understand the meaning?
3. What do you learn about the coming Messiah from this prophetic Psalm?
Read Psalm 110 for more information.

The Principles of Faith Proclaimed -

What truths about the godly and the ungodly are explained in Psalm 1?

What warnings and promises did you find in Psalm 2?

RESPOND -

Talk to God (both verbally and in writing) about your life and how it relates to these Psalms - Perhaps you could re-write Psalm 1 in your own words or you could illustrate it through a picture. If you take the last phrase of Psalm 2 as your theme, what response do you want to express to The One who will reign forever and forever. Wait quietly before Him before you express yourself.

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Lesson 2

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**“But You, O Lord, are a shield for me,
My glory and the One Who lifts up my head.”** Psalm 3:3

In the Book of Psalms, or as the Hebrew people knew it, The Book of Praises, we find real people expressing every emotion known to man. Through the words of poetry, prayer and music they cry out to God. Their circumstances are sometimes dangerous and discouraging; often evil seems to more successful than good; while at other times God's presence and power are the focus of their thoughts. For centuries before Christ, as well as the ones since His first advent, these psalms have been used by the people of God as they came together to worship. For times of personal devotion and meditation there is no greater resource available to believers. It is through the Psalms that we learn how to respond to the God who has chosen to reveal Himself to us through creation, through his Word, and through His Son, Jesus. And so, we come to the Book of Psalms to learn how to respond in our own circumstances to the God who has spoken to you and to me, to the God who calls to us.

READ - PSALMS 3 Just read it and read it again. Savor the words. Absorb it.

Try reading it out loud and maybe copying it. Be a scribe and start your copy of the Psalms - perhaps the literal one on one page and your personal prayer response on the opposite (see “Respond” below). Don't hurry to get to the study time - this may be the best part of the lesson!

REFLECT -

The Circumstances -

This is one of David's Psalms - written when he fled from Absalom, his son.

Read about David's circumstances when this Psalm was written in II Samuel 15

(You might want to keep on reading through chapter 18 - it is quite a story).

Put yourself in David's place and think about how he is feeling and why.

What would you say to God if you were in David's place?

What are some of David's life experiences that would influence his reactions at this time?

The Psalm - There are 4 sections - how would you title or summarize each one?

Verses 1 - 2

Verses 3 - 4

Verses 5 - 6

Verses 7 - 8

What are the words or word pictures that are important or make an impression on you?

The Content - What is David trying to say to God in this Psalm?

The Principles of Faith Proclaimed -

What truths has David heard God say about Himself that He is now remembering?

What truths has David heard God say about man that He is now contemplating?

What truth is David's conclusion in this Psalm?

RESPOND -

Talk to God (both verbally and in writing) about your life and how it relates to this Psalm - phrase by phrase. This is called “Praying the Psalms” - one of the greatest blessings and ways to grow in faith and obedience that is possible. Worth every minute that you can give it . . .

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Lesson 3

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"I will both lie down in peace, and sleep; For You alone, O LORD, make me dwell in safety."

Psalm 4:8

"For You, O Lord, will bless the righteous. With favor You will surround him as with a shield."

Psalm 5:12

"Psalm 1 and 2, set as an introduction to the Psalms in order to draw us into the way of prayer, began and ended with the word blessed. Psalm 1 directed us to the practice of torah-meditation and to answering the God who talks to us. Psalm 2 directed us to the practice of messiah-expectation and the truths of God entering history." (Answering God, Eugene Peterson) Psalm 3 gave us a prayer from the life of David - at a time of serious trouble. Psalms 4 & 5 are both Psalms of lament - ones which express grief for the ungodly and wickedness. Another name for this category of Psalms is "imprecatory" - invoking God's judgment on His adversaries. God calls us to be holy, which requires an understanding of what is evil and contending with it. These Psalm-prayers teach us how to do this. It will never be easy, but it brings us to our Righteous God.

READ - Psalms 4 - An Evening Prayer & Psalms 5 - A Morning Prayer

You may want to concentrate on Psalm 4 first and then concentrate on Psalm 5.

Read it and read it again. Savor the words. Absorb them.

Try reading it out loud and then copy it down.

Don't hurry to get to the study time - this may be the best part of the lesson!

REFLECT

The Circumstances - There are 29 Psalms in which an instrumental accompaniment or a tune is assigned to the prayer. These are 2 of them - Psalm 4 "with stringed instruments" and Psalm 5 is "for the flutes". Imagine yourself singing or chanting these Psalms with the people of God - bringing to Him the concerns, experiences, frustrations, joys, & victories - in community.

The Psalm -

1. Summarize or title the sections of the Psalm. (Notice to whom David is talking.)

Psalm 4: 1

Psalm 5: 1 - 6

2 - 5

7 - 9

6 - 8

10 - 12

2. What are some of the words or word pictures that are important or make an impression on you?

The Content - What is David feeling & saying to God at the end of His day in Psalm 4?

What is on David's heart and mind as He meets God in the morning - Psalm 5?

The Principles of Faith Proclaimed -

What truths has David heard God say about Himself that He wants included in their music?

What truths has David heard God say about man that He wants included in their music?

What truth is David's conclusion in each of these Psalms?

RESPOND -

Try "Praying these Psalms" for yourself. Take them phrase by phrase and talk to God about your own circumstances and understanding of what is being said in this Psalm. How do you pray at night and in the morning? Use these Psalms as a guide this week and see how this changes your praise to God.

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Lesson 4

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O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

Psalm 8: 1 & 9

In the book of Psalms praise is always directed to God. The Praise Psalms may be sub grouped under the titles *Descriptive Praise* - focusing on who God is or *Declarative Praise* - focusing on what God does. Have you ever thought about the difference between praise and thanksgiving? Praise is an O.T. term which means *speaking well of, to extol the virtues of, to magnify*, and it is always vocal and public. Thanksgiving is a N.T. term and can be silent and private. But both must be intense and genuine. To praise God for His name is to publicly praise Him for His being, His character and for His attributes. Are you amazed that you & I can do this?

Information from And I Will Praise Him by Ronald B. Allen

READ - Psalms 8 - A Psalm of Praise

Just read it and read it again. Meditate on the words, the phrases. Absorb them.

Remember to enjoy the poetry, the words, the thoughts leisurely.

Try reading it out loud and then maybe copying it.

REFLECT -

The Circumstances - This is another of David's psalms for the director of the music. The "Gath" or "Gittith" may be an instrument like a lyre or it may be a musical term.

The Psalm -

1. Summarize or title the sections of this Psalm of David.

Verse 1

Verse 2

Verses 3 -8

Verse 9

2. What are some of the words or word pictures that are important or make an impression on you?

The Content -

1. The name of God (Ex. 3: 14 & 15) and the glory of God (Psalm 19: 1-4)

In what ways do these both describe who God is. Can you expand on this idea?

2. In Matthew 21 the people are quoting Psalm 118: 26 as they welcome Jesus and Jesus quotes Psalm 8: 2 as He rebukes the chief priests & scribes. (See also I Cor. 1: 27) Why do you think this verse was included in the Psalm? What is David saying to God?

3. David is in awe as He thinks of the wonders of creation - put these verses into your own words.

The Principles of Faith Proclaimed -

What truths has David heard God say about Himself that He to express in worship?

What truths has David heard God say about man for whom He wants to give praise??

What truth is David's conclusion in this Psalm?

RESPOND -

Take your paper and pencil and re-write this poem/song of praise in your own words, picture or song. Phrase by phrase make this your own prayer of thanksgiving. How does this affect your relationship to God?

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Lesson 5

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**“Those who know Your name will trust in You,
for You, Lord, have never forsaken those who seek you.”** Psalm 9:10

There are several acrostic poems in the Book of Praises. Psalms 9 & 10 may have been one poem originally. Together they follow the order of the Hebrew alphabet and they have the same general theme - deliverance from their wicked enemies coupled with a strong sense that the Lord will reign. Ten of the initial letters in Psalm 9 follow the Hebrew alphabet and 7 of them continue the same pattern in Psalm 10. These Psalms are considered lament Psalms. What do you think it would be like to sing this in church? How would it join the believers into one body? Or would it?

READ - Psalms 9 & 10

Read them as one Psalm and then read them again - perhaps in another version or paraphrase.

Notice the parallel phrases and David's victorious determination to praise God in spite of His situation. Savor in your own mind what David poetically expresses about His God.

REFLECT -

The Circumstances - What do you think David was experiencing when He cried out to the Lord at the writing of these Psalms?

The Psalm -

1. Summarize or title the sections of these Psalms of David.

Psalm 9 : 1 - 2

3- 5

6 - 8

9 - 10

11 - 12

13 - 16

17 - 18

19 - 20

Psalm 10: 1 - 2

3 - 11

12 - 13

14 - 15

16 - 18

2. What are some of the words or word pictures that are important or make an impression on you?

The Content - What do you think David is expressing to His God at this time in His life?
How will this help the people as they sing together in worship?

The Principles of Faith Proclaimed -

What truths has David heard God say about Himself that He wants to repeat back to God?

What truths has David heard God say about his enemies or the wicked that he wants to believe?

What truths has David heard God say about those who seek the Lord?

What truth is David's conclusion in Psalm 9 - 10?

RESPOND -

Maybe it's time to write your own acrostic poem. Start with A and see where the Lord will take you.

Do these Psalms bring up any thoughts or concerns that are in your own heart and mind? Bring them to the Lord now. How about praying for the afflicted, fatherless and oppressed? (Ps.10:16-18)

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Lesson 6

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**“For the Lord is righteous. He loves justice.
Upright men will see His face.”**

Psalm 11:7

Perhaps some of David's friends wanted him to flee from Saul's anger and attacks on his life or maybe his enemies were taking advantage of the situation and taunting him as he trusted in an invisible God. We don't know David's circumstances when he wrote this song, but we do know that David was firm in his resolution to "take refuge in the Lord alone". Psalm 11 is known as a "Psalm of Trust". How interesting that it is set in between several psalms of lament.

READ - Psalm 11

Read this Psalm many times and in as many translations or versions of Scripture as you can.

Read it out loud, with expression.

Try copying it and absorbing the word pictures as you write. Be creative. TAKE YOUR TIME . . .

REFLECT -

The Circumstances - David is definitely experiencing adversity. Will he continue to trust God?

The Psalm - Summarize or title the sections of this Psalm

Psalm 11: 1 - 3

4 - 6

7

The Content -

1. Define some of the phrases in this Psalm

Upright in heart (vs. 2 & 7)

Holy temple - throne - (vs. 4)

Righteous (vs. 5 & 7)

Justice (vs. 7)

2. Can the "foundations" really be destroyed? Why or why not?

3. What prophecy does David make in this Psalm?

The Principles of Faith Proclaimed -

What truths about God does David talk about in this Psalm?

What truths about the wicked does David express in this song?

What truths about those who are upright can you find?

RESPOND -

1 If you were going to write a poem about adversity or or trials in your own life today, what would you write about? (No need for rhyme, just simple statements) Where are you experiencing the need to trust God or to find Him as your refuge?

2. Now take those phrases from question #1 and surround your circumstances, by rewriting verses 1 and 7 in your own words.

Jehovah - God Almighty - waits for conversation with you - a response to His Word to you!

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Lesson 7

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"LORD, who may dwell in Your sanctuary? Who may live on Your holy hill?"

Psalms 14: 1

Psalms 14 and 15 are known as wisdom Psalms. In them David gives poetic expression to the theme of the foolishness of living as if God did not exist and the proper approach to the worship of God. Psalm 14 is almost the same as Psalm 53. You might want to compare the slight variations and final verse. Isn't it amazing that these songs written so many years ago are still so true today? We worship a God who is utterly consistent, without change, and He is continuing to carry out His purposes for all creation.

READ - Psalms 14 & 15

Take some time to read these 2 Psalms - every day if you can.

Make a copy of them where you will see them during the week. See what impact this makes on you.

REFLECT -

The Circumstances - When would David write these poems of contemplation and wisdom?

The Psalm -

Summarize or title the sections of these Psalms of David.

Psalm 14: 1 - 3

Psalm 15: 1

4 - 6

2 - 4

7

5

The Content -

1. Why do you think David is expressing these ideas in Psalm 14?
As the people sing this what will they experience?
2. Make a list in your own words of the characteristics of the person described in Psalm 15.
How does this list compare with the 10 Commandments (Ex. 20) and the N. T. description of the Spirit filled believer - Galatians 5: 19 - 26, Ephesians 4: 20 - 32, Colossians 3: 1 - 17
3. These "good works" have never been the way to earn salvation either in the Old Testament or the New Testament. What has always been the means of forgiveness and reconciliation between God and man? In way do you think this Psalm is of value to the believer today?

The Principles of Faith Proclaimed -

1. David has listened to God and now he is responding. What wisdom is he expressing in Psalm 14?
2. David has heard God's Word and now he is proclaiming truth. What is he expressing in Psalm 15?

RESPOND -

1. As David looks around and sees those who live as if God does not exist, it makes him anticipate the day when God will reign and fulfill His promise made to his forefathers. Rewrite this Psalm describing the way you see people and what gives you hope.
2. Take some time to rewrite Psalm 15, making it a personal prayer of your own and asking the Holy Spirit to show you His desires for your life - so that "you will never be shaken."

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Lesson 8

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"I love you, O LORD, my strength.

The LORD is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer..."

Psalm 18:1,2

This Psalm is a great hymn of celebration to the grace of God. It is both a Psalm of trust and a Messianic Psalm. We find David expressing very vividly how God had protected and vindicated him throughout the days of his life and we also can see how God will be doing this even more clearly for "The Anointed One" - his own Son, Jesus. David is a master of using metaphors as He prays to God. He can take the unseen world of faith, guilt, sin, protection, judgment and make it real or visible through the use of word pictures. As David sums up his life in this Psalm, he paints a very vivid picture. God can use His unlimited power to save one who worships Him.

READ - Psalm 18

This is a great Psalm to read out loud - maybe a few times, emphasizing various aspects of it. Try to put yourself in David's place as you read and re-read this song. Think of David's life and how God's hand had been upon Him. Think also of the coming "Anointed One" - the Son of God and find Him in this Psalm.

REFLECT -

The Circumstances - This Psalm was first written in II Samuel 22: 1 - 51. There are only a few minor changes which were most likely made in order to have it be useful to the church. So many times God had spared David's life - from Saul and from his enemies and now David remembers these occasions and expresses his deep love and thanks to the One who was His Rock.

The Psalm - Summarize or title the sections of this Psalm

Psalm 18: 1 - 6	28 - 36
7 - 19	37 - 45
20 - 27	46 - 50

The Content -

1. David has many names for the Lord in this Psalm - Ex. Rock, Fortress, etc.
Make a list of them and write a short definition -

2. What do you think David means in verses 20 - 24?

3. Pick out some of the phrases / ideas in this Psalm that are especially encouraging to you.

The Principles of Faith Proclaimed -

What truths about God does David want to express to Him in this Psalm?

What truths about God's power and protection is David expressing?

Because He loves the LORD, David expresses His praise. Make a list of all of those phrases.

RESPOND -

After you reflect on the ways that God has loved, protected and delivered you throughout the days of your life, spend some time writing down your own Psalm of praise and thanksgiving. It is good to remember and give thanks.

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Lesson 9

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**“May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart
be pleasing in your sight, O LORD, my Rock and my Redeemer.”**

Psalm 19: 14

Psalm 19 is a wisdom psalm which celebrates both creation and the Torah. Focusing on God in the majesty of His creation and then in the revelation of Himself through the Word which He has given to us, helps us put ourselves in perspective. We can only bow before The One Who created all that exists, including us, and The One Who has revealed Himself to us through THE WORD.

READ - Psalm 19

Savor the words. Absorb them. Write them down. Try memorizing some of them or all of them!
Don't hurry to get to your own study and thoughts - this may be the best part of the lesson.

REFLECT -

The Circumstances - What kind of a day was it when David wrote this Psalm?

The Psalm - Summarize or title the sections of this Psalm

Psalm 19: 1 - 6
7 - 11
12 - 14

The Content -

1. What comes to your mind as you study the first 6 verses of this Psalm?
You might want to look at Romans 1: 18 -21, 10: 16-18, and Isaiah 40: 25-26
2. There are 6 words for the law of God (or the Torah) in this Psalm and 6 descriptive adjectives followed by phrases which tell us what they can accomplish. Put these in your own words.
3. The prayer in verses 12 - 14 is worth memorizing, framing, and making your own daily request. Spend some time re-writing it and deciding what these ideas may mean - “errors, secret faults, presumptuous sins, words of my mouth & meditation of my heart.”
Remember, my friend - Not one of us can do this on our own, but God through His Holy Spirit will be your Strength & your Redeemer.

The Principles of Faith Proclaimed - A little review of the lesson!

What truths about God's creation does David express in this Psalm?
What truths about the Word of God does David explain?
What is David's concluding request to His God?

RESPOND -

1. If you were to re-write this Psalm what would you say about creation, about God's Word, and what would be your prayer to the One who is your Redeemer?
2. Who needs you to pray for them - regularly and often - asking God to do His work in their hearts - based on Psalm 19: 12 - 14? Pray God's protection over those you love.

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Lesson 11

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**“Show me Your ways, O LORD; Teach me Your paths.
Lead me in Your truth and teach me, for You are the God of my salvation.**

Psalm 25: 4 - 5

It is very likely that these acrostic Psalms were used by parents in training their children. Don't you find it helpful to have little gimmicks to help you remember a list of things? (In piano lessons we all learned the names of the spaces in the treble clef - F-A-C-E and the lines - Every Good Boy Does Fine.) In Psalm 25 David includes praise and petition, prayers and penitence. What a good model for the "children of God" then and now. You might want to know that "remember" in verses 6 - 8 means "to contemplate or "to call to mind" - not just the past, but the present and the future.

READ - Psalm 25 -

Read and re-read this Psalm this week, just for the joy of reading it. Enter into it. As you read it, put a little check by the words or phrases which catch your attention.

REFLECT -

The Circumstances - Where do you think David was when he wrote this psalm?

The Psalm - Summarize or title the sections of this Psalm

Psalm 25: 1 - 3	11 - 18
4 - 7	19 - 21
8 - 10	22

The Content -

1. Make a list of the things that David is asking from the Lord? What do you notice about his requests?
2. David opens and closes this Psalm with the request: "Let me not be ashamed" or "put to shame". What do you think this means? (This phrase is also used in Psalm 31: 1 and 16 - 17.)
3. Verse 14 is translated in one version - "Friendship with the Lord is for those who fear Him." How do you put this idea into your real world?

The Principles of Faith Proclaimed -

What truths has David heard God say about Himself that He is now remembering?
What truths has David heard God express about those who fear him?
What promises from the Lord is David claiming?

RESPOND -

1. This is a great Psalm to personalize. As you read it, make each verse a prayer from your own heart and life.
2. What is it that God is communicating to you through His Word - through Psalm 25? It is not a co-incidence that you studied THIS Psalm THIS week. Ask God to speak to you. Take time to listen. And then write your own response (alphabetically or not!).

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Lesson 12

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“Wait for the LORD. Be strong and take heart and wait for the LORD.” Psalm 27:14

Why is it often so hard to wait for the Lord? David did not have an easy life, did he? Yes, he knew God's promises and had seen God answer his prayers on many occasions, but still he had to remind himself of the truths that he knew about his God. Psalm 27 is another Psalm of Trust. - David is telling himself, as he talks to God, what the mission and focus of his "Homeland Security Commission" would be. How does your personal "security commission" function?

READ - Psalm 27 -

What a great Psalm to read many times this week. Take your time and read it out loud, too. Copy it down and post some of your favorite quotes on your refrigerator & bathroom mirror.

REFLECT -

The Circumstances - What do you think David's circumstances were when he wrote this poem?

The Psalm - Summarize or title the sections of this Psalm

Psalm 25: 1 - 3	7 - 10
4 - 5	11 - 13
6	14

The Content -

1. As you read that first verse - think of the ways in which knowing God as light, as salvation, and as strength would take away fear. Make a list for each word. By the way, what is fear?
2. In verse 4 David says that there is one thing that he desires of the Lord. What is it? What does it include? Certainly there are other things that he desires of the Lord. Why this?
3. Find all of David's "prayer requests" that are in this Psalm. Which ones do you pray also? Why?
4. Wait for the Lord - what does it mean? Do you think there is a connection between wait & hope?
Psalm 37: 7, 34 Proverbs 20: 22 Isaiah 26: 7 - 9
Psalm 130: 5 - 7 Isaiah 8: 16 - 17 Isaiah 30: 18

The Principles of Faith Proclaimed -

What truths does David know about God that he is now recalling?
What truths does David understand about himself that he is now expressing to God?
There are deep feelings expressed by David in this prayer to the Lord, aren't there?
Identify what some of these emotions are. How does David bring them to His God?

RESPOND -

Fear is a God-given emotion which can keep us from danger. When/how does it become excessive?
Sometimes I feel fearful because I I am afraid (anxious) when I
It frightens me when I think about I hate to admit it, but scares me.

Now take those fears and bring them to the LORD. He wants to be your light, your salvation, your strength, your hiding place, your rock, your help, and your hope. Turn this Psalm into your own prayer - song - psalm for your own life.

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Lesson 13

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“Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered.”

Psalm 32:1

This was the favorite psalm of St. Augustine. He had it inscribed above his bed so that he could see it as soon as he awoke in the morning. It was Augustine’s opinion that “the beginning of knowledge is to know oneself a sinner.” This Psalm is both a wisdom and a penitential psalm. David may have been written it after his “affair with Bathsheba” (II Samuel 11 & Psalm 51) or it may have been written at some other time when he was troubled by disobedience. Whether to cover up wrong doing and try to ignore/rationalize it or to come to God in honesty and repentance is a choice we all experience regularly, isn’t it? Why is it often hard?

READ - Psalm 32 -

Read this Psalm to yourself quietly. Read it out loud.

Copy it down on a piece of paper and draw some sketches wherever there are word pictures.

REFLECT -

The Circumstances - Describe how David is feeling as he writes this Psalm.

The Psalm - Summarize or title the sections of this Psalm

Psalm 32: 1 - 2

8 - 9

3 - 5

10 - 11

6 - 7

The Content -

1. There are 4 phrases that describe the blessed person in Psalm 32: 1 - 2
What are they and how do they amplify each other?
Do you think the conclusion in verses 10 - 11 is related to the introduction?
2. This Psalm is quoted in Romans 4. Spend some time studying Romans 4: 1 - 5: 11
What is Paul teaching in this section of Romans?
How does this Scripture put the O.T. and the N.T. together for you?
3. How do verses 6 - 7 relate to verses 3 - 5? What makes a good “hiding place”?
4. When God offers to us His counsel and guidance, why are we so often like a horse or mule?
Do you have any experiences that help you understand this concept?

The Principles of Faith Proclaimed -

What truths does David understand about God that he is now expressing to Him?

What truths does David know about himself that he is talking over with the Lord?

What are the feelings that David has about sin, confession, and forgiveness because he knows God?

RESPOND -

1. Spend some time reading Romans 5: 1 - 11. What does it mean to you to be “justified by His blood”? Have you been “reconciled to God through the death of His Son”? Thank Him . . .
2. In what areas of your life, with your temperament, is it easiest for you to rationalize your attitudes/behavior rather than admitting your sin? Isn’t it great that forgiveness for even the guilt of our sin is available to us? Do you ever struggle with guilt long after you have repented?

Responding with Praise

A study of some of the Psalms in Section I

Lesson 14

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**“May your unfailing love rest upon us, LORD,
even as we put our hope in You.”** Psalm 33:22 NIV

“Let Your mercy, O LORD, be upon us, just as we hope in You.”
Psalm 33:22 - NKJV

The Book of Psalms or Praises is the hymnal of ancient Israel. We can learn a great deal about the use of music in our worship through many of these Psalms. Watch for this as you read Psalm 33. It is a psalm of descriptive praise and is anonymous. One title for this Psalm is “The Sovereignty of the LORD in Creation and History”. Don’t you think that is as timely for us today as it has been at any point in history?

READ - Psalm 33 -

Get ready to praise the Lord as you read and re-read this Psalm this week.

Copy it down and live in an attitude of joy as you reflect each morning on Jehovah God.

REFLECT -

The Circumstances - Why do you think this poem/song was included in the Biblical collection?

The Psalm - Summarize or title the sections of this Psalm

Psalm 33: 1 - 7

8 - 12

13 - 19

20 - 22

The Content -

1. Make a list of all the attributes of God that the Psalmist mentions in this song of praise.
2. What do you learn about the sovereignty of God from this psalm?
3. In the final 3 verses of this Psalm there is a declaration of intent or a commitment, and a prayer. What are the 4 parts of this affirmation of faith? What is the request?

The Principles of Faith Proclaimed -

What truths does the author know about the kind of praise that is fitting for the LORD?

What does this poet want to express to the Lord about His creation?

What does this writer want to tell the Lord about His sovereignty?

As he/she creates this worship music, how do intellect and feelings, knowledge and emotions, merge?

RESPOND -

1. What a great Psalm to put into your own words. Do it. At least try . . .
2. Now make it a prayer, verse by verse, expressing the desires of your heart in praise and in petition.

Responding with Praise

A study of some of the Psalms in Section I

Lesson 15

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Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good; Blessed is the man who trusts in Him! Psalm 34:8

Sometimes we find ourselves in very strange and unexpected circumstances. And in these kind of circumstances it is easy to react in strange and unexpected ways. This may have been what happened to David when he pretended madness before Abimelech, the king of Gath. In this Philistine city David could easily have been put to death, but God delivered him. David composed his response to God in Psalm 34 - a Psalm of wisdom and of praise. David does not seem to fall into the temptation of focusing on his own cleverness or ingenuity to solve his dilemmas, but rather on his need to cry out to God, to seek Him, and to trust Him in whatever the crisis there may be. Perhaps this is one time when he did take his safety into his own hands, but immediately he recognized who really had delivered him.

READ - Psalm 34

This is a great psalm to read often and copy down. You may want to separate the parts that are praise and the parts that are wisdom or instruction - perhaps making "2 psalms out of 1".

REFLECT -

The Circumstances - The historical setting of this Psalm can be found in I Samuel 21: 10 - 15. It is thought that Abimelech was his throne name and Achish was his personal name.

The Psalm - Summarize or title the sections of this Psalm

Psalm 34: 1 - 3
4 - 7
8 - 14
15 - 22

The Content -

1. David is full of praise. How does he express it to the Lord? How do praise & instruction fit together?
2. Find the verses that use our 5 senses - eyes, ears, nose, mouth, touch. How do these images help you understand God and yourself?
3. There are many verses in Proverbs that reinforce verse 13. See what you can learn about your tongue.

Proverbs 4: 24	13: 3	21: 23
10: 19 - 21	15: 1 - 4	28: 23
12: 17 - 19	17: 4, 20, 28	
James 3: 1 - 12		

The Principles of Faith Proclaimed -

What truths does David express to God about His character and goodness?

What truths does David understand about the best way for man to live?

RESPOND -

1. Has God protected you from harm, evil, or temptation recently? Give Him the praise that you feel and that brings glory and joy to your Lord. Try using parallelism to re-express each idea.
2. What instruction or wisdom does God want you to consider and use for change in your life?

Responding with Praise

A study of some of the Psalms in Section I

Lesson 16

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**The LORD delights in the way of the man whose steps He has made firm;
though he stumble, he will not fall,
for the LORD upholds him with His hand.** Psalm 37: 23-24

Doesn't it seem like God should intervene more quickly than He often does? And don't you wonder why selfish people often seem to keep on prospering and godly people keep on suffering at times? Well, this wisdom Psalm is all about patience. There is one phrase that is repeated and amplified in many ways and it is "Do not fret." This is a command that we can use at all ages and stages, but it may be increasingly needed as people grow older. Before you study this Psalm, think about this theme, and see if you are ready to respond to the Lord by entering into David's poetic expression of the need to "trust in the Lord". By the way, it is another acrostic Psalm.

READ - Psalm 37

Read it and read it out loud. Choose some of the phrases to underline, copy or memorize.

REFLECT -

The Circumstances - What qualifies David to give advice to those who worship?

The Psalm - Summarize or title the sections of this Psalm

Psalm 37: 1 - 11 -
12 - 22
23 - 33
34 - 40

The Content -

1. How many commands can you find in this Psalm? Make a list of them.
2. Now take some time to notice what is said about "those who do wrong - the wicked".
When do you think some of these things will happen to them?
3. "The righteous" are described in many of the verses in this Psalm. Find those descriptions.
4. There are many themes that are repeated throughout the Psalm. Find some of them and give thought to their meaning and importance.

The Principles of Faith Proclaimed -

1. David is responding to God as he thinks about why the wicked prosper and the righteous struggle.
What are the reasons that those who trust in the Lord should not fret or be envious over this?
2. What promises from the Lord does David claim in this Psalm?

RESPOND -

1. As you think about the wisdom in this Psalm, try creating your own alphabetical Psalm based on what you have learned and are thinking about. Make it your own response to the Lord.
2. Are there places in your heart where you fret, have envy, or feel some anger or impatience?
Jesus is waiting to walk through these places with you and "make your righteousness shine."