

Psalms Part 1
Leader Guide
(NASB AND ESV)

THE LORD HEARS
WHEN I CALL

Psalms Part 1 Leader Guide (NASB and ESV)

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Chattanooga, Tennessee 37422

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USING LEADER GUIDES

Leader Guides are intended for you, the leader, to guide your Precept Upon Precept® and In & Out® discussions. They are designed to help you reason through the content of the lessons and to ensure you have understood what your group should have learned from their study. The guides offer effective plans for leading discussions.

The Holy Spirit is your guide as you prepare. He is the one who knows what your group needs to apply to their lives. Pray for them as they study and for yourself as you prepare to lead the discussion.

These guides can be used for either the NASB or the ESV edition of the courses. ESV words follow the NASB after a slash / or are set off with parentheses.

Leader Guides include the following:

- Lesson emphasis
- A logical order for the discussion
- Discussion questions
- Suggested visual aid(s)

Practical tips for using the Leader Guide:

- **Don't simply "do" the lesson.**
Stay with the lesson until you have a good understanding of it. This will give you a better grasp of how the Leader Guide takes you through the lesson.
- **You don't have to ask every question in the guide.**
Often one question will be covered while discussing another question so there is no reason to ask it. Your goal is not to ask every question, but to ask enough questions to make sure your group understood the lesson and to help them apply the truths to their lives.

Using the Leader Guide with In & Out

When your entire group uses In & Out

Compare an In & Out lesson with the Leader Guide. Use what relates to the In & Out lesson as a guide for the discussion. Don't teach what's not in In & Out lessons. Remember your goal in the discussion is for your group to discuss what they've learned, not for you to lecture on what you learned.

For groups studying both Precept Upon Precept and In & Out

Use the Leader Guides as designed for PUP, knowing that the In & Out assignments will be covered in the discussion. Make a note in the Leader Guide of what is not in the In & Out.

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PSALMS PART 1 LEADER GUIDE Lesson 1

Lesson emphasis:

- Psalms 1–5

To begin this discussion, tell your group to look at their At a Glance chart and the list about the Lord as visual aids. Also, to discuss the first psalm, they need to look at the chart in the lesson on Day One.

PSALM 1

Verses 1-3

Who are these verses about and what do they say about him?

The blessed man is described as not walking, standing, or sitting with the wicked, sinners, and scoffers. Some in your group might mention a progression—walk, stand, and then sit with them.

The blessed delights in the Lord’s law and meditates in it day and night.

What is the definition of meditates?

“Ponder, give serious thought and consideration to selected information”¹

So how important is the Lord’s law to the blessed person? And ask your group how important God’s Word is to them. Do they meditate on it regularly?

According to verse 3, what is the blessed person compared to, and what is the result?

A tree planted by a stream
The result is fruit in season and leaves not withering

The blessed prosper in what they do because of being in God’s Word.

Verses 4-6

Who is this stanza mostly about? What the contrast with verses 1-3?

The contrast is between the wicked and the righteous, the blessed.
The wicked won’t stand in judgment; their way will perish.
The Lord knows the way of the righteous.

¹James Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Hebrew (Old Testament)* (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997).

You might ask your group how they can apply the truths of this psalm to their lives.

Now ask about a theme for Psalm 1. Tell them to look at their At a Glance chart.

The blessed meditate and prosper; the wicked will perish
or
The righteous are blessed; the wicked will perish

PSALM 2

Verses 1-3

Who and what are these verses about?

The nations and kings of the earth want to break away from the Lord and His Anointed. They take their stand / set themselves against them as those on earth counsel with each other. They are the wicked and scoffers as described in the first psalm.

How do verses 4-6 contrast with 1-3?

The Lord sits in heaven and laughs at the rulers on earth.
Then He will speak to them in His anger / wrath, terrify them in His fury.

His King is installed / set on His holy mountain / hill, Zion.

How do verses 7-9 continue?

The Lord's decree is about His Son—His Anointed, His King.
The Lord gave the earth as His Son's inheritance, and He will break and shatter them (ESV—dash them in pieces).

It's no use for people on earth to think they can get away from God.

Now ask your group what they learned from the cross-references of Day Two in the lesson.

Acts 4:24-28 and 13:32-35

In Acts 4, the believers quoted verses 1 and 2 of this psalm referring to those who had put Jesus to death. "Christ" is used here for "Anointed." Jesus is the Son and King of Psalm 2.

Psalm 2:7 is quoted in Acts 13, referring to the resurrection of Christ.

David wrote this psalm according to these two passages in Acts.

Revelation 19:11-16

This is the final fulfillment of part of Psalm 2. When Jesus comes again to earth, He'll strike down the nations that came to war against Him. And then He as the King of kings will rule them with a rod of iron.

Micah 4:1-3 and Zechariah 14:16

In the last days / latter days everyone left / who survives of the nations after God's judgment of them will come to the Lord's mountain, Mount Zion in Jerusalem, to be taught about His ways.

Verses 10-12

Lead your discussion back to Psalm 2 and ask how this psalm ends.

Because of what David wrote in verses 1-9, there is a warning for the earth's rulers. Worship / serve, do homage to the Son (ESV—kiss the Son) so that He not be angry and they perish.

Those who take refuge in Him are blessed.

Ask your group how the truths of this psalm relate to world events happening now. Who is in charge? What does that mean to them?

Tell them to look at their At a Glance chart and ask what they noted as a possible theme for this psalm.

Nations against God and His Anointed; worship / serve the Son or perish

PSALM 3

Superscription

What's the setting for this psalm?

David fled from his son Absalom

Ask your group what they learned about this situation from 2 Samuel 15:13-17.

Absalom had turned Israel from David's rule to his own so King David had to leave Jerusalem quickly or be killed by his son's men.

Verses 1-2

How do these two verses relate to David's situation?

He talked to the Lord about it.

Many adversaries / foes against him saying God wouldn't deliver / save him

Verses 3-6

How does David's prayer continue?

Although David had adversaries, foes on earth who wanted to kill him, He knew God as his shield. He reminded himself of that fact and that God answers.

So David slept because God was his sustainer. He didn't need to be afraid of even ten thousand / many thousands around him.

Now ask your group how knowing this psalm can help them with fear of enemies.

Verses 7-8

What did David ask the Lord as he closed this psalm?

Arise, save me
God smote / struck and shattered / broke his enemies, the wicked
Salvation is the Lord's

And he asked for Him to bless His people—maybe referring to restoration of David as king over God's people Israel

Ask your group if they talk to the Lord like David did? Why or why not? What can they learn from this psalm about crying out to Him?

What is a possible theme for this psalm?

David's adversaries increased (ESV—David had many foes); he knew God his shield; not afraid of ten thousand / many thousands

PSALM 4

According to the superscription, who wrote this psalm and what was it for?

David, the musician, said this was for the choir director / choirmaster on stringed instruments

Tell your group that as they study the Psalms to look for lyrics they recognize in the songs they sing at church.

How does this psalm begin in verse 1?

David again talked to the Lord and asked Him to answer when he called. He was a righteous man who God relieved in distress. He asked for the Lord to be gracious to him and hear his prayer again.

You might ask your group if they think God gets tired of believers coming to Him and asking for help. What does this psalm seem to indicate about that?

Verses 2-3

Who does this psalm begin addressing in these verses? And what does it say about them?

Men
David spoke to or about men who didn't honor him.

Their focus was off—loving the worthless / vain words and aiming at deception / seeking after lies.

Then he seemed to defend himself. He was a godly man who the Lord had set apart and who the Lord listened to.

Verses 4-5

What did David do in these verses?

Still addressing the men of verse 2, he gave them instructions.

Tremble / be angry

Don't sin

Meditate / ponder

Be still

Offer sacrifices

Trust

Verses 6-8

How does this psalm end? What are these verses about?

Many said that there was no one to show good.

But David called on the Lord to do that.

God had put gladness / more joy in David's heart

Peace to sleep

Live in safety

What is a possible theme for this psalm?

Lord set apart godly man for Himself; He hears—peace, safety

According to Psalms 3 and 4, who did David encourage people about? How do gladness, peace, and safety come?

PSALM 5

How does this superscription relate to the one for Psalm 4?

They are the same except this one is for flute accompaniment.

How does the content of this psalm relate to Psalms 3 and 4? What are they?

Songs, but also David's prayers to the Lord

Remind your group to continue using their list about the Lord as a visual aid while they discuss this psalm. And tell them to use it as a list for praising the Lord when they pray.

Verses 1-3

How does this prayer begin?

Again, it was David asking the Lord, His King and God, to hear his prayer, his cry for help. He prayed in the morning and waited for the answer.

Verses 4-7

Why did David cry to the Lord? What did he know?

He knew God hates wickedness, evil, iniquity, falsehood / speaking lies, bloodshed / the bloodthirsty, and deceit.

And he knew the contrast—God’s lovingkindness / steadfast love for him to enter His temple.

NOTE: Someone may mention that the temple was not built in David’s lifetime. The Hebrew word translated temple in verse 7 can also be translated “tabernacle.”

Verses 8-12

What does it seem was David’s problem in these verses, and what did he ask the Lord?

David’s enemies again were causing trouble for him, and they were rebellious against God. He asked the Lord to hold them guilty (ESV—make them bear their guilt), let them fall by their own devices / counsels.

David asked for those who take refuge in the Lord and love His name to be glad / rejoice, sing, exult. God blesses and surrounds / covers him with favor.

What is the definition of exult?

“to rejoice”²; “be jubilant, i.e., be in a state of joy, which may include verbal expressions of joy and praise”³

Tell your group to look again at their At a Glance chart. What’s a theme for Psalm 5?

A morning prayer to sing and exult in God

To end this discussion, you can ask what they learned from these psalms about:

the righteous and their enemies
prayer
the Lord

² Robert L. Thomas, *New American Standard Hebrew-Aramaic and Greek Dictionaries: Updated Edition* (Anaheim: Foundation Publications, Inc., 1998), H5970.

³ James Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Hebrew (Old Testament)* (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997).

PSALMS PART 1 LEADER GUIDE Lesson 2

Lesson emphasis:

- Psalms 6–9

REVIEW

To begin this discussion, tell your group to look at the At a Glance chart and their list about the Lord as visual aids. Then ask what they remember or have learned about Psalms in general, and what the psalms teach about the Lord.

They are songs or poems, and some are also prayers.
David wrote a lot of psalms as he poured out his heart to the Lord.
Some psalms are about enemies—the psalmist’s enemies and God’s enemies.
They are about the righteous or blessed and the wicked.

The Lord is in heaven; He blesses the righteous and sends wrath on the wicked.
He is a shield and savior. He hears when the righteous call to Him. He is the King.
He gives gladness, peace, and security to those who trust in Him.

Reading and applying the truths in Psalms can bring calmness to believers.

PSALM 6

What does the superscription say about this psalm?

It’s very similar to Psalms 4 and 5. David wrote this for the choir director.

Verses 1-3

Who and what is the first stanza about?

David first asked the Lord not to rebuke him in anger or chasten / discipline in His wrath.
He asked instead for the Lord’s grace and to be healed of the dismay / trouble in his bones and soul.

He was greatly dismayed / troubled and cried out to the Lord for healing of his soul.
Then he asked the Lord how long he would be in this way before the Lord healed him.

NOTE: Some in your group might suggest that David had sinned and was therefore afraid of God’s rebuke. Although the text doesn’t say it, it indicates that David had done something he regretted.

You might ask your group if they have ever felt like that? Been in dismay when crying to God?

Verses 4-5

What else did David ask the Lord and why?

It seems that he thought the Lord had left him because he asked for Him to return / turn. He asked for rescue / deliverance of his soul because of God's lovingkindness / steadfast love.

Then it seems he likened his dismay with being close to death unless rescued. No one gives thanks in Sheol, the place of the dead.

Verses 6-7

What was the cause of David's dismay?

His adversaries / foes made him weary with sighing / moaning and crying.

How can this psalm help people when they feel like David did?

Verses 8-10

How did David end this song of prayer?

He knew the Lord heard him.
So he also knew his enemies would be ashamed and dismayed / troubled by God.

What is a possible theme for this psalm? Tell your group to look at their At a Glance chart.

David dismayed, cried; the Lord received his prayer—enemies dismayed / troubled

How can this prayer be used to help people in dismay / trouble?

PSALM 7

How does this psalm begin? What does the superscription say?

This psalm was a result of Cush, a Benjamite who evidently did something to David. A Shiggaion could be a wild passionate song.⁴ The ESV says it's probably a musical or liturgical term.⁵

According to the cross-reference, who were the Benjamites?

1 Chronicles 2:1-2

Benjamin was one of Israel's twelve sons who became a tribe of Israel.

⁴*The New Inductive Study Bible* (Eugene, Oregon: Harvest House Publishers, 2000), marginal note, Psalm 7.

⁵*The New Inductive Study Bible* (Eugene, Oregon: Harvest House Publishers, 2013), marginal notes, Psalm 7.

Verses 1-2

What did David think Cush might do to him?

Again David said he took refuge in the Lord so his pursuer didn't tear him like a lion, dragging him away. He asked the Lord again to deliver him. This has become a common theme in David's psalms about his enemies.

Verses 3-11

Who and what are these stanzas about?

If David had done the things in verses 3 and 4, then he deserved what the enemy would do.

David knew of God's anger and judgment on evil, wicked people.
He asked Him to vindicate/ judge him according to his righteousness and integrity.

He knew that the righteous God tries / tests the hearts and minds of men.
He saves the upright in heart because He's a righteous judge.

How do the cross-references relate?

Deuteronomy 32:35-36

Retribution / recompense and vengeance belong to the Lord.
He vindicates his people in compassion.

Romans 12:17-19

Believers, the righteous, are not to pay back evil for evil or take revenge / avenge themselves. God will repay with His wrath.

Give your group time to talk about wanting to take revenge for themselves or loved ones. Why is it best to leave that to God?

Verses 12-17

Who are these verses contrasting and how?

The unrepentant man and God are contrasted.

God has weapons, but man conceives / is pregnant with mischief and falsehood, then falls into his own pit and his mischief returns on his head. Compare this with Psalm 5:10.

Thanks and praise to the name of the LORD Most High.

How can knowing the Lord as Most High help believers when they feel the way this psalm describes?

What is a theme for this psalm?

David and Cush, a Benjamite—God, vindicate me

PSALM 8

Who does the superscription say the author of this Psalm is?

David

How does this psalm begin and end?

How majestic is the Lord's name in all the earth
Compare this with Psalm 7:17.

How does the cross-reference in Matthew 21 relate to verse 2?

Matthew 21:14-16

Children shouted / cried out in the temple when Jesus was there healing people.
And He said it was fulfillment of verse 2 in this psalm.

What does this psalm say about the Lord?

His splendor is displayed (ESV—glory is set) above the heavens according to verse 1.
He made the moon, stars and yet he thinks about people, individuals.

When God made man, He crowned him with glory and majesty / honor.
He made man to rule / have dominion over the rest of His creation.

What do the cross-references say that go along with these verses in Psalm 8?

Genesis 1:26-28

God told man to fill the earth, subdue it, and rule over the fish, birds, and every living thing. God's design was for man to rule the earth.

Hebrews 2:6-8

This is another quote from this psalm, and it says that all things are not yet subjected to man.

NOTE: Some in your group might bring up verse 9 of Hebrews 2 which is clearly about Jesus instead of man. And verse 5 says this is concerning the world to come—the future.

Tell your group to look at their At a Glance chart and ask about a theme for this psalm.

O Lord, how majestic is Your name in all the earth

What does knowing these things about the Lord do for or mean to a believer? How can this psalm be used to strengthen one's faith?

PSALM 9

NOTE: The superscription gives another label for this psalm of David for the choir director. You don't always need to ask about a superscription unless it's something very different from others.

Verses 1-6

What are the first two stanzas about?

Thanks, gladness, and praise to the Most High

It seems that David's thanks was for God's righteous judgment of his enemies.
Their name was blotted out forever; no memory of them left.

Verses 7-16

What do these verses teach about the Lord? Give time for your group to also share how these things minister to their lives.

Abides / sits enthroned forever
Established His throne for judgment / justice
Judge the world in righteousness
A stronghold for the oppressed in trouble
Not forsaken those who seek Him
Doesn't forget the cry of the afflicted
Lifts from the gates of death
Salvation

Verses 17-20

Who is contrasted?

The wicked, the nations who forget God will return to Sheol.
But the needy aren't forgotten nor the hope of the afflicted / poor.

David asked the Lord to judge the nations and put them in fear.
Let them know that they are only men.

Ask your group how this can give them comfort with what is going on in the world now.

How does Numbers 10 compare with these verses?

Numbers 10:33-36

The cloud of the Lord was over Israel when they journeyed in the wilderness, following the ark of the covenant. When the ark set out, Moses said, "Rise up, O LORD! And let your enemies be scattered."

What is a possible theme for this psalm?

Thanks to Most High; His throne for judgment; nations are but men

To end this discussion, you can encourage your group to use their list about the Lord as a guide or prompt for thanksgiving and praise. Also, it helps them grow in getting to know Him better.

PSALMS PART 1 LEADER GUIDE Lesson 3

Lesson emphasis:

- Psalms 10–14
- Dealing with opposition

REVIEW

Tell your group to look at their At a Glance chart and their list on the Lord and ask what they remember about Psalms 1–9.

David wrote Psalms 2–9 and gave instructions for how some of them were to be presented musically. Most of them are prayers asking the Lord to help David with his enemies.

David knew that God hears prayers of the righteous.

The righteous and the wicked are contrasted in most of these psalms.
And Psalm 8 is a wonderful praise psalm.

PSALM 10

Verses 1-11

What are the questions this psalm begins with, and why did the psalmist ask them?

He asked why the Lord was far off / away and hidden in times of trouble. The wicked were pursuing the afflicted / poor, and he asked for the wicked to be caught in their own plots / schemes.

Tell your group to look at the list they made about the wicked on Day One of the lesson. What do these verses say about the wicked? Also, ask about the definition of spurns / renounces.

Boasts

Spurns / renounces the Lord

“despise, reject . . . feel contempt or strong dislike for an object, rejecting as having little of no value either or both by words and actions . . . revile”⁶

Doesn't seek Him

Thinks there is no God

⁶James Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Hebrew (Old Testament)* (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997).

He prospers and doesn't see God's judgments awaiting him. He tells himself that he'll not have adversity.

Verse 7 tells what he says, and then verses 8-10 says what he does as he catches the afflicted (ESV—seizes the poor) and kills / murders the innocent.

Verse 11 goes back to what he says and somewhat compares with verse 4. He tells himself that God forgets or doesn't see what he does.

How does this description of the wicked help identify them?

Verses 12-18

Who and what are these verses about?

The psalmist asked the Lord not to forget the afflicted, and then asked another question. Why has the wicked spurned / renounced God?

The wicked says God will not hold him accountable or judge what he does
But He does see.

The Lord is King forever.
And He will vindicate the oppressed.
And the men who cause terror will perish.

Ask for your group to review what the wicked say or think about the Lord in this Psalm.

Spurns
Doesn't seek
Thinks there is no God
Says to himself that God has forgotten or doesn't see
Says to himself that God won't hold him accountable

What are the contradictions in what the wicked say or think?

If they think there is no God, then they can't think He forgets or won't judge them.

What is a possible theme for Psalm 10?

Wicked say no God, He doesn't see; but the Lord is King and vindicates the oppressed

PSALM 11

Who wrote this Psalm and who is it about?

This is another of David's psalms.
Again, it's about the wicked contrasted with the righteous and the Lord over all.

What was David’s situation?

He took refuge in the Lord when the wicked tried to kill him.

Tell your group to look at their list about the Lord and ask what verses 4-7 say about Him.

The Lord is on His throne in heaven, and He sees all that men do.
He tests the righteous and the wicked.
He hates the violent and wicked, but He loves righteousness / righteous deeds.
And those who are righteous will see His face.

Ask your group what they learn from Psalms 10 and 11 about dealing with the wicked.

What is a possible theme for this Psalm? Tell them to look at their At a Glance chart.

Lord on throne in heaven tests the righteous and wicked; loves righteousness, hates wicked

PSALM 12

Who did David write about and what did he say in this Psalm?

He asked the Lord for help because he saw the godly and the faithful disappearing / vanishing. He heard the lies and flattery of those who used their words to prevail.

Then the Lord said He would arise for the safety of the afflicted / poor.

NOTE: Some in your group might mention that in psalms before this one, David asked the Lord to arise.

Contrasted with the words of the ungodly, God’s words are pure.
He will keep the afflicted who long for His safety.

How does verse 8 relate to now?

What does vileness mean?

“what has no worth and is useless, as a moral filth”⁷

Ask what your group noted on their At a Glance chart as a theme for this Psalm.

Help, the godly ceases / is gone; false lips and God’s pure words

⁷James Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Hebrew (Old Testament)* (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997).

PSALM 13

What were David's questions to the Lord, and why does it seem that he asked them?

How long
Forget me forever?
Hide from me?
Sorrow in my heart?
Enemy exalted over me?

And the last question is what prompted them.

David felt like God had abandoned him.

Maybe some in your group have felt the same way. What's the answer for that feeling?

What did David ask of the Lord?

Consider, answer, enlighten / light up my eyes
Or David thought his enemy might kill him and his adversaries / foes rejoice

Then how does this psalm end?

Again, David ended with his relationship with the Lord.
God answered him.

You can ask your group if they know the Lord like David did. What does this psalm tell them about the Lord?

Then ask what they recorded on their At a Glance chart as a theme for Psalm 13.

How long...? Answer me; then sing to the Lord

PSALM 14

What are the first three verses about?

The fool says there is no God. The wicked also say the same in Psalm 10.

David wrote that there is no one who does good, not even one. God looked down from heaven to see if there was any who understand, who seek Him but there are none.

How does the cross-reference in Romans 3 relate to Psalm 14:1-3?

Romans 3:9-18

Part of this Psalm is quoted by Paul as he wrote that all are under sin.

Lead your discussion back to Psalm 14 and ask about the wicked in verses 4-6.

They don't know that they're in great dread / terror because God is with the righteous.
He's the refuge of the afflicted—those who the wicked afflict.
He is the King on His throne, and He is the Judge.

How does this Psalm end?

David looked to the future of Israel—when God will restore them.

What do the cross-references say about this time?

Ezekiel 36:22-28

God will vindicate His holiness, and the nations will know He is the Lord.
He will bring Israel back from the nations to their land.
He'll make them clean and give them a new heart and His Spirit.
They'll walk in His ways and be His people.

Romans 11:25-27

When the fulness of Gentiles has come into salvation, then all Israel at that time will be saved. And God will take away their sins.

Isaiah 2:1-4

In the last / latter days people will go to Zion, Jerusalem, to hear God's word.
And God will judge the nations.

Tell your group to look at their At a Glance chart and ask about a theme for this Psalm.

Fool said no God; Lord will restore His people Israel

Then ask what they learned from the cross-references from the end of the lesson about salvation.

Romans 5:18-21; 6:23

All people begin as sinners, and the wages of sin is death.
But Jesus paid for man's sins and offers a gift of eternal life by faith in Him.
Sinners are made righteous by Jesus.

1 Corinthians 15:1-4

The gospel to believe is that Jesus died for the world's sins and was raised.

Romans 1:16

And this gospel has in it the power for salvation to all who believe.

To end your discussion, let your group share what they learned about dealing with opposition and feelings, situations and trials.

PSALMS PART 1 LEADER GUIDE Lesson 4

Lesson emphasis:

- Psalms 15–18
- Not shaken

REVIEW

Tell your group to look at their At a Glance chart and ask what they remember as repeated persons and thoughts in the first fourteen psalms.

NOTE: Keep your review very brief as there is a lot to discuss from Psalm 18. Watch your time closely.

David wrote most of these psalms as he prayed to the Lord for help because his enemies were coming against him. And he closed several of them with praise to God for hearing his prayers.

Therefore, the psalms are a good prayer book for believers now, especially when going through bad times.

Exalting the Lord is another thing repeated in these psalms. He is in heaven; He is on His throne. Reading these psalms shows God in His proper place.

The wicked and the righteous are contrasted throughout most of these psalms. The righteous are believers, and the wicked are not. Believers now can see from these psalms who is who, descriptions of each.

PSALM 15

What are the questions in verse 1?

Who will abide / sojourn in the Lord's tent, dwell on His holy hill?

How do verses 2-5 answer the questions?

Tell your group to look at the list they made on Day One of the lesson.

This is another list about the righteous.

Integrity / blameless

Righteousness / does what is right

Truth, not slander

No evil to neighbor, nor reproach against friend

Despise reprobate / vile person and honor those who fear the Lord

Swears to own hurt
Not loan with interest or take a bribe
He will never be shaken / moved.

What do the cross-references for this psalm add?

Hebrews 4:14-16

This is also about those who abide in God’s presence.

Believers can draw near with confidence to God’s throne to receive mercy and grace to help when needed.

Hebrews 10:19-25

Believers have confidence to enter God’s holy place because Jesus made the way by His blood. So Christians should draw near to Him with full assurance of faith.

Psalms 1:1-3 and 55:22

The blessed are firmly planted (ESV—planted)—not shaken.
God is the sustainer of the righteous and will never allow / permit them to be shaken / moved.

Ask your group how the truths of Psalm 15 and these cross-references apply to their lives.

Tell them to look at their At a Glance chart and ask what a possible theme is for Psalm 15.

Who will abide / sojourn in Lord’s tent? Righteous...never shaken / moved

PSALM 16

Verses 1-4

What is this first stanza about?

Again, David asked the Lord to preserve him because he had taken refuge in Him. The majestic / excellent ones are David’s delight. The “saints who are in the earth / land” probably refers to other righteous people.

The contrast is with those who have another god. David said he would not participate in their offerings or even speak the names.

You might ask your group how they think about other believers.

Verse 5-6

What do these verses talk about?

David’s portion of his inheritance / chosen portion and heritage / inheritance
Pleasant places, beautiful heritage / inheritance

How does Joshua 13:32-33 relate to this stanza?

The priestly tribe of Levi didn't receive an inheritance of land with the other tribes of Israel because the Lord is their inheritance.

Ask your group how they feel about their inheritance and portion from the Lord. You might also ask what they added to their list about the Lord from this Psalm.

Verses 7-11

What did David say he would do and why?

Bless the Lord
Set Him continually / always before him

His mind / heart instructs him in the night—meditating on the Lord.
He knows the Lord is at his right hand so he can't be shaken.
So his heart is glad—rejoice, security.

He knows God will not abandon his soul to Sheol. Instead, He will make the path of life known to David. So joy and pleasures are with His presence.

Ask your group if they know God's presence like David did. If not, how can they?
How is the atmosphere in this psalm different from Psalms 1–14?

Delight
Pleasant
Beautiful
Not shaken
Rejoice
Security

Now ask how the cross-references relate to this psalm.

Acts 2:22-32 and Acts 13:34-37

This psalm is quoted referring to Jesus' resurrection.
David was a prophet.
God fulfills His what He says.

David died, so this psalm was not about him. Although David was not abandoned by the Lord; He showed him the path of life—eternal life.

1 Corinthians 15:16-20, 42-44, 50-53

This is a chapter about resurrection, focusing on Jesus' resurrection from the dead.
Without resurrection there is no life, faith is in vain.

You might ask your group what they think this Messianic Psalm show about God's Word.

What is a possible theme for Psalm 16? Tell your group to look at their At a Glance chart.

Lord is portion of inheritance / chosen portion, beautiful; not abandon soul to Sheol, no decay / corruption

How have Psalms 15 and 16 been different from Psalms 1–14?

There is very little said about the wicked.
The atmosphere is rejoicing, righteous from beginning to end.

NOTE: Again, watch your time closely because Psalm 18 is so long.

PSALM 17

Verses 1-5

As David began this psalm, what did he say to the Lord?

Again he asked the Lord to hear his prayer.

Then he talked about the Lord judging, trying, and testing him and finding nothing.
The Lord's words had kept David from the deeds / works of violent men.
His feet didn't slip because he held to God's paths.

Verses 6-12

Who are these verses about and what do they say?

First, David called on the Lord because he knew God answers. He is the Savior of those who take / seek refuge at His right hand. David asked the Lord to keep him as the apple of His eye and hide him in the shadow of His wings.

Then David again wrote about his enemies, the wicked. He either was or felt surrounded by them.

Now ask how the cross-references relate to verse 8.

Deuteronomy 32:7-10

God guarded / kept Jacob—Israel—as the pupil / apple of His eye.
People guard / keep their eyes with much care. How much more does God guard / keep .

Psalm 91:1-4

Dwelling in God Most High's shelter. This seems to be what David referred to as taking refuge in the Lord. Live in His shadow. He is the fortress.

Pinions and wings to cover are like a mother chicken covering her chicks.
This psalm also says God is the shield.

Where do people go for protection? Where should they go? Why?

Lead the discussion back to Psalm 17.

Verses 13-15

How did David end this psalm with the last stanza?

Again he asked the Lord to arise.
Confront the wicked and deliver David.

Men of this world are satisfied with children, leaving abundance to them.
But David will be satisfied to see God's face.

Psalm 16:5-6

His inheritance is beautiful.

Ask your group if they think the way David did about seeing God's face. Why?

Tell them to look at their At a Glance chart and ask about a theme for Psalm 17.

Savior of those who take refuge at His right hand

PSALM 18

To begin discussing this psalm, you need to ask what information the superscription gives. And then ask how it compares with 2 Samuel 7:1.

This tells of when David lived in his own house and the Lord gave him rest from all his enemies.

Verses 1-3

How did David begin this song to the Lord?

He told of his love for the Lord

Strength
Rock
Fortress
Deliverer
Shield
Horn of salvation
Stronghold
Worthy to be praised

Ask your group if they know the Lord like this. If not, why not?

Verses 4-6

What did David describe in these verses and how?

He had faced death from his enemies, but when he called to the Lord, God heard from His temple—referring to His dwelling place in heaven.

Verses 7-19

Who and what are these verses about?

The Lord's anger

Earth shook / reeled and quaked / rocked

Fire devoured

Thick darkness, waters and clouds

Hailstones and coals of fire

His voice thundered in heavens.

Lightning

His rebuke

And again, you can ask your group if they understand the Lord like this description. How can they have a healthy fear of the Lord?

NOTE: Your group might read in commentaries that these stanzas refer to an event like the flood or God speaking the Ten Commandments at Mt. Sinai. But beginning in verse 7 it seems to be the response to David's prayer describing how God rescued him. Help your group to remember that this is poetic language which might or might not be taken literally.

What do verses 16-19 describe?

Again, the Lord delivered / rescued David and these verses describe that deliverance. The Lord delighted in David and rescued him.

Verses 20-36

Who are these stanzas about, and what are the descriptions? Ask about the word study when relevant to your discussion.

He rewarded / dealt with me and recompensed / rewarded David for righteousness, verses 20 and 24 are almost identical.

recompense / reward—"to bring back, make requital, pay"⁸; "reward"⁹

⁸James Strong, *Enhanced Strong's Lexicon* (Woodside Bible Fellowship, 1995), H7725.

⁹James Strong, *The New Strong's Dictionary of Hebrew and Greek Words* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997, c1996), H7725.

How is the Lord described beginning in verse 25?

The Lord is
Kind / merciful
Blameless
Pure
Astute (ESV—make yourself seem tortuous)
Saving the afflicted / humble

What was David’s relationship with the Lord and the result?

In verses 28-36, David got his strength from the Lord.
His feet did not slip.

How does the description of the Lord in verses 30-36 relate to David’s strength?

Verses 37-45

What was the result of David being delivered from his enemies?

He overtook and subdued them (ESV—made them sink under him) so that even a people he didn’t know served him, foreigners submitted / came cringing to him. God place him as / made him the head of the nations.

Continue to ask your group what they learned about the Lord, what they recorded on their list about Him.

Verses 46-50

How did David end this psalm? Compare this with the first stanza.

This last stanza is praise very similar to verses 1-3.
He exalted God his rock who delivered him.
So, among the nations, David gave thanks praised and sang praises to Him / sang to him.

David, the king—God’s anointed—and his descendants / offspring forever

What is a possible theme for this psalm?

David’s song when the Lord delivered him from all his enemies

PSALMS PART 1 LEADER GUIDE Lesson 5

Lesson emphasis:

- Psalms 19–22

REVIEW

Tell your group to look at their At a Glance chart and their list about the Lord, then ask what they remember as repeated persons, patterns, and thoughts in Psalms 1–18.

NOTE: Keep your review brief as there is a lot to discuss from Psalm 22. Watch your time closely.

David wrote most of these psalms as he prayed to the Lord for help because his enemies were coming against him. And he closed several of them with praise to God for hearing his prayers.

Therefore, the psalms are a good prayer book for believers now, especially when going through bad times.

Exalting the Lord is another thing repeated in these psalms. He is in heaven; He is on His throne. Reading these psalms shows God in His proper place.

The wicked and the righteous are contrasted throughout most of these psalms. The righteous are believers, and the wicked are not. Believers now can see from these psalms who is who, descriptions of each.

PSALM 19

Verses 1-6

What are the heavens doing and how?

They tell God's glory; they declare / proclaim His works.
Every day and night the heavens display God everywhere in the world.
The sun shines from one end of heaven to the other.

How does the cross-reference in Romans 1 compare with this stanza?

Romans 1:18-20

God's creation shows His invisible attributes
eternal power
divine nature

He can be understood / perceived through what He made; people can know about Him.

Verses 7-14

What is this stanza about?

Not only can men know about God through His creation, but He also spoke, wrote, His words for man to know more about Him.

His Law	perfect	restores / revives the soul
His testimony	sure	makes simple wise
His precepts	right	rejoice the heart
His commandment	pure	enlighten the eyes
Fear of Him	clean	endure forever
His judgments / rules	true	righteous

What are results of God’s words in verses 10-13?

Desire their sweetness, their warning.
Keeping them brings great reward. His words show errors, faults, and sins.
They also help to keep people from sin.

How did David end this psalm in verse 14?

He asked that his words be acceptable to God.
He asked that what he meditates on be acceptable to God.

Ask how this stanza applies to your group. Some of them probably memorized it. What does it mean?

What is a possible theme for Psalm 19? Tell them to look at their At a Glance chart.

Heavens tell God’s glory; His Law restores / revives and keeps from sin

PSALM 20

What is this psalm about? What are the requests?

May God answer
send help
support
grant heart’s desire
fulfill all petitions

Ask your group what they think about these requests.

Why does God fulfill petitions and grant a heart’s desire?

If one’s heart desires God’s will and petitions Him accordingly

NOTE: Some in your group will see verses 1-5 as David saying these things to others. But some might read in commentaries that verses 1-5 are petitions that the people of Israel prayed for David the king.

Verses 6-9 tell what David knew—the Lord answered him
He boasted / trusted in God’s name instead of horses and chariots like his enemies.

Ask what your group recorded as a theme for Psalm 20 on their At a Glance chart.

May He grant your heart’s desire and fulfill all your petitions

PSALM 21

Verses 1-6

How do these verses compare with Psalm 20:1-3?

The Lord granted David’s heart’s desire.
He asked life, and God gave it to him forever.
He blessed David greatly, and David was glad in God’s presence.

Ask your group how they feel when God answers their requests.

Verses 7-13

What is this stanza about?

David trusted God and because of His lovingkindness / steadfast love he was not shaken / moved. The Lord would swallow up David’s enemies in His wrath.
He exalted the Lord; he praised His power.

You might ask what your group has learned about God’s power from studying Psalms.

What is a theme for Psalm 21?

David glad in God’s strength; heart’s desire given; praised God’s power

PSALM 22

Verses 1-5

How does this psalm begin, and how does it compare with Matthew 27?

Jesus quoted from this psalm when He was on the cross in Matthew 27:46.
Therefore, it’s another Messianic Psalm.

What does it seem was David’s situation or state of mind when he wrote this psalm?

Again, he felt forsaken or like God was far away and not answering him.

How do verses 3-5 continue?

In verse 3 there is another description of God enthroned, this time on the praises of Israel. God is holy.

David said the fathers trusted in God, and He delivered them. They weren't disappointed in their trust and crying to God.

You can ask your group if they've felt disappointment and how can they deal with it.

Verse 6-10

Although God answered the fathers who trusted in Him, how did David feel? Ask about the cross-reference in Matthew 27 when relevant.

He felt like a worm, reproached / scorned and despised.
Sneered at / mocked, talked about, people wag their heads at him
People said to let the Lord deliver him.

Matthew 27:39-43?

Again, these things happened or were said when Jesus was on the cross.

In verses 9-10, David told the Lord how he had trusted Him since a child. It seems he didn't understand why God hadn't answered him.

Verses 11-18

What is this description about? When appropriate, ask how the cross-references relate.

David's situation—surrounded by the strong, and without help
And Jesus on the cross
Tongue cleaves / sticks to jaws, John 19:28; Jesus said He was thirsty
Pierced my hands and feet
Divided his garments, Matthew 27:35

Verses 19-21

What did David go back to in these verses?

Asking the Lord to hurry to help him, deliver his soul from the sword.
The references to strong animals compare with verses 12-16.

Verses 22-24

How are these verses different from the previous ones? And ask about the cross-reference.

David praised the Lord's name.
Verse 22 is quoted in Hebrews 2:12.

He called others to praise and glorify the Lord.

God didn't hide, and He heard when David cried to Him for help.

Verses 25-31

How does this stanza close the Psalm?

More praise

Even all families of the nations will worship because the kingdom / kingship is the Lord's.

He rules all nations. Some in your group might remember what Psalm 2 says.

Tell the coming generation.

Declare His righteousness; He has performed / done it.

What does Philippians 2 say that relates to this stanza?

Philippians 2:9-11

Every knee will bow at Jesus' name.

What is a possible theme for Psalm 22?

My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?

To close, ask your group what they have learned for their lives from studying these Psalms. What about their prayer life? Their worship? Their trials?