

Jacob's Well

Lesson Title: Themes in the Psalms—Psalms of Wisdom



Key Concept: The Psalms provide an honest reflection of our human nature and the nature of God. God is the source of true wisdom, and we would do well to value the guidance it provides for our lives.



Scriptures:

The Lord says, "I will guide you along the best pathway for your life. I will advise you and watch over you."

(Psalm 32:8 *New Living Translation*)

Your word is a lamp to guide my feet and a light for my path.

(Psalm 119:105 *New Living Translation*)

Context Scriptures: John 1:1; Psalm 104:24; Psalm 4:7; 2 Timothy 3:14–17; Proverbs 4:3–9; Psalm 19:7–11; Psalm 107:43; Proverbs 8:11; James 1:5; Psalm 1:1–3, 6



Lesson Thoughts:

We're taught from an early age that wisdom is important, but what is wisdom? Wisdom's secular definition is the ability to make good judgments based on experience, knowledge, and understanding. Wisdom's biblical definition is similar, but with one major exception: its source. Wisdom obtained through self-reliance is limited and pricey, often purchased through risk and loss. On the other hand, God's unlimited wisdom is obtained freely and comes with great reward. This unmatched wisdom from God is a recurring theme throughout the book of Psalms.

Wisdom, or the lack thereof, determines one's destiny. Similar to a detailed roadmap, wisdom reveals which directions to take to avoid life's destructive pathways: ignore it and perish, obey it and become wise. The Bible teaches us that God gives us his wisdom in his Word. The Word is not only inspired by

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God, but the Word *is* God. The psalmists glorify wisdom's invaluable instructions for life and God's promise to keep the feet of those who obey him from slipping. With a worth greater than gold, wisdom advises us to do what is right and buy God's road map. While other maps lead to destruction, his never fails!

The Psalms describe God's wisdom not merely as a map but also as a blueprint for life itself. From the vast creation of the heavens to the most delicate formations of life inside a mother's womb, all are God's marvelous workmanship. Psalm 104:24 attributes all of creation's wondrous complexities to him, "O Lord, what a variety of things you have made! In wisdom you have made them all. The earth is full of your creatures."

The theme of wisdom is not limited to the book of Psalms, but extends throughout the entirety of the Scriptures. Through wisdom, the simple gain understanding, fools are made wise, and the young are endowed with knowledge beyond their years. Following the psalmists' lead, we should delight ourselves in the life-giving Word, which provides a God-given roadmap for life. We would do well to value wisdom above all else.

**Discussion Questions:**

- 1) What is something the world calls wise that God calls foolish? What is something the world calls foolish that God calls wise?
- 2) Share a time when you either ignored wisdom or followed wisdom. What was the outcome?
- 3) Compare the sources you turned to for wisdom before and after Christ. How do the two differ?
- 4) Think of a time when you witnessed someone's wise actions. What did you learn?

Next Lesson: Psalms of Lament

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Notes and Reflections

- 1) Search for “wisdom” outside of the Psalms. How is it spoken of in those Scriptures?

- 2) Do a slow read of James 1:5–8 and reflect on areas of struggle in your life. Consider asking God for wisdom.