

PSALMS 102–103; 110; 116–119; 127–128; 135–139; 146–150

This week we continue to study various Psalms. The LDS resources are organized according to groups of psalms based on themes. We will include some of their main discussion points as we go.

The following “Witnessing Christ from the Old Testament” study covers **Psalms 102–103; 110; 116–119; 127–128; 135–139; 146–150**. [You can find the LDS outline of study and resources here.](#)

LDS Study Focus

LDS study material follows the theme, **“Let Every Thing That Hath Breath Praise the Lord.”**

The traditional Jewish name for the book of Psalms is a Hebrew word that means “praises.” That word, Tehillim, is also related to the exclamation “hallelujah” (meaning “praise Jehovah” or “praise the Lord”). If you had to choose one word to sum up the main message of the Psalms, “praise” would be a good choice. Some of the Psalms contain the direct invitation to “praise ye the Lord” (see especially [Psalms 146–50](#)), and all of them can inspire a feeling of worship and praise.

The Psalms invite us to reflect on the Lord’s power, on His mercy, and on the great things He has done. We can never repay Him for any of this, but we can praise Him for it. That praise may take different forms for different people—it may involve singing, praying, or bearing testimony. It often leads to a deeper commitment to the Lord and to following His teachings. Whatever “praise ye the Lord” means in your life, you can find more inspiration to do it as you read and ponder the Psalms.

For clarity and conciseness, this week, we have combined brief “commentary,” “conversation starters,” and “sharing personally” sections into a more cohesive unit for you to study and share easily.

Many psalms under consideration in this section urge the reader to “praise the Lord.” This week’s overarching application will help our Mormon friends and family think about **why God is so worthy of praise**.

Witnessing Note: Mormons talk about and go about their “worship” and “praise” differently. Although they revere him, the Mormon god does not create the same kind of awe and admiration that the Biblical God does for Christians. The Mormon god is smaller than the biblical God. The Mormon god was once a man and someone Mormons believe they can become like not just in holiness and perfection, but in essence. Pray that God will lead you as you discuss these psalms with your Mormon friends and family to marvel at his majesty and might as the one and only God and Lord of the universe.

PSALMS 102–103; 116

LDS Focus: *The Lord can comfort me in my suffering.*

Psalm 102 is the prayer of a suffering person who, in their weakness, pours out laments to the Lord in the face of eternity. The psalmist contrasts his impoverished state, smallness, and frailty with God’s towering timelessness and perpetual presence and power. The psalmist’s self-talk is not, “Pull yourself up; you have got this and have what it takes.” Instead, it’s “I am nothing, Lord, and you are everything, be my everything too and give me everything I need.”

- Have you ever experienced affliction like the writer of this psalm did in the face of eternity? What happened, and what did you learn about God and his glory and goodness in the process?
- What does this psalm teach us about God and the many ways he is different from us?
- What words or phrases in this psalm were most *convicting* and *comforting* to you? Why those words?

Witnessing Note: Mormonism teaches that God was once a man, like us, and that someday we can become just like him, not just in holiness and perfection, with knowledge, intellect, and will, but like him in his very essence as gods ourselves. **Psalm 102** powerfully shows how God is God and has always been God. Take time with your Mormon friends and family to slowly work through this psalm, drawing attention to the various attributes of God.

Psalm 103 is David's treatise on the forgiving love of God, in which he implores his readers to "bless the Lord." Why does he deem God worthy of receiving glory? This psalm writer explains that God has given him all good things, including the forgiveness of sins, compassion, righteousness, and faithful love.

Read **Psalm 103** and listen to [Bless the Lord, O My Soul \(Psalm 103\) as sung by Sovereign Grace Music](#).

- The writer of this psalm marvels at the fact that God does not deal with us as our sins deserve. Why is the removal of sins he describes here overwhelming him so much?
- How does the fact that God is "compassionate, gracious, and slow to anger and abounding in love" (v. 8) change how we view him and our relationship with him?
- Which words or phrases in this psalm were most *convicting* and *comforting* to you? Why?

Witnessing Note: Mormonism teaches that God's forgiveness depends on one being properly repentant, and many are left wondering if God has forgiven their sins. According to Mormonism, "repentance is a painful process, but it leads to forgiveness and lasting peace" (True to the Faith, p. 133). It is also a detailed and drawn-out process. It has six steps: faith, sorrow for sin, confession, abandonment of sin, restitution, and righteous living. Mormonism teaches that it might be hundreds of years from now (while in the spirit world) before one can be confident of forgiveness. Point out how David was presently confident of the Lord's forgiveness which gave him comfort for this life and the life to come.

Psalm 116 is one in a line of psalms offering thanks and praise for God and what he has done. The psalmist exalts God for hearing his prayer and providing great deliverance. The rescued one can do nothing but bring glory to the one who worked for his salvation. Although he was in great distress with the "ropes of death wrapped around him," his soul now rests.

Read **Psalm 116** and listen to [Psalm 116 \(I Love You Lord\), sung by Mission House featuring Andrew and Skye Peterson](#).

- How has God delivered the psalmist? How has God delivered the entire world?
- How would you look at life and your duties and obligations differently if you knew that God had already rescued you from your most significant worries and fears and desires to give you rest?
- Which words or phrases in this psalm were most *convicting* and *comforting* to you? Why those?

Witnessing Note: Mormons are taught they need to, in one way or another, pay Jesus back for what he has done for us. This psalm could help show what it looks like to return thanks to the Lord for his great salvation. The psalm writer ponders all God has done for him and wonders, “How can I repay (or return to) the Lord?” His answer is not, “Now I must obey commandments to make and keep covenants to show that I am worthy of God’s salvation.” Instead, he says, “I will lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the Lord” (**Psalm 116:13**). We thank God for his salvation as we rejoice and relish in his salvation and as we call on and praise his name.

PSALMS 110; 118

LDS Focus: *The Psalms can point me to my Savior.*

Psalm 110 and **Psalm 118** are great psalms of victory from and in the Lord. In each, the psalmists revere God as a powerful and providing king who alone can save his people. This remarkable king provides his people with refuge, unlike the safety and security of anything or anyone else. This king is the firm cornerstone upon which we may build our lasting hope for life and salvation. This victorious king’s right hand has no rival.

Read both psalms in their entirety and then listen to [What a Beautiful Name, sung by Travis and Lily Cottrell](#), which captures many of the themes contained in the psalms we are considering this week.

- Christ, our great king has no rivals; he has no equals. Let that sink in for a moment, and then consider what that means for your life and salvation. What does it mean for you and your eternity if Jesus truly has no rivals and no equals?
- How might an enhanced understanding of God’s grandeur and glory force you to rethink who he is and who you are?
- Which words or phrases in these psalms were most *convicting* and *comforting* to you? Why?
- Which words or phrases in “What a Beautiful Name” are most *convicting* and *comforting* to you? Why?

Witnessing Note: The Christian song *What a Beautiful Name* is an extremely popular song among Mormons and Mormon recording artists. In 2019, renowned LDS singer [Reese Oliveira](#) covered it with Rise Up Children’s Choir, Barlow Arts Conservatory, Utah COPA, One Voice Children’s Choir, and other Mormon friends. A Mormon all-sister group, [ELENYI, covered it in 2020](#). In 2021, [David Archuleta](#) (a since disillusioned Mormon) followed suit with a rendition recorded with BYU Vocal Point Choir.

I am currently processing and considering ways a Christian witness might effectively use this song to proclaim Christ to Mormons. For now, ask your Mormon friends if they are familiar with *What a Beautiful Name*. If they are, ask them if there is anything in it that confuses or comforts them. I am interested in asking my Mormon friends about this song, especially the phrase, “He has no rivals, he has no equals.”

If you have any ideas for how to use this song in witnessing, [we would love to hear about them](#).

PSALM 119

LDS Focus: God's word will keep me on his path.

In **Psalm 119**, the longest of the psalms and the longest chapter in the Bible, the psalmist explores how God's Word guides and directs us for life and eternity. This difficult-to-digest psalm is an elaborate acrostic, a literary device in which the writer uses the first letter or first word of a series of poetic units to form a significant pattern or to spell out a message. In this case, the letters are Hebrew, and the literary device gets lost in translation. The primary purpose of this poetic technique is to express completeness. The psalmist wants to meditate carefully and slowly on every aspect of God's Word "from A to Z."

Throughout **Psalm 119**, the writer emphasizes how "God's Word gives us *life* through the forgiving power of the gospel. The Word gives us *freedom*. It not only frees us from sin but gives us the power to begin serving God, which is true freedom. God's Word gives us *light* (*light* represents both joy and guidance). God's Word gives us *stability* so that we are not pulled in every direction by pressure from people of the world" (Brug, John. *The People's Bible: Psalms 73–150*, p. 195).

Read **Psalm 119** (perhaps over a couple of days) and listen to [Your Words Are Wonderful \(Psalm 119\) sung by Sovereign Grace Music](#).

- What teaching about God's Word in **Psalm 119** did you find most profound? What was something new that you learned about God's Word and its purpose in our lives?
- Which words or phrases in this psalm were most *convicting* and *comforting* to you? Why?
- How is God's Word a "lamp for our feet and light for our path" (**Psalm 119:105**)?

PSALMS 134–136

LDS Focus: The Lord is more powerful than any idol.

Psalms 134–136 collectively describe many reasons for giving thanks to a praising God. Throughout these three psalms, the psalmists review the wonders and workings of God throughout history. **Psalm 134** urges readers to "praise the Lord" with lifted hands, **Psalm 135** to "praise the name of the Lord" for he is "good and his name delightful," and **Psalm 136** to "give thanks to Lord, for he is good, his love endures forever."

The psalmists repeatedly remind us about all God has done, continues to do, and will do. The resounding refrain of "his faithful love endures forever," combined with all the instances of "he" and "his," testify boldly that salvation and life eternal with God are all about God and what he does.

Read **Psalms 134–136** and listen to [Give Thanks to God, sung by Pete Crockett](#) and friends.

- What God-worked event reviewed in **Psalms 134–136** was most remarkable to you? How does God's faithful love endure today?
- Which God-worked event or divine characteristic reviewed in *Give Thanks to God* was most remarkable to you?
- Which words or phrases in these psalms were most *convicting* and *comforting* to you? Why?

PSALMS 146–150

LDS Focus: “Praise ye the Lord.”

Psalms 146–150 close out the Book of Psalms with a repeating and resounding anthem, “Praise the Lord.” Why should we “Praise the Lord?” **Psalm 146** says, “Praise the Lord,” for “your God reigns for all generations.” **Psalm 147** says, “Praise the Lord,” for “he binds up the wounded and heals the broken hearted.” **Psalm 148** says, “Praise the Lord,” for “his majesty covers heaven and earth” in all his creative glory. **Psalm 149** says, “Praise the Lord,” for “he adorns the humble with salvation.” Finally, **Psalm 150** closes the book with the plea for everything that has breath to “praise him for his powerful act and his abundant greatness.” The Book of Psalms was the hymn book of Ancient Israel and rightly serves to guide us in our worship today as we proclaim and praise the name of our God and King.

Read **Psalms 146–150**, making a long list of why God is worthy of praise, and then listen to [Praise His Name \(Psalm 148\) sung by Sovereign Grace Music](#) and [Praise the Lord \(Psalm 150\) sung by Matt Papa and Matt Boswell](#).

- Which reason for praising God reviewed in **Psalms 146–150** was most compelling to you? Why?
- Which words or phrases in these psalms were most *convicting* and *comforting* to you? Why?

Witnessing Note: I have not found the concept of praising God predominant in LDS teachings and talks. This week, the Psalms that urge the reader to “praise God for this and praise God for that” may strike an unfamiliar string with many Mormons. Use these psalms to ask, “Why is God worthy of our praise?” After your Mormon connection shares their answer, share yours and list all of the reasons why God is deserving of praise.

While studying the Psalms over the past few weeks, a quote from one of my seminary professors came to mind. As he talked about the different parts of a Sunday service, he said, “All praise is proclamation, and all proclamation is praise.” Think about that as you witness, every time you proclaim the name of Jesus, you are praising him, and every time you praise his name, you are proclaiming his name. I pray that you have found an opportunity to do just that in your study of the Psalms and that you will find more opportunities to praise and proclaim Christ to Mormons shortly.