

# **Bible Study on Psalms**

## **Individual Praise Psalms – The Privilege of Giving Thanks**

### **Psalm 23**

1. Both shepherds and kings led their flocks/people. Those “sheep” looked to them for guidance, protection, provision.
2. The entire psalm makes it clear that our Good Shepherd is always thinking about us, always looking for ways to show his care. His scrutiny, and his eyes are eyes of purest love.
3. The rod and staff were two indispensable tools for the shepherd. The shepherd’s rod looks like a club. It was used by the shepherd to defend himself and his sheep. The staff was a long straight walking stick used to guide the sheep and pull down leafy branches for them.
4. Jesus received the punishment of death we deserved because of our sin. We in turn receive life. By God’s grace, Jesus has turned death from something too frightening to contemplate into a mere “shadow.” It still looks frightening at times, but it has no power to harm those who are Christ’s.
5. Some have taken the table Jesus has prepared (v. 5) for us as the heavenly banquet table where we will feast with Jesus forever. This hope is ours right now, even “in presence of [our] enemies.” Right now we begin the feast of joy and confidence that our Savior has prepared in love for us. In Holy Communion, we enjoy a foretaste of that eternal “banquet” of God’s goodness.
6. Individual answers will vary

### **Psalm 30**

Read Psalm 30 and work through these questions.

1. “you lifted me out of the depths” and “did not let my enemies gloat over me” (v. 1); “you healed me” (v. 2); “you brought up from the grave” and “you spared me from going down into the pit” (v. 3).
2. “for his anger lasts only a moment but his favor last a lifetime” (v. 5).
3. “I felt secure...I will never be shaken” (v. 6); “you favored me, you made my mountain stand firm” (v. 7); “you turned my wailing into dancing, you removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy” (v. 11).

4. "I will give thanks forever" (v. 12b).

### **Psalm 32**

1. David mentions that because of his impenitence his bones wasted away (v. 3); he groaned in pain (v. 3); God's hand lay heavy upon him (v. 4); and his strength was sapped (v. 4).
2. We, like David, are able to confess our sins and receive God's forgiveness because Jesus himself call us to do so (Luke 5:31-32). God's kindness leads us to repentance (Rom. 2:4b). just think of how we might respond if we were unsure of our Lord's answer to our confession. If we knew he might without his love or deny our request for pardon, how difficult – or impossible – confession of sins might be. But we know, in Christ's cross, that his Word to us will always be a word of grace.
3. In verses 6, 8-11, David warns others not to hold onto their sins in the same way he did. Instead, David admonishes others to trust in God and to pray to him. In verse 9, David tells others not to be stubborn as horses and mules are, but rather to be open to God's will for them. In verse 10, David reminds the people of "the Lord's unfailing love." God reminds us through his Word that he loves us, he also helps us to come to him to confess our sins and receive his forgiveness. Therefore, we can "be glad," and we can praise God for all that he does for us.

### **Psalm 118**

1. Familiar verse include verses 1 and 29; verse 14 (also found in Ex. 15:2; verse 22 (also found in Is. 28:16, Matt. 21:42, Mark 12:10, Acts 4:111, and 1 Peter 2:7); and verse 24. Some verses also may be used as parts of table prayers.
2. Jesus gave his life for us, we now enjoy eternal life. We have hope now, no matter what our circumstances. And we have certain and sure hope of life after our earthly life ends. The "gate of righteousness" stands open wide to us. by faith, we share the right standing with God Jesus himself enjoys! In fact, Jesus himself is the one and only "gate of righteousness." We enter God's presence in peace in Jesus and only Jesus, our Savior.
3. The Lord made "the stone the builders rejected...the capstone." The capstone (cornerstone) was very important in ancient buildings. An entire building was set in place in relation to the cornerstone. The proper placement of the chief cornerstone would prevent the buildings collapse.

After reading and rereading a psalm, ask yourself these questions. What words or phrases stick out to you? How do these words or phrases reveal the poet's purpose for the psalm? What effect does this psalm have on you as you meditate on it?

