

# On Track Map

## Topical Lesson: Getting to know the book of Psalms Preschool

<b>Know Right:</b>	Psalms is a group of songs written to God.
<b>Think Right:</b>	"May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, O Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer." Psalm 19:14
<b>Do Right:</b>	I will worship God.
<b>Feel Right:</b>	I can feel good about worshiping God any time.

This lesson is designed to introduce kids to the longest book in the Bible - Psalms. They'll learn some basics about the book, as well as what is contained in its pages and the different types of psalms. Through the Psalms, God's people communicate with Him passionately and expressively, but no matter what they are feeling, the writers always go back to their trust in God and their desire to worship and obey Him.

### Pre-Service Review Game

Worship Leaders will lead children in a review game. Game details are in the appendix.

### Large Group Opening Time

**Offering:** We are going to worship God right now by giving our money. When we give our money to God, the church will use it to tell others about Jesus (*or insert a specific way your church will use the offering*).

**Think Right verse:** *We recommend reviewing the current Bible verse, rather than memorizing the Think Right verse from this lesson.*

*Read the current verse from the Bible and then demonstrate the hand motions. Repeat the verse several times while saying it in a loud voice, a quiet voice, and while jumping up and down.*

**Transition:** *You will need to develop a transition based on song choice.*

**Song 1:** *Song of your choice*

## Puppet Skit: Tracker's feelings

**Prop: Bible**

**T:** Hey, hey, \_\_\_\_\_. Can I ask you a question? Have ya ever been happy one day an' sad the next day? *(moves head from side to side)*

**WL:** Well, yes I have. It depends on what's happening.

**T:** Me, too. I was sad *(long sigh)* when I found out my friend is movin' away. *(pause)* But then, the next day *(jumps up and down)* I was real happy when I met a new friend who likes to play Hide and Seek ... just like me! I wonder what God thinks about me bein' happy one day an' sad another day.

**WL:** That is an interesting thing to wonder about, Tracker.

**T:** It's confusing, cuz I don't know when I should talk ta God. Should I only talk ta God when I'm happy? Or should I only talk ta God when I'm sad an' want His help?

**WL:** Oh, Tracker. God wants to hear from you no matter how you feel. He understands all your feelings. He wants you to worship Him and obey Him no matter how you feel.

**T:** *(using his grumpy voice)* Even when I'm mad?

**WL:** Yep, even when you're mad.

**T:** *(squeal)* Even when I'm squealin' cuz I'm so excited?

**WL:** *(chuckles at Tracker's squeal)* Sure thing. Even when you're squealing with excitement.

**T:** *(hangs head)* How about when I'm lonely and feel like cryin'?

**WL:** God wants to hear from you when you're lonely, too, Tracker. I think I have something that might just help you. It's a special book in the Bible. *(hold Bible up to Tracker)* Each chapter of this book, called Psalms, is written to tell God how that person is feeling. In fact, each one is really the words to a song.

**T:** I'm not real good at readin' yet. Would you read me one of those ... those ... oh, what are they called?

**WL:** Psalms. Sure, I can read one to you. Can you say "Psalms" Tracker?

**T:** Psalms! I'm really excited that you're gonna read one to me.

**WL:** *(chuckles)* I'm excited, too. I'll find you after class and we can read some together.

**T:** Great! Bye, \_\_\_\_\_.

**Transition:** *You will need to develop a transition based on song choice.*

**Song 2:** *Song of your choice*

**Pray**

## Preparation for the Classroom

**Pray:** Pray that God will give you a clear understanding of the Scripture and that the children in your class will understand the book of Psalms.

**Read:** Psalm 19:14

**Know Right:** Psalms is a group of songs written to God

### Lead Teacher's Notes:

- It is very important that as you read the Scriptures from Psalms to the children that you pull from your deepest expression. Think of the Psalms as gut-wrenching heart cries—whether they are cries of despair or overflowing praise and worship. They are passionate, enthusiastic, and heartfelt. This is your opportunity to speak for the writers of these songs and communicate some of what they were feeling. Make the words of the Bible come alive! When you personally experience feelings, they are not mundane or mediocre, so start laying a foundation with these young ones that they can share their deepest feelings with God.
- You will want to mark in advance the verses you will be reading.
- You will be using the words “psalms” and “songs” throughout the lesson. These words sound a lot alike and mean very much the same thing. Be conscious of articulating each word clearly each time you use it.

### Creative Ideas for the Lesson:

1. Use props as you teach the lesson: a collection (examples in the lesson include a collection of dolls and/or a collection of rocks) and pot lids (use to make music). *This idea is written into the lesson.*
2. Refer to the Feel Right poster as you teach this lesson.

## Lesson Introduction for the Classroom

**Pray:** *When you pray, remind children that you are talking to God. Have children bow their heads, close their eyes, and fold their hands so they can be completely focused on God.*

**Find It:** Psalms is a special book, almost right in the middle of the Bible. So, when I open my Bible to the center, it's very close to where Psalms is. *Hold your Bible up and open it, slightly toward the front middle of the Bible.* It is the biggest book in the entire Bible, and it is in the Old Testament. *Pinch together all the pages that make up the book, so kids can see how much of the Bible is Psalms.* It sure is a big part of the Bible!

**Timeline:** Let's look at our timeline to see when Psalms was written. Psalms is a collection of songs to God. It was written by lots of different people over many, many, many years. Let's find where Moses is on our timeline. That's when some of the first psalms were written. Now, let's find Ezra. It was about that time that the last psalm was written. It took a long time to collect all the songs that are in Psalms.

### Introduction to the Bible Lesson:

*Show a collection. The children will love observing and making comments about any collection you are able to show them. Below are two examples.*

**Example 1:** If you have a collection of dolls, that means you have a bunch of different dolls. Are they all exactly the same? (No) Some may be newborn baby dolls, and some may be older dolls. Some are boy dolls, and some are girl dolls. Some dolls are large and other dolls are small and will fit in your backpack. But they are all dolls – a collection of dolls.

**Example 2:** What if you have a collection of rocks? Would they all look exactly alike? (No) Some are smooth for trying to skip in the water. Some have jagged edges. Some might be so little that you can fit ten in your pocket and another one might be so big you can hardly pick it up by yourself. But they are all rocks – a collection of rocks.

Psalms is a book in the Bible that is a collection of songs - all kinds of songs written by all kinds of people. Let's learn more about this special book in the Bible.

## Scripture Outline for the Classroom

We talked about a \_\_\_\_\_ collection. There were all kinds of \_\_\_\_\_ in the collection. Well, the book of Psalms is also a collection. It's a collection of songs written to God – 150 different songs. Wow! One hundred fifty is a big number! That's a lot of songs. In fact, Psalms is the biggest book in the entire Bible. We don't have the music that goes along with the songs, but we have the words, and that's what Psalms is. They are all different, but they are all songs to God.

*Refer to the Feel Right poster as you explain the book of Psalms.* Some of the songs to God share how much the writer loves God. Other psalms share how sad they are about what is going on in their life. Some psalms are songs to say a giant "thanks!" to God. In Psalms, each person shares their feelings with God. They say over and over how much they want to obey God. No matter how they feel, they can tell God about it.

Let's talk about four different kinds of psalms today.

### Psalms of thanksgiving

Many of the psalms are songs of thanksgiving. This means they are songs thanking God for all that He has created, and they can be sung anytime you feel really thankful and want to tell God thanks.

*Say to one child in a bland, monotone voice, "Thank you for the fabulous gift." Now, turn to another child, dance around, jump up and down, and with so much excitement you can hardly contain yourself, say, "Thank you for the amazing gift!"*

Which way makes you believe that I'm really thankful? (The excited one!) The thanksgiving psalms are bursting with thankfulness. Listen to this thanksgiving psalm.

#### **Read Psalm 106:1**

Let's all say, "Give thanks to the Lord!" Now, let's say it like we mean it - jump up and down and dance around. Singing a thanksgiving psalm is a way of saying thank you to God.

### Psalms of worship and praise

Many of the psalms are songs of worship and praise. These were written when people just couldn't help but stop and worship our awesome God. They felt so full inside that they had to tell God through a song. But they didn't just sing. The Bible tells us they used lots and lots of instruments. *Bang two pot lids together to mimic the sound of cymbals.* Listen to this psalm of worship and praise.

#### **Read Psalm 150:5-6**

Let's all say, "Praise the Lord." When I want to tell someone what a great job they did, I clap for them. Our hands can be like a clanging cymbal - our very own instrument on the end of our arms! Let's worship God with a great big clap!

## Psalms asking for help

Many of the psalms were written to tell God that they needed His help. They are songs that beg God to help them through whatever they were going through. Grab your elbow if you've ever needed help from someone. We all need someone to help us, and God is always ready to help us when we call out to Him.

When you get hurt and want your mom or dad to hold you, you let them know by stretching up your arms to them. Stretch your arms above your head. That says, "Pick me up. Hold me. Help me get over this." Wiggle your nose if you've ever wanted your mom or dad to pick you up when you got hurt. Listen to this psalm asking for help.

### **Read Psalm 86:7**

Let's let God know we want His help. *Have children stand with their arms outstretched as far as they can and say, "Please help, God" after you read each situation.*

- You can ask God for help when you're not getting along with a friend.
- You can ask God for help when you miss your grandma or teacher or cousin.
- You can ask God for help if your parents aren't getting along.
- You can ask God for help if you're sick.

## Psalms asking for forgiveness

Many of the psalms were written as a way to ask God for His forgiveness. Sometimes we disobey God, and we don't live the way He wants us to live. That's called sin. Sin is anything we think, say, or do that is against God. When you admit how you've disobeyed God and ask Him for His forgiveness, He gives you a new start. Listen to this psalm asking for forgiveness.

### **Read Psalm 51:8**

What will make the person singing this song happy? They will be happy when they know that God has forgiven them when they have not obeyed - when God has forgiven their sin. We can know our sins are forgiven when we believe in God's Son, Jesus, and that should bring us great joy and gladness! Show me your best joy and gladness face. That's a face that says, "God forgives!" *Opportunity to share the Gospel through the Wordless Book.*

Now we know four different kinds of songs that are part of the book of Psalms. Let's go through them one last time. There are psalms of thanksgiving. *Hold up one finger.* Everyone jump around and shout, "Give thanks to the Lord!" And we've learned about psalms of worship and praise. *Hold up two fingers.* Everyone clap and shout, "Praise the Lord." We found out about psalms that ask God for help. *Hold up three fingers.* Everyone stretch out your arms for help and say, "Please help, God." And the last group are psalms asking for forgiveness. *Hold up four fingers.* Now give me those big smiles while you say, "God forgives!"

## Conclusion:

The people who wrote the chapters of Psalms were not afraid to tell God what they were thinking or feeling. The thing they wanted most was to obey God and be close to Him. That meant sharing everything with God.

## Do Right and Feel Right:

Just like the people who wrote the songs in Psalms, you can worship God no matter how you feel. You can tell Him when you are thankful, when you are full of praise and worship, when you need help, and when you need His forgiveness.

Let's thank God for always hearing us when we pray to Him.

*Close in prayer.*

## Review Questions: What did you discover today?

1. Is the book of Psalms a collection of recipes or songs to God? (Songs to God)
2. How can you find the book of Psalms in your Bible? (It is almost right in the middle)
3. When do you need to ask for forgiveness? (When you sin)
4. How can you worship God? (Singing, playing instruments, clapping, etc.)
5. Is God always ready to help us? (Yes!)
6. Name something God created that you'd like to thank Him for.

## Discover Time

**Transition to Discover Time:** Psalms is a wonderful book of the Bible. It helps us know how to worship God. Let's go to Discover Time and do that now!

**Do Right:** I will worship God.

### Large Group Option 1: Open area

**Goal:** To give children the opportunity to worship God with musical instruments.

#### Supplies:

- Fun children's praise music such as Yancy's "Little Praise Party" (choose a song that children are familiar with, so they can sing along during the activity)
- As many musical instruments as you can assemble: metal pot lids, large spoons, pots, water bottles with rocks, rice, or beans in them, tambourines, inflatable instruments, bells, dowel rod sticks (or chopsticks), chip cans, harmonicas, anything a little one can bang on or tap together!

#### Instructions for the DT Leader:

1. Children will choose an instrument to accompany the fun praise music. Placing the instruments in different places around the room will make them easier to distribute, rather than having all the children come to the same place to choose their instrument.
2. Begin to play children's praise music.
3. Encourage children to sing along with the music and play their instruments.

4. Stop several times during the song(s) and have children switch their instruments with another person. When you stop to pass the musical instruments, remind children that they are worshiping God with their instruments. It makes God happy to hear us worship Him.

### **Large Group Option 2: Open area**

**Goal:** To give children the opportunity to practice thanking God.

#### **Supplies:**

- Wordless Book-colored paper (one large set and one small set)
- Tape (tape large pieces of each colored paper high up in different corners/areas of the room)
- Container or bag (put the small pieces of each color in the container/bag)

#### **Instructions for the DT Leader:**

1. Have children stand in the center of the room.
2. When you (the DT Leader) yell, "Thank You, God!", all children will run to any colored paper area they choose.
3. You will pull out one of the colors from the container and ask the children who are standing by the matching color to respond to one of the "Name Something" statements below.

##### "Name Something" statements:

- Name something in your refrigerator that you can thank God for.
  - Name something in your backyard you can thank God for.
  - Name something at the grocery store you can thank God for.
  - Name something red you can thank God for.
  - Name someone at church you can thank God for.
  - Name something in your bedroom you can thank God for.
  - Name something in the park you can thank God for.
4. After responding to the prompt, all children will return to the middle of the room and repeat the activity. Use a different "Name Something" statement each round.
  5. Say: Wow! You named a bunch of things we can thank God for! God loves to hear our thanks, over and over, for big things and small things. Remember that in the Bible, in the book of Psalms, we can find beautiful songs that people wrote about how thankful they were to God.
  6. Repeat as time permits.

## Classroom Review Time

**Lead Teachers ~ Connecting the DT to the Lesson:** Did you have fun today in Discover Time, \_\_\_\_\_ (insert statement based on DT: thanking God for so many things or praising God with your beautiful music)? Remember, the book of Psalms is a collection of songs that people wrote to tell God how they were feeling, whether they were happy or sad. Just like the people who wrote the songs, you can worship God no matter how you feel. You can tell Him when you are thankful, when you are full of praise and worship, when you need help, and when you need His forgiveness.

### Reviewing the Know Right:

#### Supplies:

- Six very large disposable cups

#### Instructions:

1. Ask the Lesson Review questions from above one at a time.
2. When a child answers one of the review questions correctly, that child will place a cup upside down on a flat surface.
3. Build a small pyramid from the six cups as questions are answered (use three cups as the base).
4. Optional: You can also increase the number of cups/pyramids so children can do this in smaller groups so they will have more opportunities to answer and place a cup.
5. Say: God loves each of you! And He wants to hear from you no matter how you're feeling. He wants you to tell Him when you're especially thankful and also when you're upset about something. He wants to know that you love Him back. He's there to help you, and He's there to celebrate with you. Most of all, He wants you to obey Him. Let's worship God this week, no matter how we feel or what's going on in our lives. Let's take a minute and talk to God in prayer.

**Pray:** Invite a child to lead the group in prayer. We talked about expressing ourselves personally to God today and this is a great opportunity to allow a child to do that in a supportive environment. Encourage the child to speak clearly so everyone can agree with their prayer. Standing next to you will also help give them confidence and will enable you to guide them, if necessary.

### Think Right Activity while waiting for parents:

#### Instructions:

1. Say: The book of Psalms says to use instruments to praise and worship God. We can use our hands and feet to be instruments of worship.
2. Have children respond to your statements below by performing the action you describe.
3. Then, respond with, "God loves it when we talk to Him!", before going to the next one.
4. Encourage children to contribute their own if-and-then statements also.
  - If you can worship God when you're swinging on the swing set, then pat your head.
  - If you can thank God when you're in a car or bus, then stomp your feet.
  - If you can ask God for help when you skinned your knee, then rub your shoulder.
  - If you can ask God to forgive you when you say something mean, then grab your big toe.
  - If you can praise God with your dolls or toys, then nod your head.
  - If you can ask God to help your friend who is feeling sad, then wiggle your fingers above your head.
  - If you can worship God when you're on a picnic, then blink your eyes.