



Psalms – Study Guide



Bible Reading (Other chapters may be read for extra credit/benefit)	Textbook Reading (Other material may be read for extra credit/benefit)
Psalms ☐ Ps. 1 ☐ Ps. 2 ☐ Ps. 12 ☐ Ps. 23 ☐ Ps. 24 ☐ Ps. 25 ☐ Ps. 37 ☐ Ps. 46 ☐ Ps. 51 ☐ Ps. 63 ☐ Ps. 73 ☐ Ps. 95 ☐ Ps. 96 ☐ Ps. 100 ☐ Ps. 117 ☐ Ps. 118 ☐ Ps. 121 ☐ Ps. 131 ☐ Ps. 143 ☐ Ps. 150	Ch. 21 ☐ The Unique Place of the Psalms in Scripture ☐ Classification of the Psalms

Study Guide for Psalms

Psalm 1

- What are the characteristics of the blessed man in this Psalm? What does he NOT do? What does he do? How is he described? What is the significance of this?
- What are the characteristics of the wicked in this Psalm? How are they described? How is this different than the blessed man? What should we learn from this?
- How are these two types of people contrasted in the last two verses? What does this demonstrate about their relationship with God? What does this demonstrate about their destinies? How should we respond?
- What does this Psalm in general teach us about how we should interact with God? What does this teach us about how we should live? How does this set the tone for the rest of the Psalms? What difference does this make?

Psalm 2

- What do the nations do, according to this Psalm? How does God respond? What does this demonstrate about the nations? What does this demonstrate about God? What difference does this make?
- What is the point of God speaking about the king He has installed in Zion and the Son He has given an inheritance? What does this demonstrate about God's rule? What does this demonstrate about the nations?

(Continued on the next page)

- What advice does this Psalm give to kings and nations, based on what God has said? How does this apply? How does this set the tone for the rest of the Psalms?

Psalm 12

- What kind of situation do you think caused the author to write this Psalm prayer? How does he describe what was happening in his time? Have you ever experiences similar situations?
- What does this Psalm say to give hope in such difficult times? How is this encouraging and hopeful? What difference does this make?
- What does the author expect that God will do? Do you think this is a reasonable expectation, based on God's character? How can you apply this kind of idea in your own life?

Psalm 23

- What does the author express about his relationship to God? How does God treat him? What does this demonstrate about God's character and plans?
- How does the author describe his response to God's care for him? What kind of attitude does he have? What kind of actions does he do? What can we learn from this?
- How does this Psalm give hope and comfort? How does this apply to us today?

Psalm 24

- What does this Psalm say about God's relationship to His creation?
- What does this Psalm say about God's relationship to His people? What are the characteristics of those who can be with God? How should we respond?
- What do you think is the point of the command to the gates? What kind of emotions, hopes, and expectations does this express? What does this say about God and His actions? What difference does this make?

Psalm 25

- List and describe each of the things the author asks God for in this Psalm. Why do you think he asks for each of these things? What reason(s) does he give why God should grant each request? How is this related to God's revealed character?
- What kind of promises to God's people are inherent in this Psalm? What do these reveal about God's character and plans? What difference does this make?
- How would your life be different if you prayed each of these prayers and God gave what you prayed for?
- How can you use this Psalm as a model to help you pray for things in conformity with what God has revealed about Himself and what He wants from His people?

Psalm 37

- What kind of attitude(s) does this Psalm express? What does this demonstrate about God's character and plan? How should we respond?
- What reasons does this Psalm give to trust God and live in a way that is pleasing to Him? How does that motivate and encourage us?
- In what ways does this Psalm tell us to express our trust and delight in God? How should we respond?
- What does this Psalm say about enemies and wicked people? What does that tell us about God? What difference does that make?

(Continued on the next page)

- How does this Psalm teach us to deal with difficulties? What motivation(s) and reason(s) does it give for this? How should we respond?
- How does this Psalm contrast the righteous and the wicked? What specific characteristics does it use to describe each? What can we learn from this? How does it apply?
- How does this Psalm counsel people to live? What kind(s) of attitudes and actions does it command? What does this teach us about God and how He relates to His people? How does this apply to us today?

Psalm 46

- What does the author declare about God? What conclusion does he draw from this truth? How did that apply in his situation? How does it apply today?
- What does the author say about the city of God? What conclusion does he draw from this truth? How did that apply in his situation? How does it apply today?
- What does the author declare about the works of God? What conclusion does he draw from this truth? How did that apply in his situation? How does it apply today?
- What ideas are repeated in this Psalm? Why? What does this say about God and how He relates to His people? What difference does that make?

Psalm 51

- What does the author of this Psalm ask from God? What reason(s) does He give for God to answer these prayers? What can we learn from this? How does it apply?
- From the superscription and from the content of this Psalm, what was the reason the author prayed this prayer? What do you think were the attitudes and emotions that motivated these expressions? How do these expressions apply to your own life?
- What did the author say about his own sin and its relation to God? How is this similar or different from the way our society often thinks about sin? Why is this important?
- What did the author ask God to do? Why was this necessary? What would the answer to these requests be like? How can we ask for and experience these kinds of things in our lives today?
- What did the author promise would happen when God answered these prayers? How is that result connected to the expected answers to the prayers? What can we learn from this?
- From this entire Psalm, what can we learn about what God desires from His people? How can we each conform to God's desires in this area (as well as in others)? How should you respond?

Psalm 63

- What kind(s) of emotions does this Psalm express? What kind(s) of experiences caused these expressions? How are these expressions appropriate for these kinds of experiences? How do they apply today?
- What reasons does this Psalm give for the desire for God and hope in God? What does this demonstrate about God's character and plan? What difference does this make?

(Continued on the next page)

- What kind of personal response does the author describe himself making, based on his desire and hope? What can we learn from this? How does it apply?
- What expectation does this Psalm express about the author's situation? How is this connected to God? What does this tell us? Why is this significant?

Psalm 73

- What general statement is given at the beginning of this Psalm? How does it relate to the rest of this Psalm? What is the significance of this?
- What does the author say about his own situation and attitude? What reason does he give? Does this describe a good situation and attitude? Why or why not?
- How does the author describe the wicked? Does this description ring true with what you have observed? Can you understand how the author was tempted to the attitude he had expressed? Is there anything inaccurate about this way of looking at things? Why or why not?
- What does the author say about his own evaluation and attitude in the middle of the Psalm? What experience does the author say gave him clarity of thought and changed his attitude and conclusions about the wicked? What changed in his understanding and attitude? Why? What difference does this make?
- What description and evaluation does the author give of the wicked after his change of perspective? Why? Is this more or less accurate than what he had said earlier? Why do you think so?
- What does the author say about his prior attitude? What can we learn from this? How can we guard our hearts against this kind of mental blindness caused by envy?
- What does the author say about God and his own relationship with God? How was this a cure to the envy and mental blindness that he had expressed earlier? What can we learn from this? How can we apply it?
- How does this Psalm as a whole help us to see reality more clearly based on God's eternal perspective? What difference does this make in our attitude and actions? How should we respond?

Psalm 95

- What does this Psalm encourage people to do? What reason(s) does it give? How are these two things connected? What insight does this give us? How does this apply?
- What does this Psalm demonstrate about the character of God and His relationship to creation and to His people? How should we respond?
- What warning does this Psalm give people not to do? What historical event from the Torah does this describe? What reasons can we learn from this historical example to heed this warning? What should we do instead? How does that look in our everyday lives?

Psalm 96

- What does this Psalm command people to do? What reason(s) does it give? How are these two things connected? What insight does this give us? How does it apply?

(Continued on the next page)

- What does this Psalm say about God and how He relates to His people and to His creation? Why is this significant? How does this inform our proper response to Him?
- What example does this Psalm give for how God's people and God's creation should declare and demonstrate God's greatness? How do these things tell about God? What specific things should they tell about God? How can we personally take part in this proclamation and demonstration more faithfully and consistently?

Psalm 100

- What does this Psalm command people to do? What reason(s) does it give? How are these two things connected? What can we learn from this? How can we put it into practice?
- What does this Psalm intend to convey by its use of the symbolic language of sheep and of entering God's courts? How were these things understood back in that culture? What can we learn from this about How God relates to us? What difference does this make?

Psalm 117

- What does this Psalm command people to do? What reason(s) does it give? How are these two things connected? What difference does this make?
- How does this short Psalm summarize and apply great ideas and themes taught throughout the Old Testament? What ideas does this Psalm remind you of? Where did you learn those ideas in the rest of the Old Testament? What difference does this make?

Psalm 118

- What does this Psalm command people to do? What reason does it give? How does this introduce the rest of this Psalm?
- What personal experience does the author describe? What did he do? How did God respond? How did the author respond to this? What does this declare about God and the way He treats His people? Why is this important?
- What conclusion does the author make from this experience? How can this lesson help us in similar situations? What difference does this make?
- How does the author elaborate and give specifics about his experience? How does this help us to understand more clearly?
- What other conclusion does the author make and express? What can we learn from this lesson? How does it apply?
- What point was the author making about the gates? What was he asking for? Why?
- What point was the author making about the stone and the builders? Why is this significant? What does this demonstrate about God and His plans? Do you recall how this idea was applied in the New Testament? What difference does this make?
- What does the author pray for? How is this connected with the character of God and His relationship with His people? What can we learn from this?
- How does this Psalm end? What is the significance of this?

(Continued on the next page)

Psalm 121

- What kind of situation do you think caused the author to write this Psalm? What makes you think that?
- How does the author react to this situation? Why? Do you think this is the only possible reaction he could have made? What other possibilities were there? Do you think this was a good reaction? Why or why not?
- What kind of hope and confidence does the author express in this Psalm? What is the basis and reason for this confidence? How can this give us hope and encouragement in every situation? How can this Psalm help us in our own prayers and attitudes in every situation?

Psalm 131

- What kind of attitudes does the author express in this Psalm? Why?
- What does the author NOT do? What reason does he give? What does he do instead? What is the underlying point to all of these things?
- What does the author command people to do? How is this connected to what he had just said earlier in this Psalm? What can we learn from all this? How does this apply to our situations?

Psalm 143

- What does the author ask for? How did he connect this with the character and ways of God? What can we learn from this?
- What does the author describe about his own situation? How is this connected with his prayer?
- What does the author describe about his own experience? How is this connected with his prayer?
- What specifically does the author ask God to do? What reason(s) does he give? What do you think the answers to these prayers would look like in the author's situation? How can you imitate these kinds of prayers in your own situation? What would the answers look like? What difference would this make?
- What does this entire Psalm demonstrate about God's character and how He relates to His people? How should we respond?

Psalm 150

- What does this Psalm command to be done?
- Why should this be done?
- How should this be done?
- Who should do it?
- What can we learn from this Psalm as a whole? How is this expression a fitting summary and conclusion for the entire book of Psalms? What are the implications of this? How should we respond?

(Continued on the next page)

Study Guide for Textbook chapter 21

Background to the Psalms

The Unique Place of the Psalms in Scripture

- What do the Psalms teach us about the worship of ancient Israel? What difference does this make?
- What point does the textbook make about “all aspects of Hebrew life”? What is the significance of this for us today? What does this tell us about how we can use the Psalms?

Classification of the Psalms

- Describe each of the various Psalm types covered in this section and their general characteristics in your own words. Review the sidebar to compare your description with the textbook’s summary.
- What is the function of the Psalm type labeled “hymns”? What examples does the textbook give and what does this teach us about this type of Psalms? What can we learn from this? How does it apply?
- What is the function of the Psalm type labeled “Penitential Psalms”? What examples does the textbook give and what does this teach us about this type of Psalm? What does this teach us about how we should interact with God? How can we put these ideas into practice?
- How does the textbook describe “Wisdom Psalms”? What does this tell us about how they functioned and how we should apply them today? What examples are given and what does this teach us? What difference does this make?
- According to the textbook what is a “Royal Psalm”? What are its characteristics? How did it function in the life of ancient Israel? What do they say about the King? What do they say about God? What examples does the textbook give, and what do they teach us? How does this apply today?
- According to the textbook, what is a “Messianic Psalm”? What are its characteristics? Define the term “Messiah.” How are Messianic Psalms related to Royal Psalms? What examples does the textbook give? How are these applied in the New Testament? What can we learn from this?
- What are the basic characteristics of “Imprecatory Psalms”? What examples does the textbook give? What can these teach us about how to interact with God? How do they apply today?
- What are the characteristics and function of “Lament Psalms”? What three elements are found in Lament Psalms? How are these three things logically related? What examples of Lament Psalms are given? What does each teach us? How can we put this into practice?
- When you consider all of these Psalm types and expressions together, what does this tell us about the variety of ways we can speak and relate to God? How is this influenced by the various situations we encounter? How is this influenced by the various promises God has given and the revelation of His character and plans? What can we learn from all these things that will help us to grow in prayer, praise, and more honestly and genuinely relating to God in our own lives? How can we put these insights into practice?

Review the Study Questions and Summary at the end of the chapter