



HIGHLIGHTS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

Wisdom & Prophecy (Job - Malachi)

Lesson 2

Job — The Cry of the Spirit¹

The book of Job is perhaps the oldest book in the Bible. No one knows who wrote it. But one thing is certain: this book is given to us by the Holy Spirit. It addresses the question, “Why do godly people suffer?” more deeply than any other book in the Bible.

Job was a real man, not a mythological figure. The prophet Ezekiel classifies him as one of the three great men of the Old Testament, along with Noah and Daniel. In the New Testament James refers to Job and his perseverance.

God Meets with Angelic Creation

As Job opens, the angels come to present themselves before God, and Satan comes with them. Satan seems to stride in sneering and swaggering, operating on the philosophy that self-interest is the only motive for all human behavior. In response God says, “Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one on earth like him; he is blameless and upright, a man who fears God and shuns evil” (Job 1:8).

It is clear from this scene that Satan is not on an equal basis with God. Some scholars feel that the book of Job is the record of a great battleground between God and Satan, with Job caught in between. But what kind of battle is this, in which one side must get permission from the other before it attacks? It is God who initiates a test of Job’s character, and He proposes to Satan that Job be put to the test. Satan then responds with eagerness and asks permission from God to take away Job’s prosperity so that he will curse God to His face.

One by one the props are pulled out from under Job’s sense of well-being. In one tragic day Job learns that all his oxen and donkeys were driven away by raiders and his servants slaughtered, his sheep and their shepherds were killed, and his herd of camels was stolen. Finally comes the heart-rending news that while his seven sons and three daughters were enjoying a feast together, a great tornado struck; the house was demolished and all his children were killed. Satan struck to the full extent of his permission and took away everything Job had.

“At this, Job got up and tore his robe and shaved his head. Then he fell to the ground in worship and said: ‘Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked I shall depart. The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away; may the name of the LORD be praised’” (Job 1:20-21). Job

¹ This is an overview. You can study this material in more detail in the Joy of Living study titled *Job*.

has won the first round of testing. He still loves God and follows Him, and recognizes God’s right to do with him as He will.

But the test is not over. Before the book is finished we will begin to understand what God is doing in Job’s life (and in ours) by this kind of testing.

Again it is God who initiates further conversation with Satan about Job’s character. Satan is rather taken aback by Job’s steadfastness, but responds to God’s challenge by asking for a change in the rules: “But stretch out your hand and strike his flesh and bones, and he will surely curse you to your face.’ The LORD said to Satan, ‘Very well, then, he is in your hands; but you must spare his life’” (Job 2:5-6). So Satan is given renewed access to Job, and without warning Job is suddenly stricken with painful sores all over his body.

Job’s wife is the first whose faith succumbs. She turns on him and says, “Are you still holding on to your integrity? Curse God and die!” (Job 2:9). But once again Job’s faith proves triumphant. He gently rebukes his wife and reasserts the right of God to be sovereign in human affairs. Job’s wife has the philosophy that life ought to be pleasant, and if it is not, there is no use living. Job at least understands that the reason we are on earth is not necessarily to have a good time. When the pressure comes, life is still worth living. Job argues that we take God’s joy and pleasure with gladness and gratitude. If He then chooses to send something difficult, will we abandon the gratitude and begin to curse Him in protest?

Dialogue with Three Friends

“When Job’s three friends, Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite, heard about all the troubles that had come upon him, they set out from their homes and met together by agreement to go and sympathize with him and comfort him” (Job 2:11). The primary attack on Job’s faith now comes not only through his physical trials, but also through an attack on his spiritual relationship with God by means of these three well-meaning friends.

When the friends arrive they are shocked at what they see. Could this repulsive creature sitting on a heap of ashes, scraping himself with a broken piece of pottery, be the man they had known and loved? They tear their robes, sprinkle dust on their heads in mourning, and finally end up sitting on the ground around Job, observing him in silence for seven days. They had come to comfort him, but in their hearts they believed that somehow Job deserved what he was getting.

Job's friends try various approaches—first, sarcasm and irony; then, an appeal to Job's honesty; and finally, an accusation of specific crimes and misdeeds. In the end they fall silent because they feel Job has insulted them. In all their speeches they attack Job's integrity with the argument that if God is indeed just, the righteous are always blessed and the wicked always suffer. If an individual is suffering, it must therefore be because something is wrong in his life.

Before the dialogue begins, Job raises three questions. After months of suffering, he no longer submits without question to the will of God, but begins to ask why. First he asks, "Why was I ever born?" (See Job 3:3-10.) His misery is so intense that he would like to have his birth day blotted out of existence. His second question is, "Why didn't I die at birth?" (See Job 3:11-19.) Life has been totally meaningless, Job infers, and it would have been better to have died at birth. Then he gives his view of death as a time of rest and quiet after the tumult and trouble of life. His third question is, "Why can't I die now?" (See Job 3:20-26.) He is not thinking of suicide, but only desires that God would take his life.

Though Job's friends each propose the same solution to the problem of suffering, they approach it in three distinct ways. Eliphaz, the first speaker, begins in chapter 4 by saying, in effect, "You have been a counselor to many, and you have been able to put your finger on their problem and help them deal with it. Now your turn has come. Follow your own advice and you will be relieved." His second point is that the righteous are never punished; only the unrighteous suffer. If Job will fear God and admit his sin, things will be all right. He claims to have learned this truth from a vision in which he saw that God is of such holiness that even angels stand defiled before Him. What chance can a person have, then, to claim sinlessness? Though this is accurate theology it is unbalanced, for it sees God only as a God of justice and knows nothing of His love, compassion, and forgiveness. In chapter 5 Eliphaz argues that trouble comes only from sin, and he suggests that the loss of Job's children was the result of Job's personal evil. He then warns Job not to play games with God, because God knows too much. Finally, he closes with a section which says, in effect, "Just give up and God will bless you."

In chapter 6 Job rebukes his friends, stating that he has a right to complain because of his terrible suffering. He speaks of his inability to bear more pain: "What does God think I am made of, stone or bronze, that He subjects me to all this?" (See Job 6:12.) Then Job expresses his irritation at the misunderstanding of his friends. He says, in effect, "You friends are like the mountain brook that is full of water in the wintertime when no one needs it, but when the hot summer sun comes out and we long for the refreshing of the water, it is nothing but a dry, gravel-filled stream bed." (See Job 6:14-21.)

Job then turns to God and complains to Him about the hardness of his present experience. He views the future as absolutely hopeless, and in baffled bewilderment he cries, "If I have sinned, what have I done to you, O watcher of men? Why have you made me your target? Have I become a burden to you?" (Job 7:20).

In chapter 8 the second friend, Bildad, takes up the attack. His first question is, "Can God do wrong?" (See Job 8:3.) He feels that Job

has slandered God, and he draws the logical conclusion, "If your children have sinned against God, He has delivered them into the power of their transgression. When they died on that tragic day, you can only conclude it was because they did something terribly wrong." (See Job 8:4.) He closes with an exhortation to Job to repent.

Job replies to Bildad in chapters 9-10. He explains the difficulty he has with God, for he accepts the principle that trouble comes only because of sin. He would have analyzed another's problems along the same line before his own trials began, but in the long, dark hours of searching his own heart, he has not been able to put his finger upon any sin he has not already dealt with. His dilemma is, "I am not aware of sin in myself, yet I am in deep trouble; therefore, the problem must lie with God." But he has no way of examining God. God's wisdom is far beyond Job's, and He exercises power which can only make a person tremble in awe. His invisibility makes it difficult to deal with Him, and His sovereignty is overwhelming.

Then, out of the deep darkness that surrounds this suffering saint, a ray of light breaks through: "If only there were someone to arbitrate between us, to lay his hand upon us both, someone to remove God's rod from me, so that his terror would frighten me no more. Then I would speak up without fear of him, but as it now stands with me, I cannot" (Job 9:33-35). Job at last begins to feel the terrible gulf between humanity and God that must be bridged by another—the one who would be revealed in the New Testament—the "one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Timothy 2:5).

Every argument which has ever occurred to a suffering saint is brought out in the book of Job. All the haunting dilemmas are faced, so that anyone who is suffering will find that Job has felt whatever he has felt. The questions are not answered at this point, but they will be answered, in a way we could never anticipate.

In chapter 11 Zophar opens with a scorching rebuke to what he sees as Job's sinful folly. He says Job is only getting what is coming to him. He describes Job's stupid ignorance in contrast with God's deep wisdom and inscrutable ways. He closes with the shining possibilities that are ahead, if Job will only repent.

The problem with these friends is that though much of their theology is correct, it is incomplete, and they answer Job's words without compassion. They speak with the utmost confidence that what they are saying is the final word on the subject. There is apparently no understanding that perhaps there are aspects of God that they have not yet seen. Nor do they pray for or with Job. They never ask God for help to illuminate their understanding so they can help their friend. This is the difference between mere theology and the experience of a person taught by God's Spirit. Theology can be very clear and right, but when one is dealing with the hurting problems of life, a deeper dimension must be added—the compassion that Jesus manifested.

The first round of speeches ends with Job's sarcastic defense in chapters 12-14. Job sees his friends as know-it-alls, who deal with elementary truths which everyone knows. Consequently they have not helped him but are really in the same boat with him, being subject to the same judgments from God that they warn him about. He therefore

requests they will do him the courtesy of listening carefully to the case he seeks to present before the Lord.

In chapter 13 Job is like a man in prison, planning his case for his appearance before God. First, he asks that God will lift the pain and anguish he is now going through, so he does not have to speak out of torment. Second, he asks that God would so veil His presence that Job will not be terrified by His awesomeness. He next pleads for the knowledge of the charges which are against him, and finally, he protests the silence of God in His apparent anger with him.

In chapter 14 Job brings out the helplessness and hopelessness of humanity before God. Job feels that a person is helpless to control his affairs, but God judges this limited, helpless person for things he or she cannot help. Job sees life only as a natural man, with the present existence as the only truly important thing, and if one does not make something out of the present experience, he will never have another chance. The first cycle of dialogue ends with Job's stout insistence that he has done no wrong, so he cannot understand what is behind his torment.

Second Round of Speeches

In chapters 15-21, the friends come at Job again. Eliphaz charges Job with presumptuous words, and then supports his charges with his narrow and worn-out theology. He rightly says that there is no one who is righteous before God, but he fails to point out specifically what it is that Job has done. Eliphaz argues again from experience, pointing out that God will never let a person get by with wickedness, and therefore if one is being punished he or she must be wicked. It is the same old tired thrust at Job: he must be guilty of some terrible sin.

Job answers Eliphaz, rebuking his friends for their misunderstanding and windy words. Though Job cannot see it, Satan is there in the background, using these friends as channels for what the apostle Paul calls "the flaming arrows of the evil one" (Ephesians 6:16). It is a good reminder to beware lest we become a channel for Satan's accusations against someone who is suffering as Job is suffering here.

Job goes on to state the facts as he now sees them. He can only conclude that God must hate him, though he does not know why, for He lets people insult him and seems to totally disregard Job's innocence. Despite these strong feelings a gleam of faith emerges at this point, in that Job still sees that God must supply the answers to these questions, for humanity is helpless to solve them in our ignorance.

Bildad then takes up the same tired line of argument as before. Job replies, beseeching mercy from his friends, and describes his own bafflement at what is happening to him. But once again faith responds, and he speaks the great anticipation of bodily resurrection for which he is famous: "I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand upon the earth. And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God; I myself will see him with my own eyes—I, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!" (Job 19:25-27). Job is gradually realizing that though life is essentially a mystery, God is working out His own purposes.

Despite Job's tremendous flash of hope, Zophar lets loose a blast of impassioned words against Job. His argument is that the prosperity of the wicked is always short, their joy is but for a moment, and their punishment is always terrible and certain.

After a reasoned appeal for a careful hearing, Job sets forth the facts about the wicked. They often live lives that are for the most part untroubled. They openly defy God and yet prosper. God's judgments upon them are infrequent and long delayed, and even when they come they seem to be uneven. He concludes by chiding his friends for their hidden surmises and their unsupported convictions.

Final Round of Speeches

In chapter 22 Eliphaz begins to pour out accusation upon poor Job. He even stoops to inventing totally false charges against Job. He ends with exhortations to Job to confess his sin and return to God, with the hope that God will again pour out blessings upon him.

Job does not attempt to answer the arguments of his friends any further. He simply cries out of a troubled heart, expressed before them but addressed to God, the deepest problem he now feels: "Why is God absent?" As Job's pain increases and his frustration grows, his basic longing for God remains, and though he searches everywhere to find God, nothing seems to work. Yet despite this, a slowly growing faith in God's justice sustains him, and confidence in God's ultimate purpose encourages him. Nevertheless, he is terribly afraid of God and dreads a confrontation with Him. His progressing faith produces the highest expression of trust found in the book: "But he knows the way that I take; when he has tested me, I shall come forth as gold" (Job 23:10).

In chapter 24 Job faces his second question: "Why is God silent?" He raises the complaint many have raised about God, "Why doesn't He judge evil?" Job points out that thieves and scoundrels flourish, while poor people suffer terribly, and yet God seems uncaring. Thus, though the three friends assert that evil finds invariable retribution, Job points out that the facts of life are quite different.

In a final address, Bildad restates his argument that God is all-powerful and humanity is inherently sinful. Job sarcastically answers that the friends have been of no help at all to him, for he quite agrees that there is a mystery in God that no person can explain.

In chapters 27-31, Job reviews the situation. He states again his sense of unshakeable integrity, and yet he must agree with much his friends have stated. He traces humanity's search for wisdom, concluding that wisdom is elusive. The only way to obtain it, he asserts, is from God. He looks back on the days of his prosperity and blessing, recounting in detail the honor that was shown him. He contrasts that with the painful present, where he faces the mockery of people, the anguish of pain, and—the ultimate torment—the silence of God. But once again he can find no reason in himself why God continues to allow this pain to go on. With this, the words of Job are ended. Baffled, questioning, tormented, yet unwilling to forsake God, he falls silent.

A New Voice

At this point God replies to Job in a way he did not expect, for suddenly a young man, Elihu, who has been listening all along, speaks up and appears as witness to the Mediator for whom Job has been asking throughout the book. Elihu claims to speak not out of experience, as the other men did, but from revelation: “the Almighty...gives [a person] understanding” (Job 32:8). Elihu, therefore, comes into the book as the answer to Job’s cry for an explanation.

Elihu states that he has not entered the discussion before, but now, since the knowledge that comes with age has not solved the problem of Job’s suffering, he feels pressured to speak. He says Job sees God as capricious, acting as people do out of His feelings and moods, but in this Job is not right, for God is much greater than people. Further, Elihu says, Job claims that God is silent, but actually God speaks (1) in dreams and (2) in pain, even repeating Himself patiently so that the person may get the message. In essence, affliction is sent by a God of love in order to discipline and purify. To this Job is invited to reply, but he remains silent.

Elihu claims that Job’s view of God makes him echo the arguments of the ungodly: “What man is like Job, who drinks scorn like water? He keeps company with evildoers; he associates with wicked men. For he says, ‘It profits a man nothing when he tries to please God’” (Job 34:7-9). In effect, Elihu says Job is saying, “What advantage is it to me to behave myself? I might as well have sinned.”

Elihu reveals the truth about the character of God: He cannot be unjust because He cannot deny Himself, and since He judges humanity He Himself must be just. Further, He is beyond accountability to people, for no person authorized Him to act and nothing functions without Him. Actually it is He who teaches people what justice is, for a person cannot govern without the concept of justice and we learn impartial justice from observing God. Yet God does not need to investigate when He judges, and He will not accept outward reformation, but requires inward repentance. Therefore, Job speaks from some degree of ignorance of God and needs further enlightenment.

Elihu claims to speak from divine authority, saying, “Be assured that my words are not false; one perfect in knowledge is with you” (Job 36:4). Some commentators have thought that he is referring to himself as “perfect in knowledge” and is therefore an arrogant young man. But in Job 37:16 he asks Job: “Do you know how the clouds hang poised, those wonders of him who is perfect in knowledge?” Obviously he here refers to God, and his claim in chapter 36, therefore, is that he is speaking with the wisdom and authority of God.

Elihu points out that Job is so preoccupied with justice that he comes close to blasphemy and judgment in his view of God. If he goes on in this vein his case will be hopeless.

God’s Message to Job

This brings us to the climax of the book of Job, where the voice of God Himself is heard. He sets forth a series of questions designed to show Job that His wisdom is far above what Job could ever understand. God first asks concerning the earth, where Job was when its foundations were laid, and then proceeds to question Job as to how the sea was born and how it is kept within limits. He probes Job’s understanding of the processes of day and night, and of what lies beneath the sea and beyond the boundaries of life. Then He explores the heavens, and finally He examines Job’s ability to handle God’s daily chores of caring for the animals.

In reply to all this, Job admits his total incompetence to contend with the Almighty, and declares himself unable to speak further. Job had believed that God had wronged him (see Job 19:6), and that He was indifferent to the evil in the world. With another series of questions, God reveals to Job, and to us, His wisdom, power, knowledge, and righteousness.

Chapter 42 sets forth Job’s repentance, consisting of a new view of God Himself and of his own life. He concludes: “My ears had heard of you but now my eyes have seen you. Therefore I despise myself and repent in dust and ashes” (Job 42:5-6). Where before his testing, Job knew of God, now he knows God—Whom to know is life eternal (see John 17:3). All his questionings are silenced by the magnificent presence of the Lord.

Thus Job learns that the ultimate problem of life is within us, but it is a problem that only God can handle. We are unable, totally unequipped, to handle it by ourselves. All we can do is put ourselves in His gracious hands and trust Him to work out the circumstances of our lives, to teach us what He desires us to learn, to change us to become more like Him, and to draw us into an ever closer walk with Himself.

The closing scenes of the book record God’s rebuke of the friends and His vindication of Job before them. God completely restores Job, granting him double blessing in all that he once possessed.

Study Questions

Before you begin your study this week:

- ☞ Pray and ask God to speak to you through His Holy Spirit.
- ☞ Use only the Bible for your answers.
- ☞ Write down your answers and the verses you used.
- ☞ Answer the “Challenge” questions if you have the time and want to do them.
- ☞ Share your answers to the “Personal” questions with the class only if you want to share them.

First Day: Read the Commentary on the Book of Job.

1. What meaningful or new thought did you find in the commentary on the book of Job, or from your teacher's lecture? What personal application did you choose to apply to your life?

2. Look for a verse in the lesson to memorize this week. Write it down, carry it with you, or post it in a prominent place. Make a real effort to learn the verse and its “address” (reference of where it is found in the Bible).

3. This week's questions focus on the book of Psalms. If you have time, you may want to read or skim through the entire book this week. As you answer the questions, you will be looking up passages of Scripture from various places in the Bible. This will help you discover that God's Word is a “whole,” and that His message to us is the same from Genesis to Revelation.

The book of Psalms reflects every experience of our hearts, and expresses every cry of the human soul. Its writing covers many centuries, from Moses (13th century B.C.), who wrote Psalm 90, to the lament in Psalm 137 of the Jews who were in exile from 605 to 539 B.C. Comprised of 150 individual psalms, it is divided into five books, which correlate to the first five books of the Bible—the books of law—known as the Jewish Torah, or the Pentateuch. The five books of law were designed to give us a pattern of God's working in human history, in the world of nations, and with individuals. The five books of psalms follow the same pattern, but reflect the emotional reactions of the human heart to God's divine program.

Second Day:

As Genesis describes mankind's awareness of our need for God and our inadequacy in ourselves, so the first section, or book, of psalms (Psalms 1-42) in general expresses that same sense of need.

1. From Psalm 14:2-3, how does God view humanity?

2. Our sin problem was taken care of by Jesus Christ on the cross. Psalm 22 describes what transpired there. Read each of the following sets of verses (one from Psalm 22 and the other from the New Testament) and compare them.

Psalm 22:1 with Matthew 27:46

Psalm 22:6-8 with Matthew 27:39, 41, 43

Psalm 22:14-18 with John 19:23-24, 28-29

3. a. Psalm 32 describes the grief over their sin that every believer in Christ has experienced, at least in part. From verses 1-2, describe the person who has confessed their sin and has been forgiven.
 - b. What does 1 John 1:9 say will happen if we confess our sin to God?
 - c. Personal: Have you confessed your sin and experienced the joy of God's forgiveness? If not, what is stopping you?
4. Psalm 40 describes the experience of a person who was in great difficulty emotionally and spiritually. From Psalm 40:1-3 describe...
 - a. the action the psalmist took
 - b. God's response to that action
 - c. the psalmist's response
5. Psalm 23, one of the best known psalms, pictures God as our Good Shepherd and recounts His care and provision. From verse 6, how long will He care for us?
6. Personal: What is the cry of your heart to God today?

Third Day:

The second book of psalms covers Psalms 42-72, and corresponds in theme to the book of Exodus. As Exodus tells the story of Israel in captivity in Egypt—describing their sorrow and bondage and the slavery of sin, yet teaching much of the grace of God in His power to deliver them and bring them out of oppression and captivity—so the second book of psalms traces the same theme in a wider human experience.

1. Psalm 42 is the heart cry of one who knows the Lord, yet is suffering—who is in pain, who is oppressed by the enemy, and who doesn't feel the presence of the Lord. How is the psalmist comforted and encouraged? (verses 4-6, 8-9, 11)
2. Psalm 51 was written after David's sins of murder and adultery, and records first his godly sorrow, then his forthright confession and his desire to turn from evil. From verses 7-15, list what David wants God to do for him.
3. The second book within Psalms closes with a psalm that consists of a prayer for the king. Read Psalm 72:2, 4, 7, 12-14. What will a just and righteous king do for his people?

4. What does 1 Timothy 2:1-3 urge believers in Christ to do? Why?

5. Personal: Do you pray for those in authority? If you don't, will you commit to praying for them on a regular basis?

Fourth Day:

The third book of psalms consists of Psalms 73-89. It corresponds in theme to the book of Leviticus, which is the book of tabernacle worship. It reveals the inner workings of our hearts and our discovery of what God is like.

1. a. Psalm 73 opens this third book of psalms by facing one of the most common problems of faith in an unbelieving world. Read verses 2-3 and describe the problem.

b. From verses 16-20, what truth brought peace to the psalmist's soul?

c. The psalmist has learned the importance and satisfaction of intimacy with God. From verses 23-28, list the benefits to those who have made the Lord their refuge.

2. Most everyone has times of discouragement and doubt. From Psalm 77:11-12, what did the psalmist do to receive comfort?

3. Personal: Psalm 84 is an expression of the blessedness of those who walk in intimate fellowship with the Lord. You may have accepted Jesus Christ as your Savior, but have you entered into a deep relationship with the Lord? Read Psalm 84.¹ Which portion of the psalm is most meaningful to you? Why?

Fifth Day:

Just as the book of Numbers is the record of the wandering of Israel in the desert for 40 years, so the fourth book of psalms, covering Psalms 90-106, reflects the up-and-down desert experience of the believer.

1. Psalm 90, written by Moses, begins this section. In spite of the difficulties Israel is facing in her desert wandering, how does Moses refer to God in Psalm 90:1?

2. From Psalm 91:1-2, what do we learn about those who make God their dwelling place?

3. Psalm 95 gives words of comfort, however verses 7b-11 also give a warning. Why was God angry with Israel, and what was the result?

1. *Baca* in Psalm 84:6 means weeping.

4. a. These words of promise and warning are repeated in Hebrews 4. Read Hebrews 4:2, 5-11. Why was the message of no value to those who heard it? (verse 2)

 - b. What is remaining for God's people? (verses 8-10)

 - c. How might one fall? (verse 11)
5. Personal: Although we rest in Christ's finished work on the cross for our salvation, we also need to learn to rest, by faith, in God's love and provision for us in our every day lives. We must learn to dwell (remain) in God's presence, and that is done by the obedience that comes from faith. If we truly believe what God says, we seek to obey Him. Are there areas in your life where you are walking in disobedience to God's Word? Read Proverbs 28:13 and 1 John 1:9. What are you going to do?

Sixth Day:

The fifth and longest book of psalms (Psalms 107-150) corresponds to the book of Deuteronomy in theme. It records deliverance brought about by the resources of God instead of by reliance upon human resources.

1. Psalm 107 relates a sequence of difficult circumstances in which people found themselves. From verses 6, 13, 19, and 28, what happened when they cried out to the Lord?

2. Psalm 119 is the longest chapter in the Bible. Its theme is the Word of God and its remarkable power. From verses 11, 50, 98-99, 105, 130, and 165, list some of the things God's Word will do.

3. Psalm 139 expresses how intimately God knows each one of us as an individual, and how He is concerned about us. From Psalm verses 23-24, what is the psalmist's response to God? Is this the longing of your heart?

4. Psalm 150:6 is the final verse in the book of Psalms. What are we exhorted to do?

5. Personal: The Psalms help us learn to be honest before God, even about troubles and problems, wrong moods and resentful attitudes. They also remind us that He cares and is there to help. Do you have a favorite psalm? How did it become meaningful to you?