



DISCOVERY **UNIT 8** **TEACHER'S GUIDE**

**Proverbs, Ecclesiastes,
Song of Solomon, Psalms**

The Way of Wisdom

Proverbs 1:1—9:18

The Proverbs of Solomon

Proverbs 10:1—22:16

The Words of the Wise

Proverbs 22:17—24:34

A Collection of Proverbs

Proverbs 25:1—31:31

The Book of Ecclesiastes

Ecclesiastes 1:1—12:14

The Song of Solomon

Song of Solomon 1:1—8:14

Book I of The Psalms

Psalms 1:1—41:13

The Shepherd's Psalm

Psalm 23:1-6

Book II of The Psalms

Psalms 42:1—72:20

Book III of The Psalms

Psalms 73:1—89:52

Book IV of The Psalms

Psalms 90:1—106:48

The Great Psalm

Psalm 119:1-176

Book V of The Psalms

Psalms 107:1—150:6

Discovery is a Bible study course for the high school and adult levels. Bible references are taken from the King James Version. The companion to these Sunday school lessons is Daybreak, a daily devotional and personal Bible study continuum. All of the material is available on our website, as well as in printed form. The print version is designed as a tear apart, to be stored in a binder; subsequent modules can then be easily inserted. Discovery is an official publication of the Apostolic Faith Church. All rights are reserved.

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SUGGESTED RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS

1. The first words of this beautiful psalm are “The LORD is my shepherd.” The word translated “LORD” in this passage refers to the self-existent nature of God, the great I AM who is unchangeable and all-powerful.

How do you think this understanding of God’s nature enabled the psalmist to state the remainder of that verse, “I shall not want” (suffer deprivation), with such profound assurance?

David understood that the great, unchanging, all-powerful God was certainly well able to provide for his needs. Direct your group’s attention to the word “my” and ask them to explain the significance of that pronoun. Discussion should bring out that David was not speaking of the fact that the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob would provide for the needs of the nation of Israel, although that was true. He had a personal connection with God which allowed him to state with assurance, “The LORD is my shepherd.”

Your students should grasp the concept that confidence in God is a personal matter. Knowing of God, or even possessing a vast knowledge of Scripture, will never provide that assurance. It is only when we have a direct and intimate relationship with God himself that we have the assurance that He will provide for our every need.

2. In verse 2, David said that his Shepherd “maketh me to lie down in green pastures” and “leadeth me beside the still waters.” Personalize this portion of the psalm, and write a brief description of how the Good Shepherd accomplishes this in your life.

Your students’ responses will provide a paraphrase of these verses; they should center on the fact that as our Good Shepherd, God provides for our every need. The term green literally means “fresh shoots” and pastures means “habitation.” Since areas of fertile vegetation and still waters in semi-arid Palestine were few and far between, sheep had to be led from place to place to find enough grass and water to sustain them. It took ongoing effort on the part of the shepherd to make sure the needs of the flock were met.

Follow up by encouraging your students to share accounts from their own knowledge or experience of times when God provided for the physical needs of His children.

3. The psalmist went on to assert, “He restoreth my soul” (verse 3). One meaning of the word translated restore is “to refresh.” We are well acquainted with the need for regular restoration and refreshment of our physical bodies. In this verse, however, David said that his soul was restored—a statement that points to spiritual restoration and refreshment. How does God provide for that need in our lives?

Horizontal lines for writing answers.



Book III of The Psalms

SOURCE FOR QUESTIONS

Psalms 73:1 through 89:52

KEY VERSE FOR MEMORIZATION

“For the LORD God is a sun and shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.” (Psalm 84:11)

BACKGROUND

Book III consists of Psalms 73 through 89. The majority of them (Psalms 73 through 83) are attributed to Asaph, a priest from the tribe of Levi who served in Jerusalem as the chief worship leader during David's reign, throughout the reign of Solomon, and into the reign of Rehoboam. He probably composed much of the music for David's psalms; Ezra 2:41 identifies him as the ancestor of the Temple singers. According to Bible scholars, during David's time several "guilds" were established to train musicians to carry on the musical traditions established by Asaph and others. Of the remaining psalms in this section, three are attributed to the "sons of Korah" (likely a family of Temple singers), David wrote Psalm 86, Heman the Ezraite wrote Psalm 88, and Ethan the Ezraite wrote Psalm 89.

The psalms in this section have been classified in various ways but some of the common groupings are: alphabetic or acrostic psalms, hallelujah psalms, historical psalms, imprecatory (invoking vengeance) psalms, Messianic psalms, penitential psalms, songs of ascent or degrees (sung by pilgrims on the way to Jerusalem), psalms of lament, and psalms of thanksgiving. Each of the major classifications is represented in this collection except for penitential.

As stated in previous lessons, Jewish tradition compares the five sections of the Book of Psalms to the first five books of the Bible. Book III has clear similarities to Leviticus in theme and scope. The purpose of Leviticus was to guide the people in their relationship with a holy God, and many of the psalms in this book focus on worship of God, His sovereignty, and His faithfulness.

The divine title primarily used in this section is *El* or *Elohim* (God), the first name for God used in Scripture (Genesis 1:1).

SUGGESTED RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS

1. Psalm 73 opens with Asaph's comments on a perplexing subject which is also addressed in Psalms 37 and 49 and the Book of Job: How can our all-powerful God be good and yet allow the righteous to suffer while

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7. Psalm 103 is a song of praise to God which has been universally acclaimed for its beauty of expression. While it is apparent that David had experienced God’s goodness personally, the benefits he cites are available to all who fear God and keep His commandments. What specific benefits are mentioned in verses 3-6?

Verses 3-6 indicate that God forgives our iniquities, heals our diseases, redeems us from destruction, crowns us with lovingkindness and tender mercies, satisfies us with good things, and executes justice on behalf of the oppressed.

Ask your class how many of these benefits we deserve. The answer is obvious: none! Not one of us has any right to claim these benefits based on our own merit; they are provisions we receive only because of God’s abundant goodness toward us. Since we are so undeserving, the only proper response is unceasing praise and grateful remembrance—the very activities that David calls us to in verses 1 and 2.

8. Many of the Psalms record words of individuals who cried out to God for help in times of great distress or need. However, in Psalm 105:4, we are told to seek the “face” of the Lord. How does seeking God’s face differ from seeking His help in time of need?

When we seek God’s help, we are asking Him to provide a specific benefit or answer to prayer that we desire. There are times when it is right to petition God for the needs of ourselves and others—Jesus himself did so in His model prayer (see Matthew 6:11-13). However, a deeper seeking of the Lord occurs when we seek His face (the word “face” can also be translated “presence”). We are not looking for a particular provision or benefit, but are seeking a closer and more intimate relationship with the Giver himself. This is a place of beautiful communion and fellowship.

As we seek the Lord, whether for a specific need or a closer walk, we should never become discouraged because we feel we have not yet attained. Nor should we think that we have all of God we need after He has answered our prayers. Verse 4 tells us to seek His face “evermore,” or continually. We can never draw too close to God, and continually seeking His face will keep our connection with Him in its proper place as life’s highest priority.

CONCLUSION

As we come before God with praise for His many benefits, and spend time getting to know Him personally, our desire to live in a manner that pleases Him will grow.

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The Great Psalm

SOURCE FOR QUESTIONS

Psalm 119:1-176

KEY VERSE FOR MEMORIZATION

“For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven. Thy faithfulness is unto all generations: thou hast established the earth, and it abideth.”

(Psalm 119:89-90)

BACKGROUND

Psalm 119, often referred to as “The Great Psalm,” is the longest chapter in the Bible; it contains 176 verses. The author is unknown, but most Bible scholars credit it either to David or the prophet Jeremiah, based upon textual references to kings, reproach, enemies, etc. Dating the psalm’s composition to the time of the Babylonian captivity would point toward Jeremiah as the author; however, the context allows for an earlier date as well, making David’s authorship a possibility that must also be considered.

In the original Hebrew, Psalm 119 is presented in the form of an acrostic, or alphabetical writing. While it is one of several acrostics in the Book of Psalms (others are Psalms 9 and 10 combined, along with Psalms 25, 34, 37, 111, 112, and 145), this is the longest and most intricate of these compositions. There are twenty-two letters in the Hebrew alphabet, and Psalm 119 is divided into twenty-two, eight-verse sections. Each of these twenty-two sections is prefaced with a successive letter of the Hebrew alphabet. In the original Hebrew, that letter begins the first word of each of the eight verses within the section.

The clear theme of Psalm 119 is the Law of the Lord and its vital ministry in the spiritual life of believers. The word translated *law* is *torah*—a word which has a much broader meaning in Hebrew than in English. It refers to the will of God as it was made known to Israel, and has the sense of “teaching” or “instruction.” A unique feature of this psalm is that all but a very few of the verses contain at least one reference to the Law of the Lord. The multifaceted manner in which the truths regarding God’s instruction are presented reflects the importance of integrating Scripture into every part of life and community.

SUGGESTED RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS

1. What words describing the Law of the Lord are used in the first section, titled Aleph? (Psalm 119:1-8)

The words describing the Law of the Lord used in these eight verses are “law,” “testimonies,” “ways,”

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