

Know the God of Scripture

Volume 1

Week 23: Fingerprints of God - Answer Guide

Below is the answer guide for this week's lesson. By no means are the answers complete or the only possible responses to each question. They are a guide to fully understanding the intent of the questions posed.

1. The message in Psalm 8 is God is the Creator of all things known to man: heaven, earth, sea, sky, etc. According to Genesis 1-3, He placed man in charge of His creation to subdue it. In the light of this reality man is nothing more than a speck of cosmic dust on a rotating ball of mud in the vastness of space. This concept of our place in vast space should contribute to the foundation which humbles us and motivates our love for an omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent loving God.

2. The Hebrew word used for God in Psalm 8:5 is Elohim which normally expresses the plurality of God. However, there are several places in Scripture where context calls for a different interpretation. This is one place where it probably means spiritual beings. After angels were created God made man lower than them in the hierarchy of Creation.

Another interpretation of Elohim could be that it refers to lower case gods, as in existing pagan gods (which really aren't gods) in other cultures. YHWH is above these gods whereas man is below them, thus excluding them altogether. I don't particular adhere to this interpretation.

3. The underlying message in Psalm 13 is to always keep your eyes on God and not on your circumstances. Our faith is our foundation in our relationship with Jesus. It is what binds us to Him in all things. Despite what David was enduring, despite not being able to see God's hand, David never wavered in his faith in YHWH. Rejoicing and singing to God, like David did, strengthens our faith and reinforces our hope in His provision and protection.

4. Psalm 14 adds to the realism of the Scriptures by portraying real people dealing with real situations. It paints a clear picture of the depravity of man and his need for salvation. The very 1st step of redemption is recognizing our sinful nature and acknowledging our grave need for salvation. D. L. Moody used Psalm 14:2 as a basis for his famous quote, "The world has yet to see what God can do with one man whose heart is completely his." As Paul rightly quotes in Romans 3:23, "For all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God." Each of us has a void in our hearts that only Jesus can fill. Humble confession of our depravity is the first step to salvation. Reference Isaiah 53:6.

5. Psalm 18:8 instructs us to continually keep God (Jesus) in the forefront of our thoughts so that we are reminded He is with us all the time. Psalm 18:9 reflects the triune nature of man. As believers in Christ, we are assured to spend eternity with Christ enjoying His good pleasures and avoiding the pit of Sheol. We find our complete purpose and joy only in Christ our Savior as David did with YHWH.

6. Psalm 17:10-12 describe how David's adversaries seemed to surround him like a young lion lurking in ambush. Compare this verbage with Genesis 4:7 and 1 Peter 5:8. The Devil and his minions are on a continuous quest to destroy God's children (John 10:10) which is why we must be vigilant in our resistance by calling up spiritual assistance through prayer. Our battle, much like David's, is in the spiritual realm manifested in the physical. Compare Ephesians 6 and the armor of God.

The expressions "apple of the eye" and "shadow of Your wings" are metaphors for God's love and care for mankind. The background for these metaphors may be found in the Song of Moses (Deuteronomy 32:10-12).

7. Jesus quotes 22:1 from the cross. He was scorned and mocked by the people as He hung from the cross (Psalm 22:6-7). Psalm 22:16 paints a vivid description of Jesus' death on the cross (crucifixion was instituted by the Romans 800 years later! It wasn't practiced in David's day). Psalm 22:17-18 describe, in prophetic detail, that not a bone in His body was broken and His garments were divided by casting lots. These details of a future event, especially the most important event in history, add credence to the validity of the holy Scriptures, for mere man could not have forecasted such an event like this.

In addition, Jesus is portrayed as compassionate, loving, caring and a warrior leader of His people. This Psalm should strengthen our resolve that the Bible's authors were divinely inspired by the Holy Spirit since man could not have known these facts.

8. Many times Jesus used sheep as a reference to His followers (Matthew 9:36, 10:6, 25:33). Sheep are really stupid animals who live by instinct and intuition, much like mankind. They are in dire need of care, to be led to greener pastures to graze, and to be protected from vicious predators. What better way to depict the role of a Great Shepherd, of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Today this is probably the most quoted Psalm. It is read at funerals, on people's death beds and when people are struggling. Its vary words give us encouragement knowing that the LORD is our shepherd who cares for us by protecting us, providing for us and leading us to better pastures.

9. Psalm 25:4-5 instruct us to ask God to make known His ways so we can follow them. These words should encourage every believer to humbly approach God and ask Him to teach them His ways of living. We must come to the conclusion that we are mere vessels for His use. When we accept Jesus into our lives we die to self and live for Him and His purposes.

Additional Questions:

1. In short, the Anthropic Principle is a scientific claim that life as we know it on earth is only possible because the right parameters are in place. In other words, if the earth were minutely closer to the Sun or the Moon, or the rate of rotation was slightly different, or the tilt of the earth were remotely tweaked, we would all die. Often referred to as the Goldilocks Phenomenon, it basically states the constraints in which we live are perfect, pointing to an omniscient Creator. Knowing about the Anthropic Principle and its theories should help Christians in their faith that the world as we know it was created by God.

2. Answers will vary depending on personal experience.

3. Answers will vary depending on personal experience.

