

July 6
Adults and Next Gen
Lesson 26

2025
CHRONOLOGICAL BIBLE

**WHERE CAN I
FIND JOY?
Psalm 84**

WHERE CAN I FIND JOY? Psalm 84

MAIN IDEA

Joy resides in God's house, relies on God's strength, and radiates from God's presence.

OUTLINE

Weekly Reading Recap

Era Overview

Introduction

- 1. Joy Resides in God's House (Psalm 84:1–4, p. 652)**
 - God's house is beautiful.
 - God's house is bountiful.
 - Jesus' Church is beautiful.
 - Jesus' Church is bountiful.
- 2. Joy Relies on God's Strength (Psalm 84:5–7, p. 653)**
 - Admit your weakness.
 - Accept your weakness.
- 3. Joy Radiates From God's Presence (Psalm 84:10–12, p. 653)**
 - God guides our steps.
 - God guards our lives.
 - God gives abundantly.

Redemption Thread

Call to Action (Determine where you're relying on your strength instead of God's.)

Conclusion

Special Note

This Life Group series draws from the work of Iva May and her team at Chronological Bible Teaching Ministries Inc. Foundational concepts, such as dividing the Bible into 14 Eras, the Redemption Thread, and understanding how God speaks, acts, and reveals Himself in each era, come directly from her work. We are thankful for her willingness to allow us to utilize her

14 Era framework and concepts to create these lessons. Our aim with this series is to encourage participants to read the Bible chronologically, but it is not intended to replace or replicate the comprehensive work of Iva and her team. For more resources on reading the Bible chronologically, we highly recommend visiting chronologicalbibleteaching.com.

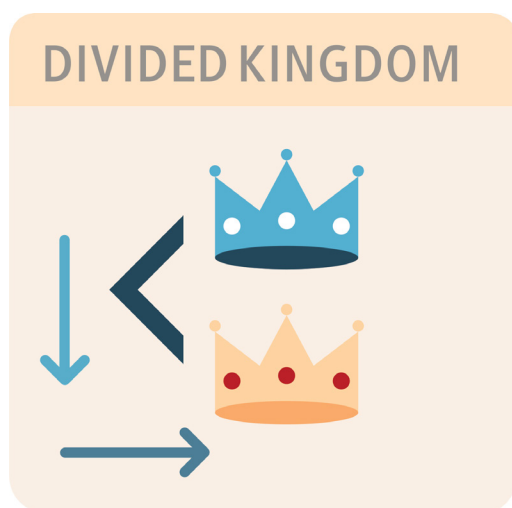


WEEKLY READING RECAP

This week's reading saw Ahaz's reign end in Judah, and his son Hezekiah replaced him. Hezekiah sought to restore the nation to following the Lord, and he reopened the temple and reinstituted the celebration of Passover. The prophet Isaiah also prophesied against Babylon and other nations. We then finished reading Proverbs and read multiple Psalms written by the descendants of Korah.

DISCUSSION QUESTION

1. Which Psalm directly encouraged you in your relationship with God?



ERA OVERVIEW

Leader, our lesson today takes place during the Divided Kingdom Era. Utilizing page A17 in your Chronological Bible, briefly review the Divided Kingdom Era and how it fits in the larger story.

INTRODUCTION

In the 2024 World Happiness Report, the United States ranked 23rd among the happiest countries. This was a significant drop from being No. 15 in 2023, and it's the first time America has not been ranked in the top 20 in the report's 12-year history. A significant contributor to this decline is the way Americans under 30 feel about their lives. Factors that contribute to feelings of happiness include financial status and family well-being.¹

DISCUSSION QUESTION

1. On a scale of 1 to 10, how happy are you? Why?

Throughout the Bible, the words "happiness" and "joy" are often used together (Esther 8:16 NIV; Proverbs 23:25, p. 519; Jeremiah 31:13 CSB). In a world filled with uncertainty, doubt, and disorder, is it possible to be filled with happiness or joy consistently? Should a Christian's feelings

of joy fluctuate with their circumstances, or is it possible to be filled with joy no matter what?

In today's lesson, we'll examine the source of joy and the steps you must take to ensure that your life is defined by joy and happiness.

JOY RESIDES IN GOD'S HOUSE (Psalm 84:1-4, p. 652)

The descendants of Korah wrote Psalm 84, but to understand its significance, we must remember who Korah was and what he did. Korah was a Kohathite, and his clan was tasked with carrying the items of the tabernacle on their shoulders while the Israelites lived in the wilderness (Numbers 7:9, pp. 152-153). However, Korah did not find joy in serving the Lord and incited a rebellion against Moses. Korah and his followers died as a result of God's divine punishment (Numbers 16:1-33, pp. 207-208). Korah's children went on to become the gatekeepers of the tabernacle and temple.

THE TRUE BEAUTY OF GOD'S HOUSE WASN'T FOUND IN ITS MATERIALS BUT IN ITS INHABITANT—GOD HIMSELF.

Ask someone to read Psalm 84:1-4 (p. 652).

Where Korah was filled with discontent and anger, his descendants took joy in their role in serving God at the temple. What did they discover?

God's house is beautiful.

Korah's descendants declared, "How lovely is your dwelling place, O LORD of Heaven's Armies" (Psalm 84:1, p. 652). God's house on earth, the temple, was filled with incredible beauty, as it contained the most precious resources people had to provide, such as gold and silver. However, the true beauty of God's house wasn't found in its materials but in its inhabitant—God Himself. That's why Korah's descendants shouted joyfully with their "whole being, body and soul" (Psalm 84:2, p. 652).

GOD'S HOUSE IS NOT A PHYSICAL BUILDING; IT'S CHRISTIANS WHO FOLLOW JESUS AND COME TOGETHER TO FORM HIS CHURCH.

God's house is bountiful.

God desires to provide for His entire creation, from

His people to the birds in the sky. The example in Psalm 84 of the sparrow and swallow finding refuge in God's house mirrors Jesus' teaching in Matthew 6, that God provides for the birds, so people have no reason to worry about their needs. God loves people much more than the birds! In God's house, people will find supply for all their needs.

Read Psalm 36:8 (pp. 444–445, Kingdom Era)—“You feed them from the abundance of your own house, letting them drink from your river of delights.”

Where do we find God's house today? The Church. But not the building we meet in or another church building down the street. No, God's house is not a physical building; it's Christians who follow Jesus and come together to form His Church.

Jesus' Church is beautiful.

Ask someone to read Ephesians 2:19–20 (p. 1,210, Missions Era).

God's new temple is the Church, and Jesus is its cornerstone. The apostles and prophets laid the foundation, and every Christian (Jew and Gentile) is a member of God's family and an occupant of this new temple. It's a beautiful connection of every tribe, race, and tongue from all over the world!

Jesus' Church is bountiful.

Ask someone to read Ephesians 1:3 (p. 1,208, Missions Era).

As Christians, we have access to every spiritual blessing from heaven even though we still live on earth. We know God personally, are led by His Spirit, have a purpose that will impact eternity, and have received His gifts of the Spirit. In His grace, God abundantly gives all of Himself to us through Christ.

And just like the descendants of Korah, what do we receive when we live in God's house? “What joy for those who can live in your house” (Psalm 84:4, p. 652). No matter our status, position, or influence, we can find everlasting joy by inhabiting God's house.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How do we allow Korah's attitude to infect us today?
2. How can we be encouraged by God's promise to provide for the birds?

JOY RELIES ON GOD'S STRENGTH

(Psalm 84:5–7, p. 653)

Ask someone to read Psalm 84:5–7 (p. 653).

Our journey through life will be difficult. We will face pain, disappointment, unmet expectations, hardship, and loss. The author of this Psalm used the imagery of Israelites making a pilgrimage to Jerusalem through the dry “Valley of Weeping” (Psalm 84:6, p. 653). As the Israelites enter the valley, they are tired and weary. But in their discouragement, God provides refreshing springs and rain so that they are strengthened to worship Him in Jerusalem, which fills them with joy.

Today we often go through our own valleys of weeping or discouragement. A valued relationship came to an end. Our child has a medical condition that is unbeatable. Our primary source of income disappeared.

In these moments, we enter a valley and often attempt to escape its clutches on our own. However, this strategy usually leads to discouragement, disappointment, and disillusionment. Joy is scarce because we try to solve the challenge on our own and find that we are inadequate to solve the issue. So we sink further into the valley, with seemingly no way out. Is there a way out?

The Apostle Paul was confronted with his own challenge. Let's see how he responded.

Ask someone to read 2 Corinthians 12:7b–10 (p. 1,196, Missions Era).

WE WILL BE ABLE TO RADIATE JOY WHEN WE DISCOVER THAT WE ARE STRONG IN OUR WEAKNESSES.

Admit your weakness.

We don't know the challenge Paul was given, but he couldn't remove it from his life. He admitted to God that he couldn't solve it and asked Him to take it away. When we confront our challenges in our own strength, we will consistently experience frustration and desperation. Paul took the first step to admit that he couldn't solve his challenge and laid it at God's feet.

Accept your weakness.

God's response showed Paul that all he needed was God's grace. By accepting his weakness, Paul discovered how God's strength would shine through his life. When we accept our weaknesses and struggles and tell God that we will trust Him no matter our situation, we open the door for Him to strengthen us through His Spirit. Just as Paul was able to be glad in his weakness, we will be able to radiate joy when we discover that we are strong in our weaknesses.

Leader, share about a time you faced a situation you couldn't solve and how the Lord strengthened you through it.

When we admit and accept our weaknesses, we will discover the greatness of the “joy for those whose strength comes from the LORD” (Psalm 84:5, p. 653)!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why do we often attempt to solve problems on our own before turning to God?
2. When have you experienced God's joy in the middle of a discouraging or difficult situation?

JOY RADIATES FROM GOD'S PRESENCE

(Psalm 84:10–12, p. 653)

Ask someone to read Psalm 84:10–12 (p. 653).

We've discussed how joy is found in God's house and in God's strength. However, joy only comes from those attributes because God's presence produces joy.

God guides our steps.

"For the LORD God is our sun" (Psalm 84:11, p. 653).

God's very presence is filled with light, and there is no darkness within Him. Because God is our light, we can trust the path He illuminates for us. When decisions come, we know He will point us in the best direction.

GOD MAY NOT GIVE US EVERYTHING WE WANT, BUT HE PROMISES TO PROVIDE US WITH THE GOOD THINGS THAT WE NEED.

God guards our lives.

"For the LORD God is ... our shield" (Psalm 84:11, p. 653). God goes before and behind His people and provides protection wherever they go. Though we experience physical troubles and hardship, He protects our spirits for eternity and does not allow anyone or anything to snatch us from His grasp.

God gives abundantly.

"The LORD will withhold no good thing" (Psalm 84:11, p. 653). When we obey God's directions, He abundantly provides us with every good thing we need. He may not give us everything we want, but He promises to provide us with the good things that we need. He will not withhold what you need but will give it to you abundantly (Philippians 4:19, p. 1,222, Missions Era)!

What needs does God promise to fulfill?

- Daily provision (Matthew 6:31–33, p. 1,008, Gospel Era)
- Peace (John 14:27, p. 1,087, Gospel Era)
- Forgiveness (1 John 1:9, p. 1,258, Missions Era)
- Wisdom (James 1:5, p. 1,223, Missions Era)

Because God's presence is filled with light, protection, and abundance, the author of Psalm 84 declared he would rather spend a "single day in [God's] courts ... than a thousand anywhere else!" (Psalm 84:10, p. 653). He would have rather been a lowly servant in God's presence than live the "good life" through dishonest gain with dishonest people.

God's presence is good, and those who seek His presence will be filled with joy!

TODAY, GOD'S SPIRIT LIVES INSIDE US BECAUSE OF JESUS' WORK ON THE CROSS. YOU DON'T HAVE TO TRAVEL ANYWHERE SPECIAL BECAUSE GOD'S PRESENCE IS WITH YOU RIGHT NOW.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. If God's presence produces joy, why do we start our days with anything or anyone else?
2. What changes can someone make if their life doesn't radiate joy?

REDEMPTION THREAD

God's presence has always been available to people. Korah had the opportunity to be close to God and serve Him, but he actively despised what God offered. Korah's descendants, on the other hand, readily sought God and received His joy as a result. Today, God's Spirit lives inside us because of Jesus' work on the cross. You don't have to travel anywhere special or do anything unusual because God's presence is with you right now, ready to fill you with His joy.

CALL TO ACTION

Form small groups within your Life Group. Direct the groups to answer this question: Where am I relying on my own strength instead of God's? Give the groups time to discuss and encourage them to pray for each other afterward.

CONCLUSION

Do you desire the same joy the descendants of Korah had? Then remember today's main idea: "Joy resides in God's house, relies on God's strength, and radiates from God's presence." You'll never be able to manufacture everlasting joy on your own because the joy that your spirit desires only comes from the Lord. The first part of Bellevue's mission is to love God. It's only through loving Him first that you'll ever be able to experience His joy. How do you need to reorient your life this week so you can experience His unending joy?

NEXT GEN

WHERE CAN I FIND JOY?

Psalm 84

OPENING

Activity: Balloon Joy

Supplies: Balloons

Direct the students to form several teams. Give each team a blown-up balloon and tell them they have to transport their balloon from one side of the room to the other using only their heads and knees. If the balloon hits the floor, they must start over. The team that completes the challenge in the shortest amount of time is the winner. Allow the teams to go one at a time.

Afterward, tell your students that being filled with joy can feel fragile, like keeping the balloon up in the air. Many people feel like one wrong move will sap all their joy and that they are just one bad move away from it crashing to the ground. What if our joy isn't dependent upon our circumstances but upon something much more solid?

Discussion Questions

1. What are some things that teenagers believe will fill them with happiness? Why do they believe that?
2. Who's someone you believe is filled with joy even when life is difficult? What sticks out about them?
3. Should Christians be more joyful than other people? Do you ever feel like joy is something that only other people have, not you? How come?

APPLICATION

Direct the students to form several groups. Instruct everyone to share one area in their life where they're weak and then pray, "Lord, I'm weak in [this area], but I trust that You are strong and will help me." After each person shares, have someone else in the group pray for them. Afterward, remind the students that when they confess their weakness and rely on God's strength, they will discover joy in trusting Him.

Citations

1. "U.S. Drops from Top 20 Happiest Countries List in 2024 World Happiness Report - CBS News." *www.cbsnews.com*, 20 Mar. 2024, www.cbsnews.com/news/happiest-countries-world-list-2024-united-states-gallup/.

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Additional Resources

"What Is the Valley of Baca in the Bible?"
gotquestions.org/valley-of-Baca.html

*All thoughts and ideas listed under Additional Resources may not be completely in agreement with Bellevue's theology, and their listing should not be considered as an endorsement.

CONGRATULATIONS— YOU FINISHED LESSON 26!



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July 13
Adults and Next Gen
Lesson 27

2025
CHRONOLOGICAL BIBLE

**DOES GOD HEAR
MY PRAYERS?
Psalm 116**

DOES GOD HEAR MY PRAYERS? Psalm 116

MAIN IDEA

I praise God during difficult times because He hears my prayers.

OUTLINE

Weekly Reading Recap

Era Overview

Introduction

1. **God's Humble Posture Toward You (Psalm 116:1–2, p. 669)**
2. **God Hears Your Crisis Prayers (Psalm 116:3–9, p. 669)**
 - Names of God
 - The LORD
 - Yahweh-Jireh
 - Yahweh-Shalom
 - El Roi
3. **God Hears Your Anxious Prayers (Psalm 116:10–14, p. 669)**
 - Anxiety Examples
 - David
 - Hannah
 - Jeremiah
4. **Your Posture Toward Your Loving God (Psalm 116:15–19, p. 669)**
 - He knelt.
 - He offered.
 - He acted.

Redemption Thread

Call to Action (Call on God using one of His names.)

Conclusion

Special Note

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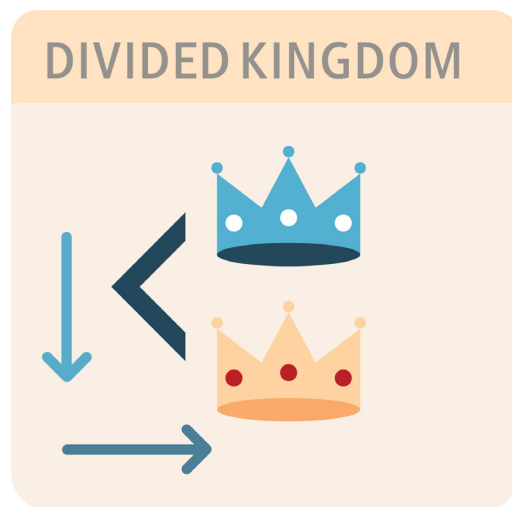


WEEKLY READING RECAP

The reading this week consisted entirely of Psalms. Many of them were Psalms of praise and worship, acknowledging God's reign, faithfulness, goodness, and salvation. Other Psalms celebrated God's creation and His faithfulness to Israel. In the middle of all those, Psalm 102 is a lament of someone overwhelmed with trouble who calls out to God for help.

DISCUSSION QUESTION

1. What's one verse that impacted you from this week's reading in the Psalms?



ERA OVERVIEW

Leader, our lesson today takes place during the Divided Kingdom Era. Utilizing page A17 in your Chronological Bible, briefly review the Divided Kingdom Era and how it fits in the larger story.

INTRODUCTION

If you type “Does God hear” in the search bar on Google, you’ll receive multiple suggestions based on actual online searches:

- “Does God hear a sinner’s prayer?”
- “Does God hear the prayers of the unsaved?”
- “Does God hear silent prayers?”
- “Does God hear all prayers?”

This is not a question that only non-Christians ask; our church is filled with people who wonder if God truly hears them when they pray. In our lesson today, we’ll examine whether God hears our prayers.

GOD’S HUMBLE POSTURE TOWARD YOU

(Psalm 116:1–2, p. 669)

Ask someone to read Psalm 116:1–2 (p. 669).

The psalmist of Psalm 116 boldly and definitively declared that God hears his voice and prayers. He painted a picture of a loving God who humbly stoops down and personally listens to his prayers, like a father who crouches down next to a child. But how could the psalmist be sure of this

statement? Perhaps he never had hardships and had only known the sunny side of life. When you’ve never experienced hardship, believing that God is loving and humble is easy.

DISCUSSION QUESTION

1. On a scale of 1 to 10—with 1 being “completely disagree” and 10 being “completely agree”—how would you rate your agreement with the fact that God hears your voice? Explain.

Let’s discover the psalmist’s journey with the Lord and why he believed that God humbly stooped down and heard all his prayers.

GOD HEARS YOUR CRISIS PRAYERS

(Psalm 116:3–9, p. 669)

Ask someone to read Psalm 116:3 (p. 669).

CALLING OUT TO GOD AND USING HIS NAMES REMIND YOU OF HIS CHARACTER WHEN YOU’RE IN THE MIDDLE OF A CRISIS.

The psalmist revealed that he was familiar with difficulty. He didn’t have everything handed to him on a silver platter but faced scary and overwhelming circumstances. As he faced those situations, he saw only darkness, with no light revealing the way out. But as he sank under the weight of his circumstances, he made a crucial decision.

Ask someone to read Psalm 116:4 (p. 669).

He called on the name of the LORD! He didn’t turn to his intellect, attempt to solve his problem with his ideas, or defeat the challenge with his strength. But why did He call on the name of the LORD? Because calling out to God and using His names remind you of His character when you’re in the middle of a crisis. What are some of God’s names?

The Lord

Let’s start with the name the psalmist uses in Psalm 116. “LORD” (written using small caps) is the English version of “YHWH” or “Yahweh,” which ancient Israelites considered to be too holy a name to pronounce verbally. This is the name God revealed when He called Moses to liberate His people from Egypt during the Exodus Era. “This name specifies an immediacy, a presence. Yahweh is present, accessible, near to those who call on Him for deliverance, forgiveness, and guidance.”¹

Yahweh-Jireh

This name means “the Lord will provide.” Abraham spoke this name after God provided a ram for him to sacrifice on Mount Moriah. God called Abraham to the

impossible task of sacrificing his son, but He provided exactly what Abraham needed when he needed it.

Read Genesis 22:14a (p. 31, Patriarch Era)—“Abraham named the place Yahweh-Yireh (which means ‘the LORD will provide’).”

Yahweh-Shalom

This name means “the Lord is our peace.” When God visited Gideon to call him to defeat the Midianites, Gideon responded in fear that He would die because he had been in God’s presence. Amid Gideon’s fear, God reassured and comforted him.

Read Judges 6:23–24a (p. 310, Judges Era)—“‘It is all right,’ the LORD replied. ‘Do not be afraid. You will not die.’ And Gideon built an altar to the LORD there and named it Yahweh-Shalom (which means ‘the LORD is peace’).”

El Roi

This name means “God of seeing.” When Hagar ran away from her mistress, Sarai, because of mistreatment, God met her in the wilderness.

Read Genesis 16:13a (p. 25, Patriarch Era)—“‘Thereafter, Hagar used another name to refer to the LORD, who had spoken to her. She said, ‘You are the God who sees me.’”

WHEN YOU EXPERIENCE A CRISIS, YOU HAVE A CHOICE TO MAKE. WILL YOU TRUST GOD OR YOURSELF?

All these names of God were revealed to people in times of crisis, and God met with them individually. He heard them, spoke to them, and provided for them. God has always heard people’s prayers during crisis, and He continues to do so today. *Leader, encourage the members of your Life Group to pray through God’s names during their daily time with the Lord. Consider printing the article about God’s names in the additional resources and handing it out.*

What did the psalmist discover after calling out to God during his crisis?

Ask someone to read Psalm 116:5–9 (p. 669).

The psalmist found the Lord faithful amid his crisis. He experienced God’s kindness, goodness, and protection. He even experienced God’s heavenly presence while living on earth. When you experience a crisis, you have a choice to make. Will you trust God or yourself? You will only experience the reality of one of God’s names if you choose to trust Him. Knowing God’s names will give you boldness and strength in the midst of any battle you face (Proverbs 18:10, p. 514, Kingdom Era)!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Hagar called God “El Roi” because He saw her in her pain. Do you believe God sees you? Why or why not?
2. When have you seen God prove one of His names during a crisis in your life? What happened?

GOD HEARS YOUR ANXIOUS PRAYERS

(Psalm 116:10–14, p. 669)

Americans become more anxious with every passing year. In 2024, 43% of adults said they were more anxious than the previous year, up from 37% in 2023 and 32% in 2022. Issues that prompt anxiety include personal and family safety (68%), paying bills and expenses (63%), and the impact of emerging technology on day-to-day life (46%).²

But is anxiety unique to our society, and is God uncaring in the face of these issues?

Anxiety Examples

David

Ask someone to read Psalm 116:10–14 (p. 669).

Anxiety is not new to us. The Bible is filled with people who were consumed with anxiety.

David wrote in Psalm 55:4–5 (p. 449, Kingdom Era), “My heart pounds in my chest. The terror of death assaults me. Fear and trembling overwhelm me, and I can’t stop shaking.”

Hannah

When Hannah went to the tabernacle to pray about her barrenness in 1 Samuel 1:10, she “was in deep anguish, crying bitterly as she prayed to the LORD” (p. 334, Judges Era).

Jeremiah

The prophet Jeremiah wrote in Lamentations 3:17–18 (p. 863, Captivity Era), “Peace has been stripped away, and I have forgotten what prosperity is. I cry out, ‘My splendor is gone! Everything I had hope for from the LORD is lost!’”

These biblical figures show us that anxiety is a normal part of life, but each of them turned to the Lord. David called on God, believing that God would rescue him (Psalm 55:16, p. 449, Kingdom Era), and Jeremiah declared that God’s faithful love would never end (Lamentations 3:22, p. 863, Captivity Era).

Even though the psalmist of Psalm 116 was filled with anxiety, he knew that God still heard his prayers, so he responded in obedience in front of the people watching him. He found peace and joy in the presence of the Lord.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What did the psalmist do when he was filled with anxiety? How can you imitate him?

2. What are you most anxious about? What can we learn from David, Hannah, and Jeremiah about taking our anxieties to God?
2. How can you take your anxious thoughts captive and replace them with truths from God?

YOUR POSTURE TOWARD YOUR LOVING

GOD (Psalm 116:15–19, p. 669)

Ask someone to read Psalm 116:15–19 (p. 669).

IN RESPONSE TO GOD'S GOODNESS, THE PSALMIST OFFERED GOD A SACRIFICE OF PRAISE. HE CONTINUED TO CALL ON GOD BECAUSE HE HAD PROVEN HIMSELF FAITHFUL.

Because of God's humility and attentiveness to his prayers, the psalmist responded to God with three specific postures.

He knelt.

After experiencing his crisis and enduring his anxiety, the psalmist bent his knee before the Lord and declared himself to be the Lord's servant. He had experienced God's goodness and knew firsthand that God deserved his obedience.

He offered.

In response to God's goodness, the psalmist offered God a sacrifice of praise. He continued to call on God because He had proven Himself faithful.

He acted.

The psalmist took action and fulfilled his promises to the Lord. His actions reveal his trust and belief that God is good and faithful to His people.

After experiencing a difficult circumstance, the psalmist learned firsthand that God heard his cries and prayers. As a result, his relationship with God was strengthened, and the people around him witnessed a man being transformed.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Do you believe it's possible to praise God after a crisis, or is Scripture setting an impossible standard?
2. How has suffering transformed your relationship with God in the past?

IF YOU'RE A CHRISTIAN, GOD IS WITH YOU IN EVERY CIRCUMSTANCE YOU EXPERIENCE WITHOUT SEPARATION OR SECLUSION.

REDEMPTION THREAD

After Adam and Eve sinned in the garden of Eden, people throughout the Old Testament had to call out to God because they could not dwell in His presence. Eventually God took the steps necessary to come and dwell among people (in the tabernacle and temple), but people were still separated from Him. However, when Jesus, or Immanuel ("God with us"), came, people could talk to God face-to-face. After Jesus completed His work on the cross and ascended back to heaven, God sent the Holy Spirit to live inside His people (Romans 8:11, p. 1,177, Missions Era). If you're a Christian, God is with you in every circumstance you experience without separation or seclusion. From the beginning, God has pursued a close relationship with His people, wanting to hear and respond to their cries.

CALL TO ACTION

Write the four names of God discussed in today's lesson and their meanings on the whiteboard ("The LORD," "Yahweh-Jireh," "Yahweh-Shalom," and "El Roi"). Remind your Life Group that at Bellevue, we believe prayer is one way to grow in Christlikeness. Give everyone time to pray and call on God using one of these names.

CONCLUSION

Today's main idea is "I praise God during difficult times because He hears my prayers." You will experience difficult circumstances that will prompt you to question whether God hears your prayers. That's normal. When that time comes, remember the psalmist who discovered firsthand that God stooped down and heard his prayers. Remember, this psalmist was a real person who endured real events and experienced God's kindness and mercy. If you give God the chance to prove His trustworthiness to you, He will prove it. You may not get exactly what you're praying for, but God will show you that He hears you and is with you.

NEXT GEN

DOES GOD HEAR MY PRAYERS?

Psalms 116

OPENING

Discussion Questions

1. If you could type any question into Google and know that God would respond, what question would you ask?
2. Have you ever prayed and wondered if God was listening? What made you feel like that?
3. If someone asked you, "How do you know God hears you?", how would you respond?

APPLICATION

Give each student a sticky note and a pen. Write these names of God on the whiteboard with their meanings:

- Yahweh-Jireh: The Lord will provide.
- Yahweh-Shalom: The Lord is our peace.
- El Roi: God of seeing

Instruct the students to choose one of the names of God and then write a prayer declaring their belief that God will honor His name. Tell everyone to place the sticky note inside their Bible where they will see it.

Citations

1. "What Are the Different Names of God, and What Do They Mean?" *GotQuestions.org*, www.gotquestions.org/names-of-God.html.
2. American Psychiatric Association. "American Adults Express Increasing Anxiousness in Annual Poll; Stress and Sleep Are Key Factors Imp." *Psychiatry.org*, 1 May 2024, www.psychiatry.org/news-room/news-releases/annual-poll-adults-express-increasing-anxiousness.

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Additional Resources

"Does God Hear My Prayers?"

gotquestions.org/does-God-hear-my-prayers.html

"What Are the Different Names of God, and What Do They Mean?"

gotquestions.org/names-of-God.html

*All thoughts and ideas listed under Additional Resources may not be completely in agreement with Bellevue's theology, and their listing should not be considered as an endorsement.

CONGRATULATIONS— YOU FINISHED LESSON 27!



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Baptist Church



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July 20
Adults and Next Gen
Lesson 28

2025
CHRONOLOGICAL BIBLE

**WHAT ARE THE
ESSENTIALS OF
WORSHIP?
Psalm 150**

WHAT ARE THE ESSENTIALS OF WORSHIP? Psalm 150

MAIN IDEA

I worship God authentically when I remember who God is and what He has done.

OUTLINE

Weekly Reading Recap

Era Overview

Introduction

1. **Whom Should I Praise? (Psalm 150:1, p. 681)**
 - God is everlasting.
 - God is holy.
 - God is present.
 - God is compassionate.
2. **Why Should I Praise? (Psalm 150:2, p. 681)**
 - God created everything.
 - God defeated powerful men.
 - God provided food and water in the wilderness.
3. **How Should I Praise? (Psalm 150:3–5, p. 681)**
 - Worship with your whole heart.
 - Worship with your whole body.
4. **Who Should Praise? (Psalm 150:6, p. 681)**

Redemption Thread

Call to Action (Spend time praising God through music or prayer.)

Conclusion

Special Note

This Life Group series draws from the work of Iva May and her team at Chronological Bible Teaching Ministries Inc. Foundational concepts, such as dividing the Bible into 14 Eras, the Redemption Thread, and understanding how God speaks, acts, and reveals Himself in each era, come directly from her work. We are thankful for her willingness to allow us to utilize her

14 Era framework and concepts to create these lessons. Our aim with this series is to encourage participants to read the Bible chronologically, but it is not intended to replace or replicate the comprehensive work of Iva and her team. For more resources on reading the Bible chronologically, we highly recommend visiting chronologicalbibleteaching.com.

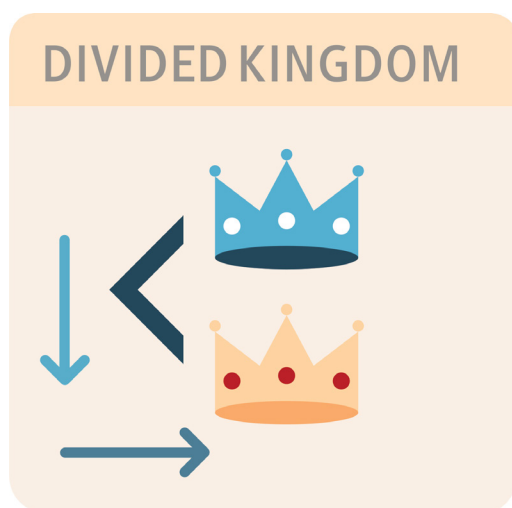


WEEKLY READING RECAP

During this week's reading we completed the Psalms, some of which are part of the "Songs of Ascent." These Psalms were sung by pilgrims traveling to Jerusalem to attend major festivals such as Passover. Many of the Psalms this week were filled with praise, thanksgiving, and faith in God. Our week finished by returning to the prophets Isaiah and Micah, who warned of God's judgment but proclaimed hope through the coming Messiah.

DISCUSSION QUESTION

1. If we have so many reasons to praise God, why do we keep turning away from Him?



ERA OVERVIEW

Leader, our lesson today takes place during the Divided Kingdom Era. Utilizing page A17 in your Chronological Bible, briefly review the Divided Kingdom Era and its connection to the larger story.

INTRODUCTION

Mark Blair, Bellevue's Minister of Music, has led our church in worshiping the Lord for many years. Each week, he leads hundreds of Choir and Orchestra members in practicing so our church body can praise God each Sunday morning. With such demands, it would be easy for Mark to approach rehearsals with a complacent attitude. However, during each rehearsal, he leads the Choir to remember the meaning of the words they're singing and the person they're singing to. Because Mark has made worship an integral, not superficial, part of his life, many Choir members leave their weekly rehearsal refreshed—they've experienced God's Spirit through Mark's leadership. Mark experiences God's presence on a daily basis, and as a result, he lives out the essentials of worship in every aspect of his life.

Today's lesson will explore the essential elements of worship and why each one is important for authentic

worship of God. It's fitting that the last Psalm in the Bible calls us back to the basics of worship and points us to the only one worthy to be praised.

NO ONE ELSE IS WORTHY OF PRAISE, NOR SHOULD THEY RECEIVE ANY PRAISE. WORSHIP IS RESERVED FOR GOD AND HIM ALONE.

WHOM SHOULD I PRAISE? (Psalm 150:1, p. 681)
Ask someone to read Psalm 150:1 (p. 681).

The psalmist answers our first question immediately, proclaiming, "Praise the LORD!" Five out of the six verses in this Psalm start by saying we should praise Him. No one else is worthy of praise, nor should they receive any praise. Worship is reserved for God and Him alone. But who is God, that He alone is worthy of this praise? Let's look back in our Chronological Bible readings and remember what we've already learned about God.

GOD IS PERFECT IN HIS CHARACTER, MOTIVES, AND ACTIONS AT ALL TIMES AND IN EVERY MOMENT.

God is everlasting.

Genesis 1:1 (p. 7, Creation Era) begins with the phrase "In the beginning God." Before time existed, God was there. God has no beginning, and He will never end. He always is. When Moses asked God's name, He replied, "I AM WHO I AM" (Exodus 3:14, p. 107, Exodus Era), meaning He has always been, always is, and always will be. Nothing escapes His notice because He's the one who made everything out of nothing. Is there anyone who can compare to Him?

God is holy.

Psalm 99:9 commands people to worship God "for the LORD our God is holy" (p. 661). "Holy" means to be set apart, separate, or sacred. When God came to dwell with His people in the tabernacle, He gave them the Law through Moses, which showed them how unholy people could live in the presence of a holy God. God is perfect in His character, motives, and actions at all times and in every moment.

God is present.

As Joshua stood on the precipice of entering the promised land, God reminded him that He

would be with Joshua wherever he went (Joshua 1:9, p. 274, Conquest Era). Joshua had no reason to fear because of God's constant presence.

God also gave this promise to Jacob in Genesis 28:15a—"I am with you, and I will protect you wherever you go" (p. 39, Patriarch Era).

When Moses feared God's call to liberate His people, God reassured Moses by saying, "I will be with you" (Exodus 3:12a, p. 107, Exodus Era). God's presence never leaves His people, no matter their situation or circumstances.

God is compassionate.

Psalm 145:8 reminds us, "The LORD is merciful and compassionate, slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love" (p. 463, Kingdom Era). We saw this truth throughout the Judges Era as God continually responded to His people's cries for help even though they turned away from Him multiple times. He never gave up or walked away from them.

GOD DOESN'T SIT HIGH AND MIGHTY IN HEAVEN AND ENJOY WATCHING US STRUGGLE THROUGH LIFE. NO, HE STOOPS DOWN TO GUIDE US AND INTERVENE AT APPROPRIATE TIMES.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. As we've read the Chronological Bible this year, what other lessons have we learned about who God is?
2. How has reading the Bible chronologically helped you more thoroughly understand who God is?

WHY SHOULD I PRAISE? (Psalm 150:2, p. 681)

Ask someone to read Psalm 150:2 (p. 681).

Understanding who God is should be enough to prompt us to praise Him. However, because of His innate character, He also does good things on our behalf! He does not sit high and mighty in heaven and enjoy watching us struggle through life. No, He stoops down to guide us and intervene at appropriate times. What mighty works has He accomplished?

God created everything.

In Genesis 1-2, God created every part of our planet and universe. Anyone can create something, but God created our existence *ex nihilo*, which means "out of nothing." Our planet is home to over 8.75 million species¹, and our universe is estimated to have one septillion stars (that's one with 24 zeros).² From the tiniest microbe to the most massive supergiant, God created it all with just His voice.

God defeated powerful men.

In Exodus 7-12, God defeated Pharaoh through the

plagues and liberated His people from slavery. Pharaoh was the most powerful man in the world and was even worshiped as a deity, but he was impotent before the Lord and His power. All the trappings of worldly power were nothing before God's presence and ability.

IF GOD CAN CREATE EVERYTHING FROM NOTHING, THEN IS IT A SURPRISE THAT NO ENEMY IS TOO STRONG AND NO NEED IS TOO BIG FOR HIM?

God provided food and water in the wilderness.

As God's people trekked through the wilderness in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, they needed food and water. This was not a small group of elite fighters trained to survive in adverse conditions but one million people who lacked the means or ability to provide for themselves. Yet God miraculously provided them with food and water for 40 years.

When we fully grasp the magnitude of God's first work—creation—we realize that everything He has accomplished afterward is small in comparison. If God can create everything from nothing, then is it a surprise that no enemy is too strong and no need is too big for Him? Yes, we praise God for who He is, but we also praise Him because He accomplishes great and mighty things for His people.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why do we easily worship other things in our lives if God is the only one who can accomplish mighty works?
2. What is one thing God has done on your behalf that you can praise Him for?

HOW SHOULD I PRAISE? (Psalm 150:3-5, p. 681)

Ask someone to read Psalm 150:3-5 (p. 681).

The easy answer to this question is that we should praise God with instruments, and hopefully we'll have a ram's horn in next week's worship service. However, if we dive a little deeper, we see two truths.

Worship with your whole heart.

These verses reveal someone who is fully committed to worshiping God. These verses call us to give God our hearts when we praise Him. There should be no hesitation, embarrassment, or worry about other people's thoughts—just a complete abandonment of selfishness and a desire to show God that you love Him. Does this mean that a true worshiper must make grand gestures when worshiping God? No, but to worship God with your whole heart requires leaving your ego and pride at the door.

Worship with your whole body.

We see in these verses that the whole body is expected to be used in worship. From your hands

to your mouth and even your feet, we are free to use our entire bodies when we praise God. Sure, as Southern Baptists, we don't really dance in our worship services, but that doesn't mean you can't have some "happy feet" when you worship.

WORSHIPING GOD DOESN'T BEGIN AND END IN OUR WORSHIP SERVICES. YOU ARE TO PRAISE GOD WITH YOUR WHOLE BODY IN EVERY ACTION AND CHOICE YOU MAKE THROUGHOUT THE WEEK.

The New Testament takes worshiping the Lord with our bodies to a deeper level.

Read Romans 12:1 (p. 1182, Missions Era)—“And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him.”

Worshiping God doesn't begin and end in our worship services. You are to praise God with your whole body in every action and choice you make throughout the week.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How can you tell if you aren't worshiping God wholeheartedly?
2. Is there any area of your life where you find it difficult to worship God with your whole heart and body? Why is that?

WHO SHOULD PRAISE? (Psalm 150:6, p. 681)
Ask someone to read Psalm 150:6 (p. 681).

This last verse of Psalm 150 clarifies who should praise God: If you're breathin', then you're praisin'. There are no exceptions, exclusions, loopholes, or special cases. If you have breath, then you should praise God.

It doesn't matter if you're a man and singing “ain't your thing.” The Bible is filled with men who praised God. Moses sang and praised God after God led the Israelites through the Red Sea (Exodus 15:1-18, p. 120, Exodus Era). Daniel praised God when God revealed the meaning of King Nebuchadnezzar's dream (Daniel 2:19-20, p. 780, Captivity Era). Paul and Silas sang when they were imprisoned for doing what was right (Acts 16:25, p. 1142, Church Era).

No matter your cultural background, you're called to praise God. All nationalities are to worship Him, whether your culture is exuberant or reserved. Psalm 86:9 (p. 456, Kingdom Era) says, “All the nations you made will come and bow before you, Lord; they will praise your holy name.”

Your age also doesn't mean you get a pass on praising God. It's common for adults to lose their enthusiasm

for praising God, believing that unhindered and free worship is reserved for children. But God calls everyone, regardless of age or maturity, to glorify His name!

Read Psalm 148:12-13 (pp. 680-681)—“Young men and young women, old men and children. Let them all praise the name of the LORD. For his name is very great; his glory towers over the earth and heaven!”

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Would those around you say that you believe praising God is optional or essential?
2. How can we break through barriers that keep us from praising God?

REDEMPTION THREAD

Throughout the Old Testament, people praised God for His mighty acts. Abraham praised God for providing a ram. Moses praised God for His protection and provision. David praised God for His grace and mercy. The Israelite people praised God for bringing them back home after their captivity in foreign nations. However, God's greatest act came later—providing salvation for the entire world through His Son, Jesus. And at the end of time, everyone will worship Jesus for His mighty act on the cross.

Read Revelation 5:9-14 (pp. 1,270-1,271, End and New Beginning Era).

CALL TO ACTION

If you have a musician in your Life Group, ask them (in advance) to lead your Life Group in a worship song. If you don't have a musician in your group, have everyone get into small groups and share reasons they have to praise God. Then instruct the groups to worship God through their prayers.

CONCLUSION

Our main idea today is “I worship God authentically when I remember who God is and what He has done.” Churches are filled with people who only go through the motions and don't truly worship the Lord. As the Bellevue pathway says, we grow in Christlikeness when we worship the Lord. God is waiting for us to praise Him with our whole hearts and bodies. May we all follow Mark Blair's example and praise God for who He is and what He has done. When you see Mark, be sure to thank him for leading our church faithfully in worshiping the Lord!

NEXT GEN

WHAT ARE THE ESSENTIALS OF WORSHIP?

Psalm 150

OPENING

Discussion Questions

1. What's a moment when music helped you feel closer to God?
2. Can you worship God without singing? How?
3. What keeps you from worshipping God with your whole heart?

APPLICATION

Have the students form several groups and challenge them to turn Psalm 150 into a rap. Give the groups enough time to develop and practice their musical creations; then allow each group to present their Psalm 150 rap. Have your Life Group choose the best rap, and then that group can challenge another Life Group's best rap. Have some fun with this!

Remind your students that it isn't the style of music that brings God glory—it's our wholehearted worship of Him that He notices.

Citations

1. Wiens, John J. "How Many Species Are There on Earth? Progress and Problems." *PLOS Biology*, vol. 21, no. 11, 20 Nov. 2023, pp. e3002388–e3002388, <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pbio.3002388>.
2. Howell, Elizabeth. "How Many Stars Are in the Universe?" *Space.com*, Space, 18 May 2017, www.space.com/26078-how-many-stars-are-there.html.

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Additional Resources

"What Does It Mean To Praise God?"
gotquestions.org/praise-God.html

*All thoughts and ideas listed under Additional Resources may not be completely in agreement with Bellevue's theology, and their listing should not be considered as an endorsement.

CONGRATULATIONS— YOU FINISHED LESSON 28!



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July 27
Adults and Next Gen
Lesson 29

2025
CHRONOLOGICAL BIBLE

**WILL GOD HELP ME
WHEN I AM ATTACKED
BY ENEMIES?
Isaiah 36–37**

WILL GOD HELP ME WHEN I AM ATTACKED BY ENEMIES? Isaiah 36–37

MAIN IDEA

God hears me and moves on my behalf when I call out to Him.

OUTLINE

Weekly Reading Recap

Era Overview

Introduction

1. **Should I Expect To Have Enemies? (Isaiah 36:1–22, pp. 702–704)**
 - Enemies will mock you.
 - Enemies will undermine you.
 - Enemies will taunt God.
2. **Where Will I Turn When Enemies Threaten Me? (Isaiah 37:1–20, p. 705)**
 - Hezekiah's Prayer
 - Proclaimed God's Identity
 - Praised God's Power
 - Petitioned God To Listen
 - Presented the Problem Honestly
 - Pleaded for God's Protection
3. **Will God Move on My Behalf? (Isaiah 37:21–38, pp. 707–708)**
 - People are not your true enemy.
 - Three Responses to Your Enemy
 - Pray for protection.
 - Seek your enemy's salvation.
 - Pray for your enemy.

Redemption Thread

Call to Action (Write down the three responses you should have toward an enemy.)

Conclusion

Special Note

This Life Group series draws from the work of Iva May and her team at Chronological Bible Teaching Ministries Inc. Foundational concepts, such as dividing the Bible into 14 Eras, the Redemption Thread, and understanding how God speaks, acts, and reveals Himself in each era, come directly from her work. We are thankful for her willingness to allow us to utilize her

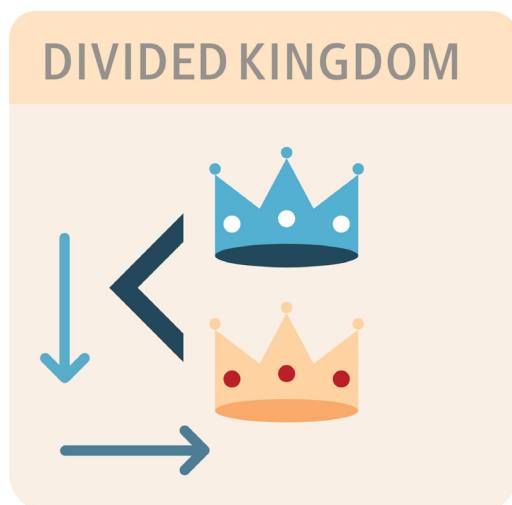
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WEEKLY READING RECAP

Our reading this week began with Assyria attacking Judah and King Hezekiah. Hezekiah sought the Lord through the prophet Isaiah, and God promised to rescue His people. Hezekiah became terminally ill, but God healed him and promised him 15 more years of life. The Babylonians visited Judah, and Hezekiah, filled with pride, showed them all his treasures. God promised that the Babylonians would eventually take all those treasures. In Isaiah, God called the people to return to Him, listen, and obey. God pointed to a coming salvation in the future. We also read the “suffering servant” prophecy, which foretold that the Messiah would be despised, rejected, and pierced for our transgressions.

DISCUSSION QUESTION

1. If you were in Hezekiah’s place, how would you have responded when the Babylonians visited?



ERA OVERVIEW

Leader, our lesson today takes place during the Divided Kingdom Era. Utilizing page A17 in your Chronological Bible, briefly review the Divided Kingdom Era and its connection to the larger story.

INTRODUCTION

There’s a common belief that when we do the right thing, everything will fall into place. People often teach the idea that “right actions lead to right results.” While this is often accurate, there are times when obeying God’s directions will result in creating enemies who will attack you. When that happens, does that mean you’ve done the wrong thing? How should you respond when attacked?

In our lesson today, we’ll examine King Hezekiah’s response when he faced an enemy like no other—the Assyrian Empire. We’ll discuss his response and discover how we can trust God when our enemies attack us.

EVEN THOUGH HEZEKIAH DID EVERYTHING RIGHT IN GOD’S EYES, HE FACED AN ENEMY WHO THREATENED TO OVERPOWER HIM.

SHOULD I EXPECT TO HAVE ENEMIES?

(Isaiah 36:1–22, pp. 702–704)

Hezekiah followed his father, Ahaz, as king of Judah. Ahaz did what was evil in God’s sight by worshiping idols and closing the temple, but Hezekiah reversed his father’s decisions. He reopened the temple, destroyed idols throughout the country, and reinstituted the Passover celebration. Under Ahaz’s rule, Judah became a vassal state to the Assyrian Empire. When Hezekiah became king, he stopped paying tribute to Assyria because he chose to trust in the Lord.

Ask someone to read 2 Chronicles 31:20–21 (p. 638).

Even though Hezekiah did everything right in God’s eyes, he faced an enemy who threatened to overpower him.

Read Isaiah 36:1 (p. 702).

Hezekiah first attempted to pay off the Assyrians with a significant gift of gold and silver, but they continued to march toward Jerusalem (2 Kings 18:13–18, p. 702). The Assyrian king, Sennacherib, sent his chief of staff to deliver a long message to Hezekiah and the people of Jerusalem, and we’ll examine some snippets of that message.

Enemies will mock you.

Read Isaiah 36:8–9 (p. 703).

Assyria had zero respect for Judah’s small army. The Assyrians trusted in the strength of their army and considered anyone who was weaker than them to be inferior.

Enemies will undermine you.

In verses 13–17, Sennacherib’s chief of staff took his message directly to the people watching from the walls of Jerusalem. He called out, “Don’t let Hezekiah deceive you. ... Don’t let him fool you into trusting in the LORD” (p. 703). He even offered the people a deal. Instead of starving during the Assyrians’ attack, all they had to do was walk out the gates, and the chief of staff would arrange to take them “to another land like this one—a land of grain and new wine, bread and vineyards” (p. 703).

Enemies will taunt God.

The chief of staff took his message one step further in Isaiah 36:18–20 (pp. 703–704), and he taunted

the God of Judah by declaring that no god of any nation had been strong enough to stand up to the might of Assyria. He finished his message with this foolish rhetorical question: “So what makes you think that the LORD can rescue Jerusalem from me?”

ENEMIES REPEATEDLY ATTACKED JESUS BECAUSE OF HIS FAITHFULNESS AND OBEDIENCE TO GOD. WE SHOULDN'T EXPECT ANYTHING DIFFERENT.

Hezekiah's obedience and faith in God prompted this confrontation with the Assyrians. When you obey God, you'll discover that people will mock you, undermine you, and even taunt God. But is this something you should expect?

Read John 15:18 (p. 1,088, Gospel Era)—“If the world hates you, remember that it hated me first.”

Enemies repeatedly attacked Jesus because of His faithfulness and obedience to God. We shouldn't expect anything different.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why do you think Hezekiah first attempted to pay off the Assyrians?
2. Are you prepared to be attacked by enemies when you obey God? What about that would cause you to hesitate?

WHERE WILL I TURN WHEN ENEMIES THREATEN ME? (Isaiah 37:1–20, p. 705)

When Hezekiah heard the message from the Assyrian chief of staff, he immediately tore his clothes, dressed in burlap, went to the temple to pray, and sent messengers to Isaiah the prophet.

What was Isaiah's response to the chief of staff's message?

Ask someone to read Isaiah 37:6–7 (p. 705).

What an amazing promise from God! Hezekiah had no reason to worry because God promised to remove the threat for him. However, after receiving this promise, Hezekiah received another threat from the Assyrians. Hezekiah's response? He prayed.

Hezekiah's Prayer

Read Isaiah 37:14–20 (p. 705).

Hezekiah's prayer can be divided into five parts:

- Proclaimed God's Identity (Isaiah 37:16a)
- Praised God's Power (Isaiah 37:16b)
- Petitioned God to Listen (Isaiah 37:17)
- Presented the Problem Honestly (Isaiah 37:18–19)
- Pleaded for God's Protection (Isaiah 37:20)

In the face of such a threat, Hezekiah could have turned to a foreign ally, attempted to attack the superior force, or folded under pressure. However, he chose to turn to God and call for His help.

WHY DON'T YOU TURN TO GOD FIRST INSTEAD OF LAST, AFTER YOU'VE EXHAUSTED ALL OTHER OPTIONS?

Hezekiah's response to this enemy is a good example for us today. Where will you turn when you're attacked for obeying God and His directions? Only one person knows how the situation will play out. Only one person knows what's going on when you're not around. Only one person can impact the situation and change outcomes—the Lord.

Why don't you turn to Him first instead of last, after you've exhausted all other options?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. When you face an enemy, where do you usually turn first? Why do you turn there before going to God?
2. (Leader, write the five parts of Hezekiah's prayer on the whiteboard.) How can you apply Hezekiah's prayer to your situation?

WILL GOD MOVE ON MY BEHALF?

(Isaiah 37:21–38, pp. 707–708)

After realizing that you should expect enemies in your life and deciding that you will turn to God when they come, you must answer one more question: Do you believe that God will move on your behalf?

After Hezekiah's prayer, Isaiah sent word concerning God's response.

Read Isaiah 37:21–22a (p. 707).

Did you catch this vital phrase? “Because you prayed about King Sennacherib of Assyria” (Isaiah 37:21, p. 707).

God was moved to action by Hezekiah's prayer! As Bro. Steve often reminds us, prayer changes things.

In verse 29 (p. 707), God used vivid imagery as He spoke directly to Sennacherib, “I will put my hook in your nose and my bit in your mouth. I will make you return by the same road on which you came.”

When the Assyrians defeated other nations, they often placed hooks in the conquered people's noses and bits in their mouths as they led them away into exile. They did this to show their dominance. But God used these phrases to show that He had complete dominance over Sennacherib.

In verses 33–35 (p. 708), God made several more promises:

- The Assyrians would not enter Jerusalem.
- The Assyrians would not even attack Jerusalem.
- Sennacherib would return home by the same road on which he came.
- God would defend and protect Jerusalem.

Does God honor His word?

GOD HASN'T PROMISED TO DEFEAT ALL OUR ENEMIES LIKE HE DID FOR HEZEKIAH. HOWEVER, HE STILL PROMISES TO MOVE ON OUR BEHALF.

Ask someone to read Isaiah 37:36–38 (p. 708).

God defeated the Assyrian army on His own, and Sennacherib retreated in humiliation. And like God promised, Sennacherib was killed by the sword. Once again, God is faithful to His promises.

For us today, we must remember that God hasn't promised to defeat all our enemies like He did for Hezekiah. However, He still promises to move on our behalf.

Let's remember this important truth:

People are not your true enemy.

Read Ephesians 6:12 (p. 1,213, Missions Era)—“For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places.”

Your enemy is not the person you can physically see attacking you. Your true enemy is Satan and his evil spirits. When Satan rebelled against God, many angels followed him in his rebellion. These spirits now work against us today in the spiritual world, which we cannot see. They are our true enemy.

Does God promise to move on your behalf concerning your true enemy? Yes.

Read 2 Thessalonians 3:3 (p. 1,148, Missions Era)—“But the Lord is faithful; he will strengthen you and guard you from the evil one.”

When you're attacked, how should you respond?

Three Responses to Your Enemy

Pray for protection.

Read 2 Thessalonians 3:2 (p. 1,148, Missions Era)—“Pray, too, that we will be rescued from wicked and evil people, for not everyone is a believer.”

GOD DESIRES FOR EVERYONE TO BE SAVED THROUGH CHRIST—EVEN YOUR ENEMY.

God hears our prayers and moves when we call on Him, like we saw with Hezekiah.

Seek your enemy's salvation.

Read 2 Peter 3:9b (p. 1,257, Missions Era)—“[God] does not want anyone to be destroyed, but wants everyone to repent.”

God desires for everyone to be saved through Christ—even your enemy.

Pray for your enemy.

Read Matthew 5:43–44 (p. 1,006, Gospel Era)—“You have heard the law that says, ‘Love your neighbor’ and hate your enemy. But I say, love your enemies! Pray for those who persecute you!”

At Bellevue, part of our mission is to love people, which means we should show the same love that Jesus shows us to everyone in our lives—including our enemies.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How does God's response to Hezekiah's prayer reveal the importance of prayer?
2. Why is it difficult to believe that God is actively working in your life when you feel under attack?

REDEMPTION THREAD

God always protects His people and always ensures that there's a remnant of His followers to continue living His truth. In our lesson today, Israel had already been defeated by Assyria and taken into captivity, and the outer towns of Judah had been destroyed as well. However, God protected His people in Jerusalem because of the king's faithfulness. When the prophet Elijah believed he was the only God-follower left under the evil leadership of King Ahab, God reminded him that there were 7,000 others who were still faithful to Him (1 Kings 19:18, p. 556). After Israel and Judah experienced God's judgment and were driven into exile, God allowed a remnant of His people to return home during the Return Era. Today, we're part of God's kingdom, which will endure and never be destroyed (Hebrews 12:28, p. 1,249, Missions Era).

IT'S EASY TO FEEL ALONE WHEN AN ENEMY
ATTACKS, BUT REMEMBER THAT GOD WILL
NEVER LEAVE YOU OR FORSAKE YOU.

CALL TO ACTION

Give each person a note card and ensure everyone has a pen. Write the three responses people should have toward enemies and the corresponding Scripture references on the whiteboard. Instruct everyone to write the steps and verses on their cards and encourage them to keep this card handy so they can be ready when an enemy attacks.

CONCLUSION

Our main idea today is “God hears me and moves on my behalf when I call out to Him.” It’s easy to feel alone when an enemy attacks, but remember that God will never leave you or forsake you. Call out to Him, trust that He hears you, and follow His instructions on how to respond to an enemy. When you do, you’ll bring Him glory and allow Him to show you His faithfulness in special ways.

NEXT GEN

WILL GOD HELP ME WHEN I AM ATTACKED BY ENEMIES? Isaiah 36–37

OPENING

Activity: Truth or Trash

Supplies: One sign that says “Truth,” another sign that says “Trash,” and tape

Before class, tape a “Truth” sign to one wall in your room and a “Trash” sign to the opposite wall. Inform the students that you’re going to read a series of statements to them. When they hear each statement, they should walk to the “Truth” wall if they believe the statement is true or to the “Trash” wall if they think the statement is false.

Here are possible statements you can use for this activity:

- If I obey God, I won’t face problems. (Trash—godly people faced hard situations all throughout the Bible.)
- Prayer moves the heart of God. (Truth)
- My enemy is the person who’s mean to me. (Trash—our real enemies are the spiritual forces of evil.)
- Being made fun of because of your faith means you’ve done something wrong. (Trash—people of God are often hated by the world.)
- Obeying God may lead to opposition from other people. (Truth)
- God helps people who are strong enough to fight for themselves. (Trash—God helps anyone who turns to Him.)
- When I’m attacked or mocked by another person, I should talk to my friend first. (Trash—we should always go to God first.)
- God wants my enemies to be saved. (Truth)

Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think so many people believe that if you obey God, everything will go smoothly in your life?
2. Do you think following Jesus could make your life more difficult at times? How come?
3. What are some ways Christians can respond when they’re mocked or ridiculed for their faith?

APPLICATION

Give each student a piece of paper and a pen. Review the five parts of Hezekiah’s prayer and write them on the whiteboard. Instruct your students to follow Hezekiah’s example and write a prayer about a situation in their life where they feel attacked. Afterward, remind your students to always turn to God when they face an enemy.

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Additional Resources

“What Can We Learn From the Life of King Hezekiah?”
compellingtruth.org/life-Hezekiah.html

*All thoughts and ideas listed under Additional Resources may not be completely in agreement with Bellevue's theology, and their listing should not be considered as an endorsement.

CONGRATULATIONS— YOU FINISHED LESSON 29!



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