

THE MINI STUDIES

~A MONTH IN PSALMS 31-60~

These mini studies are designed to keep you in the Word by building daily habits studying the Bible *and* by helping you grow in your Bible study skills of observation, interpretation, and application. I have purposely kept these studies short, limiting the questions, but you can bless your own spiritual socks by adding your own observations about the psalm. You can train yourself to ask and then answer questions like “*What situation does the psalmist find himself in?*” “*What does the psalmist ask of God?*” “*What does the psalmist know about God?*” “*How does God help the psalmist?*”

Please note that these mini studies *primarily* and *purposely* focus on what you can *observe* in the text itself. Without a doubt, your understanding would be greatly aided if I added cross references to provide insight into what the psalm writer is expressing. The use of cross references is a valuable Bible study tool and is one of many tools I employ in my *longer* Bible studies. Yet taking the time to do this kind of systematizing of what the Bible teaches on a subject would defeat the purpose of these daily, mini lessons. Please use these mini studies as a way hone your observation Bible study skills by simply looking at text itself.

To deepen your study time as you read through each psalm, or *any* portion of Scripture, learn to ask: “*What can I learn about God’s character from this Psalm or portion of Scripture?*” “*What truths transcend time and culture that I can apply to my own life?*” “*Are there any attitudes in my own heart that need changed?*” “*What truths can be in my mind and heart throughout the day?*”

Ready to get started?

1. Day 1. *Read Psalm 31.*

- a. What does David ask of the Lord in verses 1-5? What does David know about God’s character that gives him such boldness to ask those things of God (verses 1-5)?
- b. In verses 6-13, list what you learn about David’s circumstances that have led him to cry out to the Lord for help.
- c. What truths does David tell himself about God’s faithfulness that strengthen him in his trials? See verses 14-20.

- d. The first part of verse 22 reveals the state of David's heart. What do you see there? Yet, what truths about God does David rejoice in despite his afflictions? See verses 21-22.

 - e. What does David urge others to do because of God's work in his heart? See verses 23-24?

 - f. What truths about God encourage you from this psalm?
2. Day 2. *Read Psalm 32.*
- a. What kind of person is blessed in verses 1-2?

 - b. What happens when we don't confess our sin to the Lord according to verses 3-4?

 - c. What "steps" should we take to deal with our sin? See verse 5. What is God's response to us when that happens (verse 5)?

 - d. What do the godly do according to the first part of verse 6? How does God answer those prayers according to verses 6-7?

 - e. What does God promise to do for those who seek Him according to verse 8? What admonition does He give in verse 9?

 - f. What do you learn about those who trust in the Lord versus those who don't according to verses 10-11?

3. Day 3. Read Psalm 33.

- a. The psalm opens with a series of things we are to do. What are they according to verses 1-3?
- b. What reasons are given in verses 4-5 that should induce this praise in us? Take some time to praise and thank the Lord for those very same reasons given in verses 4-5.
- c. What do we learn about the Lord in verses 6-12? What should these truths about Him compel us to do?
- d. In the midst of the grandeur of God's works, what does the psalmist also remind us about God in verses 13-15?
- e. What kinds of things are we tempted to put our trust in according to verses 16-17? Consider what things you might put your trust in today rather than the Lord.
- f. What do we learn is the real place of deliverance and strength according to verses 18-19?
- g. With the truths of verses 18-19 ringing in our hearts, how should we respond? See verses 20-22.

4. Day 4. Read Psalm 34.

- a. What does David determine to do in verses 1-3?

- b. How does David describe his circumstances in verses 4-7? What does God do for him (verses 4-7)?
- c. What are we urged to do in verses 8-14?
- d. What comfort do we discover in verses 15-18?
- e. What final truths about God are given in verses 19-22?
- f. What did you find encouraging in this psalm that you'd like to remember today?

“Here are four things to remember when interpreting the psalms: (1) When the superscription gives the historical event, the psalm should be interpreted in that light. When it is not given, there is little hope in reconstructing the historical occasion. Assuming occasions will probably hurt more than help the interpretive process. (2) Some of the psalms are associated with definite aspects of Israel’s worship (e.g., 5:7; 66:13; 68:24–25), and this can help in understanding those psalms. (3) Many of the psalms use definite structure and motifs. (4) Many psalms anticipate Israel’s Messiah and are fulfilled in Christ. However, care must be taken not to allegorize them and forget the grammatical-historical method of interpretation.” From *Talk Thru the Bible*¹

5. Day 5. Read Psalm 35.

- a. David’s many enemies have him crying out to God for help and rescue. What does he ask of the Lord in verses 1-8?
- b. What does David focus on according to verses 9-10?

¹ Bruce Wilkinson and Kenneth Boa, *Talk Thru the Bible* (Nashville: T. Nelson, 1983), 153.

- c. What kind of treatment was David receiving from his enemies? See verses 11-16. Yet, how did David respond (verses 11-16)?

- d. What does David ask of the Lord in verses 17-28?

- e. What aspects of God's character bring comfort to David in this psalm? How can those same truths about God help you when you find yourself facing opposition and oppression?

6. Day 6. *Read Psalm 36.*

- a. List what you learn about the state of every unbeliever's heart from verses 1-4.

- b. In contrast to man's wickedness and unwillingness to repent of his sin, what do you learn about God from verses 5-6?

- c. For those who turn to the Lord in faith and trust, what greater mercies are revealed in verses 7-9?

- d. Upon receiving of God's bounty and mercy, what does David request of the Lord in verses 10-12?

- e. How can this review of the underserved mercies of God keep your heart softened toward the Lord when life seems hard, and things don't go your way?

7. Day 7. *Read Psalm 37.*

- a. What are you *not* supposed to do in verses 1-11? What reasons are given for this command (verses 1-11)?
 - b. What things are you supposed to do according to verses 1-11? What reasons are given for obeying these commands (verses 1-11)?
 - c. What do the wicked do according to verses 12-15? How does the Lord view their defiance?
 - d. Verses 16-22 provide us with a study in contrasts. What do you learn about the “wicked” in these verses? What do you learn about the “righteous” from verses 16-22?
 - e. What truths about God are proclaimed in verses 23-26? What effect does God’s faithfulness have upon those who trust Him according to verses 23-26?
 - f. What are some key aspects about the life and motivation of those who trust the Lord according to verses 27-34?
 - g. What happens to “wicked” man according to verses 35-40? Why is this the sure outcome of their existence? See verses 39-40. In contrast to the “wicked” what is the sure outcome for those who trust in the Lord (verses 35-40)?
 - h. What truths about God encourage you from this psalm?
8. Day 8. *Read Psalm 38.*
- a. List how the conviction of sin and the trials and consequences for sin are described in verses 1-8.

- b. What does David want God to know about his circumstances according to verses 9-12?
 - c. What do David's enemies devise for him according to verse 12? Yet, how does David respond? See verses 13-16.
 - d. What is David's mental and emotional state according to verses 17-20?
 - e. In spite of his inward struggles, what does David ask of the Lord in verses 21-22?
 - f. Though David is experiencing trials and the consequences of his sin, what do you see David still doing in verses 1, 9, 15, 21-22? How can you follow his example in turning to the Lord after you have sinned?
9. Day 9. *Read Psalm 39.*
- a. What does David purpose to do in his heart according to verses 1-3?
 - b. What does David desire to understand according to verses 4-6?
 - c. How is David's first solution (verses 1-3) in dealing with sin and sinfulness ineffective? How is David's second solution a better way to respond to sin and sinfulness (verses 4-6)?
 - d. List the truths David reflects upon in verses 7-11.

- e. Knowing that he always lives under God's holy gaze, what does David ask of the Lord as he recognizes his own sinfulness? See verses 12-13.
- f. What truths about God's character drive David to pray the way he does in this psalm? How can they encourage you in your prayer life as well?

10. Day 10. *Read Psalm 40.*

- a. In verses 1-3, list what you learn about what's going on in David's life.
- b. What blessing is listed in verse 4? How can that blessing be applied in your life?
- c. What marvelous truths about God are contemplated in verses 5-6?
- d. How does David respond to these meditations on God's character in verses 7-12?
- e. What does David request of the Lord in verses 13-17?
- f. What aspects of this psalm encourage you today?

11. Day 11. *Read Psalm 41.*

- a. What truths about God does David focus on in verses 1-3?
- b. The reason for David's rehearsing of God's attributes becomes clear in verses 4-9. What situations are troubling David in those verses?

- c. What does David ask of the Lord as result of his enemies' treatment? See verses 10-13.

- d. What truths about God's character does David cling to in his hurtful trials? How can those same attributes about God be an encouragement for you today?

12. Day 12. *Read Psalm 42.*

- a. How does the psalmist describe his soul in verses 1-4?

- b. How does the psalmist counsel himself in verse 5?

- c. He continues to find comfort in God in verses 6-8. What truths does he focus on?

- d. In verses 9-10, we see the inner workings of the psalmist's feelings. What is happening in his life to produce such sorrow?

- e. Even in his trials, the psalmist clings to the Lord. How does he end this psalm? See verse 11.

- f. Look again at the second half of verses 5 and 11. Make as many observations as you can about trusting the Lord when your soul is bowed down within you.

13. Day 13. *Read Psalm 43.*

- a. What does the psalmist ask of the Lord in verse 1?

- b. What truth does he affirm in verse 2, while still acknowledging his inward struggles?
 - c. Because he is struggling so much, what does he ask of the Lord in verse 3? Why is that a necessary and wise prayer?
 - d. What does he hope will be the result of God answering his prayer in verse 4?
 - e. What final counsel does he give himself in verse 5? How can you use this psalm to strengthen your own heart when you are hurting?
14. Day 14. *Read Psalm 44.*
- a. What did the psalmist learn about God and who told him these things according to verses 1-3?
 - b. Where does the psalmist put his trust and why according to verses 4-8?
 - c. What are the circumstances in the psalmist's life as seen in verses 9-19?
 - d. In spite of his difficulties, what does the psalmist maintain? See verses 17-18, 20-21.
 - e. The psalmist pleads his faithfulness to trust the Lord, while still undergoing many trials allowed by God. Why does he do this? See verse 22.

- f. Yet, as with the case of all those who trust the Lord, what does the psalmist do in verses 23-26?

 - g. What truths from this psalm can you glean about trusting the Lord when life is full of hardship and difficulty?
15. Day 15. Read Psalm 45.
- a. What does the psalmist desire to do in verses 1-2 of this psalm?

 - b. List how the recipient of this psalm is described from verses 1-5.

 - c. Verses 6-7 can get confusing unless you remember that the psalmist is writing to extol the virtues of someone glorious. List what you learn about the person being written about from verses 6-7. Then list what God does for that mighty personage in verses 6-7.

 - d. What further ways is the recipient of this psalm described in verses 8-9?

 - e. The psalmist then has words of wisdom for someone else. What counsel is given and how is that person described from verses 10-15?

 - f. What final blessing is given in verses 16-17?

 - g. We know from the New Testament that verses 6-7 prophesy of the Lord Jesus. What do you learn about Him from those verses?

16. Day 16. *Read Psalm 46.*

- a. What observations can you make about God from verse 1?
- b. By focusing on those truths about God from verse 1, what is the result (verse 2)? List the scenario from verses 2-3 that helps us see that even in extreme circumstances those who trust the Lord can remain steadfast.
- c. From verses 4-7, where is God and what do you learn about Him?
- d. What are you called to do at the beginning of verse 8? What evidence of God's works are listed in verses 8-9?
- e. As a result of your heart meditations about God from verses 8-9, what does God call you to do in verse 10? What does God want you to know about Himself from verses 10-11?
- f. What truths about God from this psalm particularly encourage and strengthen you today?

17. Day 17. *Read Psalm 47.*

- a. According to verse 1 what are you supposed to do? Why? See verses 2-4.
- b. What things in verses 2-4 help you see why you are to fear, respect, and revere the Lord?
- c. How is God depicted in verses 5-9?

- d. List the truths about God from this psalm that bring comfort when you look at the world in its rebellion and chaos.
 - e. Take some time to praise the Lord for His kingly reign over all the earth, knowing that all things come under His rule and authority.
18. Day 18. *Read Psalm 48.*
- a. What do you learn about God from verses 1-3?
 - b. How do the nations react to God's presence according to verses 4-6?
 - c. What things do you see God doing in verses 7-8?
 - d. What does the psalmist think about according to verse 9?
 - e. What else does he contemplate (verses 10-14)?
 - f. How can you follow the psalmist's example and meditate on the attributes of God extolled in this psalm?
19. Day 19. *Read Psalm 49.*
- a. What is the psalmist's intention in the opening verses of this psalm? See verses 1-4.

- b. What wisdom/proverb/riddle does the psalmist put forth in verses 5-6?
 - c. List the conclusions the psalmist comes to about life and death in verses 5-15.
 - d. What do you learn about the redemption of a soul according to verses 7-9 and verse 15?
 - e. After thinking on the truth about life in this world, what are the psalmist's final conclusions in verses 16-20?
 - f. How can those same conclusions help you live with peace and steadfast trust today?
20. Day 20. *Read Psalm 50.*
- a. According to verses 1-5, what do you learn about God?
 - b. God continues to communicate with man in verses 7-15. What does He want you to know about worshiping Him?
 - c. What message does God have for the wicked according to verses 16-21?
 - d. From verses 22-23, what final message does God have for those who would worship Him rightly?
 - e. From this psalm what do you learn about worship that God prizes? How can you implement that kind of worship toward God in your life?

21. Day 21. *Read Psalm 51.*

- a. As Psalm 51 begins, what does David ask of the Lord in verses 1-4? Why does he ask those things?
- b. What truths does David focus upon in verses 5-6?
- c. Because he understands his desperate state as a sinner before a holy God, list what David requests of the Lord from verses 7-13.
- d. What does David hope he can do when God removes the guilt of his sin? See verses 14-15.
- e. What does David understand about God according to verses 16-17? Why is that necessary for you to understand in your relationship with the Lord as well?
- f. What does David desire for Jerusalem according to verses 18-19?

22. Day 22. *Read Psalm 52.*

- a. What description is painted of those who don't love God according to verses 1-4?
- b. What description of God is inserted in those verses about the rebellion of man? Why does David reflect upon that truth about God while considering wicked men?
- c. David goes on to explain his meditations further in verses 5-7. What do you learn about God's dealings with those who rebel against Him?

- d. What does David affirm in verses 8-9?

- e. What principles for life living can you apply from this psalm?

23. Day 23. *Read Psalm 53.*

- a. What does the fool say according to verse 1?

- b. What does God see according to verses 2-3?

- c. What do you learn about those who do evil according to verse 4?

- d. Verse 5 reveals the way that God deals with those who reject Him. What do you learn in verse 5?

- e. What is the psalmist's desire as seen in verse 6?

- f. How does this psalm help you view the world and what is happening in it?

24. Day 24. *Read Psalm 54.*

- a. What does David ask of the Lord in verses 1-2?

- b. What reason is given for his request? See verse 3.

- c. What does David proclaim in verse 4? How can you make that statement your proclamation today and every day?
 - d. What does David anticipate from the Lord in verses 5 and 7?
 - e. What does David do in response to the Lord's help? See verse 6.
25. Day 25. *Read Psalm 55.*
- a. How does David describe his situation and the state of his soul in verses 1-8?
 - b. What rescue does David ask from the Lord? See verses 9-11.
 - c. What do you learn about one of David's enemies in particular from verses 12-15?
 - d. What does David determine to do according to verses 16-19?
 - e. Verses 20-21 give us more information about David's particular enemy. What do you learn?
 - f. How does David counsel himself in verses 22-23? What wise responses from this psalm do you want to apply in your life?
26. Day 26. *Read Psalm 56.*
- a. How does David describe his situation in verses 1-2 and in verses 5-7?

- b. Though his situation is desperate, what is David's faith-filled intention according to verses 3-4?
 - c. What truth is David sure about according to verses 8-9?
 - d. What truths does David repeat to himself that give him courage? See verses 10-11.
 - e. How does David end his prayer for God's rescue according to verses 12-13?
 - f. What truths did David stand upon that you want to remember and apply in your own life?
27. Day 27. Read Psalm 57.
- a. List what you learn about God from verses 1-3.
 - b. What is David's situation as described in verses 4-6?
 - c. In spite of his dire circumstances, what is David's response according to verses 7-11?
 - d. What key aspects about God strengthened David in this psalm?
 - e. What truth about God encouraged you today?

28. Day 28. Read Psalm 58.

- a. How does David describe the wicked in verses 1-5?
- b. David responds with righteous indignation to their rebellion against God. What does he ask God to do in verses 6-9?
- c. That same spirit drives David's final thoughts in this psalm as he considers the offenses against God. What thought brings rejoicing to David's heart according to verses 10-11?
- d. When you pray to God, "Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6:10), you are asking for God's judgment just as David did in this psalm. How can you grow even more in that attitude of desiring God's honor above all?

29. Day 29. Read Psalm 59.

- a. How does David describe his enemies, himself, and what he desires of the Lord in verses 1-5?
- b. David further describes the attitudes and actions of his enemies in verses 6-7. List what you learn.
- c. What is God's response to their belligerence in verse 8?
- d. What does David rely upon in the face of his own weakness against his many enemies? See verses 9-10.

- e. What further information do you learn about David's enemies from verses 11-15?
- f. Why is David able to respond the way he does in verses 16-17? How can that be your response when you are frightened and overwhelmed by your circumstances?

30. Day 30. Read Psalm 60.

- a. What do you learn about the judgment Israel is undergoing from verses 1-3?
- b. While "the many" in Israel experience God's judgment for rejecting Him in verses 1-3, what do "the few" experience according to verses 4-5? Why?
- c. How does God speak according to verse 6? What does God communicate in verses 6-8? What do you learn about God Himself from these verses?
- d. Why does David want God to be with him and help him overcome Israel's enemies? See verses 9-12.
- e. What do you learn from verse 11 that can aid you every day for the rest of your life?

"There are several kinds of psalms, and they express different feelings and circumstances. But the common theme is worship—*God is worthy of all praise because of who He is, what He has done, and what He will do. His goodness extends through all time and eternity.* The psalms present a very personal response to the person and work of God as they reflect on His program for His people. There is a keen desire to see His program fulfilled and His name extolled. Many of the psalms survey the Word of God and the attributes of God, especially during difficult times. This kind of faith produces confidence in His power in spite of circumstances." From *Talk Thru the Bible*²

² Bruce Wilkinson and Kenneth Boa, *Talk Thru the Bible* (Nashville: T. Nelson, 1983), 153.