

Know the God of Scripture

Volume 1

Week 24: Finding Comfort in the Psalms - 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. In Psalm 28, David cries out to his “Rock,” what he considered his immovable foundation of security and hope, YHWH. Psalm 30 is a beautiful expose of David’s joy in serving and praising God, something we should also put into practice. Psalm 35 depicts David’s encounters with evil men and how God rescued him from their devious traps. In Psalm 38, David is overwhelmed by his sin. All of these recordings strengthen the reader’s faith because we all can relate to David’s inner feelings expressed through each one.

2. Psalm 30 depicts David singing for joy because of his relationship with the LORD. Singing is an outward expression of the inner joy we feel when we trust in God. Singing is found throughout Scripture, from singing at Passover (and all the other festivals) to singing after observing the Lord’s Supper in the New Testament. Singing is found 87 times in the Psalms.

3. Jesus said, “to follow Me you need to die to self, pick up your cross, and follow me with no reservations” (paraphrased). Total surrender from a totally depraved soul is what God seeks. A heart that is empty is best filled by His Spirit. A believer doesn’t just stop living, but their every thought and action is in obedience to their Savior, Jesus Christ. They succumb to the leading of the Holy Spirit in obedience to Scripture. Fleshly desires are not heeded and the will of God is of utmost importance. That is what complete surrender entails.

4. Answers will vary based on personal experience. It is a cleansing feeling to know that we are free from shame and guilt and that our past will not be remembered by God. It is the same feeling a prisoner feels when released from jail or when a debt is forgiven. Freedom leads to joy.

5. The prefix “en” means within, the base “theos” means God. Thus, the root meaning of enthusiastic is God within us! God should shine through us as Christ shines in the darkness. Psalm 34:5 “radiant” is analogous to when Moses returned from atop Mt. Sinai or when he emerged from the Tabernacle, his face was radiant as if he was in the midst of Almighty God. People should see “God within” us, as beacons to a dark world.

6. Components of David’s prayer in Psalm 35 are:

1. David placed complete trust in God (Psalm 35:3) “I am your salvation” (the word salvation is *yeshuah*)
2. It’s a spiritual battle where God directs His angels (Psalm 35:5-6; 91:11) to protect His people
3. David knew that God was in control of all circumstances and was able to hear his prayer
4. Prayer and fasting were essential (Psalm 35:13-14)
5. Praise in the midst of turmoil comforts the soul (Psalm 35:18, 27-28). Jesus quoted vs. Psalm 35:19 in John 15:45 (reference Psalm 69:4) at his unjust trial (like the trial David is now experiencing).

7. Thirty-nine times the phrase “sing praise” is found in the Psalms. The word “praise” is found 167 times. David claims he will praise God in ALL times (Psalm 34:1). Likewise, the sons of Korah practiced praising God in difficult times (Psalm 42:11).

In the New Testament this practice is also seen. Paul and Silas were found singing to God in prison (Acts 16:23-35). The writer of Hebrews (Hebrews 13:15) calls for believers to offer up continuous songs of praise. Praising and singing to the Lord helps put our minds on reality in lieu of our sensory perception, giving us reassurance that God’s got whatever we may be going through.

8. Do not envy unbelievers, but pity their condition of depravity and blinded spiritual insight. In the presence of the Almighty, in His Tabernacle, all reality comes to light, all understanding is had, they are in need of salvation and we are to share the Gospel with them in love and tolerance. When we enter into the Tabernacle, we begin to see life from God's perspective and not from our own tainted perspective.

9. When you give your heart to Christ your mind becomes Christ-minded. You begin to see the will of God more clearly allowing you to know what pleases the heart of God (2 Corinthians 5:9). Your heart's desires line up with God's desires and He blesses you. You will want what God wants, pursue what He pursues (Psalm 37:31). This verse goes hand-in-hand with Proverbs 3:5-6 and Matthew 6:33.

10. We are all sojourners in a foreign land, much like modern-day Ambassadors. We have been assigned a task to complete with the assurance our authority will protect and provide for our needs. Therefore, evil takes on new meaning, trials are just hurdles and hardships are valleys on the trek to the promised finish line. Sojourner worldview strengthens our hope, knowing we're on our way to heaven. Living as sojourners in this world is really what sets Christians apart from non-believers. We live for Christ; they live for self. Reference Leviticus 25:23, 1 Chronicles 29:15, Psalm 119:19, Hebrews 11:13.

11. When feelings of depression emerge in our souls it is wise to seek the face of God, to see Him in His handiwork (nature), to recognize our position in Him, for He is the immovable Rock of our salvation. Put your hope in God and praise Him in your "prison" ... this is where relief and comfort are found. Find comfort in knowing that God knows what you are going through and it pains His heart.

Additional Questions:

1. Answers will vary depending on personal experience. Availability is of utmost importance. Being available to someone who is walking through a valley is comforting to their soul. God gave us all two ears and one mouth; He was trying to tell us to listen twice as much as we speak. Praying together helps one in their pain. Reading Scripture together also helps soothe the soul.

2. David's God was BIG because David saw himself as small before Him.

Imagine a father and his son looking out the window at an airport. The son looks far up in the sky and sees a plane's trail as a white line in the sky. He asked his father, "Dad, what is that white line?" To which his father explains that it is the engine exhaust from a plane way up in the sky. His son, looking perplexed, said, "That's a plane?" "Yes" his father said, "just like the one right here in front of our gate."

Moral to the story: In our eyes our God is only as big as our relationship is to Him. The closer we are to Him, the bigger He is. The farther away from Him we are, the smaller He is.

David was very close to God. From his shepherding days to his kingship, David never forgot how big God was to him.

3. When God's law is in our hearts, we are propelled to do His will. This is why it is so essential to the Christian walk to constantly, daily, be in God's Word. Combined with the Holy Spirit, it is where we get our "fill" of God.

