

RESPONDING WITH PRAISE - IV

A study of some of the Psalms in Section IV

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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.

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Lesson 1

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“Teach us to number our days aright, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.”

Psalm 90: 12

Is there anything more fragile than life itself? Yet we often live as if we had unlimited time. We count on our “tomorrows” and we assume that there will be energy and time to do what we hope to do, go where we want to go, and see what we want to see. Moses, the author of Psalm 90, helps us catch a glimpse not only of the brevity of life and the eternity of God, but an approach to life that honors God.

READ – Psalm 90 - Read this Psalm every day this week. Read it out loud and silently.
Try copying it or typing it. What verses would you like to memorize?

REFLECT –

The Circumstances – When do you think Moses might have written this prayer?
What could have caused him to write this song for the people?
(Moses wrote two other songs – Exodus 15 & Deuteronomy 32)

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

- 1 – 2
- 3 – 6
- 7 – 12
- 13 - 17

The Content -

1. How does Moses picture the brevity of life for us? What images did he use?
2. God's anger – we rarely think about it, but Moses had experienced it. Make some observations:

Exodus 4: 14, 32: 11	Nehemiah 9: 17
Numbers 11: 10, 12: 9, 25: 3, 4; 32: 14	Psalms 103: 8
Deuteronomy 4: 24, 6: 15, 9: 7, 31: 17	145: 8
Joshua 7: 1, 23: 16	Jonah 4: 2
Judges 2:12, 8: 3	Nahum 1: 3
3. The New Testament talks about the wrath of God. Is it the same as God's anger?

John 3: 36
Romans 1: 18
Ephesians 5: 6
Colossians 3: 6

4. Moses makes several requests of the Lord in this Psalm. What are they?

The Principles of Faith Proclaimed – What does Moses proclaim about God in this prayer?

RESPOND – It's so important to let what is in your head seep down into your heart and life.
How many days have you lived so far? (Multiply 365 x your age). How many more days do you think you might have? How will you spend them in light of eternity?

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Lesson 2

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**“It is good to give thanks to the LORD
and to sing praises to Your name, O Most High;
to declare Your lovingkindness in the morning
and Your faithfulness every night.”** Psalm 92: 1 – 2

It's a very good idea! Try it every day this week . . . tell someone about God's lovingkindness to you in the morning and someone else about His faithfulness to you each evening. It's a habit that transcends your circumstances, your comfort, your anxieties, and even your boredom or loneliness. Focusing on God's love and faithfulness puts all of life in perspective:

It's not about me; it's all about HIM.

READ – Psalm 92 - Read this Psalm every day this week. Read it in different translations. Copy it down. Memorize some of it . . .

REFLECT –

The Circumstances – It's a song for the Sabbath Day. Look for some clues about the poet's motives or the setting.

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

- 1 – 4
- 5 – 9
- 10 – 11
- 12 - 15

The Content -

5. Do you like the word “lovingkindness”? We don't use it as one word any more, but it conveys something about God, doesn't it? Read some more about it.

Psalm 17: 7	51: 1	119: 88, 149, 159
26:3	63: 3	138: 2
36: 7, 10	69: 16	143: 8
40:10	103: 4	
42: 8, 9	107: 43	

Jeremiah 9: 24 and 32: 17 - 18

6. God's faithfulness – What does it mean to be faithful? Why is this a very important part of the character and nature of God? Lamentations 3: 22 – 24
7. Verses 12 – 15 picture “old age” quite differently than what our culture teaches us. Which philosophy do you believe? Why? Can you think of examples from real life to illustrate what you believe?

Psalm 1	Proverbs 16: 31
Psalm 37: 23 – 26	Proverbs 31; 25 - 26
Psalm 71: 17 – 18	

The Principles of Faith Proclaimed –

1. According to this song/poem, what is the destiny of the wicked? The righteous?
2. What are the descriptive words used for God?

RESPOND – God's lovingkindness and faithfulness - from your head to your heart and life – Give Him thanks and praise for your yesterdays.

He's there for you today – express your gratefulness.

Tomorrow – your unknown and uncertain future – will you trust Him?

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Lesson 3

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“For the LORD is the great God, and the great King above all gods.”

Psalm 95: 3

What words come to your mind when you think of a great king? Perhaps powerful and strong? The “Royal Psalms” celebrate God as King, a concept which was extremely meaningful to both the Israelites and the Canaanites. In contrast to their gods, who were easily deposed and in conflict with each other, the living God reigns supreme. He is King over creation – the Creator; He is King over the Israelites – their Savior; He is the coming King – a kingdom without end! It’s an amazing fact that if you have received Jesus as Savior, then you are a child of The King.

READ – Psalms 93 – 99 Read these Psalms. Then read all of them again. And again.

REFLECT –

The Circumstances – Who do you think wrote these Psalms?

How would they help the people of God worship and adore God, their King?

The Psalm – Give each poem/song a title and then summarize it.

Psalm 93 –

Psalm 94 –

Psalm 95 –

Psalm 96 –

Psalm 97 –

Psalm 98 –

Psalm 99 -

The Content – Choose one (or two) of the Psalms from this group for yourself.

1. Which aspects of God as King is emphasized in this Psalm – Creator, Savior, coming King? Why is each of these important?
2. How is the power and might of the King pictured in your Psalm?
3. The writer(s) of these songs often sees this great King as personally interested in His people. Is there any indication of this in the Psalm that you chose?
4. This King is coming again. He is coming to judge the earth. They sang joyfully and with eager anticipation about this day. Why?

The Principles of Faith Proclaimed –

What do these Royal Psalms teach YOU about God?

RESPOND –

It’s a great time to write a letter to the King of Kings and express to Him your feelings and desires in response to what He has shown you through these Psalms. They are His personal Word to you from His throne, you know. He’s waiting to hear from you.

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Lesson 4

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**“Hear my prayer, O LORD, and let my cry come to You.
Do not hide Your face from me in the day of my trouble.”**

Psalm 102: 1 – 2

What do you say to God when you feel overwhelmed and alone? Is it alright to cry out to Him in honesty and to express your desperation? This Psalmist didn't pretend, but rather he pleaded with God to hear his cry. But he didn't stop there like we are prone to do. He moved right on to remind himself and God of eternal matters as he prayed. He knew what keeps hope alive when life gets really tough, didn't he?

READ – Psalm 102 - Read this Psalm every day this week. Read it out loud and silently.
What verses do you want to memorize?

REFLECT –

The Circumstances – At times we are overwhelmed by our external circumstances while in other situations the struggle is internal – depression, guilt and oppression from Satan. What do you think might be causing this Psalmist to cry out to God?

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

- 1 – 2
- 3 – 7
- 7 – 11
- 12 – 17
- 18 – 22
- 23 - 28

The Content –

1. Why do you think psalms of lament and penitence are included in this “hymnbook”?
2. Take note of the ways in which the psalmist describes his situation and feelings. What illustrations does he use?
3. In what ways does he contrast the Lord to himself and all creation?
4. There are several references to the generations to come in this poem. How do you think these truths help to give the writer hope or encouragement?

The Principles of Faith Proclaimed –

1. What truths about God are proclaimed in this Psalm?
2. What did the Psalmist count on to be true for himself and future generations?

RESPOND –

Difficult circumstances and internal struggles are often what drive us to God because we can no longer handle life on our own and our need for Him is so great. As you contemplate this Psalm, would you be willing to pray for everyone (by name) that you know who is in desperate need. Then talk to God about yourself and the places in your life where you want him to “hear your prayer”. It's O.K. to feel deeply about the needs of others and any crisis that you may be experiencing.

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Lesson 5

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“The mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear Him, and His righteousness to children’s children to such as keep His covenant, and to those who remember His commandments to do them.

Psalm 103: 17

Do you ever need some help expressing your praise to God – some new words and ideas? Then Psalm 103 is one for you to know in your mind and heart. Can you imagine this Psalm set to music and sung by an immense choir, including you? It might be a small glimpse of what will go on when we all get to heaven – when people from every tribe and nation join together in adoration of their God and King. How about practicing more often while we wait for that day?

READ – Psalm 103 - Read this Psalm every day this week. Pick out some verses to memorize.

REFLECT –

The Circumstances – David wrote this Psalm of wisdom and praise for the people and himself. Any ideas about when and why he might have written it?

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

- 1 – 5
- 6 - 10
- 11 - 14
- 15 – 19
- 20 - 22

The Content –

1. “Bless the Lord, O my soul” – What do you think this means? Re-write it with other words or expressions.
2. God’s mercy is a prominent theme in this Psalm. Find each of the verses that refer to it and then write your own definition of it with an explanation of what it means.
3. The Psalmist calls on others to “bless the Lord” beside himself – verse 20 – 22. Psalm 148 – a praise Psalm – does the same thing. Does this broad concept of praise enrich and expand your idea of God?

The Principles of Faith Proclaimed –

How is God pictured in this Psalm? Find His attributes and consider each one. Are they an integral part of the God that you know?

RESPOND –

“O my soul, bless GOD. From head to toe, I’ll bless His holy name!
O my soul, bless GOD. Don’t forget a single blessing!” Psalm 103:1 – The Message

How are you going to do just that – today, tomorrow and from now on?

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Lesson 6

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**“I will sing to the LORD as long as I live . . .
May my meditation be sweet to Him. I will be glad in the LORD.”**

Psalm 104: 33 - 34

There's a great deal in the news these days about "Intelligent Design" – the pros and cons of this view are discussed by scientists and educators with intensity. There was no question in the minds of the Biblical poets. All of nature for them was a part of God's "creation" – not to be worshiped, but to be loved and enjoyed. We can rejoice in the marvels of nature because there is a creative and kind God whose handiwork is a gift to us. He delights in receiving your admiration and amazement.

READ – Psalm 104 - Read this Psalm every day this week. Perhaps you could read it in the forest, by the ocean, and out in your garden.

REFLECT –

The Circumstances – Wouldn't this song be a great one to share together in worship with others? What might have inspired the poet to write it?

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

1 – 2	19 - 23
3 – 4	24 - 26
5 - 9	27 - 30
10 – 13	31 - 32
14 – 18	33 - 35

The Content -

8. Take some time to read Genesis 1 and 2 – return to the creation story and be amazed.
9. Verse 26 of Psalm 104 refers to Leviathan. There is a full description of this "sea monster", a well known, formidable beast in Job 41. (God is pointing out to Job that only He can control and subdue such an enemy.) Why did the Psalmist refer to it?
10. Out of the awareness of God's creative and sustaining power, there are two requests that the Psalmist asks of God – verse 31 and 34-35. What is the focus of these prayers? How would they help the people of Israel as they gather together to worship in song?
11. Is there an aspect of creation that you might have included in this Psalm if you had been the poet?

The Principles of Faith Proclaimed –

God – the Creator and Sustainer – Why is this such an important foundation of our faith?

RESPOND –

You can do it – write down your expression – poem, picture, prose – of praise.
When you have finished writing. talk to God about His creative power and your own life.