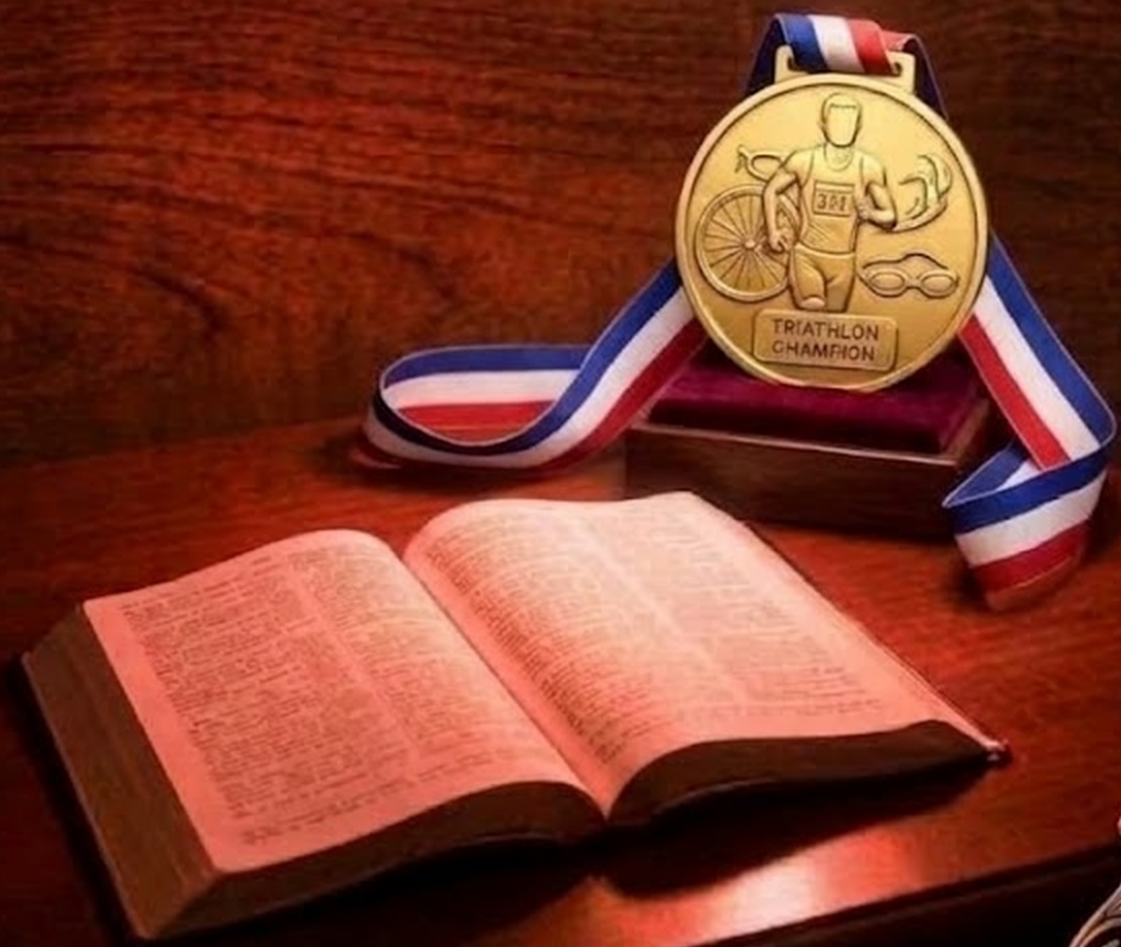


Psalms of the Messiah

FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL YOUTH



Psalms of the Messiah

Teacher Guide, Student Handouts and Slide Outlines

A 13-session, 45-minute-per-session Bible study for middle school students that follows the Messiah through the Psalms: the anointed King and Son, the Son of Man, the Holy One who rose, the suffering and vindicated Righteous One, the obedient Servant, the betrayed Friend, the divine King, the zealous Sufferer, the endless King, the Son of David, the Priest-King and the cornerstone.

Written for use in a Calvary Chapel youth ministry setting.

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Author and developer: Ron Whittam

Company: Quantum Reality Programming LLC

Web: qrprogramming.com

Contact: QuantumRealityprogrammingLLC@Gmail.com

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How to Use This Book

Each of the 13 sessions is built to fit a 45-minute class. Every session has the same parts so you can prepare quickly and teach with confidence:

- **Session opener:** the key verse, the big idea, the New Testament connections, objectives and a minute-by-minute outline.
- **Teaching notes:** a complete lesson flow with Scripture read aloud, explanations pitched for ages 11 to 14, and a closing prayer.
- **Background notes:** history, culture and society behind the passage. These are for you; share what helps.
- **Student handout:** one page with a key verse, fill-in-the-blanks, three questions, a memory verse and a weekly challenge.
- **Slide outline and reflection:** the eight-slide PowerPoint outline and the three reflection questions (Think, Feel, Do).

The big picture

Jesus told His disciples, “All things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me” (Luke 24:44). These sessions invite students to look for Jesus on nearly every page of the Psalms. Keep returning to the same three questions: Who is Jesus in this psalm? What did He do for us? How should we respond?

Teaching tips

- Read the Scripture aloud and let students read, too. Invite them to follow in their own Bibles.
- Keep the tone warm. These students are asking real questions. Welcome them and say “I don’t know, let’s look it up” when needed.
- Be gentle with the hard topics: the cross, betrayal, death, and judgment. Reassure students with the hope of the resurrection.
- Watch the clock. If time runs short, shorten the discussion before shortening the Scripture reading or the prayer.
- Use the companion web app and podcast for review, and for students who miss a week.

A note on the sessions that share a topic

Sessions 10 and 11 both study the Davidic covenant, one through Psalm 89 and the other through Psalm 132, so students see the promise from two angles: God’s oath and God’s dwelling place. Session 13 includes a short review of the whole series.

Series at a Glance

#	PSALM	PICTURE OF JESUS	NEW TESTAMENT
1	Psalm 2	The Anointed King and Son	Acts 4:25–28, Acts 13:33, Hebrews 1:5
2	Psalm 8	The Son of Man Given Dominion	Matthew 21:15–16, 1 Corinthians 15:27, Ephesians 1:22
3	Psalm 16	The Holy One Not Abandoned to Decay	Acts 2:22–32, Acts 13:34–37, 1 Corinthians 15:20
4	Psalm 22	The Suffering and Vindication of the Righteous One	Matthew 27:35–46, Mark 15:34, John 19:23–24, 28–30
5	Psalm 40	The Obedient Servant	Hebrews 10:1–14, John 4:34, John 6:38
6	Psalm 41	Betrayal by a Close Friend	John 13:1–30, Matthew 26:14–16, 47–50, Luke 22:47–48
7	Psalm 45	The Divine King and His Bride	Hebrews 1:8–9, Ephesians 5:25–27, 2 Corinthians 11:2
8	Psalm 69	The Zealous Sufferer	John 2:13–17, John 15:22–25, Romans 15:3
9	Psalm 72	The Righteous King's Endless Reign	Luke 4:18–21, Matthew 2:11, Matthew 12:42
10	Psalm 89	The Davidic Covenant: God Swears to David	Luke 1:26–35, Matthew 1:1, Romans 1:3
11	Psalm 132	The Davidic Covenant: A Home for God and a King Forever	Acts 2:29–36, Luke 1:69, John 1:14
12	Psalm 110	The Priest-King at God's Right Hand	Matthew 22:41–46, Acts 2:34–36, Hebrews 1:13
13	Psalm 118	The Rejected Stone and the One Who Comes in the LORD's Name	Matthew 21:9, 42, Acts 4:10–12, 1 Peter 2:4–8

Memory verses

- 1 • **Psalm 2:12** “Blessed are all those who put their trust in Him.”
- 2 • **Psalm 8:1** “O LORD, our Lord, How excellent is Your name in all the earth!”
- 3 • **Psalm 16:11** “You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.”
- 4 • **Psalm 22:27** “All the ends of the world Shall remember and turn to the LORD, And all the families of the nations Shall worship before You.”
- 5 • **Psalm 40:8** “I delight to do Your will, O my God, And Your law is within my heart.”
- 6 • **Psalm 41:12** “As for me, You uphold me in my integrity, And set me before Your face forever.”
- 7 • **Psalm 45:6** “Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom.”
- 8 • **Psalm 69:30** “I will praise the name of God with a song, And will magnify Him with thanksgiving.”
- 9 • **Psalm 72:19** “Blessed be His glorious name forever! And let the whole earth be filled with His glory. Amen and Amen.”
- 10 • **Psalm 89:1** “I will sing of the mercies of the LORD forever; With my mouth will I make known Your faithfulness to all generations.”
- 11 • **Psalm 132:13** “For the LORD has chosen Zion; He has desired it for His dwelling place.”
- 12 • **Psalm 110:1** “The LORD said to my Lord, ‘Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.’”
- 13 • **Psalm 118:26** “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD! We have blessed you from the house of the LORD.”

SESSION 1 OF 13 • PSALM 2

1

The Anointed King and Son

The nations rage, but God has already crowned His King.

KEY VERSE • Psalm 2:6–7

“Yet I have set My King On My holy hill of Zion.” “You are My Son, Today I have begotten You.”

THE BIG IDEA

God’s King is not a candidate; He is already crowned. The nations may rage, but Jesus the Messiah, God’s own Son, reigns, and everyone who runs to Him for refuge is blessed.

JESUS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Acts 4:25–28 • Acts 13:33 • Hebrews 1:5 • Hebrews 5:5 • Revelation 2:27 • Revelation 12:5 • Revelation 19:15

SESSION OBJECTIVES

- Students will explain that “Anointed” (mashiach) means Messiah and Christ, and that Psalm 2 points to Jesus.
- Students will trace how the New Testament applies Psalm 2 to Jesus’ resurrection, His reign and His return.
- Students will respond to the psalm’s invitation to trust the Son rather than rebel against Him.

SESSION AT A GLANCE (45 MINUTES)

4 min	Opening: Who Is in Charge?
6 min	Meet the Psalms of the Messiah
7 min	Point 1: The Rage (Psalm 2:1–3)
6 min	Point 2: The Laughter and the King (Psalm 2:4–6)
9 min	Point 3: The Son and the Nations (Psalm 2:7–9)
7 min	Point 4: The Invitation (Psalm 2:10–12)
4 min	Application and Prayer
2 min	Quick Review and Dismissal

Materials: Bible (NKJV), whiteboard or flip chart, the session slides, one handout per student, pens or pencils.
Optional: play the podcast episode for review or for students who missed the session.

TEACHER GUIDE

Teaching Notes — Psalm 2

Opening: Who Is in Charge? [4 min]

Play a quick round of “King of the Hill” with a chair at the front. Let two or three volunteers try to stand on the chair while others pretend to pull them off. Stop after two minutes and ask: What would it take for someone to stay on the chair no matter what anyone did? (Answer: no one could knock them off, or they were put there by someone more powerful.)

Say: “Today’s psalm is about a King nobody can knock off His throne, because the One who put Him there is the most powerful Being in the universe.”

Meet the Psalms of the Messiah [6 min]

Explain that the Book of Psalms is Israel’s songbook and prayer book, and that it has 150 psalms. Some of them are called Messianic psalms because they look ahead to the Messiah, the Savior-King God promised. Over the next 13 weeks we will meet Him in the Psalms.

Write three words on the board: MASHIACH (Hebrew), MESSIAH (English), CHRIST (Greek). All three mean “Anointed One.” In Israel, prophets, priests and kings were anointed with oil to show that God had set them apart. Jesus is all three: the Prophet, the Priest and the King.

Psalm 2 is a royal psalm. Many Bible scholars believe it was used when a new king of David’s line was crowned. But as the early church read it, they saw that no earthly king ever fully matched it. Only Jesus did.

Point 1: The Rage (Psalm 2:1–3) [7 min]

Read aloud:

“Why do the nations rage, And the people plot a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together, Against the LORD and against His Anointed, saying, ‘Let us break their bonds in pieces And cast away their cords from us.’” (Psalm 2:1–3)

Ask: What do the nations want? Notice what they call God’s rule: bonds and cords. They think living under God is like being tied up. They want to be free of Him.

Show how the early church used this psalm. In Acts 4, Peter and John were threatened and told to stop talking about Jesus. The believers prayed Psalm 2 together and said it came true when Herod, Pontius Pilate, the Gentiles and the people of Israel gathered against Jesus (Acts 4:25–28). The rage of Psalm 2 was not just ancient history; it happened at the cross.

Teaching point: People still resist Jesus today because they think His rule will take something from them. But here is the surprise: the “vain thing” is not Jesus’ plan; it is the plot against Him.

Point 2: The Laughter and the King (Psalm 2:4–6) [6 min]

Read:

“He who sits in the heavens shall laugh; The Lord shall hold them in derision. Then He shall speak to them in His wrath... ‘Yet I have set My King On My holy hill of Zion.’” (Psalm 2:4–6)

Explain that God's laugh is not mean. It is the laugh of someone who is not threatened. Compare it to a little child trying to push over a mountain. The rebellion looks big to people, but it looks tiny to God.

Then God speaks: "I have set My King." Note the word "I." God did the installing. Jesus did not take the throne by force. His Father gave it to Him. Zion is Jerusalem, the city of David, a picture of God's kingdom.

Point 3: The Son and the Nations (Psalm 2:7–9) [9 min]

Read:

"I will declare the decree: The LORD has said to Me, 'You are My Son, Today I have begotten You. Ask of Me, and I will give You The nations for Your inheritance, And the ends of the earth for Your possession.'" (Psalm 2:7–8)

Now the King Himself speaks. He repeats what His Father said to Him. Say: "Three times the New Testament quotes 'You are My Son' about Jesus." Show them: Acts 13:33 (Paul says God fulfilled this by raising Jesus from the dead); Hebrews 1:5 (Jesus is greater than angels, since no angel was ever called 'Son' in this way); Hebrews 5:5 (Jesus did not exalt Himself to be High Priest; the Father called Him).

Explain "today I have begotten You" carefully and simply: it does not mean that Jesus had a beginning. Jesus is eternal (John 1:1). It means that on a particular day God publicly declared Jesus to be His Son in power. Romans 1:4 says Jesus was "declared to be the Son of God with power... by the resurrection from the dead." The Father said at Jesus' baptism,

"This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Matthew 3:17)

The nations are His inheritance. This is why Jesus said,

"All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations." (Matthew 28:18–19)

The Great Commission is Psalm 2 in action: the Son asks, the Father gives the nations, and we get to carry the good news to them.

The "rod of iron" in Psalm 2:9 shows up in Revelation 2:27, 12:5 and 19:15. It points to Jesus' final victory over evil when He returns. Teach it gently for this age: Jesus is a good King who will end all evil and make everything right.

Point 4: The Invitation (Psalm 2:10–12) [7 min]

Read:

"Now therefore, be wise, O kings; Be instructed, you judges of the earth. Serve the LORD with fear, And rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, And you perish in the way, When His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all those who put their trust in Him." (Psalm 2:10–12)

Notice that after the warning comes an invitation. God is not shouting at the nations to get lost; He is calling them to be wise. "Kiss the Son" was an ancient sign of loyalty and honor, like bowing or shaking hands to pledge allegiance.

The very last line is the heart of the psalm: “Blessed are all those who put their trust in Him.” The word for trust can mean “take refuge,” like running into a strong tower in a storm. Ask: What does it look like for you to take refuge in Jesus this week?

Application and Prayer [4 min]

Invite students to think about one area where they have been tempted to say, “I want to run my own life.” Remind them that Jesus’ rule is not like chains; it is like a loving Shepherd King who gave His own life for His people.

Close in prayer (see prayer below), then review the memory verse together as a call-and-response.

Quick Review and Dismissal [2 min]

Ask three students to name one thing they learned. Hand out the one-page worksheet and remind them of the Think, Feel, Do reflection in the web app.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why do you think people want to get free from God’s rule? What do they think they would gain?
2. How does it help you to know that God is not afraid of anyone who opposes Him?
3. What does “Anointed” mean, and how are Messiah and Christ connected to it?
4. What is the difference between a king who takes and a King who gives? Which one is Jesus?
5. In your own words, what does it mean to “kiss the Son” and to “take refuge” in Him?

CLOSING PRAYER

Father, thank You that You have set Your Son on the throne and that no one can remove Him. Forgive us for the times we have wanted to run our own lives. Today we choose to honor Jesus and to take refuge in Him. Help us to tell others about the King who invites everyone to come. In Jesus’ name, amen.

FOR THE TEACHER

Background Notes: Culture, History and Society

These notes are for your preparation. Share what fits your students and your time.

Why this psalm matters

Psalms 1 and 2 stand together at the doorway of the Psalter. Psalm 1 begins with “Blessed is the man” and Psalm 2 ends with “Blessed are all those who put their trust in Him,” bookending the opening. Some early manuscripts even count them as one psalm. Psalm 1 says how a person gets blessed; Psalm 2 says whom the blessing is found in.

Acts 4:25 attributes Psalm 2 to David, even though the psalm has no title. That helps the teacher see that the apostles read the Psalms through the lens of the Davidic promise (2 Samuel 7).

Culture: kings, anointing and rebel vassals

In the ancient Near East, a powerful king ruled over smaller kings called vassals, who paid tribute and swore loyalty. When a great king died or a new one took the throne, vassals often took the opportunity to rebel and refuse tribute. Psalm 2 paints exactly this picture: the nations plot to “break their bonds” the moment God’s King is installed.

Israel’s kings were anointed with olive oil by a prophet or priest (1 Samuel 10:1; 16:13). The oil was not magic; it signaled that God had chosen the person and set him apart. “The LORD’s anointed” became a title for Israel’s king, and later a title for the coming Savior-King.

“Son of God” in Israel’s royal tradition did not mean a physical child of God. God told David about his heir, “I will be his Father, and he shall be My son” (2 Samuel 7:14). The king was God’s representative son. The New Testament shows that Jesus is this and infinitely more: the eternal Son who shares God’s very nature (Hebrews 1:3).

Teaching cautions

“Today I have begotten You” (2:7) has been misunderstood to mean that Jesus was created. Teach that Hebrews and Acts apply it to Jesus’ public exaltation (resurrection and enthronement), not to His origin.

Do not skip the invitation in verses 10–12. Many students will hear the “wrath” language as only scary. Present God’s patience: He warns because He wants the nations to turn and be blessed. Also teach that “wrath” is God’s settled opposition to evil, not a bad mood.

Verse 9 (“rod of iron... dash them to pieces”) is hard for middle schoolers. Frame it with Revelation: it describes Jesus finally ending evil and injustice, not harming people who trust Him.

SESSION 1 OF 13 • PSALMS OF THE MESSIAH

PSALM 2

The Anointed King and Son

Name: _____ Date: _____

KEY VERSE • Psalm 2:6-7

*"Yet I have set My King On My holy hill of Zion." "You are My Son, Today I have begotten You."***1 FILL IN THE BLANKS**

1. The Hebrew word mashiach means "_____."
2. In Greek, the same word is _____.
3. God says, "You are My _____, Today I have begotten You."
4. Paul said God fulfilled Psalm 2:7 by raising Jesus from the _____ (Acts 13:33).
5. "Blessed are all those who put their _____ in Him."

WORD BANK: trust • Anointed • dead • Christos (Christ) • Son**2 THINK IT THROUGH**

- a. What did the nations want to break off in verse 3?

- b. Why does God laugh in verse 4?

- c. What does it mean to "kiss the Son"?

MEMORY VERSE • Psalm 2:12

"Blessed are all those who put their trust in Him."

THIS WEEK'S CHALLENGE This week, find one moment when you want to "run your own show." Stop and whisper: "Jesus, I trust You." Write down what happened.

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PRESENTATION

Slide Outline

- 1 Psalm 2**
The Anointed King and Son · Session 1 of 13: Psalms of the Messiah
- 2 Messiah Means Anointed**
Hebrew: mashiach · English: Messiah · Greek: christos (Christ) · Prophet, Priest, King
- 3 The Rage (2:1-3)**
Nations and kings plot · They call God's rule "bonds and cords" · Acts 4: this happened at the cross
"Against the LORD and against His Anointed" (2:2)
- 4 God Laughs (2:4-6)**
Not cruel, just unthreatened · God Himself sets the King · Zion is the city of David
"Yet I have set My King On My holy hill of Zion." (2:6)
- 5 The Son Speaks (2:7-9)**
Declared Son with power at the resurrection · Acts 13:33, Hebrews 1:5, Hebrews 5:5 · The nations are His inheritance
"You are My Son, Today I have begotten You." (2:7)
- 6 From Psalm to Commission**
Matthew 28:18-19 · All authority is given to Jesus · He sends us to every nation
- 7 The Invitation (2:10-12)**
Be wise. Serve the LORD. · Kiss the Son: honor and bow · Take refuge in Him
"Blessed are all those who put their trust in Him." (2:12)
- 8 Think, Feel, Do**
THINK: Who is the King in Psalm 2? · FEEL: How does it feel that He is in charge? · DO: Say "Jesus, I trust You" this week

AFTER THE SESSION

Think · Feel · Do Reflection

Students answer these three questions in the companion web app after the lesson. Use them for a closing conversation or a take-home card.

THINK

What do you think Psalm 2 teaches us about who Jesus is and who is really in charge?

FEEL

How do you feel knowing that God's King cannot be knocked off His throne, and that He invites you to take refuge in Him?

DO

What is one way you will trust Jesus this week instead of trying to run everything yourself?

LISTEN TO THE LESSON

A short two-voice podcast episode for this session is built into the web app, just before "What We Learned."

SESSION 2 OF 13 • PSALM 8

2

The Son of Man Given Dominion

God made humans to rule, and Jesus is the Man who finally does it.

KEY VERSE • Psalm 8:4

“What is man that You are mindful of him, And the son of man that You visit him?”

THE BIG IDEA

God made people to rule His creation, but we lost that rule. Jesus, the perfect Son of Man, was made lower than the angels, suffered death for everyone, and is now crowned with glory and honor, so that He can bring us back.

JESUS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Matthew 21:15–16 • 1 Corinthians 15:27 • Ephesians 1:22 • Hebrews 2:5–9

SESSION OBJECTIVES

- Students will describe humanity’s original place of honor and dominion (Psalm 8; Genesis 1:26–28).
- Students will explain how Hebrews 2 applies Psalm 8 to Jesus as the Son of Man who humbled Himself and is now crowned.
- Students will respond with praise, and with a sense of their own worth in God’s eyes.

SESSION AT A GLANCE (45 MINUTES)

5 min	Opening: Look Up
7 min	Point 1: A Name That Fills the Earth (Psalm 8:1–2)
7 min	Point 2: What Is Man? (Psalm 8:3–4)
8 min	Point 3: Crowned and Given Dominion (Psalm 8:5–8)
10 min	Point 4: But We See Jesus (Hebrews 2:9)
6 min	Application and Prayer
2 min	Quick Review and Dismissal

Materials: Bible (NKJV), whiteboard or flip chart, the session slides, one handout per student, pens or pencils.

Optional: play the podcast episode for review or for students who missed the session.

TEACHER GUIDE

Teaching Notes — Psalm 8

Opening: Look Up [5 min]

Turn off the lights and show a photo or short video of the night sky (a star-field image works well on the projector). Ask: How do you feel when you look at a sky like this? Small? Amazed? Peaceful? Let three or four students answer.

Say: “David was a shepherd. He spent long nights outside with sheep and no streetlights. He wrote a song about what he felt when he looked up.”

Point 1: A Name That Fills the Earth (Psalm 8:1–2) [7 min]

Read:

“O LORD, our Lord, How excellent is Your name in all the earth, You who set Your glory above the heavens! Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants You have ordained strength, Because of Your enemies, That You may silence the enemy and the avenger.” (Psalm 8:1–2)

Notice the first and last verses of the psalm are the same. This is called a frame, and it tells us what the psalm is about: God’s excellent name.

Explain verse 2: God does not need an army to defeat His enemies. He uses the praise of the weak and small. Tell the Palm Sunday story. After Jesus drove the sellers out of the temple, children were shouting, “Hosanna to the Son of David!” The religious leaders were upset. Jesus said,

“Yes. Have you never read, ‘Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants You have perfected praise?’” (Matthew 21:16)

Teaching point: Jesus quoted Psalm 8 and put Himself in the place of the LORD. He accepted the children’s praise as praise that belongs to God.

Point 2: What Is Man? (Psalm 8:3–4) [7 min]

Read:

“When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, The moon and the stars, which You have ordained, What is man that You are mindful of him, And the son of man that You visit him?” (Psalm 8:3–4)

David is not putting people down. He is amazed. The God who flung the stars into place with His fingers stops to be mindful of us. “Visit” in the Hebrew carries the idea of caring for and coming to help.

Ask: Is it harder to believe God made the stars, or that God cares about you personally? Let students respond. Then say: “Both are true. And the cross is the proof.”

“Man” and “son of man” are two ways of saying the same thing in Hebrew poetry: human beings. Keep this in mind for Point 4, where the phrase takes on a bigger meaning.

Point 3: Crowned and Given Dominion (Psalm 8:5–8) [8 min]

Read:

“For You have made him a little lower than the angels, And You have crowned him with glory and honor. You have made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet.” (Psalm 8:5–6)

Connect to Genesis 1:26–28, where God made people in His image and said, “have dominion.” Explain that dominion means being God’s caretakers, like a gardener who tends a garden that belongs to someone else. It does not mean using up creation or being cruel to animals.

Draw two columns on the board: What God gave us / What we did. In the first column: image of God, dominion, glory and honor. In the second: Adam and Eve disobeyed, creation was damaged, death entered, and people lost their rule.

Read Hebrews 2:8: “But now we do not yet see all things put under him.” We look around and see the world broken. We do not see people ruling well. Then comes the next verse.

Point 4: But We See Jesus (Hebrews 2:9) [10 min]

Read:

“But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone.” (Hebrews 2:9)

Explain that the writer of Hebrews takes the psalm’s words about “man” and says that they find their fullest answer in one Man: Jesus. He took on human flesh, stepped lower than the angels for a time, died, and was crowned with glory and honor. He is the true Adam who fulfills what Adam failed to do.

“Son of Man” was Jesus’ favorite name for Himself. He used it about 80 times in the Gospels. It points both to His humanity (He really became one of us) and to Daniel’s vision of One “like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven” who is given an everlasting kingdom (Daniel 7:13–14).

Show 1 Corinthians 15:27 and Ephesians 1:22: God has put all things under Jesus’ feet. That means Jesus’ rule is real now, even though we do not see everything in order yet. One day we will.

Teaching point: We were made to rule, we lost it, and Jesus won it back. Hebrews 2:10 says He is bringing “many sons to glory.” Jesus takes people who were crowned and then fell, and He brings them back into glory.

Application and Prayer [6 min]

Ask students to write one sentence on a sticky note: “God made me with worth because ____.” Collect them and read a few aloud.

Challenge: pick one way to care for something God made this week (an animal, a plant, a younger sibling, the neighborhood). Close with prayer and the memory verse.

Quick Review and Dismissal [2 min]

Review the memory verse and ask one student to retell how Jesus used Psalm 8 in the temple. Hand out the worksheet and remind them of the Think, Feel, Do reflection.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. When have you looked at something huge (the sky, the ocean, a mountain) and felt small? What did you think about God?
2. What do you think it means that God is “mindful” of you? How has He shown it?
3. What does “dominion” mean in Psalm 8, and how is it different from ruining or using up the earth?
4. Why do you think Jesus chose to be “made a little lower than the angels”?
5. How does it encourage you that children’s praise is called “strength” in Psalm 8:2?

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Your name in all the earth! Thank You that You are mindful of us even though You made the stars. Thank You for sending Jesus, the Son of Man, who became lower than the angels, died for us, and is crowned with glory and honor. Teach us to praise You with all our hearts and to care for what You have made. In Jesus’ name, amen.

FOR THE TEACHER

Background Notes: Culture, History and Society

These notes are for your preparation. Share what fits your students and your time.

About the psalm

Psalm 8 is a hymn of praise attributed to David. Its title includes the word “Gittith,” which probably refers to a musical setting or instrument, possibly a tune associated with Gath or with the winepress. Scholars are not certain. Teachers can simply say it was written for singing.

David was a shepherd as a boy (1 Samuel 16:11). Sleeping outdoors with sheep, he would have known the night sky far better than modern children. There were no streetlights to hide the stars. The Milky Way would have been blazing overhead.

Culture: the sky as a god, and the king as an image

In nearby nations such as Babylon and Egypt, the sun, moon and stars were worshiped as gods. David says something shocking: the moon and stars are simply “the work of Your fingers.” They are made things. This was a radical statement against the surrounding religions.

In the ancient world, kings placed statues or images of themselves in distant regions to show that they ruled there. Genesis 1:26–28 uses similar language: human beings are the “image of God,” set on the earth to represent His rule. This helps explain why dominion is a high calling and not a license to exploit.

Babies and children had little status in the ancient world. That is part of why 8:2 is striking: God says He builds His strength on the praise of the least powerful.

New Testament use

Hebrews 2:5–9 is the main passage. The writer quotes Psalm 8:4–6 and argues that humanity has not yet seen its promised rule, but Jesus, the Son of Man, has been crowned, and He is the pledge that humanity will rule.

The Hebrew word translated “angels” in Psalm 8:5 is *elohim*, which can mean God, gods, or heavenly beings. The Greek translation (Septuagint), which Hebrews follows, reads “angels.” Hebrews 2:7 can also be read as “for a little while lower.” Either way, the point is Jesus’ temporary humbling followed by glory.

Jesus’ use of “Son of Man” was not a modest title. It draws on Daniel 7, where the Son of Man receives an everlasting kingdom. At His trial Jesus applied it to Himself and the high priest tore his robes (Matthew 26:64–65).

Teaching cautions

Avoid saying that Jesus was “less than God” when He was lower than the angels. Philippians 2:6–8 helps: Jesus did not stop being God; He took the form of a servant. The lowness is about His taking human nature and suffering, not about losing deity.

Be sensitive to students who struggle with self-worth. Psalm 8 is a gift for them: they are crowned with glory and honor not because of what they have done, but because of what God has done in making them.

SESSION 2 OF 13 • PSALMS OF THE MESSIAH

PSALM 8

The Son of Man Given Dominion

Name: _____ Date: _____

KEY VERSE • Psalm 8:4

“What is man that You are mindful of him, And the son of man that You visit him?”

1 FILL IN THE BLANKS

1. In Psalm 8, David looks at the _____ and feels small.
2. God uses the praise of _____ and nursing infants to show strength.
3. God made people “a little _____ than the angels” and crowned them with glory and honor.
4. “But we see _____, who was made a little lower than the angels.” (Hebrews 2:9)
5. Jesus’ favorite name for Himself was “Son of _____.”

WORD BANK: Man • lower • Jesus • babes • night sky (heavens)

2 THINK IT THROUGH

- a. What question does David ask in verses 3–4?

- b. What did God give people to do in verses 6–8?

- c. Why does Hebrews 2:9 say Jesus was made lower than the angels?

MEMORY VERSE • Psalm 8:1

“O LORD, our Lord, How excellent is Your name in all the earth!”

THIS WEEK’S CHALLENGE Go outside tonight and look up for five minutes. Say aloud Psalm 8:1. Then thank God for one way He has shown He is mindful of you.

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PRESENTATION

Slide Outline

- 1 Psalm 8**
The Son of Man Given Dominion · Session 2 of 13
- 2 Look Up**
What do you feel under a night sky? · David was a shepherd under the stars
"When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers..." (8:3)
- 3 A Name That Fills the Earth**
Verse 1 and verse 9 are the same · God's strength is in children's praise · Matthew 21:16: Jesus quotes verse 2
"O LORD, our Lord, How excellent is Your name in all the earth!" (8:1)
- 4 What Is Man?**
Not put-down but amazement · The God of the stars is mindful of you · "Visit" means to care and come help
"What is man that You are mindful of him?" (8:4)
- 5 Crowned With Glory**
Made in God's image · Given dominion: caretakers, not users · We lost it through sin
"You have crowned him with glory and honor." (8:5)
- 6 But We See Jesus**
Hebrews 2:9 · Lower than the angels for a time · Crowned after suffering death for everyone
"But we see Jesus..." (Hebrews 2:9)
- 7 The Son of Man**
Jesus' favorite title (about 80 times) · Daniel 7: given an everlasting kingdom · 1 Corinthians 15:27: all things under His feet
- 8 Think, Feel, Do**
THINK: How does Jesus fulfill Psalm 8? · FEEL: What does it feel like to be crowned by God? · DO: Praise Him and care for something He made

AFTER THE SESSION

Think · Feel · Do Reflection

Students answer these three questions in the companion web app after the lesson. Use them for a closing conversation or a take-home card.

THINK

What do you think Psalm 8 and Hebrews 2 teach us about who Jesus is and what He did for us?

FEEL

How do you feel knowing that the God who made the stars is mindful of you and crowned you with honor?

DO

What is one way you will praise God or care for His creation this week?

LISTEN TO THE LESSON

A short two-voice podcast episode for this session is built into the web app, just before "What We Learned."

SESSION 3 OF 13 • PSALM 16

3

The Holy One Not Abandoned to Decay

David's hope was bigger than David. It was the empty tomb.

KEY VERSE • Psalm 16:10

"For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption."

THE BIG IDEA

David trusted God even in the face of death, but his words reach beyond him. Peter and Paul say Psalm 16 is a prophecy of Jesus' resurrection: God did not let His Holy One see decay, and because He lives, we have the path of life.

JESUS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Acts 2:22–32 • Acts 13:34–37 • 1 Corinthians 15:20 • John 11:25

SESSION OBJECTIVES

- Students will explain how Psalm 16 shows trust in God that goes beyond death.
- Students will follow Peter's and Paul's argument that Psalm 16:10 is fulfilled in Jesus' resurrection and not in David.
- Students will respond to the "path of life" by choosing to find joy in God's presence.

SESSION AT A GLANCE (45 MINUTES)

5 min	Opening: A Safe Place
8 min	Point 1: God Is My Portion (Psalm 16:1–6)
6 min	Point 2: The LORD Is Always Before Me (Psalm 16:7–8)
10 min	Point 3: Not Abandoned to Decay (Psalm 16:9–10)
8 min	Point 4: The Path of Life (Psalm 16:11)
6 min	Application and Prayer
2 min	Quick Review and Dismissal

Materials: Bible (NKJV), whiteboard or flip chart, the session slides, one handout per student, pens or pencils.
Optional: play the podcast episode for review or for students who missed the session.

TEACHER GUIDE

Teaching Notes — Psalm 16

Opening: A Safe Place [5 min]

Ask: If your house caught fire and you had two minutes, what is the one thing you would grab? Let a few students answer. Then ask: What is the one thing you could not stand to lose forever?

Say: “Psalm 16 is David’s song about the One thing he could never lose, and about a promise that even death could not break.”

Point 1: God Is My Portion (Psalm 16:1–6) [8 min]

Read:

“Preserve me, O God, for in You I put my trust. O my soul, you have said to the LORD, ‘You are my Lord, My goodness is nothing apart from You.’” (Psalm 16:1–2)

Then read:

“O LORD, You are the portion of my inheritance and my cup; You maintain my lot. The lines have fallen to me in pleasant places; Yes, I have a good inheritance.” (Psalm 16:5–6)

Explain that when Israel entered the Promised Land, each tribe received land by lot, but the tribe of Levi received no land because “the LORD God of Israel is their inheritance” (Joshua 13:33). David is saying the same of himself: God is his land, his food and drink (the cup), and his future.

Teaching point: Many people look for happiness in things, popularity or achievements. David says, “My goodness is nothing apart from You.” Ask: What are some things people use as their ‘portion’? What happens when those things fail?

Point 2: The LORD Is Always Before Me (Psalm 16:7–8) [6 min]

Read:

“I will bless the LORD who has given me counsel; My heart also instructs me in the night seasons. I have set the LORD always before me; Because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved.” (Psalm 16:7–8)

A person who has the LORD at his right hand has a defender at his side. Ancient soldiers fought with their shield on the left and sword on the right, so the right hand was the place of the strongest defender. David says he will not be shaken.

Teach that Peter later quotes these verses as Jesus’ own words. Jesus kept His eyes on the Father throughout His life and even in the garden and on the cross. He was not moved from the plan of redemption.

Point 3: Not Abandoned to Decay (Psalm 16:9–10) [10 min]

Read:

“Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices; My flesh also will rest in hope. For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.” (Psalm 16:9–10)

Explain Sheol: the Old Testament word for the place of the dead, or the grave. Corruption means decay. David is saying, “I am not afraid of dying, because God will not abandon me there.” But then he says “Your Holy One,” and that is where Peter begins his argument.

Walk through Acts 2:22–32 on the board. On the day of Pentecost, Peter preached that God raised Jesus up, because it was not possible for Him to be held by death (2:24). Then he quotes Psalm 16. Then he makes a smart argument:

“Men and brethren, let me speak freely to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day.” (Acts 2:29)

Peter’s point: If David were only talking about himself, the words would be false, since David’s body did decay. So David, as a prophet, was looking ahead to the Christ:

“he, foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption.” (Acts 2:31)

Paul makes the same argument in Acts 13:35–37: David “saw corruption; but He whom God raised up saw no corruption.” Teach students that the apostles read the Psalms as full of Jesus because He told them to (Luke 24:44).

Show the contrast with Lazarus (John 11:39), whose sister said that after four days there would be a stench. Jesus’ body was in the tomb parts of three days, and He rose before any decay.

Point 4: The Path of Life (Psalm 16:11) [8 min]

Read:

“You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.” (Psalm 16:11)

Notice that this is the other side of verse 10. Death is not the end; the path leads somewhere. Jesus rose and ascended to the right hand of God (Acts 2:33). Because He went first, He opens the path for His followers.

Show 1 Corinthians 15:20:

“But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.”

“Firstfruits” means the first piece of the harvest, which promises that more is coming. Jesus’ resurrection is the first, and ours will follow.

Also read John 11:25 together: “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live.”

Application and Prayer [6 min]

Ask each student to think of something they are afraid to lose. Invite them to pray silently, giving it to the LORD as David did: “You are my portion.”

Close by reading Psalm 16:11 aloud together as the memory verse. Pray the prayer below.

Quick Review and Dismissal [2 min]

Ask: Who did Peter say Psalm 16:10 was really about? (Jesus.) Why? (David's tomb was still there.) Hand out the worksheet and remind students of the reflection.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. David says, "My goodness is nothing apart from You." What do you think he meant?
2. Why do you think David could face death without fear?
3. How does Peter prove that Psalm 16 is about Jesus and not about David?
4. What does it mean that Jesus is the "firstfruits" of those who sleep?
5. Where have you found joy that lasts, and where have you found joy that fades?

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord, You are our portion and our cup. Thank You that You did not leave Your Holy One in the grave or let Him see decay. Thank You that because Jesus rose, we have hope for life that never ends. Show us the path of life and fill us with joy in Your presence. In Jesus' name, amen.

FOR THE TEACHER

Background Notes: Culture, History and Society

These notes are for your preparation. Share what fits your students and your time.

About the psalm

Psalm 16 is a “Michtam” of David. The meaning of Michtam is uncertain; some think it means “golden” or “inscription,” and others think it relates to “covering” or atonement. Teachers need not settle it; it simply marks the psalm as special.

The psalm is a song of trust. In verses 1–8 David speaks of trusting God in the present; in verses 9–11 his trust extends beyond the grave.

Culture: land, lots and tombs

The language of “portion,” “lot,” “lines” and “inheritance” comes from Israel’s land distribution under Joshua. Families received land by casting lots, and boundaries were marked by measuring lines. For an agricultural society, land was life; it fed the family and passed to children. Saying “the LORD is my portion” meant, in effect, “God is all the land and income I need.”

Burial in Jesus’ day was in tombs cut from rock. After the flesh decayed, bones were sometimes gathered into small stone boxes called ossuaries. Corruption was an expected part of death, which makes the promise “Your Holy One will not see corruption” striking. Jesus was laid in a new, unused tomb belonging to Joseph of Arimathea (Matthew 27:57–60) and rose before decay set in.

“Sheol” in the Old Testament refers to the realm of the dead; the New Testament Greek equivalent is “Hades.” Peter’s quotation in Acts 2:27 uses Hades.

How the apostles used it

The Hebrew word for “Holy One” (chasid) means a faithful, loyal one. David was first of all describing his own confidence in God’s faithfulness. But Peter and Paul argue that the full meaning of the verse goes beyond David, since David’s body did decay. They treat David as a prophet, quoting Psalm 132:11 as proof (Acts 2:30).

Teachers can say: the psalm fits David as a song of faith, and fits Jesus as a literal fulfillment. This pattern of an Old Testament person’s experience pointing to a greater fulfillment in Christ appears again in later sessions.

Teaching cautions

Keep the topic of death age-appropriate and sensitive. Some students may have lost a family member or pet. Emphasize hope, not fear.

Avoid speculating about the details of Jesus’ time in the grave. Stay with the text: His soul was not left in Hades and His body did not decay.

SESSION 3 OF 13 • PSALMS OF THE MESSIAH

PSALM 16

The Holy One Not Abandoned to Decay

Name: _____ Date: _____

KEY VERSE • Psalm 16:10

*“For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.”***1 FILL IN THE BLANKS**

1. David said, “You are the _____ of my inheritance and my cup.”
2. “You will not allow Your _____ One to see corruption.”
3. Peter said David’s _____ was still with them, so David was not speaking only of himself.
4. In the presence of God is fullness of _____.
5. Jesus is the _____ of those who have fallen asleep. (1 Corinthians 15:20)

WORD BANK: portion • firstfruits • tomb • joy • Holy**2 THINK IT THROUGH**

- a. What did David trust the LORD for?

- b. Why did Peter say Psalm 16:10 was not about David?

- c. What is the “path of life” in verse 11?

MEMORY VERSE • Psalm 16:11

“You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.”

THIS WEEK’S CHALLENGE Write down three things you really love. Then say a prayer: “Lord, I want You to be my portion even more than these.”

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PRESENTATION

Slide Outline

- 1 Psalm 16**
The Holy One Not Abandoned to Decay · Session 3 of 13
- 2 What Could You Not Lose?**
Your house? Your phone? Your friends? · David's answer: the LORD Himself
- 3 God Is My Portion**
Land, lot, cup, inheritance · "My goodness is nothing apart from You" · Pleasant places, a good inheritance
"You are the portion of my inheritance and my cup." (16:5)
- 4 Not Moved**
The LORD is at my right hand · The strongest defender is beside me · Jesus kept the Father before Him
"Because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved." (16:8)
- 5 Not Abandoned to Decay**
Sheol = the place of the dead · "Holy One" = faithful one · Corruption = decay
"Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption." (16:10)
- 6 Peter's Argument**
David died and was buried (Acts 2:29) · His tomb is still here · So David spoke of the Christ (Acts 2:31)
- 7 The Path of Life**
Jesus rose and sits at God's right hand · He is the firstfruits · Joy and pleasures forever
"In Your presence is fullness of joy." (16:11)
- 8 Think, Feel, Do**
THINK: Why is the resurrection good news? · FEEL: What do you feel when you think about life after death? · DO: Make God your portion this week

AFTER THE SESSION

Think · Feel · Do Reflection

Students answer these three questions in the companion web app after the lesson. Use them for a closing conversation or a take-home card.

THINK

What do you think Psalm 16 shows us about Jesus' resurrection and why it matters?

FEEL

How do you feel about death when you remember that the Holy One did not see decay and that the path of life is open?

DO

What is one thing you will do this week to find your joy in God's presence rather than in things?

LISTEN TO THE LESSON

A short two-voice podcast episode for this session is built into the web app, just before "What We Learned."

SESSION 4 OF 13 • PSALM 22

4

The Suffering and Vindication of the Righteous One

A thousand years before the cross, David wrote what Jesus would live.

KEY VERSE • Psalm 22:1

“My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?”

THE BIG IDEA

Psalm 22 describes the cross in detail written long before crucifixion existed. It begins with the cry Jesus spoke from the cross and ends with victory for the whole world, because the Righteous One suffered in our place and God raised Him up.

JESUS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Matthew 27:35–46 • Mark 15:34 • John 19:23–24, 28–30 • Hebrews 2:12

SESSION OBJECTIVES

- Students will identify specific details of Psalm 22 that were fulfilled at Jesus' crucifixion.
- Students will explain why Jesus cried out “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?” and how the psalm continues.
- Students will respond to the cross with gratitude and with the hope of worldwide praise.

SESSION AT A GLANCE (45 MINUTES)

5 min Opening: A Cry in the Dark

9 min Point 1: The Cry (Psalm 22:1–2)

8 min Point 2: The Mockers (Psalm 22:6–8, 12–13)

8 min Point 3: The Details (Psalm 22:14–18)

10 min Point 4: The Turn: Deliverance and Worldwide Praise (Psalm 22:19–31)

4 min Application and Prayer

1 min Quick Review and Dismissal

Materials: Bible (NKJV), whiteboard or flip chart, the session slides, one handout per student, pens or pencils.

Optional: play the podcast episode for review or for students who missed the session.

TEACHER GUIDE

Teaching Notes — Psalm 22

Opening: A Cry in the Dark [5 min]

Ask quietly: Have you ever felt alone, like no one understood what you were going through? Allow a moment of silence. You do not need to ask students to share personal details.

Say: “Today’s psalm begins with the loneliest words in the Bible. And these are the words Jesus Himself spoke at the most important moment in history.” Keep the tone reverent and calm throughout this session.

Point 1: The Cry (Psalm 22:1–2) [9 min]

Read:

“My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? Why are You so far from helping Me, And from the words of My groaning? O My God, I cry in the daytime, but You do not hear; And in the night season, and am not silent.” (Psalm 22:1–2)

Show how Jesus spoke these words:

“And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, ‘Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?’ that is, ‘My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?’” (Matthew 27:46)

Notice that there had been darkness over the land from noon until three (Matthew 27:45).

Explain gently: Why did Jesus say this? Not because He lost faith: He still says “My God.” Not because He was confused: He was quoting Scripture on purpose. The best explanation is that on the cross Jesus was bearing our sin. Read 2 Corinthians 5:21 aloud: He “made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” Jesus faced what we deserved so that we would never have to be truly forsaken.

Teachers: This is a mystery, and it is fine to say so. Stay close to Scripture. Jesus is the eternal Son and was never less than God, and He bore real judgment in our place.

Note that in Jesus’ day, people often referred to a psalm by its opening line. When Jesus spoke verse 1, anyone who knew the psalm would think of the whole thing, including how it ends.

Point 2: The Mockers (Psalm 22:6–8, 12–13) [8 min]

Read:

“But I am a worm, and no man; A reproach of men, and despised by the people. All those who see Me ridicule Me; They shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, ‘He trusted in the LORD, let Him rescue Him; Let Him deliver Him, since He delights in Him!’” (Psalm 22:6–8)

Compare with Matthew 27:39–43. The people who passed by shook their heads. The leaders said, “He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now if He will have Him.” The words are almost the same. David wrote these words centuries before, and the mockers unknowingly repeated them.

Explain verses 12–13: bulls of Bashan and a roaring lion are pictures of powerful enemies surrounding the Sufferer. Bashan was a region known for strong, well-fed cattle.

Teaching point: Jesus was not a victim of bad luck. He was surrounded by mockers who unknowingly were fulfilling God's plan. Ask: What would you have wanted to say to the mockers?

Point 3: The Details (Psalm 22:14–18) [8 min]

Read the key lines slowly:

"I am poured out like water, And all My bones are out of joint... My tongue clings to My jaws... They pierced My hands and My feet; I can count all My bones. They look and stare at Me. They divide My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots." (Psalm 22:14, 15, 16–18)

Make a chart on the board with two columns: Psalm 22 / The Cross. Fill it in with students: shaking heads (22:7; Matthew 27:39); thirst (22:15; John 19:28); pierced hands and feet (22:16; John 20:25–27); soldiers dividing clothes by lot (22:18; John 19:23–24).

Explain that David lived around 1000 B.C. Crucifixion was a Roman method of execution invented much later. Nobody in David's day could have guessed at it. Yet David describes the very pain of it. Only God could write ahead of time what Jesus would suffer.

Keep the discussion respectful and not graphic. Emphasize that Jesus chose this out of love: John 15:13,

"Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends."

Point 4: The Turn: Deliverance and Worldwide Praise (Psalm 22:19–31)

[10 min]

Explain that at verse 21 the psalm turns:

"Save Me from the lion's mouth And from the horns of the wild oxen! You have answered Me." (Psalm 22:21)

The tone changes completely from groaning to praise. The cross was not the end. God answered the Sufferer by raising Him.

Read verse 22 and compare with Hebrews 2:12:

"I will declare Your name to My brethren; In the midst of the assembly I will praise You."

The writer of Hebrews says it is Jesus speaking, calling us His brothers and sisters. After His resurrection Jesus called His disciples "My brethren" (John 20:17).

Read verse 24:

"For He has not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; Nor has He hidden His face from Him; But when He cried to Him, He heard." (Psalm 22:24)

God heard the cry. This comforts anyone who feels alone: the Father did not despise the Son's suffering, and He does not despise yours.

Read verses 27–28 and 30–31:

"All the ends of the world Shall remember and turn to the LORD, And all the families of the nations Shall worship before You. For the kingdom is the LORD's, And He rules over the nations." (Psalm 22:27–28)

The psalm ends with future generations hearing “that He has done this.” Jesus’ last cry on the cross was “It is finished!” (John 19:30). The psalm’s closing words, “He has done this,” are a fitting echo of that cry. Say it simply: the work is done.

Teaching point: Jesus started the psalm on the cross, and the church finishes it by taking the good news to all the families of the nations.

Application and Prayer [4 min]

Ask: How does knowing Jesus was forsaken for you change how you feel when you feel alone? Allow students to answer silently or in a short written note.

Pray the prayer below, thanking Jesus for the cross, and say the memory verse together.

Quick Review and Dismissal [1 min]

Hand out the worksheet and remind students of the Think, Feel, Do reflection.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why is it important that Jesus quoted Psalm 22 on the cross?
2. Which detail of Psalm 22 do you find most amazing: the mockers, the thirst, the pierced hands and feet, or the clothing? Why?
3. What does it mean that Jesus “was made sin for us”? How does this show His love?
4. What do verses 24 and 27 teach you about how the story ends?
5. What can you do to help “all the families of the nations” hear about Jesus?

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord Jesus, thank You for going to the cross for us. Thank You that You took what we deserved. Thank You that the Father heard You, raised You, and made a way for all the families of the earth to worship. Help us to remember Your sacrifice and to share Your good news with others. In Your name, amen.

FOR THE TEACHER

Background Notes: Culture, History and Society

These notes are for your preparation. Share what fits your students and your time.

About the psalm

Psalm 22 is attributed to David and is titled “To the Chief Musician. Set to ‘The Deer of the Dawn.’” It has two halves: verses 1–21 describe suffering and prayer, and verses 22–31 describe deliverance and worldwide praise.

Early church writers called Psalm 22 the “Psalm of the Passion.” The Gospel writers do not often say “this fulfilled that,” but they echo its language repeatedly (Matthew 27:35, 39, 43, 46; John 19:24, 28).

Culture: crucifixion in the first century

Crucifixion was a Roman form of execution used for slaves, rebels and the worst criminals. It was designed to be slow, public and shameful. Roman citizens were normally exempt from it. Jews considered a man hanging on a tree to be under God’s curse (Deuteronomy 21:23; Galatians 3:13).

Crucifixion was not practiced in Israel in David’s time; the Assyrians and Persians used impaling and similar methods, and the Romans perfected crucifixion much later. That makes the description in 22:16–17 striking.

The Roman soldiers assigned to a crucifixion typically divided the victim’s clothes among themselves as a perk of the job. John’s Gospel notes that they cast lots for Jesus’ seamless tunic (John 19:23–24).

At the ninth hour (about 3 p.m.) Jesus spoke. Matthew records the Hebrew “Eli, Eli,” and Mark records the Aramaic “Eloi, Eloi.” Some bystanders thought He was calling for Elijah, since the sounds were similar (Matthew 27:47).

Notes on the text

Verse 16: The traditional Hebrew text (Masoretic) reads something like “like a lion my hands and feet,” while the ancient Greek translation (Septuagint) and a Dead Sea Scrolls fragment support “they pierced.” The NKJV follows “pierced.” Teachers who are asked can say that the oldest manuscripts, including a scroll found near the Dead Sea, support “pierced.”

“Dogs” (22:16) in the Bible often refers to wild scavenger dogs that roam cities, and is used as a picture of violent, shameless enemies.

“Forsaken” (22:1) is a strong word. Do not teach that the Trinity was broken or that the Father stopped loving the Son. Jesus is God, and the Father and Son are one. Teach that Jesus entered fully into the judgment our sin deserves, and that this is a mystery we receive with worship (see Isaiah 53:4–6, 10).

Teaching cautions

Some students may have experienced abuse, loss or loneliness. Psalm 22:24 is for them: God does not despise the afflicted. Offer to talk privately and know your church’s reporting and care procedures.

Do not dwell on gruesome medical detail. The goal is worship and understanding, not shock.

SESSION 4 OF 13 • PSALMS OF THE MESSIAH

PSALM 22

The Suffering and Vindication of the Righteous One

Name: _____ Date: _____

KEY VERSE • Psalm 22:1

“My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?”

1 FILL IN THE BLANKS

1. Jesus' cry from the cross, “My God, My God, why have You ____ Me?”, comes from Psalm 22:1.
2. Mockers shook their ____ and said, “He trusted in the LORD, let Him rescue Him.”
3. “They pierced My ____ and My feet.”
4. The soldiers cast ____ for Jesus' clothing.
5. “All the ends of the world shall ____ and turn to the LORD.”

WORD BANK: lots • remember • hands • heads • forsaken

2 THINK IT THROUGH

- a. Which details of Psalm 22 match the crucifixion?

- b. Why can we say that the psalm does not end in despair?

- c. What does verse 24 tell us about how God sees people who suffer?

MEMORY VERSE • Psalm 22:27

“All the ends of the world Shall remember and turn to the LORD, And all the families of the nations Shall worship before You.”

THIS WEEK'S CHALLENGE Read all of Psalm 22 out loud once this week. Notice where the tone changes. Write down one thing you will thank Jesus for.

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PRESENTATION

Slide Outline

- 1 Psalm 22**
The Suffering and Vindication of the Righteous One · Session 4 of 13
- 2 The Cry**
Psalm 22:1 = Matthew 27:46 · Jesus quoted Scripture on purpose · He bore our sin (2 Corinthians 5:21)
“My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?” (22:1)
- 3 The Mockers**
Shaking heads (22:7) · “He trusted in the LORD, let Him rescue Him” · Matthew 27:39–43
- 4 The Details**
Thirst (22:15; John 19:28) · Pierced hands and feet (22:16) · Clothes divided by lot (22:18; John 19:24)
“They pierced My hands and My feet.” (22:16)
- 5 1,000 Years Early**
David lived about 1000 B.C. · Crucifixion came much later · God wrote ahead what Jesus would suffer
- 6 The Turn**
“You have answered Me” (22:21) · He has not despised the afflicted (22:24) · Praise among His brothers (22:22; Hebrews 2:12)
“He has not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted.” (22:24)
- 7 Worldwide Praise**
All the ends of the world will turn · All families of the nations will worship · “He has done this” echoes “It is finished”
“All the ends of the world Shall remember and turn to the LORD.” (22:27)
- 8 Think, Feel, Do**
THINK: What does Psalm 22 show about the cross? · FEEL: How does it feel to know Jesus took your place?
· DO: Thank Him and tell someone about Him

AFTER THE SESSION

Think · Feel · Do Reflection

Students answer these three questions in the companion web app after the lesson. Use them for a closing conversation or a take-home card.

THINK

What do you think Psalm 22 teaches us about what Jesus went through on the cross and why?

FEEL

How do you feel when you remember that Jesus was forsaken so that you never have to be, and that God heard Him?

DO

What is one way you will thank Jesus or share the good news with someone this week?

LISTEN TO THE LESSON

A short two-voice podcast episode for this session is built into the web app, just before “What We Learned.”

SESSION 5 OF 13 • PSALM 40

5 The Obedient Servant

Jesus came to do the will of God, and His one offering did what a thousand sacrifices could not.

KEY VERSE • Psalm 40:7-8

“Then I said, ‘Behold, I come; In the scroll of the book it is written of me. I delight to do Your will, O my God, And Your law is within my heart.’”

THE BIG IDEA

Animal sacrifices could never take away sin. So the Son came into the world with a body prepared for Him, delighted to do the Father’s will, and offered Himself once for all, so that we could be made holy.

JESUS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Hebrews 10:1-14 • John 4:34 • John 6:38 • Philippians 2:8

SESSION OBJECTIVES

- Students will explain why animal sacrifices could not permanently remove sin.
- Students will connect Psalm 40:6-8 to Jesus’ willing obedience in coming into the world (Hebrews 10:5-10).
- Students will respond by choosing to delight in doing God’s will out of gratitude, not to earn forgiveness.

SESSION AT A GLANCE (45 MINUTES)

5 min	Opening: Who Is the Real Boss?
8 min	Point 1: Out of the Pit (Psalm 40:1-3)
5 min	Point 2: Blessed Is the One Who Trusts (Psalm 40:4-5)
10 min	Point 3: Not Sacrifices but Obedience (Psalm 40:6-8)
10 min	Point 4: The Body Prepared (Hebrews 10:5-10)
5 min	Point 5: A Heart That Delights (Psalm 40:8-10)
2 min	Application and Prayer

Materials: Bible (NKJV), whiteboard or flip chart, the session slides, one handout per student, pens or pencils.

Optional: play the podcast episode for review or for students who missed the session.

TEACHER GUIDE

Teaching Notes — Psalm 40

Opening: Who Is the Real Boss? [5 min]

Play a quick round of “Simon Says.” After a minute, stop and ask: What made it hard? (Listening to the right voice.) What happens when you obey the wrong voice? Then say: “Today we meet someone who always listened to the right voice, and who enjoyed it.”

Point 1: Out of the Pit (Psalm 40:1–3) [8 min]

Read:

“I waited patiently for the LORD; And He inclined to me, And heard my cry. He also brought me up out of a horrible pit, Out of the miry clay, And set my feet upon a rock, And established my steps. He has put a new song in my mouth— Praise to our God; Many will see it and fear, And will trust in the LORD.” (Psalm 40:1–3)

Describe the picture: a deep cistern with mud at the bottom, no way out. Ask: What are some “pits” people get stuck in? (Fear, guilt, bad habits, hurt.) The LORD lifts David out and puts his feet on a rock. Mention Jesus’ words about the wise man who built on the rock (Matthew 7:24–25).

Teaching point: Salvation is a rescue. David did not climb out. God lifted him. The result is a new song, and others will see it and trust God.

Point 2: Blessed Is the One Who Trusts (Psalm 40:4–5) [5 min]

Read:

“Blessed is that man who makes the LORD his trust... Many, O LORD my God, are Your wonderful works Which You have done; And Your thoughts toward us Cannot be recounted to You in order; If I would declare and speak of them, They are more than can be numbered.” (Psalm 40:4–5)

Say that David cannot even count all of God’s thoughts toward us. Invite two students to name something God has done for them recently. This builds gratitude before the main teaching.

Point 3: Not Sacrifices but Obedience (Psalm 40:6–8) [10 min]

Read:

“Sacrifice and offering You did not desire; My ears You have opened. Burnt offering and sin offering You did not require. Then I said, ‘Behold, I come; In the scroll of the book it is written of me. I delight to do Your will, O my God, And Your law is within my heart.’” (Psalm 40:6–8)

Explain that the sacrifices were commanded in the Law, so what does it mean that God “did not desire” them? The prophets said the same thing (1 Samuel 15:22; Psalm 51:16–17; Hosea 6:6). God was never after the ritual alone; He wanted hearts that trusted and obeyed Him. The sacrifices were pictures pointing to something better.

Explain “My ears You have opened.” In Israel, a servant who loved his master and did not want to go free could choose to stay permanently, and his ear was pierced to mark him as a lifelong servant (Exodus 21:5–6). The

picture is of a servant who joyfully says, “I will serve You forever.”

Explain “the scroll of the book it is written of me.” Israel’s kings were to keep a copy of the law (Deuteronomy 17:18–20). The speaker says that God’s book was about Him. Jesus said the same about all the Scriptures (Luke 24:44; John 5:39).

Point 4: The Body Prepared (Hebrews 10:5–10) [10 min]

Read:

“Therefore, when He came into the world, He said: ‘Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, But a body You have prepared for Me... Then I said, “Behold, I have come... To do Your will, O God.”

” (Hebrews 10:5–7)

Notice who is speaking: the Son, before His birth, as He came into the world. The Son knew that animal blood could never really take away sins (Hebrews 10:4). So He said, “Here I am. Send Me. I will do it.” Compare John 6:38:

“For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.”

Walk through Jesus’ obedience: He obeyed in the manger and the carpenter’s shop (Luke 2:51), in the wilderness (Matthew 4), in Gethsemane (Matthew 26:39: “not as I will, but as You will”), and to the cross (Philippians 2:8). John 4:34 says it was His food, His joy:

“My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work.”

Contrast with the priests, who “stand ministering daily” (Hebrews 10:11), because their work is never done. But Jesus, after offering one sacrifice, sat down (Hebrews 10:12). The job is finished. Read Hebrews 10:10 again: “By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.”

Teaching point: Jesus did not just do a good deed. He did the one thing nobody else could do, and He did it gladly.

Point 5: A Heart That Delights (Psalm 40:8–10) [5 min]

Return to Psalm 40:8: “I delight to do Your will, O my God, And Your law is within my heart.” Explain that this is how Jesus lived, and how He gives His followers a new heart that wants to obey (Ezekiel 36:26–27).

Remind students that obedience does not earn salvation. We obey because we are saved, not to become saved. Verses 9–10 show the next step: David tells everyone about God’s faithfulness and does not hold back. Ask: Whom could you tell about Jesus this week?

Application and Prayer [2 min]

Invite students to name one place in their life where they know God wants something and they have been resisting. Pray quietly, asking Jesus for a delighting heart. Say the memory verse together and dismiss with the worksheet.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What kind of “pit” can people get stuck in? How does God rescue them?
2. Why did God say He did not desire sacrifices? What did He want instead?

3. What does it mean that Jesus “delighted” to do the Father’s will, even when it led to the cross?
4. How is Jesus’ one offering different from all the offerings the priests made?
5. Why should we obey God if we cannot earn salvation by obeying?

CLOSING PRAYER

Father, thank You for lifting us out of the pit and putting a new song in our mouths. Thank You for sending Jesus, who delighted to do Your will and offered Himself once for all. Give us hearts that delight in You and want to obey You, not to earn Your love, but because we already have it. In Jesus’ name, amen.

FOR THE TEACHER

Background Notes: Culture, History and Society

These notes are for your preparation. Share what fits your students and your time.

About the psalm

Psalm 40 is a psalm of David. It begins with thanksgiving for deliverance (vv. 1–10) and moves to a fresh prayer for help (vv. 11–17). Verses 13–17 appear again nearly word for word as Psalm 70.

David speaks first about himself, and in verse 12 he confesses that his own iniquities have overtaken him. Jesus had no sin of His own, so verse 12 is not applied to Him. Hebrews quotes only verses 6–8, where the speaker is the obedient servant. Teachers can say that the psalm fits David's life and finds its deeper fulfillment in Jesus' obedience, and that Jesus bore our iniquities (Isaiah 53:6).

Culture: the sacrificial system

Israel's sacrificial system involved daily burnt offerings, sin offerings, peace offerings and the annual Day of Atonement (Leviticus 1–7; 16). The animal was a substitute; its blood was shed in place of the worshiper. These sacrifices pointed ahead to Christ.

There were no chairs in the tabernacle or temple furnishings. Priests stood while serving because their work was never finished. That is the background to Hebrews 10:11–12, where Jesus “sat down” after offering one sacrifice.

A Hebrew servant who loved his master could choose to stay forever; the master pierced his ear with an awl against the doorpost (Exodus 21:5–6; Deuteronomy 15:16–17). It was a sign of loving, permanent commitment. Some scholars see this behind the phrase “My ears You have opened.”

Notes on the text

A well-known puzzle: Psalm 40:6 says “My ears You have opened” (literally dug or pierced), while Hebrews 10:5 says “a body You have prepared for Me,” following the Greek Septuagint. The meaning is compatible: the Servant's ears were opened to obey, and God prepared a body for Him to obey in. The writer of Hebrews, inspired by the Spirit, draws out the full sense.

“In the volume of the book” likely refers to the Law of Moses and the Scriptures as a whole, which speak of the Messiah (Luke 24:27, 44).

Teaching cautions

Do not give students the impression that Old Testament people were saved by animal sacrifices. They were saved by faith in God's promise, and the sacrifices pointed toward Christ. Hebrews 10:4 states that the blood of bulls and goats could not take away sins.

Avoid teaching works-based religion. Make clear that students obey out of love and gratitude, not to earn God's approval.

SESSION 5 OF 13 • PSALMS OF THE MESSIAH

PSALM 40

The Obedient Servant

Name: _____ Date: _____

KEY VERSE • Psalm 40:7-8

“Then I said, ‘Behold, I come; In the scroll of the book it is written of me. I delight to do Your will, O my God, And Your law is within my heart.’”

1 FILL IN THE BLANKS

1. God lifted David out of the horrible _____ and set his feet on a rock.
2. “Sacrifice and offering You did not _____.”
3. Jesus said, “I have come... to do Your _____, O God.”
4. Hebrews says we are made holy through the offering of Jesus’ body once for _____.
5. After offering one sacrifice, Jesus _____ down at the right hand of God.

WORD BANK: all • desire • pit • will • sat

2 THINK IT THROUGH

- a. What does Psalm 40:1-3 tell us about how God rescues?

- b. Why could animal sacrifices not take away sins?

- c. What does it mean that Jesus delighted to do the Father’s will?

MEMORY VERSE • Psalm 40:8

“I delight to do Your will, O my God, And Your law is within my heart.”

THIS WEEK’S CHALLENGE Pick one thing God has asked you to do that you have been avoiding. Ask Jesus for a heart that delights. Do it this week.

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PRESENTATION

Slide Outline

- 1 Psalm 40**
The Obedient Servant · Session 5 of 13

- 2 Out of the Pit**
David waited; God lifted · Feet on a rock · A new song in his mouth
"He also brought me up out of a horrible pit." (40:2)

- 3 Not Sacrifices Only**
God wanted a heart of obedience · Sacrifices pointed ahead · "My ears You have opened"
"Sacrifice and offering You did not desire." (40:6)

- 4 "Behold, I Come"**
The Son speaks as He comes into the world · "It is written of me" · Hebrews 10:5–7
"I delight to do Your will, O my God." (40:8)

- 5 A Body Prepared**
Hebrews 10:5 · Jesus took a human body to offer it · John 6:38: not My will, but the One who sent Me

- 6 Once for All**
Priests stand: work never done · Jesus sat down: work finished · Hebrews 10:10
"Sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." (Hebrews 10:10)

- 7 A Delighting Heart**
Obey because we are saved · Tell others of God's faithfulness · Ezekiel 36:26–27: a new heart

- 8 Think, Feel, Do**
THINK: What did Jesus' obedience accomplish? · FEEL: What do you feel about a sacrifice made for you? · DO: Obey God joyfully in one area

AFTER THE SESSION

Think · Feel · Do Reflection

Students answer these three questions in the companion web app after the lesson. Use them for a closing conversation or a take-home card.

THINK

What do you think Psalm 40 and Hebrews 10 teach us about why Jesus came and what His obedience did?

FEEL

How do you feel knowing Jesus gladly did the Father's will to rescue you?

DO

What is one specific way you will obey God this week out of gratitude?

LISTEN TO THE LESSON

A short two-voice podcast episode for this session is built into the web app, just before "What We Learned."

SESSION 6 OF 13 • PSALM 41

6

Betrayal by a Close Friend

Jesus knew what a friend's betrayal felt like, and He loved to the end anyway.

KEY VERSE • Psalm 41:9

“Even my own familiar friend in whom I trusted, Who ate my bread, Has lifted up his heel against me.”

THE BIG IDEA

Jesus was betrayed by a friend who ate at His table, just as Psalm 41 said. He knew it was coming and loved His disciples to the end. His faithfulness shows us how to face betrayal, and God's vindication shows us that the faithful are never abandoned.

JESUS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

John 13:1–30 • Matthew 26:14–16, 47–50 • Luke 22:47–48 • John 17:12

SESSION OBJECTIVES

- Students will identify how Psalm 41:9 describes the betrayal of Jesus by Judas (John 13:18).
- Students will observe how Jesus responded to betrayal with love and truth.
- Students will apply the passage by choosing how they will respond when a friend hurts them, and by being faithful friends.

SESSION AT A GLANCE (45 MINUTES)

6 min	Opening: Friends and Trust
7 min	Point 1: Blessed Is He Who Considers the Poor (Psalm 41:1–3)
7 min	Point 2: Whispers and Enemies (Psalm 41:4–8)
11 min	Point 3: The Betrayal (Psalm 41:9; John 13)
8 min	Point 4: God Raises Me Up (Psalm 41:10–13)
4 min	Application: When a Friend Hurts You
2 min	Prayer and Dismissal

Materials: Bible (NKJV), whiteboard or flip chart, the session slides, one handout per student, pens or pencils.
Optional: play the podcast episode for review or for students who missed the session.

TEACHER GUIDE

Teaching Notes — Psalm 41

Opening: Friends and Trust [6 min]

Ask: What makes someone a good friend? Write answers on the board (loyal, kind, keeps secrets, sticks up for you). Then ask: How does it feel when a friend breaks that trust? Let students answer generally; do not ask for names or stories.

Say: “Today we will see that Jesus knows exactly how that feels, and He shows us what to do with it.”

Point 1: Blessed Is He Who Considers the Poor (Psalm 41:1–3) [7 min]

Read:

“Blessed is he who considers the poor; The LORD will deliver him in time of trouble. The LORD will preserve him and keep him alive, And he will be blessed on the earth.” (Psalm 41:1–2)

Explain that the psalm begins with a blessing on people who care for the weak. Jesus did this in everything He did: He healed the sick, fed the hungry, welcomed children and honored the outcast. Ask students for examples from the Gospels.

Point out that this is the same word “blessed” that opens Psalm 1 and closes Psalm 2. Psalm 41 ends the first of the five “books” of the Psalms, and the first book begins and ends with blessing.

Point 2: Whispers and Enemies (Psalm 41:4–8) [7 min]

Read:

“My enemies speak evil of me: ‘When will he die, and his name perish?’ And if he comes to see me, he speaks lies; His heart gathers iniquity to itself; When he goes out, he tells it. All who hate me whisper together against me; Against me they devise my hurt.” (Psalm 41:5–7)

Explain that David is sick and surrounded by people who gossip and wish him harm. They put on a friendly face and then talk behind his back. Ask: Why does gossip hurt so much?

Teacher note: In verse 4 David says, “Heal my soul, for I have sinned against You.” That is David’s own confession. Jesus never sinned, so that line is not applied to Him. This reminds us that the Psalms speak first from David’s life and then reach their fullest meaning in Jesus. Do not skip this point if students notice it.

Point 3: The Betrayal (Psalm 41:9; John 13) [11 min]

Read:

“Even my own familiar friend in whom I trusted, Who ate my bread, Has lifted up his heel against me.” (Psalm 41:9)

Explain the picture. In the ancient Middle East, sharing a meal meant peace and loyalty. If you ate someone’s bread, you were under his protection and he was under yours. To lift the heel against someone means to kick him or treat him with contempt. It was the worst insult to a table friend.

Tell the story of the Last Supper from John 13. Point out: Jesus had “loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end” (13:1). He got up, took a towel, and washed His disciples’ feet, including the feet of Judas. Then He said,

“I do not speak concerning all of you. I know whom I have chosen; but that the Scripture may be fulfilled, ‘He who eats bread with Me has lifted up his heel against Me.’” (John 13:18)

Show the moment of the bread (John 13:26): Jesus dipped the bread and gave it to Judas. In that culture, giving a dipped piece of bread was a gesture of honor and friendship. Jesus offered love one last time. Judas still went out. Teach carefully: Judas made his own choice; he was not a puppet. John 17:12 says Judas was lost “that the Scripture might be fulfilled,” yet his responsibility was real (Luke 22:22).

Show the betrayal in the garden:

“Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?” (Luke 22:48)

Even then Jesus called him “friend” (Matthew 26:50). Judas had been paid thirty pieces of silver (Matthew 26:15), the price of an injured slave (Exodus 21:32).

Teaching point: Jesus was not caught off guard. He knew, and He still chose to go to the cross for the very people who failed Him: Judas’s fellow disciples all ran away, and Peter denied Him. Later Jesus restored Peter (John 21). Jesus’ love does not depend on our performance.

Point 4: God Raises Me Up (Psalm 41:10–13) [8 min]

Read:

“But You, O LORD, be merciful to me, and raise me up... By this I know that You are well pleased with me, Because my enemy does not triumph over me. As for me, You uphold me in my integrity, And set me before Your face forever.” (Psalm 41:10–12)

Explain that the psalm does not leave David in his pain. God upholds him. For Jesus, this shows up in the resurrection: the Father raised Him, vindicated Him, and set Him in His presence forever. Judas’s plan did not win.

The last verse of Psalm 41 is a doxology that closes Book 1 of the Psalms:

“Blessed be the LORD God of Israel From everlasting to everlasting! Amen and Amen.” (Psalm 41:13)

Even a psalm about betrayal ends in worship.

Application: When a Friend Hurts You [4 min]

Give three practical points. First, take the hurt to Jesus; He knows. Second, forgive, as Jesus prayed, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do” (Luke 23:34), and do not take revenge. Third, be a faithful friend. Ask: Is there someone I have let down? How can I make it right?

If a student is being bullied or hurt in a serious way, encourage them to tell a trusted adult. Forgiving someone does not mean staying in unsafe situations.

Prayer and Dismissal [2 min]

Pray the prayer below. Review the memory verse together. Hand out the worksheet and remind students of the Think, Feel, Do reflection.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why is betrayal by a friend more painful than an attack by an enemy?
2. How did Jesus treat Judas even when He knew what Judas would do?
3. What do you think it means that Jesus “loved them to the end”?
4. What is the difference between forgiving someone and trusting them again?
5. How can you be a loyal friend this week?

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord Jesus, thank You that You understand what it feels like when a friend lets us down. Thank You for loving Your disciples to the end. Help us to forgive those who hurt us, and to be faithful friends. Thank You that You uphold us and will set us before Your face forever. In Your name, amen.

FOR THE TEACHER

Background Notes: Culture, History and Society

These notes are for your preparation. Share what fits your students and your time.

About the psalm

Psalm 41 is a psalm of David and closes Book 1 of the Psalter (Psalms 1–41). Book 1 opens with the word “blessed” (Psalm 1:1), and Psalm 41 opens with “blessed” (41:1) and ends with “Blessed be the LORD” (41:13). The first book is bracketed with blessing.

The occasion is not named. David is seriously ill, and his enemies hope he will die. A friend has turned against him. Many Bible teachers connect this to Ahithophel, David’s counselor, who joined Absalom’s revolt (2 Samuel 15:12; 16:23). Teachers should be aware that this is a suggestion, not a certainty.

Culture: table fellowship and betrayal

In the ancient Middle East, eating together created a bond of loyalty. A host was bound to protect his guest, and the guest was bound to remain loyal. Betraying someone who had shared his bread was a violation of one of the deepest social expectations.

“Lifted up his heel against me” is a figure of speech. It may picture a horse rearing to kick or a wrestler tripping an opponent. Either way it means a hostile act.

At the Last Supper (a Passover meal), guests reclined on couches around a low table. Foot washing was normally the job of the lowest household servant. When Jesus washed the disciples’ feet, He took the lowest place. Dipping bread into the common dish and handing it to someone was a mark of favor to the guest of honor.

Thirty pieces of silver was the compensation due to a master whose slave was gored by an ox (Exodus 21:32). Zechariah 11:12–13 tells of thirty pieces of silver thrown to the potter. Matthew 26:15 and 27:3–10 connect this to Judas.

Teaching cautions

John 13:18 says, “that the Scripture may be fulfilled,” but this does not turn Judas into a puppet. The Gospels teach both God’s plan and Judas’s guilt (Luke 22:22; Matthew 26:24). Keep both in balance.

Do not dwell on Judas’s death. Focus on Jesus’ love and the call to faithful friendship.

Students may be dealing with bullying, family betrayal or broken friendships. Listen carefully. Encourage them to talk to a trusted adult. Know your church’s procedures for reporting concerns.

David’s confession in 41:4 is his own. Teach that the New Testament quotes the betrayal line (v. 9), not the confession.

SESSION 6 OF 13 • PSALMS OF THE MESSIAH

PSALM 41

Betrayal by a Close Friend

Name: _____ Date: _____

KEY VERSE • Psalm 41:9

“Even my own familiar friend in whom I trusted, Who ate my bread, Has lifted up his heel against me.”

1 FILL IN THE BLANKS

1. Psalm 41 begins with the word “_____.”
2. “Who ate my bread has lifted up his _____ against me.”
3. Jesus washed the disciples’ _____ at the Last Supper.
4. The betrayer was _____ Iscariot.
5. “You uphold me in my _____, and set me before Your face forever.”

WORD BANK: Judas • heel • feet • integrity • Blessed

2 THINK IT THROUGH

- a. What did sharing a meal mean in ancient times?

- b. How did Jesus treat Judas even though He knew?

- c. What happens at the end of Psalm 41?

MEMORY VERSE • Psalm 41:12

“As for me, You uphold me in my integrity, And set me before Your face forever.”

THIS WEEK’S CHALLENGE Pray for someone who has hurt you. Ask Jesus to help you forgive. Then do one kind thing for a friend this week.

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PRESENTATION

Slide Outline

- 1 Psalm 41**
Betrayal by a Close Friend · Session 6 of 13
- 2 What Makes a Good Friend?**
Loyal, kind, trustworthy · How does it feel when trust is broken?
- 3 Blessed Is He Who Cares**
Care for the weak · Jesus healed, fed and welcomed · First book of the Psalms begins and ends with blessing
"Blessed is he who considers the poor." (41:1)
- 4 Whispers**
David is sick and surrounded · Gossip and fake friends · Jesus faced hatred too
- 5 The Betrayal**
Table fellowship = loyalty · "Lifted up his heel" = hostile act · John 13:18
"Who ate my bread, has lifted up his heel against me." (41:9)
- 6 Jesus Loved to the End**
He washed Judas's feet · He gave Judas the bread · He called him "friend"
"Having loved His own... He loved them to the end." (John 13:1)
- 7 God Raises Me Up**
The psalm ends with confidence · The Father raised Jesus · He is set before God's face forever
"You uphold me in my integrity." (41:12)
- 8 Think, Feel, Do**
THINK: How did Jesus respond to betrayal? · FEEL: What do you feel when you think of Jesus' love for Judas? · DO: Forgive and be a faithful friend

AFTER THE SESSION

Think · Feel · Do Reflection

Students answer these three questions in the companion web app after the lesson. Use them for a closing conversation or a take-home card.

THINK

What do you think Psalm 41 and John 13 teach us about how Jesus responded to betrayal?

FEEL

How do you feel knowing that Jesus understands being hurt by a friend?

DO

What is one way you will forgive someone or be a more faithful friend this week?

LISTEN TO THE LESSON

A short two-voice podcast episode for this session is built into the web app, just before "What We Learned."

SESSION 7 OF 13 • PSALM 45

7

The Divine King and His Bride

A royal wedding song that turns out to be about the Son of God and the people He loves.

KEY VERSE • Psalm 45:6

“Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom.”

THE BIG IDEA

Psalm 45 is a love song for a royal wedding, but the Book of Hebrews says the King in this psalm is the Son, whose throne is God’s throne forever. Jesus is the Divine King, and His bride is His people, whom He loves and presents to Himself in glory.

JESUS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Hebrews 1:8–9 • Ephesians 5:25–27 • 2 Corinthians 11:2 • Revelation 19:7–9

SESSION OBJECTIVES

- Students will describe the King of Psalm 45 and explain why Hebrews 1:8–9 applies it to Jesus.
- Students will explain that Psalm 45 teaches the deity of the Son: “Your throne, O God, is forever and ever.”
- Students will understand the image of the church as Christ’s bride and respond with trust and loyalty.

SESSION AT A GLANCE (45 MINUTES)

4 min	Opening: A Wedding Song
6 min	Point 1: A Good Theme (Psalm 45:1–2)
8 min	Point 2: The Warrior King (Psalm 45:3–5)
10 min	Point 3: “Your Throne, O God” (Psalm 45:6–7)
8 min	Point 4: The King’s Bride (Psalm 45:10–15)
4 min	Point 5: A Name Remembered (Psalm 45:16–17)
4 min	Application and Prayer
1 min	Review and Dismissal

Materials: Bible (NKJV), whiteboard or flip chart, the session slides, one handout per student, pens or pencils.
Optional: play the podcast episode for review or for students who missed the session.

TEACHER GUIDE

Teaching Notes — Psalm 45

Opening: A Wedding Song [4 min]

Ask: What happens at a wedding? List things on the board (a ceremony, a feast, a bride in a special dress, music, promises). Ask students what they think the most important part is. (The promises and the love between two people.)

Say: “Psalm 45 was sung at a royal wedding. But the Holy Spirit had something even bigger in mind. Today we will see a wedding that involves Jesus.”

Point 1: A Good Theme (Psalm 45:1–2) [6 min]

Read:

“My heart is overflowing with a good theme; I recite my composition concerning the King; My tongue is the pen of a ready writer. You are fairer than the sons of men; Grace is poured upon Your lips; Therefore God has blessed You forever.” (Psalm 45:1–2)

Explain that the writer is a poet (the psalm is written by the Sons of Korah, who were temple musicians). He can’t stop writing about the King. Ask: What is something you could talk about for hours because you love it so much? Say that we should feel this way about Jesus.

Notice “grace is poured upon Your lips.” People were amazed at the gracious words that came from Jesus’ mouth (Luke 4:22). He is “fairer than the sons of men.” His beauty is not only appearance, but character.

Point 2: The Warrior King (Psalm 45:3–5) [8 min]

Read:

“Gird Your sword upon Your thigh, O Mighty One, With Your glory and Your majesty. And in Your majesty ride prosperously Because of truth, humility, and righteousness; And Your right hand shall teach You awesome things.” (Psalm 45:3–4)

Explain that this King goes into battle, but notice why: truth, humility and righteousness. He fights for good. Compare to Revelation 19:11, where the rider on the white horse is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war.

Teaching point: Jesus is strong and gentle at the same time. He is humble, and yet He is the Mighty One.

Point 3: “Your Throne, O God” (Psalm 45:6–7) [10 min]

Read:

“Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom. You love righteousness and hate wickedness; Therefore God, Your God, has anointed You With the oil of gladness more than Your companions.” (Psalm 45:6–7)

This is the key moment. The writer calls the King “God.” Then read Hebrews 1:8–9, where the writer says that the Father speaks these words to the Son.

“But to the Son He says: ‘Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your Kingdom.’” (Hebrews 1:8)

Point out that the same verse says, “God, Your God, has anointed You.” That shows that the Father and the Son are distinct persons (the Father anoints the Son) and yet the Son is called God. Jesus is fully God and the eternal King. His kingdom is righteous, and it will never end (Luke 1:33).

Teacher note: In Psalm 45, the king is first an Israelite king, and the language of verse 6 is surprising even for a king. The writer of Hebrews, guided by the Holy Spirit, shows that the verse reaches its full meaning only in the Son. Jesus accepted worship (Matthew 14:33; John 20:28), and Thomas called Him “My Lord and my God.”

Ask: What does it mean to you that the King who rules the universe is also the One who loves righteousness and gave Himself for you?

Point 4: The King’s Bride (Psalm 45:10–15) [8 min]

Read:

“Listen, O daughter, consider and incline your ear; Forget your own people also, and your father’s house; So the King will greatly desire your beauty; Because He is your Lord, worship Him.” (Psalm 45:10–11)

Describe the scene: the princess is leaving her old home to join the king. She is dressed in gold, led in with joy and gladness into the king’s palace (45:13–15). In the ancient world, a bride joined her husband’s household and took on his name.

Now connect to the New Testament. Show Ephesians 5:25–27:

“Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.”

Explain: The “bride” is the church, all believers, boys and girls, men and women. The picture is about loving relationship, not about gender. Jesus loves His people the way a bridegroom loves his bride. Paul says,

“I betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.” (2 Corinthians 11:2)

Show Revelation 19:7:

“Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.”

One day, the wedding feast will take place.

Point 5: A Name Remembered (Psalm 45:16–17) [4 min]

Read:

“I will make Your name to be remembered in all generations; Therefore the peoples shall praise You forever and ever.” (Psalm 45:17)

This is a promise. Millions have praised Jesus’ name for 2,000 years, and the song continues.

Application and Prayer [4 min]

Ask students: If Jesus is the King who loves you like a bridegroom, what does it look like to be loyal to Him? (Prayer, obedience, worship, living for Him.) Pray the prayer below.

Review and Dismissal [1 min]

Say the memory verse together. Hand out the worksheet and remind students of the Think, Feel, Do reflection.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How do you feel when you hear that the King of Psalm 45 is Jesus?
2. What does Hebrews 1:8 teach about who Jesus is?
3. What are some ways the King in Psalm 45 is both strong and humble?
4. Why do you think the Bible uses a wedding to describe Jesus and His people?
5. What does it look like to be loyal to Jesus in your everyday life?

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord Jesus, You are the King whose throne is forever and ever. Thank You that You love righteousness and that You love us. Thank You for being the Bridegroom who gave Himself for His people. Help us to listen, to honor You, and to be loyal to You every day. In Your name, amen.

FOR THE TEACHER

Background Notes: Culture, History and Society

These notes are for your preparation. Share what fits your students and your time.

About the psalm

The title reads, “A Contemplation of the sons of Korah. A Song of Love,” set to “The Lilies” (Shoshannim). The sons of Korah were a family of temple musicians and gatekeepers (1 Chronicles 6:31–38; 9:19). Psalms 42–49 are in their collection.

The psalm is a royal wedding song, one of only a few in the Bible. Bible scholars have suggested that it was composed for Solomon or another king of David’s line. The mention of “the daughter of Tyre” (45:12) suggests a foreign princess. The identity of the king is not named, which helps the psalm speak beyond one wedding.

Culture: a royal wedding in ancient Israel

A royal marriage was a public celebration and often a political alliance. The bride was escorted in procession to the palace, dressed in gold-woven garments and accompanied by her attendants. The king himself was anointed and perfumed with myrrh, aloes and cassia (45:8), costly spices imported from distant lands. “Ivory palaces” (45:8) refer to buildings decorated with carved ivory, like those of Ahab (1 Kings 22:39).

A bride was expected to leave her father’s house and join her husband’s household (45:10). Forgetting “your own people” meant a change of loyalty and identity. That is part of why Paul can compare the church’s relationship to Christ with a bride’s devotion.

“Gold of Ophir” (45:9) was among the finest gold known, brought by sea to Solomon (1 Kings 9:28).

The deity of the Son in Psalm 45:6

The Hebrew of verse 6 reads “Your throne, O God (elohim), is forever and ever.” Some modern translations suggest alternative renderings such as “Your throne is God’s throne.” But Hebrews 1:8 quotes the Greek Septuagint in a form that addresses the Son as God (ho theos). The NKJV reads “O God.” The writer of Hebrews uses this passage as part of a chain of Scriptures demonstrating that the Son is superior to angels.

Verses 6 and 7 together show the Father and the Son as distinct persons (“God, Your God, has anointed You”) while the Son is also called God. This fits the New Testament’s teaching on the Trinity. Do not oversimplify; rely on Scripture.

Teaching cautions

Middle schoolers may find wedding imagery awkward. Keep the discussion focused on loyalty, love and promise. Make clear that “bride” refers to the whole church, men and women, boys and girls.

Avoid speculation about the identity of the earthly king. The New Testament emphasis is on the King who is greater than Solomon (Matthew 12:42).

SESSION 7 OF 13 • PSALMS OF THE MESSIAH

PSALM 45

The Divine King and His Bride

Name: _____ Date: _____

KEY VERSE • Psalm 45:6

*“Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom.”***1 FILL IN THE BLANKS**

1. Psalm 45 is a song for a royal _____.
2. “Your throne, O _____, is forever and ever.”
3. The King is a warrior for truth, _____ and righteousness.
4. The New Testament says the _____ is Christ’s bride.
5. “I will make Your name to be remembered in all _____.”

WORD BANK: church • generations • God • humility • wedding**2 THINK IT THROUGH**

- a. Why does Hebrews 1:8 quote Psalm 45:6?

- b. What is the King like in verses 3–7?

- c. Who is the bride, according to Ephesians 5?

MEMORY VERSE • Psalm 45:6

“Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom.”

THIS WEEK’S CHALLENGE Write a short “love song” or poem to Jesus (even four lines). Tell Him one thing you admire about Him. Share it with someone if you want.

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PRESENTATION

Slide Outline

- 1 Psalm 45**
The Divine King and His Bride · Session 7 of 13

- 2 A Wedding Song**
A song of love for the King · The poet's heart overflows · Written by the sons of Korah
"My heart is overflowing with a good theme." (45:1)

- 3 The Warrior King**
Strong and gentle · Fights for truth, humility, righteousness · Revelation 19:11: Faithful and True
"Because of truth, humility, and righteousness." (45:4)

- 4 "Your Throne, O God"**
The King is called God · Hebrews 1:8–9: the Father speaks to the Son · Anointed with the oil of gladness
"Your throne, O God, is forever and ever." (45:6)

- 5 The Bride**
Listen, consider, incline your ear · Leave the old life behind · The King desires her beauty
"Because He is your Lord, worship Him." (45:11)

- 6 The Church Is His Bride**
Ephesians 5:25–27: Christ loved the church · 2 Corinthians 11:2: betrothed to one husband · Revelation 19:7: the marriage of the Lamb

- 7 A Name Remembered**
All generations will remember · All peoples will praise Him · The song goes on forever
"I will make Your name to be remembered in all generations." (45:17)

- 8 Think, Feel, Do**
THINK: What does Psalm 45 say about Jesus? · FEEL: What do you feel about a King who loves you? · DO: Be loyal to Jesus this week

AFTER THE SESSION

Think · Feel · Do Reflection

Students answer these three questions in the companion web app after the lesson. Use them for a closing conversation or a take-home card.

THINK

What do you think Psalm 45 and Hebrews 1 teach us about who Jesus is?

FEEL

How do you feel knowing that the King of kings loves His people like a bridegroom loves his bride?

DO

What is one way you will show loyalty and worship to Jesus this week?

LISTEN TO THE LESSON

A short two-voice podcast episode for this session is built into the web app, just before "What We Learned."

SESSION 8 OF 13 • PSALM 69

8 The Zealous Sufferer

Hated without a cause, burning for God's house, and given vinegar to drink.

KEY VERSE • Psalm 69:9

“Because zeal for Your house has eaten me up, And the reproaches of those who reproach You have fallen on me.”

THE BIG IDEA

Jesus burned with zeal for His Father's house, was hated without a cause, took the insults aimed at God, and was given vinegar to drink on the cross. Psalm 69 shows us a Savior who suffered for love of God and for us, and it ends with praise.

JESUS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

John 2:13–17 • John 15:22–25 • Romans 15:3 • Matthew 27:34, 48 • John 19:28–30 • Acts 1:20

SESSION OBJECTIVES

- Students will identify how Psalm 69 connects to specific moments in the life and death of Jesus.
- Students will explain what “zeal for God's house” looked like in Jesus' life.
- Students will respond to Christ's suffering with praise and a desire to love God more than comfort.

SESSION AT A GLANCE (45 MINUTES)

5 min	Opening: What Burns in You?
8 min	Point 1: Deep Waters (Psalm 69:1–4)
10 min	Point 2: Zeal for God's House (Psalm 69:6–9)
8 min	Point 3: Gall and Vinegar (Psalm 69:20–21)
6 min	Point 4: A Verse Applied to Judas (Psalm 69:25; Acts 1:20)
6 min	Point 5: Praise at the End (Psalm 69:29–36)
1 min	Application and Prayer
1 min	Dismissal

Materials: Bible (NKJV), whiteboard or flip chart, the session slides, one handout per student, pens or pencils.
Optional: play the podcast episode for review or for students who missed the session.

TEACHER GUIDE

Teaching Notes — Psalm 69

Opening: What Burns in You? [5 min]

Ask: What are you really passionate about? (A sport, a hobby, a friend, a cause.) How do you act when something matters that much to you? Let a few students share. Then say: “Zeal is a very strong passion. Today we meet Someone whose zeal for God was stronger than anything.”

Point 1: Deep Waters (Psalm 69:1–4) [8 min]

Read:

“Save me, O God! For the waters have come up to my neck. I sink in deep mire, Where there is no standing; I have come into deep waters, Where the floods overflow me. I am weary with my crying; My throat is dry; My eyes fail while I wait for my God.” (Psalm 69:1–3)

Describe the picture: quicksand, rising water, no place to stand. Ask: Have you ever felt like everything was too much? This is a prayer for those moments. It is a real prayer in the Bible.

Read verse 4: “Those who hate me without a cause Are more than the hairs of my head.” Then read Jesus’ words in John 15:25:

“But this happened that the word might be fulfilled which is written in their law, ‘They hated Me without a cause.’”

Jesus helped people, healed people and taught the truth, and still He was hated.

Teaching point: Jesus did not deserve any of the hatred. He was innocent. His enemies could not find any real fault in Him (Luke 23:4, 14–15).

Point 2: Zeal for God’s House (Psalm 69:6–9) [10 min]

Read:

“I have become a stranger to my brothers, And an alien to my mother’s children; Because zeal for Your house has eaten me up, And the reproaches of those who reproach You have fallen on me.” (Psalm 69:8–9)

Connect with John 7:5: even Jesus’ own brothers did not believe in Him at first. Then tell the story of John 2:13–17. At Passover, Jesus found people selling animals and changing money in the temple courts.

“When He had made a whip of cords, He drove them all out of the temple... And He said... ‘Do not make My Father’s house a house of merchandise!’ Then His disciples remembered that it was written, ‘Zeal for Your house has eaten Me up.’”

Explain: Jesus was not having a temper tantrum. He was grieved that the place meant for prayer and for the nations to worship had become a marketplace (Mark 11:17). His anger came from love for God and for people who were being shut out.

Now read Romans 15:3:

“For even Christ did not please Himself; but as it is written, ‘The reproaches of those who reproached You fell on Me.’”

Explain that when people insulted God, the insults fell on Jesus. He took the shame and hostility meant for the Father. Jesus lived for His Father’s honor, not His own comfort.

Teacher note: In verse 5 David says, “O God, You know my foolishness; And my sins are not hidden from You.” That is David’s own confession. Jesus had no sin, so the New Testament does not apply verse 5 to Him.

Point 3: Gall and Vinegar (Psalm 69:20–21) [8 min]

Read:

“Reproach has broken my heart, And I am full of heaviness; I looked for sympathy, but there was none; And for comforters, but I found none. They also gave me gall for my food, And for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.” (Psalm 69:20–21)

Show Matthew 27:34 and John 19:28–30. At the cross, they offered Jesus wine mixed with gall, and He refused it. Later, Jesus said, “I thirst!” They filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on hyssop, and held it to His mouth. After He received it, Jesus said, “It is finished!” and gave up His spirit. John says this happened “that the Scripture might be fulfilled.”

Explain that these details are small, but they show God’s attention to every part of His plan. Remind students that the psalm says Jesus “looked for sympathy, but there was none.” The disciples had fled. He suffered alone for us.

Point 4: A Verse Applied to Judas (Psalm 69:25; Acts 1:20) [6 min]

Read Psalm 69:25:

“Let their dwelling place be desolate; Let no one live in their tents.”

Then show Acts 1:16–20, where Peter says this Scripture was about Judas and quotes it when the apostles chose a replacement.

Teach carefully. Some psalms ask God for justice against evildoers. These are called imprecatory psalms. They are not permission for us to take revenge. Jesus told us to love our enemies and pray for them (Matthew 5:44), and He prayed for His own killers (Luke 23:34). We leave justice to God (Romans 12:19).

Point 5: Praise at the End (Psalm 69:29–36) [6 min]

Read:

“But I am poor and sorrowful; Let Your salvation, O God, set me up on high. I will praise the name of God with a song, And will magnify Him with thanksgiving.” (Psalm 69:29–30)

Then verse 32:

“The humble shall see this and be glad; And you who seek God, your hearts shall live.”

Point out the pattern: suffering first, then glory. It matches Jesus’ story: cross, then resurrection and exaltation (Philippians 2:8–11). The Savior’s sufferings end with praise, and so can ours.

Application and Prayer [1 min]

Ask: What would it look like to burn with zeal for God this week? Pray the prayer below. Say the memory verse together.

Dismissal [1 min]

Hand out the worksheet and remind students of the Think, Feel, Do reflection.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What does it mean to have “zeal” for God’s house? How did Jesus show it?
2. Why do you think people hated Jesus without a cause?
3. What does Romans 15:3 mean when it says the reproaches of those who reproached God fell on Jesus?
4. How does knowing that Jesus “looked for sympathy, but there was none” help you when you feel alone?
5. Why does Psalm 69 end with praise?

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord Jesus, thank You for burning with love for Your Father’s house and for us. Thank You for taking the insults and the sin that belonged to us. Give us hearts that love God more than comfort and help us to praise You with a song. In Your name, amen.

FOR THE TEACHER

Background Notes: Culture, History and Society

These notes are for your preparation. Share what fits your students and your time.

About the psalm

Psalm 69 is a psalm of David, “set to The Lilies.” It is one of the most quoted psalms in the New Testament after Psalms 22 and 110, with citations in John 2:17, John 15:25, Romans 15:3, Romans 11:9–10, Matthew 27:34, 48, John 19:28–29 and Acts 1:20.

Like Psalm 22, it moves from deep suffering to praise. In the first half David cries out (vv. 1–29), and in the second half he praises (vv. 30–36).

Culture: the temple, the sellers and the vinegar

The temple in Jerusalem had large outer courts. The Court of the Gentiles was the only place where non-Jews could come to pray. At Passover, thousands of pilgrims arrived and needed animals for sacrifice and the temple tax, which had to be paid in a particular coin (the Tyrian shekel). Merchants and money changers set up in the courts and made profit, often unfairly. Jesus’ cleansing of the temple protected the Gentiles’ place of prayer and condemned greed.

Jesus cleansed the temple at the start of His ministry (John 2) and again near its end (Matthew 21:12–13; Mark 11:15–17). Both times He quoted Scripture.

“Gall” refers to a bitter substance, probably a poisonous or bitter plant, and Mark records wine mixed with myrrh (Mark 15:23). It was a mild sedative offered to ease the pain of the condemned. Jesus refused it, choosing to face the cross fully conscious. Later He accepted sour wine (vinegar, probably the cheap wine soldiers drank) in answer to His thirst, on a branch of hyssop (John 19:29). Hyssop was also the plant used to apply the Passover lamb’s blood in Egypt (Exodus 12:22).

About imprecatory language

Verses 22–28 call down judgment on enemies. These are not personal revenge fantasies; they are prayers for God to bring justice. In Romans 11:9–10, Paul uses verses 22–23 to speak of Israel’s hardening, and Acts 1:20 applies verse 25 to Judas.

Teach that the psalmist leaves vengeance with God rather than taking it himself. Never use these verses to justify harming others. Note also that verse 28 mentions the “book of the living,” a reminder that God knows His own.

Teaching cautions

Verse 5 is David’s own confession of folly and sin, not applied to Jesus.

Be calm and clear when students ask about the harsh language in 69:22–28. Tie it to Jesus’ call to love enemies, and to God’s justice and mercy.

Some students may feel overwhelmed by troubles (verses 1–3). Affirm that the Bible gives them words to pray. If a student seems seriously distressed, speak with them privately and involve appropriate adults.

SESSION 8 OF 13 • PSALMS OF THE MESSIAH

PSALM 69

The Zealous Sufferer

Name: _____ Date: _____

KEY VERSE • Psalm 69:9

“Because zeal for Your house has eaten me up, And the reproaches of those who reproach You have fallen on me.”

1 FILL IN THE BLANKS

1. “Zeal for Your _____ has eaten me up.”
2. They hated Me without a _____.
3. They gave me gall for my food, and for my thirst they gave me _____ to drink.
4. Jesus cleansed the _____ because it had become a marketplace.
5. “I will _____ the name of God with a song.”

WORD BANK: temple • vinegar • cause • house • praise**2 THINK IT THROUGH**

- a. How did Jesus show zeal for God’s house?

- b. What details of Psalm 69 match the cross?

- c. What do you think the psalm teaches about suffering and praise?

MEMORY VERSE • Psalm 69:30

“I will praise the name of God with a song, And will magnify Him with thanksgiving.”

THIS WEEK’S CHALLENGE Choose one way to show that you care about God’s house this week: help at church, pray for your pastor, or invite a friend. Do it with a whole heart.

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PRESENTATION

Slide Outline

- 1 **Psalm 69**
The Zealous Sufferer · Session 8 of 13
- 2 **What Burns in You?**
Passion shows what matters · Zeal = strong, burning love
- 3 **Deep Waters**
Sinking in mire · Hated without a cause · John 15:25
“Those who hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of my head.” (69:4)
- 4 **Zeal for God’s House**
John 2: Jesus cleanses the temple · Grief and love, not a tantrum · Romans 15:3: the reproaches fell on Him
“Zeal for Your house has eaten me up.” (69:9)
- 5 **Gall and Vinegar**
Matthew 27:34: gall refused · John 19:28–30: “I thirst” and sour wine · “I looked for sympathy, but there was none”
“For my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.” (69:21)
- 6 **Justice and Mercy**
Acts 1:20 applies verse 25 to Judas · Imprecatory psalms ask God for justice · Jesus says to love your enemies
- 7 **Praise at the End**
Suffering, then praise · The humble will be glad · Those who seek God will live
“I will praise the name of God with a song.” (69:30)
- 8 **Think, Feel, Do**
THINK: How does Psalm 69 point to Jesus? · FEEL: What do you feel about what He suffered? · DO: Show zeal for God this week

AFTER THE SESSION

Think · Feel · Do Reflection

Students answer these three questions in the companion web app after the lesson. Use them for a closing conversation or a take-home card.

THINK

What do you think Psalm 69 teaches us about what Jesus experienced and why?

FEEL

How do you feel knowing that Jesus took the hatred and insults and still loved?

DO

What is one way you will show zeal for God or praise Him this week?

LISTEN TO THE LESSON

A short two-voice podcast episode for this session is built into the web app, just before “What We Learned.”

SESSION 9 OF 13 • PSALM 72

9

The Righteous King's Endless Reign

A coronation prayer for a perfect king, and a portrait of the only One who is.

KEY VERSE • Psalm 72:17

"His name shall endure forever; His name shall continue as long as the sun. And men shall be blessed in Him; All nations shall call Him blessed."

THE BIG IDEA

Psalm 72 prays for a king who rules with perfect justice, rescues the poor, reigns from sea to sea and is blessed by every nation forever. Solomon and every later king fell short. Jesus is the King the psalm is really about.

JESUS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Luke 4:18–21 • Matthew 2:11 • Matthew 12:42 • Revelation 11:15

SESSION OBJECTIVES

- Students will describe the perfect king portrayed in Psalm 72 and how Solomon fell short of it.
- Students will connect the psalm to Jesus' mission to the poor, His worship by the nations and His eternal reign.
- Students will respond by trusting Jesus as King and caring for people in need.

SESSION AT A GLANCE (45 MINUTES)

5 min	Opening: A Perfect Ruler
8 min	Point 1: A King of Justice (Psalm 72:1–4)
7 min	Point 2: A Reign That Never Ends (Psalm 72:5–7)
8 min	Point 3: From Sea to Sea (Psalm 72:8–11)
7 min	Point 4: A Rescuer With a Heart (Psalm 72:12–14)
6 min	Point 5: A Blessing for All Nations (Psalm 72:15–19)
2 min	Application and Prayer
2 min	Dismissal

Materials: Bible (NKJV), whiteboard or flip chart, the session slides, one handout per student, pens or pencils.
Optional: play the podcast episode for review or for students who missed the session.

TEACHER GUIDE

Teaching Notes — Psalm 72

Opening: A Perfect Ruler [5 min]

Ask: If you could design the perfect ruler, what would he or she be like? List qualities on the board (fair, wise, kind, strong, cares for the poor). Say: “Psalm 72 is a prayer that describes exactly this kind of ruler.”

Add that ancient kings were often selfish and cruel, so this was a bold prayer.

Point 1: A King of Justice (Psalm 72:1–4) [8 min]

Read:

“Give the king Your judgments, O God, And Your righteousness to the king’s Son. He will judge Your people with righteousness, And Your poor with justice... He will bring justice to the poor of the people; He will save the children of the needy, And will break in pieces the oppressor.” (Psalm 72:1–2, 4)

Notice that the king’s justice is God’s justice, given to him. The psalm prays that the king will do God’s job on earth: protect those who cannot protect themselves. Ask: Who are the “poor” and “needy” today? (The hungry, refugees, orphans, the bullied.)

Show Jesus in the synagogue (Luke 4:18–21):

“The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed.”

He then said,

“Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”

Jesus is the King who cares for the poor.

Point 2: A Reign That Never Ends (Psalm 72:5–7) [7 min]

Read:

“He shall come down like rain upon the grass before mowing, Like showers that water the earth. In His days the righteous shall flourish, And abundance of peace, Until the moon is no more.” (Psalm 72:6–7)

Explain the picture: the grass has just been cut, and the rain comes and makes it grow again. It is a picture of refreshing and new life. The King’s rule makes things flourish. “Peace” here is the Hebrew shalom, meaning wholeness and well-being, not just the absence of fighting.

Read Isaiah 9:6–7 aloud:

“And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no end, Upon the throne of David.”

Connect: this is the same promise of a never-ending reign of peace.

Point 3: From Sea to Sea (Psalm 72:8–11) [8 min]

Read:

“He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, And from the River to the ends of the earth. Those who dwell in the wilderness will bow before Him... The kings of Tarshish and of the isles Will bring presents; The kings of Sheba and Seba Will offer gifts. Yes, all kings shall fall down before Him; All nations shall serve Him.” (Psalm 72:8–11)

On a map, show that Solomon’s kingdom stretched far (1 Kings 4:21), and that the Queen of Sheba brought gifts (1 Kings 10). But the psalm describes more than Solomon ever ruled. Tarshish was probably far to the west; Sheba and Seba were far to the south. “The ends of the earth” goes beyond any ancient kingdom.

Show Matthew 2:11:

“And when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him. And when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts to Him: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.”

The wise men came from the East and bowed to a toddler, just as the psalm said that kings would bow to the King.

Read Revelation 11:15 aloud:

“The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!”

Point 4: A Rescuer With a Heart (Psalm 72:12–14) [7 min]

Read:

“For He will deliver the needy when he cries, The poor also, and him who has no helper. He will spare the poor and needy, And will save the souls of the needy. He will redeem their life from oppression and violence; And precious shall be their blood in His sight.” (Psalm 72:12–14)

Draw attention to “precious shall be their blood in His sight.” Every human life matters to this King. And notice “redeem,” a word that means to buy back. Jesus redeemed us with His own blood (1 Peter 1:18–19). Ask: How does it feel to know you are precious to Jesus?

Point 5: A Blessing for All Nations (Psalm 72:15–19) [6 min]

Read:

“His name shall endure forever; His name shall continue as long as the sun. And men shall be blessed in Him; All nations shall call Him blessed.” (Psalm 72:17)

Compare this with God’s promise to Abraham in Genesis 12:3:

“In you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

The psalm shows the promise reaching its fulfillment in a King from Abraham’s family. Galatians 3:16 says the “Seed” of Abraham is Christ.

Read verses 18–19 as the doxology:

“Blessed be the LORD God, the God of Israel, Who only does wondrous things! And blessed be His glorious name forever! And let the whole earth be filled with His glory. Amen and Amen.”

Explain that these verses close Book 2 of the Psalms, and the last line of verse 20 says, “The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended.”

Application and Prayer [2 min]

Ask: What is one way you can care for the poor or needy this week? (Giving, helping at a food drive, kindness to a lonely student.) Pray the prayer below and say the memory verse.

Dismissal [2 min]

Hand out the worksheet and remind students of the Think, Feel, Do reflection.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What qualities of a good king does Psalm 72 list? Which is most important to you?
2. Why do you think God cares so much about the poor and needy?
3. How was Solomon like the king in this psalm, and how did he fall short?
4. What does it mean that “all nations shall call Him blessed”? How is that happening today?
5. What can you do to be part of the King’s care for the needy?

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord Jesus, You are the righteous King whose reign will never end. Thank You for caring for the poor and needy, and for redeeming us with Your blood. Help us to care for others the way You do. May the whole earth be filled with Your glory. Amen and amen.

FOR THE TEACHER

Background Notes: Culture, History and Society

These notes are for your preparation. Share what fits your students and your time.

About the psalm

Psalm 72 is titled “A Psalm of Solomon.” The Hebrew can mean “of Solomon,” “for Solomon,” or “by Solomon.” Verse 20 closes the section: “The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended.” Many scholars think David prayed this for his son at Solomon’s coronation (1 Kings 1:32–40). Others think Solomon wrote it. In either case, it is a prayer for a righteous king.

Psalm 72 closes Book 2 of the Psalms (Psalms 42–72). Each of the five books of the Psalter ends with a doxology, a short outburst of praise.

Culture: kings, justice and the poor

In the ancient Near East, the king was responsible for justice, especially for the vulnerable: widows, orphans and the poor. Law codes began with claims that the king protected the weak. In practice, many kings failed. Israel’s prophets repeatedly accused kings of neglecting the poor.

Solomon’s kingdom was at its height rich and peaceful (1 Kings 4:20–25). The Queen of Sheba traveled from far away to see his wisdom and brought gifts of spices, gold and jewels (1 Kings 10:1–13). Tarshish was likely a distant western port (possibly in Spain), and Sheba and Seba lay in the south (Arabia and Africa). “The River” is the Euphrates, the northern boundary of Israel’s ideal territory (Genesis 15:18).

Cutting grass for animals was done in the spring. Rain after cutting made the fields grow again, which is a vivid picture for farmers of refreshment and new growth.

The psalm and the Messiah

Solomon’s later life shows why the psalm points beyond him. He loved many foreign wives and turned toward other gods (1 Kings 11:1–8), and the kingdom divided under his son. Jesus said, “Indeed a greater than Solomon is here” (Matthew 12:42).

Ancient Jewish interpreters (for example, the Aramaic Targum of the Psalms) read Psalm 72 as speaking of the King Messiah. Christians see it fulfilled in Jesus. This helps students see that the hope was widely held in Israel.

The visit of the Magi (Matthew 2) is often connected with Psalm 72:10–11 and Isaiah 60:6. Matthew does not quote the psalm directly, so teach this as a connection rather than a formal citation.

Teaching cautions

Avoid political applications. Psalm 72 is not about any modern government. It describes the perfect, righteous reign of Christ.

Be balanced about wealth and poverty. Teach that God cares for the poor and calls His followers to generosity, without implying that the poor are more holy or the rich less.

SESSION 9 OF 13 • PSALMS OF THE MESSIAH

PSALM 72

The Righteous King's Endless Reign

Name: _____ Date: _____

KEY VERSE • Psalm 72:17

"His name shall endure forever; His name shall continue as long as the sun. And men shall be blessed in Him; All nations shall call Him blessed."

1 FILL IN THE BLANKS

1. The king in Psalm 72 judges the _____ with justice.
2. His reign reaches "from _____ to sea."
3. The wise men brought Jesus gold, frankincense and _____.
4. "His _____ shall endure forever."
5. "And let the whole earth be filled with His _____."

WORD BANK: poor • myrrh • sea • glory • name

2 THINK IT THROUGH

- a. Why can we say Solomon did not fully fit this psalm?

- b. How did Jesus show that He cares for the poor?

- c. What does the psalm promise about all nations?

MEMORY VERSE • Psalm 72:19

"Blessed be His glorious name forever! And let the whole earth be filled with His glory. Amen and Amen."

THIS WEEK'S CHALLENGE Find one way to help someone in need this week. Ask your family or church leader about a food drive, donation or service project. Write down what you did.

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PRESENTATION

Slide Outline

- 1 Psalm 72**
The Righteous King's Endless Reign · Session 9 of 13

- 2 The Perfect Ruler**
What would the perfect ruler be like? · Psalm 72 is a prayer for such a king

- 3 Justice for the Poor**
God's justice given to the king · He saves the children of the needy · Luke 4:18–21: Jesus announces good news to the poor
"He will judge Your poor with justice." (72:2)

- 4 A Reign Like Rain**
Refreshing like rain on cut grass · Shalom: wholeness and peace · Isaiah 9:6–7: no end to His government
"In His days the righteous shall flourish." (72:7)

- 5 From Sea to Sea**
Dominion to the ends of the earth · Kings bring gifts · Matthew 2:11: gold, frankincense, myrrh
"All kings shall fall down before Him." (72:11)

- 6 Precious in His Sight**
He rescues those with no helper · He redeems from oppression · "Precious shall be their blood in His sight"
"He will deliver the needy when he cries." (72:12)

- 7 A Blessing to All Nations**
Genesis 12:3: all families blessed · Galatians 3:16: the Seed is Christ · His name endures like the sun
"All nations shall call Him blessed." (72:17)

- 8 Think, Feel, Do**
THINK: Why is Jesus the King of Psalm 72? · FEEL: What do you feel about a King who loves the poor? · DO: Help someone in need this week

AFTER THE SESSION

Think · Feel · Do Reflection

Students answer these three questions in the companion web app after the lesson. Use them for a closing conversation or a take-home card.

THINK

What do you think Psalm 72 teaches us about the kind of King Jesus is?

FEEL

How do you feel knowing that the King of all nations cares about the poor and needy, and about you?

DO

What is one specific way you will care for someone in need this week?

LISTEN TO THE LESSON

A short two-voice podcast episode for this session is built into the web app, just before "What We Learned."

SESSION 10 OF 13 • PSALM 89

10 The Davidic Covenant: God Swears to David

God made an oath that David's Son would reign forever, and kept it in a manger in Bethlehem.

KEY VERSE • Psalm 89:3–4

"I have made a covenant with My chosen, I have sworn to My servant David: 'Your seed I will establish forever, And build up your throne to all generations.'"

THE BIG IDEA

God swore an unbreakable oath that David's offspring and throne would last forever. Even when David's kingdom fell and it looked like God had forgotten, the promise held. Gabriel told Mary that her Son Jesus would receive David's throne and reign forever.

JESUS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Luke 1:26–35 • Matthew 1:1 • Romans 1:3 • Hebrews 1:5 • Revelation 22:16

SESSION OBJECTIVES

- Students will explain what a covenant is and describe God's covenant with David (2 Samuel 7; Psalm 89).
- Students will connect Gabriel's announcement to Mary with the promise to David (Luke 1:32–33).
- Students will respond by trusting that God keeps His promises, even when they seem delayed.

SESSION AT A GLANCE (45 MINUTES)

5 min	Opening: Promises Kept and Broken
7 min	Point 1: God's Promise to David (Psalm 89:1–4; 2 Samuel 7)
5 min	Point 2: The God Who Can Keep His Word (Psalm 89:5–18)
7 min	Point 3: The Chosen King (Psalm 89:19–29)
6 min	Point 4: An Oath That Will Not Be Broken (Psalm 89:30–37)
5 min	Point 5: Where Are Your Promises? (Psalm 89:38–52)
5 min	Point 6: Gabriel and Mary (Luke 1:26–35)
4 min	Application and Prayer
1 min	Dismissal

Materials: Bible (NKJV), whiteboard or flip chart, the session slides, one handout per student, pens or pencils.
Optional: play the podcast episode for review or for students who missed the session.

TEACHER GUIDE

Teaching Notes — Psalm 89

Opening: Promises Kept and Broken [5 min]

Ask: Has anyone ever made you a promise and broken it? How did it feel? Then ask: What makes a promise strong? (The person's character and ability.) Hold up an object such as a ring or a signed paper. Say: "Today we study God's promise sealed with an oath, the strongest kind there is."

Point 1: God's Promise to David (Psalm 89:1–4; 2 Samuel 7) [7 min]

Read:

"I will sing of the mercies of the LORD forever; With my mouth will I make known Your faithfulness to all generations... I have made a covenant with My chosen, I have sworn to My servant David: 'Your seed I will establish forever, And build up your throne to all generations.'" (Psalm 89:1, 3–4)

Briefly tell the background. David wanted to build a house (a temple) for God. Through the prophet Nathan, God replied that He would build David a house (a dynasty). Read 2 Samuel 7:16:

"And your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. Your throne shall be established forever."

Explain "covenant": a binding agreement with promises. This one is sometimes called a "grant" covenant, like a king giving a gift to a loyal servant. God gave the promise freely and swore to keep it.

Ask: What three things did God promise David? (A house/descendants, a kingdom, a throne forever.)

Point 2: The God Who Can Keep His Word (Psalm 89:5–18) [5 min]

Briefly summarize: before returning to David, the psalm praises God's greatness. He rules the raging sea (89:9), made heaven and earth (89:11–12) and His throne is founded on righteousness and justice (89:14). Read:

"Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne; Mercy and truth go before Your face." (Psalm 89:14)

Teaching point: A promise is only as good as the one who makes it. God is both able and faithful.

Point 3: The Chosen King (Psalm 89:19–29) [7 min]

Read:

"I have found My servant David; With My holy oil I have anointed him... He shall cry to Me, 'You are my Father, My God, and the rock of my salvation.' Also I will make him My firstborn, The highest of the kings of the earth. My mercy I will keep for him forever, And My covenant shall stand firm with him. His seed also I will make to endure forever, And his throne as the days of heaven." (Psalm 89:20, 26–29)

Notice the "Father" and "firstborn" language, which echoes Psalm 2. Hebrews 1:5 quotes the promise of 2 Samuel 7:14, "I will be to Him a Father, And He shall be to Me a Son," about Jesus. "Firstborn" in the Bible often means the most honored or highest in rank. Colossians 1:18 calls Jesus "the firstborn from the dead, that in all

things He may have the preeminence.” Ask: What does it mean to be “the highest of the kings of the earth”?

Point 4: An Oath That Will Not Be Broken (Psalm 89:30–37) [6 min]

Read:

“If his sons forsake My law... Then I will punish their transgression with the rod... Nevertheless My lovingkindness I will not utterly take from him, Nor allow My faithfulness to fail. My covenant I will not break, Nor alter the word that has gone out of My lips. Once I have sworn by My holiness; I will not lie to David: His seed shall endure forever, And his throne as the sun before Me.” (Psalm 89:30–36)

Explain that God knew David’s descendants would fail. He promised to correct them but never to cancel the promise. When God swears by His own holiness, there is no higher guarantee. Hebrews 6:13–18 says God swears by Himself because He can swear by no one greater, and that gives us strong encouragement.

Teacher note: “If he commits iniquity” (2 Samuel 7:14) applies to David’s ordinary descendants like Solomon. Jesus never sinned. He fulfills the covenant perfectly.

Point 5: Where Are Your Promises? (Psalm 89:38–52) [5 min]

Read:

“But You have cast off and abhorred, You have been furious with Your anointed... Lord, where are Your former lovingkindnesses, Which You swore to David in Your truth?” (Psalm 89:38, 49)

Explain the shock of the change in tone. The kingdom was crushed, the crown thrown down, and the king humiliated. Many scholars think this describes the fall of Jerusalem around 586 B.C. when the last kings of David’s line were taken to Babylon. Ask: Have you ever prayed and felt like nothing was happening? Assure them that the Bible includes honest prayers like this. Notice that the psalm still ends with praise (89:52):

“Blessed be the LORD forevermore! Amen and Amen.”

Teaching point: The silence was not God’s forgetting. It was waiting for the right time (Galatians 4:4).

Point 6: Gabriel and Mary (Luke 1:26–35) [5 min]

Tell the story of the angel Gabriel visiting Mary in Nazareth, who was engaged to Joseph “of the house of David.” Read Luke 1:32–33:

“He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end.”

Compare Gabriel’s words to 2 Samuel 7:13, 16 and Psalm 89:29, 36. “Throne,” “forever” and “no end” are the covenant’s own words. Mary sang that God had helped Israel “in remembrance of His mercy, As He spoke to our fathers, To Abraham and to his seed forever” (Luke 1:54–55). Matthew begins, “The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David” (Matthew 1:1). In Revelation 22:16 Jesus says, “I am the Root and the Offspring of David.”

Say: “Jesus is the answer to Psalm 89. God did not forget. He kept His oath.”

Application and Prayer [4 min]

Ask: What is a promise from God you are waiting on? Invite students to write it on a note and pray over it. Pray the prayer below. Mention that next week we will study Psalm 132, which is the companion to this promise.

Dismissal [1 min]

Say the memory verse together. Hand out the worksheet and remind students of the Think, Feel, Do reflection.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What is a covenant, and what three things did God promise David?
2. Why did God swear by His own holiness? What does that tell us about the promise?
3. How do you think the people felt during the 600 years without a king of David's line?
4. What similarities do you see between Gabriel's words and Psalm 89?
5. What promise from God encourages you most right now?

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord, we will sing of Your mercies forever. Thank You that You keep Your promises, even when we have to wait. Thank You for keeping Your oath to David by sending Jesus, the King whose kingdom has no end. Help us to trust You in the waiting and to make Your faithfulness known to the next generation. In Jesus' name, amen.

FOR THE TEACHER

Background Notes: Culture, History and Society

These notes are for your preparation. Share what fits your students and your time.

About the psalm

Psalm 89 is a “Contemplation of Ethan the Ezrahite.” Ethan was a wise man in Solomon’s time (1 Kings 4:31) and also a temple musician (1 Chronicles 15:17–19). The psalm closes Book 3 of the Psalter (Psalms 73–89), the darkest of the five books.

It has three movements: praise of God’s faithfulness and covenant (vv. 1–18), the details of God’s promise to David (vv. 19–37), and a lament that the promise appears broken (vv. 38–51), ending with a short doxology (v. 52).

Culture: covenants, dynasty and horn

In the ancient Near East, kings made covenants with servants and nations. A “royal grant” covenant was a king’s gift of land or a dynasty to a loyal servant, given freely and secured by the king’s oath. God’s covenant with David is closest to this model: He granted David a dynasty out of free favor and swore to keep it.

In Israel, a king’s “house” meant his dynasty, the line of descendants who would rule after him. God told David that He would build him a “house” in this sense. “Horn” (89:17, 24) is a symbol of strength and honor, like the horn of a strong bull.

The last king in David’s line to rule was Zedekiah, who was taken to Babylon in 586 B.C. After the exile, Israel was ruled by foreign powers, and the Davidic throne was vacant. There is no mention of a king of David’s line on a throne until Jesus. Both Matthew 1 and Luke 3 trace His family tree to David.

Notes on the text

“Firstborn” (89:27) is a title of honor and rank, not a statement that God created the Messiah. In ancient culture, the firstborn held the place of greatest privilege. This helps explain Colossians 1:15–18.

The sun and moon (89:36–37) are pictured as permanent witnesses in the sky. They serve as a guarantee, not a limit. The promise lasts as long as the heavens and beyond.

The covenant promised a physical descendant who would sit on a throne forever. Early Christians understood that Jesus, the Son of David, rules now from heaven and will rule fully on earth. Different Christian traditions have different views on the timing; teach what is clear from Scripture: Jesus is the promised Son of David, and His kingdom has no end.

Teaching cautions

Do not give the impression that God’s promises always arrive on our timeline. Be honest that waiting is real. Psalm 89 shows that lament is not a lack of faith.

Be careful with the genealogies. Matthew traces Jesus’ legal descent from David through Joseph and Solomon, and Luke’s list is commonly understood as through Mary and Nathan. This is an interesting detail for older

students, but not necessary for this lesson.

SESSION 10 OF 13 • PSALMS OF THE MESSIAH

PSALM 89

The Davidic Covenant: God Swears to David

Name: _____ Date: _____

KEY VERSE • Psalm 89:3-4

"I have made a covenant with My chosen, I have sworn to My servant David: 'Your seed I will establish forever, And build up your throne to all generations.'"

1 FILL IN THE BLANKS

1. A _____ is a serious promise sealed by an oath.
2. God swore, "Your _____ I will establish forever, and build up your throne to all generations."
3. God swore by His own _____ that He would not lie to David.
4. The angel _____ told Mary that her Son would receive David's throne.
5. Of His kingdom there will be no _____.

WORD BANK: end • seed • Gabriel • holiness • covenant

2 THINK IT THROUGH

- a. What did God promise David?

- b. Why does the psalm change in verse 38?

- c. How did Gabriel's words to Mary match the covenant?

MEMORY VERSE • Psalm 89:1

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

THIS WEEK'S CHALLENGE Write down one promise of God from the Bible that you want to trust this week. Look it up and copy it. Pray over it each day.

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PRESENTATION

Slide Outline

- 1 Psalm 89**
The Davidic Covenant: God Swears to David · Session 10 of 13
- 2 Promises**
What makes a promise strong? · God's promise is sealed by an oath
- 3 The Covenant**
2 Samuel 7: a house, a kingdom, a throne · A royal grant: freely given · Sworn to David
"Your seed I will establish forever." (89:4)
- 4 The Chosen King**
Anointed by God's holy oil · "My firstborn, the highest of the kings" · Hebrews 1:5
"His throne as the days of heaven." (89:29)
- 5 An Unbreakable Oath**
Discipline, but no cancellation · God swears by His own holiness · Sun and moon as witnesses
"My covenant I will not break." (89:34)
- 6 Where Are Your Promises?**
The kingdom falls (586 B.C.) · Honest lament in the Bible · Still ends with praise
"Lord, where are Your former lovingkindnesses?" (89:49)
- 7 Gabriel and Mary**
Luke 1:32–33 · "The throne of His father David" · "Of His kingdom there will be no end"
- 8 Think, Feel, Do**
THINK: How did God keep His promise? · FEEL: How does it feel to trust a faithful God? · DO: Trust one promise this week

AFTER THE SESSION

Think · Feel · Do Reflection

Students answer these three questions in the companion web app after the lesson. Use them for a closing conversation or a take-home card.

THINK

What do you think Psalm 89 and Luke 1 teach us about God's faithfulness to His promises?

FEEL

How do you feel when you wait for God to keep a promise, and what does it mean to know He swore an oath?

DO

What is one promise of God you will trust and pray over this week?

LISTEN TO THE LESSON

A short two-voice podcast episode for this session is built into the web app, just before "What We Learned."

SESSION 11 OF 13 • PSALM 132

11

The Davidic Covenant: A Home for God and a King Forever

David longed to build God a home. God promised him a Son, and in that Son God moved in with us.

KEY VERSE • Psalm 132:11

“The LORD has sworn in truth to David; He will not turn from it: ‘I will set upon your throne the fruit of your body.’”

THE BIG IDEA

David could not rest until he found a home for the LORD. God answered by swearing to give David a Son to sit on his throne forever. Peter preached on Pentecost that Jesus is that Son, risen and seated at God’s right hand, and in Jesus God Himself has come to live among His people.

JESUS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Acts 2:29–36 • Luke 1:69 • John 1:14 • John 2:19–21 • Revelation 21:3

SESSION OBJECTIVES

- Students will retell David’s longing to bring the ark to Jerusalem and God’s oath that followed.
- Students will explain how Peter uses Psalm 132:11 in his Pentecost sermon (Acts 2:30).
- Students will see that Jesus is both the promised King and the place where God dwells with people.

SESSION AT A GLANCE (45 MINUTES)

5 min	Opening: A Place to Call Home
8 min	Point 1: David’s Vow (Psalm 132:1–9)
7 min	Point 2: God’s Oath to David (Psalm 132:10–12)
7 min	Point 3: Zion, God’s Chosen Dwelling (Psalm 132:13–16)
4 min	Point 4: A Horn and a Lamp (Psalm 132:17–18)
8 min	Point 5: Peter’s Pentecost Sermon (Acts 2:29–36)
3 min	Application and Prayer
3 min	Dismissal

Materials: Bible (NKJV), whiteboard or flip chart, the session slides, one handout per student, pens or pencils.

Optional: play the podcast episode for review or for students who missed the session.

TEACHER GUIDE

Teaching Notes — Psalm 132

Opening: A Place to Call Home [5 min]

Ask: What makes a house a home? (People, love, belonging.) Where would you go if you wanted to feel closest to God? Let students answer. Say: “David had a deep desire to give God a home on earth. Psalm 132 tells that story, and it shows God’s bigger plan.”

Point 1: David’s Vow (Psalm 132:1–9) [8 min]

Read:

“LORD, remember David And all his afflictions; How he swore to the LORD, And vowed to the Mighty One of Jacob: ‘Surely I will not go into the chamber of my house, Or go up to the comfort of my bed; I will not give sleep to my eyes Or slumber to my eyelids, Until I find a place for the LORD, A dwelling place for the Mighty One of Jacob.’” (Psalm 132:1–5)

Tell the story. The ark of the covenant, the golden chest that held the Ten Commandments and symbolized God’s presence, had been captured by the Philistines, returned, and then left in a house at Kiriath Jearim for about twenty years (1 Samuel 7:1–2). David wanted it in Jerusalem. After one failed attempt, David brought it up with shouting, dancing and trumpets (2 Samuel 6). Read verses 6–8, noting “Ephrathah” (Bethlehem’s region) and “the fields of the woods” (Jaar, short for Kiriath Jearim).

Read verse 8:

“Arise, O LORD, to Your resting place, You and the ark of Your strength.”

Explain that the ark was God’s throne on earth, His “footstool.” Ask: What does David’s passion teach you about how much he loved God?

Point 2: God’s Oath to David (Psalm 132:10–12) [7 min]

Read:

“For Your servant David’s sake, Do not turn away the face of Your Anointed. The LORD has sworn in truth to David; He will not turn from it: ‘I will set upon your throne the fruit of your body. If your sons will keep My covenant And My testimony which I shall teach them, Their sons also shall sit upon your throne forevermore.’” (Psalm 132:10–12)

Explain: This is the same covenant as Psalm 89 but told as an answer to David’s vow. David said, “I will build God a house.” God said, “I will build you a house.” Notice that God swore it “in truth” and “will not turn from it.”

Notice the words “fruit of your body.” That means a physical descendant. God promised David a real person from his own family who would rule. Teaching point: This is not about a building, but a Person.

Point 3: Zion, God's Chosen Dwelling (Psalm 132:13–16) [7 min]

Read:

“For the LORD has chosen Zion; He has desired it for His dwelling place: ‘This is My resting place forever; Here I will dwell, for I have desired it. I will abundantly bless her provision; I will satisfy her poor with bread. I will also clothe her priests with salvation, And her saints shall shout aloud for joy.’” (Psalm 132:13–16)

Explain that God Himself chose Zion (Jerusalem). It wasn't David's idea alone. God says, “I have desired it.” God loves to live with His people. Point out the blessings: bread for the poor, salvation for the priests, joy for the saints.

Connect with the New Testament. John 1:14:

“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory.”

“Dwelt” means “tabernacled” or “pitched His tent.” Jesus is God moving in with us. When Jesus said,

“Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up” (John 2:19)

, He was speaking of His body (John 2:21). He is the true temple, and Matthew 1:23 calls Him “Immanuel,” God with us.

Mention that those who believe become God's dwelling place by the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 2:19–22; 1 Corinthians 3:16), and that Revelation 21:3 promises that one day, “the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them.”

Point 4: A Horn and a Lamp (Psalm 132:17–18) [4 min]

Read:

“There I will make the horn of David grow; I have prepared a lamp for My Anointed. His enemies I will clothe with shame, But upon Himself His crown shall flourish.” (Psalm 132:17–18)

Explain: “Horn” means strength and power, and “lamp” means a continuing line of descendants (1 Kings 11:36). Zechariah, John the Baptist's father, said that God “has raised up a horn of salvation for us In the house of His servant David” (Luke 1:69). Jesus said,

“I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.” (John 8:12)

Point 5: Peter's Pentecost Sermon (Acts 2:29–36) [8 min]

Turn to Acts 2. Remind students that Peter quoted Psalm 16 in this same sermon (Session 3). Peter says:

“Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, He would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne...” (Acts 2:30)

Show the connection: “sworn with an oath” and “the fruit of his body” are the words of Psalm 132:11. Peter is saying that the psalm has come true. Then he says:

“This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses.” (Acts 2:32)

and

“Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.” (Acts 2:36)

Teaching point: God had promised a King from David’s family, and Peter says, “Here He is.” About three thousand people believed that day (Acts 2:41).

Application and Prayer [3 min]

Ask: What would it mean to make room for Jesus in your life the way David made room for the ark? Invite a moment of quiet. Pray the prayer below.

Dismissal [3 min]

Say the memory verse together. Hand out the worksheet and remind students of the Think, Feel, Do reflection.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What was David willing to give up to find a home for the ark? What does that show about his heart?
2. What is the difference between David building God a house and God building David a house?
3. How does Jesus fulfill both the promise of a King and the promise of God dwelling with His people?
4. Why do you think Peter used the Psalms in his Pentecost sermon?
5. What are practical ways we can “make room” for God in our daily lives?

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord, thank You that You swore to David and kept Your word by sending Jesus, the King forever. Thank You that in Jesus You came to live among us and that Your Spirit lives in us. Help us to make room for You every day, like David did for the ark. In Jesus’ name, amen.

FOR THE TEACHER

Background Notes: Culture, History and Society

These notes are for your preparation. Share what fits your students and your time.

About the psalm

Psalm 132 is one of the Songs of Ascents (Psalms 120–134), sung by pilgrims traveling up to Jerusalem for the three annual feasts. It is a long psalm in this group and focuses on the temple and the Davidic promise.

When Solomon dedicated the temple, he prayed lines that match Psalm 132:8–10 (2 Chronicles 6:41–42). So the psalm was likely used in the temple worship from early on. It remembers David's vow and God's oath, and it prays that God will keep His promise.

Culture: the ark, Jerusalem and the temple

The ark of the covenant was a gold-covered wooden chest with two gold cherubim on its lid. It held the stone tablets of the Law and was understood to be God's "footstool" and the place where He met with His people (Exodus 25:10–22). Ancient kings often had a throne room and a footstool; in Israel, the ark was God's.

The ark had been lost in battle to the Philistines (1 Samuel 4–6) and then stayed at Kiriath Jearim, the "fields of the woods," for about twenty years. "Ephrathah" (132:6) is the region around Bethlehem, which is David's family home. David brought the ark up to Jerusalem with great celebration (2 Samuel 6:12–19). Years later Solomon built the temple and placed the ark inside (1 Kings 8).

Zion was originally the hill fortress in Jerusalem that David captured, called the City of David (2 Samuel 5:6–9). Over time "Zion" became a poetic name for Jerusalem and the temple mount and then for God's people and the heavenly city (Hebrews 12:22).

After Babylon destroyed the temple in 586 B.C., the ark disappeared from history. For the Jews waiting for the Messiah, Psalm 132 kept hope alive that God would again dwell with His people and raise up a Davidic king.

Notes on the text

A "horn" in Hebrew poetry is a symbol of strength, like a bull's horn. A "lamp" symbolizes the continuing life of David's line (1 Kings 11:36; 15:4).

"Fruit of your body" is a Hebrew idiom for a physical descendant. Acts 2:30 draws the exact wording of the Greek translation of Psalm 132:11.

The promise is conditional for David's ordinary sons ("If your sons will keep My covenant") but unconditional in its final outcome, because it is fulfilled in one Son who keeps the covenant perfectly. This is true of Psalm 89 as well.

Teaching cautions

Students may confuse the ark with a magic charm. Make clear that the ark was a sign of God's presence and that God is not controlled by objects. Recall the lesson of 1 Samuel 4–6.

Avoid speculation on the location of the ark today. The Bible is silent. Keep the focus on Jesus as God's presence with us.

Because the lesson covers a lot of Old Testament background, consider sketching the ark on the board or showing a simple map of David's route to keep the students engaged.

SESSION 11 OF 13 • PSALMS OF THE MESSIAH

PSALM 132

The Davidic Covenant: A Home for God and a King Forever

Name: _____ Date: _____

KEY VERSE • Psalm 132:11

“The LORD has sworn in truth to David; He will not turn from it: ‘I will set upon your throne the fruit of your body.’”

1 FILL IN THE BLANKS

1. David swore not to sleep until he found a _____ for the LORD.
2. God swore, “I will set upon your throne the _____ of your body.”
3. “For the LORD has chosen _____; He has desired it for His dwelling place.”
4. Peter preached that God made Jesus both _____ and Christ.
5. “The Word became flesh and _____ among us.”

WORD BANK: fruit • Lord • dwelling place • dwelt • Zion

2 THINK IT THROUGH

- a. Why did David want to bring the ark to Jerusalem?

- b. What did God promise David in return?

- c. How did Peter use Psalm 132 in Acts 2?

MEMORY VERSE • Psalm 132:13

“For the LORD has chosen Zion; He has desired it for His dwelling place.”

THIS WEEK'S CHALLENGE Make a “room” for God this week: pick a time and a place each day to be quiet with Jesus for five minutes. Write what you pray about.

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PRESENTATION

Slide Outline

- 1 Psalm 132**
A Home for God and a King Forever · Session 11 of 13
- 2 A Place to Call Home**
What makes a house a home? · David wanted a home for God
- 3 David's Vow**
No sleep until a place is found · The ark: God's footstool · 2 Samuel 6: the joyful procession
"Until I find a place for the LORD." (132:5)
- 4 God's Oath**
David says: I'll build You a house · God says: I'll build you a house · "The fruit of your body"
"The LORD has sworn in truth to David." (132:11)
- 5 Zion: His Resting Place**
God chose it · Bread for the poor, salvation for priests · John 1:14: the Word dwelt among us
"This is My resting place forever." (132:14)
- 6 A Horn and a Lamp**
Horn = strength · Lamp = a continuing line · Luke 1:69; John 8:12
"I have prepared a lamp for My Anointed." (132:17)
- 7 Peter at Pentecost**
Acts 2:30: God had sworn with an oath · Jesus raised and exalted · "Both Lord and Christ"
- 8 Think, Feel, Do**
THINK: How does Jesus fulfill Psalm 132? · FEEL: How does it feel that God wants to live with His people? ·
DO: Make room for Jesus each day

AFTER THE SESSION

Think · Feel · Do Reflection

Students answer these three questions in the companion web app after the lesson. Use them for a closing conversation or a take-home card.

THINK

What do you think Psalm 132 and Acts 2 teach us about Jesus as King and as God's dwelling with us?

FEEL

How do you feel knowing God chose to live among His people and made a way for you to be close to Him?

DO

What is one way you will make room for Jesus in your daily life this week?

LISTEN TO THE LESSON

A short two-voice podcast episode for this session is built into the web app, just before "What We Learned."

SESSION 12 OF 13 • PSALM 110

12 The Priest-King at God's Right Hand

The most quoted Old Testament verse in the New Testament, and the question that left everyone speechless.

KEY VERSE • Psalm 110:1, 4

*"The LORD said to my Lord, 'Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.'"
"You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek."*

THE BIG IDEA

David called the coming Messiah his Lord, so He had to be more than a son of David. Psalm 110 says He is a King seated at God's right hand and a Priest forever, a combination no ordinary king ever held. Jesus is both, and He is always able to save and to pray for us.

JESUS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Matthew 22:41–46 • Acts 2:34–36 • Hebrews 1:13 • Hebrews 5:5–10 • Hebrews 7:24–27 • Romans 8:34

SESSION OBJECTIVES

- Students will explain Jesus' question in Matthew 22 and why it shows the Messiah is more than David's son.
- Students will describe what it means that Jesus is both King and Priest, and who Melchizedek was.
- Students will respond with confidence in Jesus' ongoing prayer for them and with loyalty to their King.

SESSION AT A GLANCE (45 MINUTES)

6 min Opening: A Puzzle

10 min Point 1: "The LORD Said to My Lord" (Psalm 110:1)

6 min Point 2: The King Who Rules and the People Who Follow (Psalm 110:2–3)

12 min Point 3: A Priest Forever (Psalm 110:4)

5 min Point 4: What This Means for Us (Psalm 110:5–7; Hebrews 4:14–16)

3 min Application and Prayer

3 min Dismissal

Materials: Bible (NKJV), whiteboard or flip chart, the session slides, one handout per student, pens or pencils.
Optional: play the podcast episode for review or for students who missed the session.

TEACHER GUIDE

Teaching Notes — Psalm 110

Opening: A Puzzle [6 min]

Ask: Can the same person be both a king and a priest? Why might that be a problem? (Different jobs, different families, rules against it.) Then pose a second puzzle: “Can a grandson be greater than his grandfather, and be honored by him?” Let students guess.

Say: “Today’s psalm gives us a puzzle that stumped the smartest religious leaders in Israel. And its answer is Jesus.”

Point 1: “The LORD Said to My Lord” (Psalm 110:1) [10 min]

Read:

“The LORD said to my Lord, ‘Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.’” (Psalm 110:1)

Explain the words: the first “LORD” (all capitals) is God, YHWH. The second “Lord” is David’s master. David is the king, and kings had no earthly superior. So who is David’s Lord? Explain that to sit at someone’s right hand is to share his honor and authority. A footstool pictures victory: ancient conquerors placed their feet on the necks of defeated kings (Joshua 10:24).

Tell the story from Matthew 22:41–46. Read:

“While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, saying, ‘What do you think about the Christ? Whose Son is He?’ They said to Him, ‘The Son of David.’ He said to them, ‘How then does David in the Spirit call Him “Lord,”

saying: “The LORD said to my Lord, ‘Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool’”? If David then calls Him “Lord,” how is He his Son?’ And no one was able to answer Him a word.” (Matthew 22:41–46)

Explain Jesus’ point. He was not denying that the Messiah is David’s Son (He is). He was showing that the Messiah is more than David’s son: He is David’s Lord. Ancient fathers were greater than their sons, but here the descendant is greater than his ancestor. The Messiah is both human and divine.

Show how the apostles used this verse: Peter in Acts 2:34–36 (“God has made this Jesus... both Lord and Christ”), Hebrews 1:13 (no angel was ever told to sit at God’s right hand), and Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:25 (Christ must reign until all enemies are under His feet). Mention that at His trial Jesus told the high priest,

“You will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven.” (Mark 14:62)

Point 2: The King Who Rules and the People Who Follow (Psalm 110:2–3) [6 min]

Read:

“The LORD shall send the rod of Your strength out of Zion. Rule in the midst of Your enemies! Your people shall be volunteers In the day of Your power; In the beauties of holiness, from the womb of the morning, You have the dew of Your youth.” (Psalm 110:2–3)

Explain that the Messiah rules even while enemies are still around. Right now Jesus reigns from heaven, and one day all enemies will be put under His feet. Notice the beautiful phrase, “Your people shall be volunteers.” Jesus does not force His people. They come willingly. Ask: What does it mean to be a “volunteer” for Jesus?

Teacher note: verse 3 is one of the hardest verses in the Hebrew Bible to translate. The NKJV’s “volunteers” and “dew of Your youth” are one reasonable rendering. Do not spend much time on the details; focus on the willing people.

Point 3: A Priest Forever (Psalm 110:4) [12 min]

Read:

“The LORD has sworn And will not relent, ‘You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek.’” (Psalm 110:4)

Explain the problem. In Israel, priests came from the tribe of Levi and the family of Aaron. Kings came from the tribe of Judah and the family of David. Kings were not allowed to act as priests. When King Uzziah burned incense in the temple, God struck him with leprosy (2 Chronicles 26:16–21). So a person who is both king and priest forever is something brand new. God swore an oath about it.

Tell the story of Melchizedek. Read Genesis 14:18–20:

“Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was the priest of God Most High. And he blessed him and said: ‘Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth.’”

This man was both a king and a priest, centuries before Israel had either. His name means “king of righteousness,” and Salem means “peace” (Hebrews 7:2). Abraham gave him a tenth of everything, showing that Melchizedek was greater than Abraham.

Explain Hebrews 5–7. Jesus did not come from the priestly tribe of Levi but from Judah (Hebrews 7:14). He is a priest in a different, older and greater order. Read Hebrews 7:24–25:

“But He, because He continues forever, has an unchangeable priesthood. Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.”

Compare the old priests with Jesus. Old priests died and had to be replaced. They offered sacrifices every day, first for their own sins. Jesus lives forever, has no sin, and offered Himself once for all (Hebrews 7:26–27). And He did it as a King-Priest, offering the sacrifice and ruling as a King.

Point 4: What This Means for Us (Psalm 110:5–7; Hebrews 4:14–16) [5 min]

Briefly read verses 5–7, which describe the victory of the Messiah over kings and nations, ending with:

“He shall drink of the brook by the wayside; Therefore He shall lift up the head.” (Psalm 110:7)

Explain that the picture is of a victorious king stopping to refresh himself and holding his head high after the victory.

Read Romans 8:34:

“Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.”

Say: “Right now, Jesus is praying for you.”

Read Hebrews 4:14–16 and invite students to come boldly to the throne of grace, because they have a great High Priest who understands their weaknesses and sits on the throne.

Application and Prayer [3 min]

Ask: What is something you want to bring to Jesus, your King and Priest, today? Invite students to pray silently. Pray the prayer below.

Dismissal [3 min]

Say the memory verse together. Hand out the worksheet and remind students of the Think, Feel, Do reflection.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why did Jesus' question in Matthew 22 leave the Pharisees speechless?
2. What does “sit at My right hand” tell us about Jesus' position now?
3. Why was it unusual for someone to be both a king and a priest?
4. What does it mean to you that Jesus “always lives to make intercession” for you?
5. What would it look like to be a willing “volunteer” in Jesus' kingdom?

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord Jesus, You are David's Lord and David's Son, our King and our High Priest. Thank You for offering Yourself once for all and for living forever to pray for us. Help us to come boldly to Your throne of grace, and to follow You willingly as Your people. In Your name, amen.

FOR THE TEACHER

Background Notes: Culture, History and Society

These notes are for your preparation. Share what fits your students and your time.

About the psalm

Psalm 110 is a psalm “of David.” It is the most quoted Old Testament psalm in the New Testament: it is cited directly in Matthew 22:44, Mark 12:36, Luke 20:42–43, Acts 2:34–35, 1 Corinthians 15:25, Hebrews 1:13, 5:6, 7:17, 21, and alluded to in many other places (Ephesians 1:20; Colossians 3:1; 1 Peter 3:22; Revelation 3:21).

The psalm contains two divine oracles: “Sit at My right hand” (v. 1) and “You are a priest forever” (v. 4). Together they describe a king who is also a priest and who rules from God’s side.

Culture: right hands, footstools and priesthood

In the ancient Near East, the right hand was the place of highest honor, power and favor (see Bathsheba seated at Solomon’s right in 1 Kings 2:19). To sit at God’s right hand meant to share His rule. In Israel, no one other than the Messiah would be invited to do so.

Ancient kings pictured victory by placing their feet on the necks of defeated rulers (Joshua 10:24) or showing carved reliefs of enemies under the throne. The footstool imagery in 110:1 is such a picture of total victory.

The priesthood belonged to descendants of Aaron from the tribe of Levi. The kingship belonged to the tribe of Judah through David. The two offices were kept separate. Saul lost his dynasty when he offered sacrifice himself (1 Samuel 13:8–14), and Uzziah was struck with leprosy for entering the temple to burn incense (2 Chronicles 26:16–21). Priest-kings existed among Israel’s neighbors, but Israel’s law kept the offices apart.

Melchizedek appears only in Genesis 14 and Psalm 110 in the Old Testament, and then in Hebrews 5–7. “Salem” is understood to be Jerusalem (Psalm 76:2). He was king and priest of “God Most High” in the city that later became David’s capital. Abraham paid him a tenth of the spoils, which for the writer of Hebrews shows his greatness. Some Bible teachers see Melchizedek as a picture of Christ, and others as an appearance of Christ; most students will be satisfied by Hebrews’ own statement that he was “made like the Son of God.”

Notes on the text

“The LORD said to my Lord”: the first word is YHWH, the covenant name of God. The second is adoni (“my lord”), a title for a human superior. David uses it for someone above himself, which is exactly Jesus’ point.

Jesus’ question in Matthew 22 is not a denial that the Messiah is David’s son. Matthew 1:1 calls Jesus “the Son of David.” His question shows that “son of David” is not enough: the Messiah is also David’s Lord. This is a way of saying the Messiah is both human and divine.

In Acts 7:55–56, Stephen sees Jesus standing at the right hand of God. Some teachers note that He stands to welcome the first martyr. It’s a fine detail but not required.

Teaching cautions

This psalm has a lot of difficult concepts. Slow down, repeat the main idea and use the riddle and the chart. Remind students that they do not need to understand every detail of Melchizedek to enjoy the main point.

Be careful with speculative claims about Melchizedek's identity. Hebrews says he was "made like the Son of God," which is the safe place to rest.

Some students may find the language of enemies, footstools and rulers harsh. Explain that the Messiah's victory is the defeat of sin, death and evil, and that He invites everyone to follow Him willingly.

SESSION 12 OF 13 • PSALMS OF THE MESSIAH

PSALM 110

The Priest-King at God's Right Hand

Name: _____ Date: _____

KEY VERSE • Psalm 110:1, 4

"The LORD said to my Lord, 'Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.'" "You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek."

1 FILL IN THE BLANKS

1. "The LORD said to my _____, 'Sit at My right hand.'"
2. Jesus asked the Pharisees how the Christ could be David's Son if David called Him "_____."
3. "You are a _____ forever according to the order of Melchizedek."
4. Melchizedek was king of _____ and priest of God Most High.
5. Jesus "always lives to make _____ for us." (Hebrews 7:25)

WORD BANK: intercession • Salem • Lord • Lord • priest**2 THINK IT THROUGH**

- a. Why could no one answer Jesus' question?

- b. Why was a priest-king unusual in Israel?

- c. What does Jesus do for us now as High Priest?

MEMORY VERSE • Psalm 110:1

"The LORD said to my Lord, 'Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.'"

THIS WEEK'S CHALLENGE Each day this week, thank Jesus for praying for you. Bring one need to Him at the "throne of grace" (Hebrews 4:16). Write it down and watch for His answer.

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PRESENTATION

Slide Outline

- 1 Psalm 110**
The Priest-King at God's Right Hand · Session 12 of 13

- 2 A Puzzle**
Can someone be both king and priest? · A question that stumped the Pharisees

- 3 David's Lord**
YHWH speaks to David's Lord · Right hand = honor and authority · Footstool = total victory
"The LORD said to my Lord, 'Sit at My right hand.'" (110:1)

- 4 Jesus' Question**
Matthew 22:41–46 · Son of David... yet David calls Him Lord · Fully human and fully divine

- 5 Volunteers**
The King rules in the midst of enemies · His people are willing · Jesus does not force His people
"Your people shall be volunteers In the day of Your power." (110:3)

- 6 A Priest Forever**
Kings could not be priests (Uzziah) · Melchizedek: king of Salem, priest of God Most High · God swore an oath
"You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek." (110:4)

- 7 Our Great High Priest**
Hebrews 7:24–25: always lives to pray for us · Hebrews 7:27: offered Himself once for all · Romans 8:34: at God's right hand, interceding

- 8 Think, Feel, Do**
THINK: Why is Jesus both King and Priest? · FEEL: How does it feel that He prays for you? · DO: Come boldly to His throne this week

AFTER THE SESSION

Think · Feel · Do Reflection

Students answer these three questions in the companion web app after the lesson. Use them for a closing conversation or a take-home card.

THINK

What do you think Psalm 110 teaches us about who Jesus is and what He does for us now?

FEEL

How do you feel knowing that Jesus is both a King on God's throne and a Priest who prays for you?

DO

What is one thing you will bring to Jesus in prayer this week?

LISTEN TO THE LESSON

A short two-voice podcast episode for this session is built into the web app, just before "What We Learned."

SESSION 13 OF 13 • PSALM 118

13 The Rejected Stone and the One Who Comes in the LORD's Name

The stone the builders threw away became the cornerstone, and the crowd shouted Hosanna.

KEY VERSE • Psalm 118:22–23

“The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone. This was the LORD’s doing; It is marvelous in our eyes.”

THE BIG IDEA

Jesus was rejected by the builders of Israel, but God made Him the cornerstone of everything. He is the One who comes in the LORD's name, and the Savior we can shout “Hosanna!” to, for there is salvation in no one else.

JESUS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Matthew 21:9, 42 • Acts 4:10–12 • 1 Peter 2:4–8 • Ephesians 2:20 • John 12:13

SESSION OBJECTIVES

- Students will explain the picture of the rejected stone and how Jesus and the apostles applied it to His rejection and resurrection.
- Students will describe the Palm Sunday crowd's use of Psalm 118:25–26.
- Students will review the portrait of the Messiah across all twelve psalms in the series and respond with worship.

SESSION AT A GLANCE (45 MINUTES)

5 min	Opening: Parade!
5 min	Point 1: Give Thanks (Psalm 118:1–9)
6 min	Point 2: Surrounded and Saved (Psalm 118:10–18)
10 min	Point 3: The Rejected Stone (Psalm 118:19–24)
8 min	Point 4: Hosanna! (Psalm 118:25–29)
8 min	Series Review: Twelve Pictures of Jesus
2 min	Application and Prayer
1 min	Dismissal

Materials: Bible (NKJV), whiteboard or flip chart, the session slides, one handout per student, pens or pencils.
Optional: play the podcast episode for review or for students who missed the session.

TEACHER GUIDE

Teaching Notes — Psalm 118

Opening: Parade! [5 min]

Ask: Have you ever been in a parade or celebration for someone special? What did people shout? Let students share. Say: “On the Sunday before Jesus died, crowds lined the road, waved palm branches and shouted words from Psalm 118. Today we finish our journey through the Psalms of the Messiah with this great psalm.”

Point 1: Give Thanks (Psalm 118:1–9) [5 min]

Read:

“Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever.” (Psalm 118:1)

Explain that the first four verses call everyone in Israel to repeat that “His mercy endures forever.” Say it together.

Read verses 5–9, highlighting:

“The LORD is on my side; I will not fear. What can man do to me? ... It is better to trust in the LORD Than to put confidence in man.” (Psalm 118:6, 8)

Ask: Where do people put their confidence instead of the LORD? (Money, popularity, power, themselves.)

Point 2: Surrounded and Saved (Psalm 118:10–18) [6 min]

Read:

“All nations surrounded me, But in the name of the LORD I will destroy them... The LORD is my strength and song, And He has become my salvation... I shall not die, but live, And declare the works of the LORD. The LORD has chastened me severely, But He has not given me over to death.” (Psalm 118:10, 14, 17–18)

Explain that the picture is of someone surrounded like bees by enemies who is rescued by God. Verse 14 is quoted in Exodus 15:2 and Isaiah 12:2, the songs of salvation. The speaker nearly dies but lives. For Jesus, the “shall not die, but live” is fulfilled in the resurrection. He went to the cross and was raised.

Mention that Psalm 118 was part of the Passover meal. Matthew 26:30 says that after the Last Supper, Jesus and the disciples sang a hymn, most likely this Hallel. Imagine Jesus singing about the stone and the gates just hours before the cross.

Point 3: The Rejected Stone (Psalm 118:19–24) [10 min]

Read:

“Open to me the gates of righteousness; I will go through them, and I will praise the LORD... The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone. This was the LORD’s doing; It is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day the LORD has made; We will rejoice and be glad in it.” (Psalm 118:19, 22–24)

Explain the picture. A builder in the quarry looks at a stone and says, “That one’s no good. Throw it away.” Later, God puts that very stone at the most important place in the building: the cornerstone, which holds everything together and sets the lines for the walls.

Show how Jesus quoted this. After telling the parable of the tenants who killed the owner’s son (Matthew 21:33–41), Jesus asked the leaders:

“Have you never read in the Scriptures: ‘The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone. This was the LORD’s doing, And it is marvelous in our eyes’?” (Matthew 21:42)

The “builders” were the religious leaders of Israel.

Show Peter before the Sanhedrin in Acts 4:10–12. Read:

“This is the ‘stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone.’ Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”

Show 1 Peter 2:6–7 and Ephesians 2:20: Jesus is the chief cornerstone of the church, and believers are living stones built on Him (1 Peter 2:5). Teaching point: The day of the resurrection is “the day the LORD has made.” God overturned the verdict of men.

Point 4: Hosanna! (Psalm 118:25–29) [8 min]

Read:

“Save now, I pray, O LORD; O LORD, I pray, send now prosperity. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD! We have blessed you from the house of the LORD. God is the LORD, And He has given us light; Bind the sacrifice with cords to the horns of the altar.” (Psalm 118:25–27)

Explain that “Save now” is the Hebrew hoshi’a na, from which we get “Hosanna.” By Jesus’ day it had become a shout of praise. Tell the story of Palm Sunday: Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey, and the crowds spread cloaks and branches on the road. Read Matthew 21:9:

“Then the multitudes who went before and those who followed cried out, saying: ‘Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD! Hosanna in the highest!’”

Mention John 12:13, where the crowd also called Him “The King of Israel!” Luke 19:39–40 records that when the Pharisees told Jesus to silence His disciples, He answered,

“I tell you that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out.”

Stones again!

Teacher note: do not say with certainty that the “Hosanna” crowd was the same one that later cried “crucify.” Many pilgrims from Galilee welcomed Him; the crowd before Pilate was a different, smaller gathering. Say simply that the praise of Palm Sunday soon met rejection by the leaders.

Note the “sacrifice bound to the horns of the altar” (118:27). It points ahead: the King who comes will also be the sacrifice.

Series Review: Twelve Pictures of Jesus [8 min]

Use the chart (handout and slide) to review the whole series. Ask students to name each psalm and picture. Psalm 2: God's Son and anointed King. Psalm 8: the Son of Man given dominion. Psalm 16: the Holy One who did not see decay. Psalm 22: the suffering and vindicated Righteous One. Psalm 40: the obedient Servant. Psalm 41: the betrayed Friend. Psalm 45: the divine King and His bride. Psalm 69: the zealous Sufferer. Psalm 72: the righteous King whose reign never ends. Psalms 89 and 132: the Son of David and God's oath. Psalm 110: the Priest-King at God's right hand. Psalm 118: the rejected Stone who is the cornerstone.

Say: "Luke 24:44 says everything written about Jesus in the Psalms must be fulfilled. We have seen that He is the center of the Psalms. Which picture of Jesus is most meaningful to you? Why?" Give each student a moment to answer, or write their answer on a card.

Application and Prayer [2 min]

Pray the prayer below and say the memory verse together. Invite students to take their favorite psalm from the series and read it again at home this week.

Dismissal [1 min]

Hand out the worksheet and remind students of the Think, Feel, Do reflection.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What does it mean that the builders rejected Jesus? Who were the "builders"?
2. How does the idea of a cornerstone help you understand Jesus' role in the church?
3. What does "Hosanna" mean, and why do you think the crowd shouted it?
4. Which of the twelve pictures of Jesus in these psalms has touched you most? Why?
5. What will you do to keep reading and enjoying the Psalms?

CLOSING PRAYER

Father, thank You for Your mercy that endures forever. Thank You that the stone the builders rejected became the cornerstone, and that there is salvation in Jesus alone. We say Hosanna to Him who comes in Your name. Help us to build our lives on Him, to keep reading Your Word, and to tell others the good news. In Jesus' name, amen.

FOR THE TEACHER

Background Notes: Culture, History and Society

These notes are for your preparation. Share what fits your students and your time.

About the psalm

Psalm 118 is the last of the Hallel psalms (Psalms 113–118), traditionally sung at Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacles. It has no title and no named author. The festival pilgrims likely sang it in procession up to the temple, with a leader and a response: the call to thank the LORD, the procession's approach to the gates, and the priests' blessing from the temple.

Psalm 118 is one of the most quoted psalms in the New Testament. Verses 22–23 appear in Matthew 21:42, Mark 12:10–11, Luke 20:17, Acts 4:11 and 1 Peter 2:7, and verses 25–26 in Matthew 21:9, Mark 11:9–10, Luke 19:38 and John 12:13. Jesus also referred to verse 26 in Matthew 23:39.

Culture: stones, parades and palms

A cornerstone was the first stone set in a foundation. It determined the position of all the other stones and walls. Some scholars think the “head of the corner” refers to a capstone at the top of a corner. Either way, it is a stone of crucial importance. Builders in a quarry judged stones by shape and quality, and an oddly shaped one could be thrown aside.

In Isaiah 28:16 God says, “Behold, I lay in Zion a stone for a foundation, a tried stone, a precious cornerstone.” Isaiah 8:14 speaks of a stone of stumbling. Peter combines these passages in 1 Peter 2:6–8.

Palm branches were a symbol of victory and joy. They were part of the Feast of Tabernacles (Leviticus 23:40) and later became a symbol of Jewish national hope. Spreading cloaks on the road was how people honored a king (2 Kings 9:13). Jesus' choice of a donkey fulfilled Zechariah 9:9 and signaled that He came as a humble king, in peace.

“Hosanna” comes from the Hebrew hoshi'a na, “Save, I pray.” By the first century it had become a shout of praise to God, much like “Hallelujah.” Passover swelled Jerusalem's population with pilgrims from across the Jewish world, so crowds of tens of thousands were common.

Notes on the text

Jesus' question to the leaders after the parable of the tenants applied Psalm 118:22–23 to Himself and then said that the kingdom would be taken from those who rejected Him (Matthew 21:43). This is a warning to those who reject the Son.

Verse 24 (“This is the day the LORD has made”) is often quoted as a general morning encouragement. In context it refers to the day of God's vindication of the rejected stone. That fits with the resurrection. Teachers can say both: it is good to rejoice in every day God gives, and it is best understood as pointing to the day of Jesus' victory.

“Bind the sacrifice with cords to the horns of the altar” (118:27) is a notoriously difficult verse. Some translations read it as a call to bring the festival offering to the altar. We can note, without making too much of

it, that the psalm moves toward the altar.

Teaching cautions

Avoid blaming the Jewish people for the death of Jesus. The Gospels show that Jesus' own followers were Jewish, that the leaders in Jerusalem arranged His arrest, that Rome carried out the execution, and that all of us are sinners for whom He died (Acts 4:27–28).

Because this is the last session, allow time for the review. Consider a small celebration, such as a snack or certificates, to mark the end of the series and to congratulate students on finishing.

SESSION 13 OF 13 • PSALMS OF THE MESSIAH

PSALM 118

The Rejected Stone and the One Who Comes in the LORD's Name

Name: _____ Date: _____

KEY VERSE • Psalm 118:22-23

"The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone. This was the LORD's doing; It is marvelous in our eyes."

1 FILL IN THE BLANKS

1. "Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! For His mercy endures ____."
2. "The stone which the builders ____ has become the chief cornerstone."
3. "____" means "Save now!"
4. "Blessed is he who comes in the ____ of the LORD!"
5. "Nor is there ____ in any other." (Acts 4:12)

WORD BANK: name • salvation • Hosanna • rejected • forever

2 THINK IT THROUGH

- a. Who are the "builders" who rejected the stone?

- b. What did the crowd shout on Palm Sunday?

- c. Which psalm from our series has meant the most to you?

MEMORY VERSE • Psalm 118:26

"Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD! We have blessed you from the house of the LORD."

THIS WEEK'S CHALLENGE Pick your favorite psalm from the series. Read it every day this week. Share one thing you learned about Jesus from it with a friend or family member.

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PRESENTATION

Slide Outline

- 1 Psalm 118**
The Rejected Stone and the One Who Comes · Session 13 of 13

- 2 Give Thanks**
The last of the Hallel psalms · Sung at Passover · “His mercy endures forever”
“The LORD is on my side; I will not fear.” (118:6)

- 3 Surrounded and Saved**
Enemies like bees on every side · The LORD is my strength and song · “I shall not die, but live”
“He has become my salvation.” (118:14)

- 4 The Rejected Stone**
Builders throw away the stone · God makes it the cornerstone · Matthew 21:42; Acts 4:11; 1 Peter 2:7
“The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone.” (118:22)

- 5 No Other Name**
Acts 4:12 · Salvation is in Jesus alone · Believers are living stones built on Him

- 6 Hosanna!**
“Save now!” · Palm Sunday: Matthew 21:9 · “Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD”
“Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD!” (118:26)

- 7 Twelve Pictures of Jesus**
Son · Son of Man · Holy One · Righteous Sufferer · Obedient Servant · Betrayed Friend · Divine King · Zealous Sufferer · Endless King · Son of David · Priest-King · Cornerstone

- 8 Think, Feel, Do**
THINK: Why is Jesus the cornerstone? · FEEL: What do you feel about the One who comes in the LORD’s name? · DO: Keep reading the Psalms and tell someone about Jesus

AFTER THE SESSION

Think · Feel · Do Reflection

Students answer these three questions in the companion web app after the lesson. Use them for a closing conversation or a take-home card.

THINK

What do you think Psalm 118 and this whole series teach us about who Jesus is?

FEEL

How do you feel after seeing Jesus throughout the Psalms, as the rejected stone who became the cornerstone and the King who comes in the LORD’s name?

DO

What is one way you will keep learning about Jesus and share Him with someone this week?

LISTEN TO THE LESSON

A short two-voice podcast episode for this session is built into the web app, just before “What We Learned.”

Handout Answer Key

SESSION 1 • PSALM 2

1. Anointed · 2. Christos (Christ) · 3. Son · 4. dead · 5. trust

SESSION 2 • PSALM 8

1. night sky (heavens) · 2. babes · 3. lower · 4. Jesus · 5. Man

SESSION 3 • PSALM 16

1. portion · 2. Holy · 3. tomb · 4. joy · 5. firstfruits

SESSION 4 • PSALM 22

1. forsaken · 2. heads · 3. hands · 4. lots · 5. remember

SESSION 5 • PSALM 40

1. pit · 2. desire · 3. will · 4. all · 5. sat

SESSION 6 • PSALM 41

1. Blessed · 2. heel · 3. feet · 4. Judas · 5. integrity

SESSION 7 • PSALM 45

1. wedding · 2. God · 3. humility · 4. church · 5. generations

SESSION 8 • PSALM 69

1. house · 2. cause · 3. vinegar · 4. temple · 5. praise

SESSION 9 • PSALM 72

1. poor · 2. sea · 3. myrrh · 4. name · 5. glory

SESSION 10 • PSALM 89

1. covenant · 2. seed · 3. holiness · 4. Gabriel · 5. end

SESSION 11 • PSALM 132

1. dwelling place · 2. fruit · 3. Zion · 4. Lord · 5. dwelt

SESSION 12 • PSALM 110

1. Lord · 2. Lord · 3. priest · 4. Salem · 5. intercession

SESSION 13 • PSALM 118

1. forever · 2. rejected · 3. Hosanna · 4. name · 5. salvation

About This Curriculum

Psalms of the Messiah is part of a family of middle school Bible curricula written for youth ministry. Each course includes a teacher guide, student handouts, slide decks, a companion web app with a Think, Feel, Do reflection after every session, and a podcast.

Developer: Ron Whittam

Company: Quantum Reality Programming LLC

Web: qrprogramming.com

Contact: QuantumRealityprogrammingLLC@Gmail.com

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