

# RESPONDING WITH PRAISE - III

A study of some of The Psalms in Section III

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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. Each lesson is one page in length on regular notebook paper - 8 1/2 x 11.

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.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Lesson 1

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**But it is good for me to draw near to God;  
I have put my trust in the Lord GOD, that I may declare all Your works.**

Psalm 73:28 (NKJV)

How do you explain it? Very often the wicked prosper and the righteous suffer. Everything seems to go well for the ungodly, while those who trust in the Lord God seem to suffer and to experience difficulties and sorrow. Is there any way to make sense of these realities and to understand them in relationship to the goodness and holiness of God? Asaph, the writer of this song, is the chief of sacred music and also a prophet. Through his reflections in the Psalm, he helps us find the one place where answers can be found; the One Person in whom we can put our trust. The One who is the same yesterday, today and forever.

**READ – Psalm 73** - Read this Psalm every day this week. Read it out loud and silently. Write it out on paper. Find a variety of translations to use.

## REFLECT –

The Circumstances - Use your imagination to think of some circumstances which may have caused Asaph to write this Psalm. What could have happened?

The Psalm – Give this song - poem a title and then summarize each section.

- 1 – 3
- 4 – 14
- 15 – 20
- 21 – 24
- 25 – 26
- 27
- 28

The Content –

1. The writer of this Psalm has a great deal to say about “the prosperity of the wicked”. Make a list of all of their advantages that he describes.
2. Why do you think it is so tempting to be jealous of them and to even want to forget obedience to God?
3. Where did he go to find understanding and to find truth and satisfaction?
4. Though the immediate circumstances may be good, what really will happen to those who choose to ignore God and live for themselves in this life?

The Principles of Faith Proclaimed –

1. What can you learn about God from this Psalm?
2. What truths about future judgment did you observe?  
Compare these with II Thessalonians 1: 7 -9, Romans 6:23

**RESPOND** – Why not take some time and draw near to God? Tell Him your complaints and frustrations, your struggles and temptations and your heart's desires. Take time to do it!

**“There is place of quiet rest, near to the heart of God.  
A place where sin can not molest, near to the heart of God.”**

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Lesson 2

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**No one from the east or the west or from the desert can exalt a man.  
But it is God who judges: He brings one down, He exalts another.**

Psalm 75: 6 – 7

When is the last time that you gave thanks to the Lord because you realized that He really will have “the last word”? As we hear of the persecution of believers around the world and as we experience oppression from those who would like to silence Christians even in our own country, the questions asked by the Psalmist become more important to us. It’s good to learn how to bring our pleas and requests to God. David did; Jeremiah did; and so can we. A day is coming when God will silence “the enemy” for the last time and that is a song of praise that we want to continue to sing while we wait for that day.

**READ – Psalm 74 and 75** - Read them daily.

Read Psalm 74 - Try to identify with the feelings of people of Israel.

Read Psalm 75 - Notice the interchange between the people and the response from God.

**REFLECT –**

The Circumstances - Foreign invaders had entered Judah and Jerusalem and had devastated the people. This wasn’t the first time and it certainly would not be the last time. What do you know about the history of the people of Israel, the ones with whom He made the covenants?

The Psalm – Give these 2 songs a title and then summarize each section.

Psalm 74

1 – 8  
9 – 11  
12 – 17  
18 – 21  
22 – 23

Psalm 75

1  
2 – 5  
6 – 9  
10

The Content –

1. In Psalm 74, there are some questions that the poet asks of God and a repeated plea to God to “remember” certain things. What can you learn from these 2 ways of praying?
2. God’s reputation is the foundation which is being shaken by the enemy. Make a list of all of the ways in which the requests center around God and His cause.
3. Psalm 75 could be thought of as a response to the difficult questions of Psalm 74. In this song, there is interaction between the people and the Lord. What do the people say to God and with what information does He respond to them?
4. This would be a good time to think about that day when God will be the Judge and He will gather His people to Himself.  
I Thessalonians 4: 13 – 18  
II Peter 3: 1 – 13  
Revelation 20: 1 – 15, 21: 1 - 8  
Revelation 22

The Principles of Faith Proclaimed –

What have you learned about God’s character from these Psalms?

**RESPOND** – “Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life.” Rev. 22: 17 The invitation is clear and the final destination for those who come to the Savior is clear. Talk to the Lord Jesus about your response to His offer of eternal life to you.

As you think of God as Judge, for whom do you need to be praying earnestly?

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Lesson 3

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## Your ways, O God, are holy. What god is so great as our God?

Psalm 77: 13

Do you ever wake up in the middle of the night and find yourself rehearsing the details of a troubling experience, the possibilities of tomorrow's problems, or the "what if's" of life? Sometimes it's like a broken record which keeps on repeating the same musical strains. Someone has said that "God gives grace for present realities, but not for your imagination." What do you say to God at times like this? Where do you find consolation and comfort?

**READ – Psalm 77** - Read this Psalm every day this week. Read it out loud and silently.

### REFLECT –

The Circumstances – What could have happened to make the poet feel so despondent?

The Psalm – Give this song a title and then summarize each section.

- 1 – 3
- 4 – 6
- 7 – 9
- 10 – 12
- 13 – 15
- 16 – 20

The Content –

1. All day and throughout the night, the psalmist is rehearsing in his mind his failures and his frustrations. The more he thought about himself, the more troubled he became. Have you experienced times like this in your life? What was it like for you?
2. The second half of the Psalm stands in total contrast to the first half. What made the difference?
3. There are several references to historical events. How was God involved in the life of:  
Jacob and Joseph (Genesis)  
Moses and Aaron (Exodus)
4. Can you recall events in the Bible when God was more powerful than the sea, the river, the weather? What does this tell you about the God that lead, and continues to lead His people and desires to walk with you through the circumstances of your life.

The Principles of Faith Proclaimed –

Write out your answers to the 7 questions in this Psalm. What do you believe about God?

### RESPOND –

1. The Psalmist's mood begins to change when he turns his focus from his own feelings to what he knows about God. He deliberately chooses to **remember** the works of the LORD. When has God given you "a song in the night"? Try to recall some specific times when you have done what the Psalmist is teaching us to do in this song.
2. Will you take some time to write a Psalm of your own that expresses to the Lord what you are feeling and thinking at this time?

"Who is so great a God as our God? You are the God who does wonders." Ps. 77: 13-14

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A study of some of The Psalms in Section III

Lesson 4

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**Blessed are those whose strength is in You,  
who have set their hearts on pilgrimage.**

Psalm 84:5

Everyday you and I can count on the presence of the Lord. He promised the disciples and He has promised us that "He will never leave us or forsake us", that "He is with us always", and that by the Holy Spirit He indwells us. The people of Israel knew that God's presence was to be found at the temple in Jerusalem. God's tabernacle, His house, Zion was the place where they longed to go to find the living God. Can you hear them joyfully singing this Psalm together in the temple? Why not join them in their worship of the LORD GOD of HOSTS?

**READ – Psalm 84** - Read this Psalm every day this week. Read it out loud and silently until the words fill up the crevices of your mind and heart.

**REFLECT –**

The Circumstances – The sons of Korah belonged to a musical family in Israel. What do you think could have inspired them to write this song?

The Psalm – Give this song a title and then summarize each section.

1 - 2  
3 - 4  
5 - 7  
8 - 9  
10 - 11  
12

The Content –

1. What is a good definition of the word "blessed"? (vs. 4, 5 and 12) Who is blessed?  
Psalm 1: 1  
Psalm 2: 12b  
Psalm 32: 1 – 2  
Psalm 34: 8 - 10  
Psalm 40: 4  
Matthew 5: 1 – 12
2. In verse 6 there is a reference made to "the Valley of Baca". This is not so much a geographical place but an emotional place – "a valley of weeping". How is it possible to turn such a place into a spring? The Psalmist has experienced this reality and has some very important insights. What do you think they are?
3. "The Living God" - mentioned only 3 other times in the Old Testament. Find them –  
Psalm 42: 1 – 2  
Joshua 3: 9 – 10  
Hosea 1: 10  
What do you notice about each of these verses?
4. The Lord God is "a sun and a shield" and gives "grace and glory". How would you explain these concepts to a new believer or to a child? Put these ideas into simple terms. Can you illustrate any of these ideas from your own experience?

The Principles of Faith Proclaimed – What happens to us when we stand in "the presence of God"?

**RESPOND** – Try to personalize this Psalm by writing one of your own. Take the idea from each of the six sections and re-write it from your viewpoint and experience. Listen to the living God. . .

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Lesson 5

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**Teach me Your way, LORD, and I will walk in Your truth.  
Give me an undivided heart that I may fear your name.**

Psalm 86:11

What would happen in your life if you prayed Psalm 86:11 every day? If you sang the words of this song throughout the day?

“Teach me Your way, O Lord, teach me Your way!  
Your guiding grace afford --- teach me Your way!  
Help me to walk aright, more by faith, less by sight;  
Lead me with heavenly light, teach me Your way!”

It is so comforting to know that when we are weak, our God is compassionate and gracious; when we fail, He is slow to anger; and when we go “our own way”, He is abounding in love and faithfulness.

**READ – Psalm 86** - Read this Psalm every day this week. Read it out loud and silently.

**REFLECT –**

The Circumstances – We don’t know the exact time when David wrote this Psalm, but his mood and attitude towards God is obvious. Describe both of them.

The Psalm – Give this song a title and then summarize each section.

- 1 - 5
- 6 - 7
- 8 – 10
- 11 – 13
- 14 – 15
- 16 – 17

The Content –

1. How does David describe himself throughout this Psalm? Do you identify with him at times?
2. David focuses on many of the attributes of the LORD. The name “Yahweh” was so holy to devout Jews that they refused to speak it. Instead they would use the word “Adonai”, which means “Master” or “Lord”. Eleven times in this Psalm, God’s name is used – 4 times it is His personal name (all capitals) and the other 7 times it is Master (small case letters). When you focus on who God is, what does it do for you?
3. David makes several requests of the Lord. Which ones are high priorities for you? Why?

The Principles of Faith Proclaimed –

It is hard to imagine that David could envision other nations worshiping the true God, but He does - Psalm 86: 8 – 10

Psalm 117

Isaiah 66:18

Revelation 5: 9

Matthew 28: 18 – 20

Acts 10: 34 -36

**RESPOND –**

It’s time to just sit before the LORD and read this Psalm slowly, letting Him speak to you, to comfort you, to challenge you, to do whatever He wants in your heart and mind.

Perhaps there will be one verse or phrase that He wants you to focus on and then to start a journey of worship and understanding.

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Lesson 6

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**“I will sing of the mercies of the LORD forever;  
With my mouth will I make known Your faithfulness to all generations.”**

Psalm 89: 1 – NKJV

Have you ever felt like God does not always keep His promises? You know, He promises to give us the desires of our heart, but you are experiencing real disappointment. Or He said that He would provide for your needs, but you have some that are not being fully met. God made some huge promises to David and yet the Israelites sometimes experienced defeat and humiliating loss. David's seed was to last forever and there was to be an enduring throne. But, at this time in history that did not seem like a possibility, and in the future it would seem even more impossible. And yet, there is a faithful God who never breaks a promise; a loving and merciful God who knows the beginning and the end. Can He really be trusted to keep His Word?

**READ – Psalm 89** - Read this Psalm every day this week. Read it out loud and silently.

## REFLECT –

The Circumstances – Read II Samuel 7 - God's covenant with David and David's response.

The Psalmist celebrates this covenant between a faithful & loving God and His servant, David, in the first half of the song. In the last half, he laments the unfaithfulness of David's descendants and the results which the nation is experiencing.

The Psalm – Give this song a title and then summarize each section.

- 1 - 4
- 5 – 18
- 19 – 37
- 38 - 45
- 46 – 51
- 52

The Content –

1. Study II Samuel 7 and the promises which God made to David. Do you find Jesus in this covenant anywhere?
2. The Psalmist accuses God of many things in verses 38 – 51. Are his accusations true? How do you explain them in light of the covenant that He made with David?
3. God's character as revealed in both the Old and New Testaments is one of faithfulness, love, mercy and goodness. How does this Psalm illustrate these in His dealings with Israel?
4. Why does God allow His people to fail, to turn to other gods, to lose battles with the enemy? Can you find any clues in this Psalm?

The Principles of Faith Proclaimed – God has made a new covenant – Hebrews 8 – 10. Learn all you can about it from the Book of Hebrews. It's a covenant for you and for me.

## RESPOND –

1. Write a song/poem/psalm of praise to God based on Psalm 89: 1 – 37.
2. Talk to the Lord about the new covenant made possible by the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. What does He want you to understand today about His promises to you?

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