

BIBLE TEACHING AND WORSHIP GUIDE



FOR THE HOME-BASED CHURCH

Produced Weekly

God Is Creator
Psalms 104

Copy this sheet for the Gathering Time, Bible Study, and Worship Experience leaders for the next meeting of the church.

Leaders' Responsibilities:

Important: Each person who will be leading one of the three parts of a session during a series of sessions needs to have access to the "Introduction" article found at the beginning of each series (Bible Teaching #....). The weekly session "Background" located in the Teacher Preparation is much more specific to that day's study.

1. **The Gathering Time Leader** will gather all of the people together and help them prepare their minds and hearts for a wonderful worship experience before God. His/her responsibility is to introduce the congregation to the theme (content) and the Scripture that will be central to their worship experience for the day.

2. **The Bible Study Leader** will then help the people understand what the Scriptures have to say and teach us about the content of the study for the day. He/she will guide the people to make a general application of the study (ie: How does this Bible study apply to people today?)

3. **The Worship Time Leader** has the responsibility to use the theme and Scriptures to guide the congregation to make personal commitments to God's will for each one in regard to the study for the day. He/she will use others to lead in the music, taking the offering, ministry moment comments, and other activities and parts of the **Worship Time** that can aid in participatory worship.

Prior to this Coming Session:

Gathering Time Leader:

Bible Study Leader:

Have a white board or large piece of paper available for use. An outline to guide the study is available at the end of the Worship Time resources. You may put this outline on the white board or paper or you may make individual copies for your recipients.

Ensure that a copy of the “Take Ten” Bible study application page for teens is available for each youth.

Worship Time Leader:

Ahead of time, choose which version of the verses, Romans 15:5,6 that you will read or have someone in the group read as the conclusion to the service and benediction. (Think of asking a youth or a senior adult to read it). An extra copy of the verses is found on the final page of the session.

Music Sources:

Morning Has Broken, *The Worship Hymnal* #45

This is My Father’s World, *The Worship Hymnal* #46; CCLI # 5713909

He Knows My Name, *The Worship Hymnal* #44; CCLI # 2151368

How Majestic Is Your Name, *The Worship Hymnal* # 52; CCLI # 26007

The Majesty and Glory of Your Name, *The Worship Hymnal* #57; CCLI #18871

To God Be the Glory, *The Worship Hymnal* # 28; CCLI #23426PD

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Copy this section for the Gathering Time leader.

Gathering Time: (Suggested time: 15 minutes)

God Is Creator

Focal Text

Psalm 104

Background Text

Psalm 104

Main Idea

Acknowledging God as Creator leads to praise and thanksgiving for His care.

Questions to Explore

What are visible indications of God's creation?

What indications of His care do we experience on a daily basis?

If we live in God's Creation, what implication does that have for our use of the world's resources?

Teaching Aims

Learners will name visible indications of God's creation.

Learners will focus on daily indications of God's care through His creation.

Learners will verbalize ways in which they need to make changes in the way in which they care for the world around them.

Gathering together:

Choose songs from those suggested under Music Sources.

First thoughts:

God's CPR

Genesis 2:7

"The LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being."

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God Is Creator – 25-52-04-en

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It was God who spoke creation into existence. It took six days or periods of God's time, His days, for Him to complete His task. After each day God looked over what was created and He said, "It is good".

But, there is an important difference between man and the rest of creation. For the first five days, God completed the creation of that day by saying "It is good". But on the sixth day, after creating man in His image, He said, "It is very good".

God took part of what He had already created and formed man. In the original language it is a picture of a potter molding a lump of clay into a creation. Using Himself as a model, God created man in His own image. Nothing else in creation is made in His image.

Then God did an amazing thing. He touched man's nostrils and breathed the breath of life into him. Until God did that Adam was just a lump of clay.

We need to remember that Christ was with God in the beginning and participated in the creation of the world. John 1-3 says ***In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.***

Each person has to breathe that first breath at birth. Until that happens there is no life. Our spiritual rebirth also needs God's breath. Salvation is not just an intellectual activity. It demands our total, life-long commitment to God. And it demands our inviting God's Spirit to come into our most innermost being and taking control of everything we think, feel, and do. The breath of life, the wind of God, which is what the word, Spirit, means, comes into everyone who calls out to Christ for salvation and eternal life.

Is that your need today? For all of us who have made that commitment, it surely means a daily re-commitment to following God's will through the day.

Closing the Gathering Time:

Take time at this point to mention items of prayer concern for the church, announcements of ministry or activities, and anything else that needs to be shared with or by the congregation. Pray for these needs. Remember to praise God in prayer.

Break time! Take five minutes between sessions. Encourage children to use the washroom so that they won't need to leave during the Bible Study time.

Distribute youth/adult Bible study outlines or paper for note-taking, if available.

Also hand out the activity sheets for preschool and younger children to use during Bible Study and/or worship.

Note to the Bible Study Leader: Suggested teaching time for the Bible study should be about 35 minutes. Use the “Teacher Preparation” for your personal study during the week before the session. Use the “Bible Study Plan” for the actual session.

Teacher Preparation

God Is Creator

Focal Text

Psalm 104

Background Text

Psalm 104

Main Idea

Acknowledging God as Creator leads to praise and thanksgiving for His care.

Questions to Explore

What are visible indications of God's creation?

What indications of His care do we experience on a daily basis?

If we live in God's Creation, what implication does that have for our use of the world's resources?

Teaching Aims

Learners will name visible indications of God's creation.

Learners will focus on daily indications of God's care through His creation.

Learners will verbalize ways in which they need to make changes in the way in which they care for the world around them.

Introduction to your personal study:

There is sheer grandeur in this psalm which portrays the Lord's power, wisdom, and goodness for all creation. One writer says it is a colorful paraphrase of the creation

story of Genesis 1.¹ The psalmist speaks of God stretching out the heavens in light. He has sovereign control of the deep. He speaks of God adorning the earth as a dwelling place for man. He prepares the sea for its life. Then the psalmist praises God who gloriously reigns over Creation and renews it by His Spirit. He would purge sinners, who are out of harmony with Creation.²

The Jewish people sang this psalm on Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement as they began a new year in repentance for past sins.

Background:

Please ask for and read the information contained in the “**Introduction**” article found at the beginning of this series (Bible Teaching #....) of Bible Study and Worship sessions. Whoever downloaded this session for you should have that material for you, as well.

Focusing on the Meaning:

1. THE PROLOGUE (104:1a).

1 Praise the LORD, my soul.

Praise for God should begin with one's self. One cannot lead others to praise God if there is not praise emanating from one's own soul. Praise from one's self first, then corporate praise.

2. PRAISE FOR THE CREATOR (104:1b-23).

LORD my God, you are very great; you are clothed with splendor and majesty.

2 The LORD wraps himself in light as a garment; he stretches out the heavens like a tent

3 and lays the beams of his upper chambers on their waters. He makes the clouds his chariot and rides on the wings of the wind.

4 He makes winds his messengers, flames of fire his servants.

The body of this hymn of praise begins with the sheer grandeur of the Lord (vs 104:1b). He is the writer's God and He is “very great”. God is pictured as a royal one. He is “clothed with splendor and majesty.” He is above all others.

Jeff Strife, a Church of Christ preacher, sees David like this. “I can picture David up on a hillside with the family sheep feeling the wind on his face, watching the trees blow in the wind. As he sits up on a hillside he looks down the Mediterranean ocean. Then

¹ Alton H. McEachern, “Layman's Bible Book Commentary, Psalms”, Vol. 8, Broadman Press, Nashville, TN, 1981, pg. 125.

² John F. Walvoord & Roy B. Zuck, “The Bible Knowledge Commentary”, Victor Books, 1992, pg. 868.

maybe he sees some mountains off in the distance and streams flowing down through the valley below. And it strikes David - as he sees all of this - just how wondrous a God he has and just how much God cares for him."

Light is the premier awesome characteristic of God. He wraps Himself in light like one would put on a garment. He lives in a heavenly tent whose covering stretches across the heavens. Its poles are set upon the waters of heaven. He rides the clouds like a charioteer. He is swift and unseen as the wind. His angelic hosts are messengers of wind and fire.

5 He set the earth on its foundations; it can never be moved.

6 You covered it with the watery depths as with a garment; the waters stood above the mountains.

7 But at your rebuke the waters fled, at the sound of your thunder they took to flight;

8 they flowed over the mountains, they went down into the valleys, to the place assigned for them.

9 You set a boundary they cannot cross; never again will they cover the earth.

This sounds like it is referring to the great flood of Noah's time, but it is not. The writer continues with the creation theme. Water is created to sustain the animals and the birds. It cannot go where God does not send it. God sets the boundaries for streams, rivers, and oceans.

10 He makes springs pour water into the ravines; it flows between the mountains.

11 They give water to all the beasts of the field; the wild donkeys quench their thirst.

12 The birds of the sky nest by the waters; they sing among the branches.

13 He waters the mountains from his upper chambers; the land is satisfied by the fruit of his work.

Water is important to an agrarian society. It flows from the mountains down through the ravines to the fields where it quenches the thirst of the animals and birds. Water is the fruit of the work of God and satisfies the need. With an increasing world population and a decreasing supply of water, we are more and more aware of the importance of clean sources of water.

Matthew 6:26 is about the worth of a bird. God provides for them and He provides for man. ***Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?***

14 He makes grass grow for the cattle, and plants for people to cultivate----bringing forth food from the earth:

15 wine that gladdens human hearts, oil to make their faces shine, and bread that sustains their hearts.

It is God who sets the order of the food chain. Water was necessary for survival and so is food. Food was grown for both man and animals. Olive oil was used for cosmetics and as a healing agent, bread made them strong. Grapes, olive oil, and bread were three principal crops in Palestine.

***16 The trees of the LORD are well watered, the cedars of Lebanon that he planted.
17 There the birds make their nests; the stork has its home in the junipers.
18 The high mountains belong to the wild goats; the crags are a refuge for the hyrax.***

God has made provision for all His creation and all His creatures. There are trees in which the birds can nest. There are mountains for the goats to roam. There are crags in which the hyrax or rabbits can live.

***19 He made the moon to mark the seasons, and the sun knows when to go down.
20 You bring darkness, it becomes night, and all the beasts of the forest prowl.
21 The lions roar for their prey and seek their food from God.
22 The sun rises and they steal away; they return and lie down in their dens.
23 Then people go out to their work, to their labor until evening.***

These verses are about time. Each month began with a new moon. The seasons are not marked by summer, fall, winter, and spring. They are marked by the timing of the moon. The setting of the sun marked the beginning of a new day for the Jews. God made the night. Animals came out after the sun went down to hunt their prey. God provided food for each one. Even men were eaten by animals such as lions. It was dangerous for humans to be out and about during the night. When daylight came the preying animals return to their dens and man was able to go out and tend the fields.

God created all of us, plants, man, and beast. He provides to keep each one alive.

3. PRAISE FOR THE LORD'S DOMINION (104:24-32).

***24 How many are your works, Lord! In wisdom you made them all; the earth is full of your creatures.
25 There is the sea, vast and spacious, teeming with creatures beyond number--- living things both large and small.
26 There the ships go to and from, and Leviathan, which you formed to frolic there.***

The psalmist proclaims his awe at the abundance of God's Creation. God was wise in His creatures. There was a place prepared for each one included the creatures in the sea. Not only is the sea a place of abode, but it is a seaway for commerce.

The large animals such as the Leviathan or whale are described as frolicking in the sea.

27 All creatures look to you to give them their food at the proper time.

28 When you give it to them they gather it up; when you open your hand they are satisfied with good things.

29 When you hide your face, they are terrified; when you take away their breath, they die and return to dust.

30 When you send your Spirit, they are created and you renew the face of the ground.

God did not create the heavens and the earth and then leave it to run on its own. He is constantly providing for His creation. There is a proper time for each creature's provisions. This passage brings to mind the provision for manna and quail in the Exodus. They had only what God provided which is true even now.

The same God who provides is the same God who can terrify. When the time comes he removes the breath given and each one dies. But, there is a constant recreating that replenishes. It is God's Spirit that is at work.

31 May the glory of the LORD endure forever; may the LORD rejoice in his works—

32 he who looks at the earth, and it trembles, who touches the mountains, and they smoke.

May the Shekinah of God – the dwelling or presence of God - continue forever. This is the psalmist's prayer. It is a prayer borne of the awe felt by the writer. God is powerful.

4. PRAYER FOR HARMONY IN CREATION (104:33-35a).

33 I will sing to the LORD all my life; I will sing praise to my God as long as I live.

34 May my meditation be pleasing to him, as I rejoice in the LORD.

35 But may sinners vanish from the earth and the wicked be no more.

What a wonderful use for the voice God gives man. Use it for singing His praises all of life. He started with "bless the LORD" and ends with praise for Him. He meditates and seeks God's favor at the same time he rejoices in Him.

Meditation means active contemplation, not wandering reverie. .It depends on purposeful concentration of the mind on the subject of meditation, and deliberate expulsion of discordant thought and images. (J S McEwan 'Theological Word Book of the Bible'.)

In Hebrew meditation means to speak with oneself, to muse, to give thought to, to turn over in one's mind. This is the opposite of what is taught by some of the false doctrines that teach that we should empty our minds. (Sermon by Collin Coombs.)

The psalmist's definition for harmony is for sinners to be no more. In the Old Testament that might mean destroying them. In the New Testament doctrine of salvation it would mean winning them to Christ.

5. EPILOGUE (104:35b).³

Praise the Lord, my soul. Praise the Lord.

He is singing "hallelujah, hallelujah". What an ending to a psalm extolling God and His Creation.

Your Goal as the Leader of this Bible Study:

A wonderful goal for the group would be to see in each one a growing joy of seeing God as the powerful and, yet, loving creator of all creation, including themselves.

For Personal Reflection:

What have I learned from this study?

What personal experience does this lesson bring to mind?

What is one action I will take this week to apply this Scripture passage to my life?

³ John F. Walvoord & Roy B. Zuck, "The Bible Knowledge Commentary", Outline for Psalm 104, pp 868-869.

Bible Study Plan (Suggested time: 35 minutes)

God Is Creator

Regroup the church after the Gathering Time and break by singing a chorus that young children can relate to—or another praise chorus if your congregation does not have children. Children who go to their own Bible teaching session should stay with the group until after this song. Have the preschoolers and children accompany the hymn with rhythm sticks, maracas, bells, etc.

Begin by helping the group locate the Focal Text in their Bibles. Also, share with them the Main Idea to be learned from the Scriptures, and the Questions to be Explored by the group.

Focal Text

Psalm 104

Background Text

Psalm 104

Main Idea

Acknowledging God as Creator leads to praise and thanksgiving for His care.

Questions to Explore

What are visible indications of God's creation?

What indications of His care do we experience on a daily basis?

If we live in God's Creation, what implication does that have for our use of the world's resources?

Teaching Aims

Learners will name visible indications of God's creation.

Learners will focus on daily indications of God's care through His creation.

Learners will verbalize ways in which they need to make changes in the way in which they care for the world around them.

Connect with Life:

Ask: What reminds you the most that God is the Creator of everything? Allow some time for reflection before asking for responses.

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Guide the Study:

Use the outline given in the teacher preparation to guide your study. You may put this outline on a whiteboard or large piece of paper or make individual copies for each participant. The outline is given for you to copy at the end of the Worship Time resources.

Continue the lesson by reading aloud the material under “Introduction to your personal study”:

There is sheer grandeur in this psalm which portrays the Lord’s power, wisdom, and goodness for all creation. One writer says it is a colorful paraphrase of the creation story of Genesis 1.⁴ The psalmist speaks of God stretching out the heavens in light. He has sovereign control of the deep. He speaks of God adorning the earth as a dwelling place for man. He prepares the sea for its life. Then the psalmist praises God who gloriously reigns over Creation and renews it by His Spirit. He would purge sinners, who are out of harmony with Creation.⁵

Add: The Jewish people sang this psalm in repentance for past sins on Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement as they began a new year. (You may find the Day of Atonement described in Leviticus 16. This was the single most important day in the Hebrew calendar. On that day the high priest entered into the Most Holy Place behind the curtain and made atonement for his sins; those of his household, and of the whole community. It occurred five days before the Feast of Tabernacles described in Nehemiah 29:12-40. The Feast of Tabernacles is also called the Feast of Ingathering because it occurred at harvest time.)

1. THE PROLOGUE (104:1a).

1 Praise the LORD, my soul.

Praise for God should begin with one’s self. One cannot lead others to praise God if there is not praise emanating from one’s own soul. Praise from one’s self first, then corporate praise.

Invite someone to read Psalm 104:1-23.

2. PRAISE FOR THE CREATOR (104:1b-23).

⁴ Alton H. McEachern, “Layman’s Bible Book Commentary, Psalms”, Vol. 8, Broadman Press, Nashville, TN, 1981, pg. 125.

⁵ John F. Walvoord & Roy B. Zuck, “The Bible Knowledge Commentary”, Victor Books, 1992, pg. 868.

Ask: How, when, and where do you praise God? Should it only be when we meet?

Using the Scriptures as a guide ask: Find the descriptions of God used by the psalmist. (You may add to the list as you continue the study).

Light, Creator, Sustainer, Wise, Perfect

Write them on a board or a large sheet of paper.

Tell them: Light is a premier characteristic and description of God.

Read to the group what Jeff Strife wrote:

"I can picture David up on a hillside with the family sheep feeling the wind on his face, watching the trees blow in the wind. As he sits up on a hillside he looks down the Mediterranean ocean. Then maybe he sees some mountains off in the distance and streams flowing down through the valley below. And it strikes David - as he sees all of this - just how wondrous a God he has and just how much God cares for him."

Now have the group look out a window or around the room and look for descriptions of God's creating power. As they respond write them on a separate sheet of paper or on a board.

Ask: If God created do we have a responsibility to take care of what He created? If so, what should we be doing?

Ask for a volunteer to read Psalm 104:24-32.

3. PRAISE FOR THE LORD'S DOMINION (104:24-32).

Ask: Who is ultimately in charge of all creation? God.

Inquire: Did God create and then leave creation to run itself? No

Say: When sin entered creation it was marred.

Call upon someone to read Psalm 104:33-35.

4. PRAYER FOR HARMONY IN CREATION (104:33-35a).

Continue: God gave man a voice that may be used for praise and prayer.

Also: God gave man a heart and mind for meditation. Meditation is more than quietness. It is purposeful concentration on the things of God.

Now inquire: In verse 35, what does the writer believe will bring harmony once again to creation? (That there would be no more sinners.)

Make sure the group understands that the New Testament doctrine for this verse would be to win sinners to Christ.

Have someone read Psalm 104: 35b.

5. EPILOGUE (104:35b).

Praise the Lord, my soul. Praise the Lord.

He is singing “hallelujah, hallelujah”. What an ending to a psalm extolling God and His Creation.

Encourage Application:

If you have two or more youth, this is the time to give them the **Youth!!! Take Ten** page and allow them to move away from the adults and apply the lesson by and for themselves.

Wrap up the lesson by asking the group to find ways they can give praise and thanksgiving for God's care for them.

For the group: Name one way you can make this lesson come alive in your life this week. After a time for reflection ask for volunteers to share aloud.

Have someone close in prayer thanking God for His creation and for creating each of you in His image.

Take a five minute break to separate the Bible Study and Worship Time. Children may need to use the washroom again before worship.

YOUTH!!! TAKE TEN

Bible Study Application for Youth

You may wish to move away from the adults for the final five to ten minutes of the Bible study and help each other as youth to apply the lesson to your own needs.

God Is Creator **Psalms 104**

A youth will lead the following activity and comments. No adults need to be present. If possible, teens should take turns in leading the application time.

CREATION, WOW!!!

One of the biggest challenges for Christian young people is understanding how creation occurred. The theory of evolution without God is often taught as being an absolute truth. Students may struggle with understanding a Biblical view of creation while being taught about creation from a purely human standpoint. It is of absolute importance to remember that God is Creator. In this, you are right.

We may believe that the Genesis account is meant to be a factual scientific and literal account or we may choose to believe that change occurred slowly and the Genesis story is a guide for the understanding of people of all the ages, from the days of primitive science until now. What is essential is that we believe that behind creation is our Creator God. Psalm 104 is a poetical expression of that reality.

Worship Time (Suggested time: 30 minutes)***God Is Creator***
Psalms 104**Beginning the Service:**

Sing one or more of the songs suggested in Music Sources.

Offering:**Praying for the World:**

In the heart of Athens, Greece which is a city known for its rich history and substantial contribution to modern day society, lies one small neighborhood buzzing with many different cultures, languages and religions. Many years ago the only known evangelical believer began praying that God would bless her community. In recent days, the nations have come together at family festivals and kids' clubs. The result of these activities is that barriers are crumbling and children from different nationalities are now playing with each other. And, most importantly, national believers have joined in the work to help form a new Bible study group.

Sharing Guide:

This sharing guide is written to assist the person who directs the worship time to reemphasize the teaching for the day and help guide the congregation to respond to God's call and will for their lives in regard to the scripture studied. The leader may choose to follow the guide closely. Or, he or she may wish to only use it to give direction and a concept for preparing an original message. The leader is free to choose other ways to communicate and share the concepts presented here.

The Manna Principle⁶
Exodus 15:22-17:7

⁶ John Ortberg.

God's creation includes God's provision at every level. His provision enables His creation to function and to give Him glory and honour:

He keeps the universe working down to the smallest detail.

He provides for our world—structure, processes, elements, plants, and animals.

He watches over each of us, day and night.

A boy returns from Sunday School and his mom asked him what he had learned that morning. 'Well, we learned that Moses went behind the enemy lines and freed the Israelites. Then he took the army engineers and built a pontoon bridge across the Red Sea. Then when the Egyptians tank division started to cross over the bridge he called in the dive bombers and blew them to bits.' His mother was outraged and said, 'IS THAT WHAT YOUR SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER IS TEACHING YOU?' The little boy looked down for a moment and finally said, 'Well - no Mom, but if I told you what she taught us this morning there's no way.'⁷

What is God teaching His people? Moses captures this lesson when he looks back on this episode decades later in Deuteronomy 8:3 – ***God humbled you, causing you to hunger and then fed you with manna***. God was teaching them to depend on Him... one day at a time! They could not rely on their own strength, their own wisdom, or their own resources. In the desert, they learned that all they needed could be found in the hands of the God who made them and delivered them. This is what John Ortberg calls "*The Manna Principle*." God will provide for us one day at a time; trust God for this day. That made some of the Israelites anxious; some got greedy and tried to beat the system; some were afraid. But God's agenda would not be derailed – God said to His people then and now, "I want you to live your life trusting Me one day at a time – just this day. Learn to trust Me for this day. If you start worrying about tomorrow, you'll worry your whole life away."⁸

Question #1. "What shall we drink?" (Exodus 15:24) After three days of marching they were very thirsty and when they finally found water it was bitter. Moses goes to the Lord for help and it is forthcoming ***Then Moses cried out to the Lord, and the Lord showed him a piece of wood. He threw it into the water and the water became sweet*** (Exodus 15:25).

Question #2. What shall we eat? They murmured and remembered Egypt and the food they had there. God provided manna in the morning and quail in the evening. ***Moses also said, You will know that it was the Lord when he gives you meat to eat in the evening and all the bread you want in the morning, because he has heard your grumbling against him, Who are we? You are not grumbling against us, but against the Lord***" (Exodus 16:8).

⁷ Ken Sowers, "God Provides".

⁸ Rick Callahan, River Valley Community Church,

God let them get real thirsty and real hungry before he provided what they needed. He was testing them to see if they would be faithful to Him (Exodus 16:4). "Mark this down: An attitude tends to become a practice, a practice slowly becomes a habit, a habit quickly becomes a lifestyle and a lifestyle always defines our character."⁹

Both the manna and the quail were supplied by God each day. There was only enough for one day except for Friday when the Israelites could gather enough for two days. They were then to prepare the meals for the Sabbath so that they would not work but would rest on the seventh day.

Water was supplied for them throughout the journey in the wilderness. Each of these blessings was provided with the accompanying instruction that they obey Him.

Matthew 6:11 ***"Give us today our daily bread".***

Matthew 6:25 ***"Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear".***

The key to understanding the Sermon on the Mount is answered in the question: do I have faith enough to believe Jesus can do these things in and for me?

John 6:32-33; 35. ***Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."***

Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty."

If the Israelites believed God then He would provide them with deliverance, food, water, and the Promised Land

One author had three things to say about the Israelites and their grumbling.

Grumbling is gratitude problem. Grumbling comes as a response to pain or problems in life. We grumble because we think that we should experience pleasure rather than pain and prosperity rather than adversity.¹⁰

Grumbling is a perception problem. The problem is that when we grumble our perception is faulty. Grumbling invariably causes us to distort the facts.¹¹

⁹ Dr. Calvin Wittman, "Walking by Faith in the Wilderness".

¹⁰ John Hamby, "Complainers Never Win".

¹¹ Ibid.

Grumbling is a contagious problem.¹² No one grumbles alone. They tell others to get them involved.

Warren Wiersbe in his commentary “Be Delivered” calls this chapter in the life of the Israelites “The School of Life”. Phillip Brooks wrote “Do not pray for easy lives. Pray to be stronger men and women. Do not pray for tasks equal to your powers. Pray for powers equal to your tasks.”¹³

What will keep us a gracious person instead of a grumbler:

Keep your eyes on the Lord and trust Him who supplies your need. (Heb. 12:1; Phil. 4:19)

Be grateful for the blessings you receive and give thanks for them. (Phil 4:6)

Take Christ into your life each day as you would food and water. (John 6:35)

Expect trials to come. They test our faith.

Obey God’s instructions.

Call to Commitment:

Who is willing to trust Christ today. Let Him provide for every area of your life. And for all believers in our God of both creation and salvation, spend time this week enjoying the presence of other people and, likewise, the different objects, large and small, majestic and humble that exist by God’s creation. And each time you think on that object or person, thank God for His majesty and for His provisions for you.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ “Be Delivered”, Warren Wiersbe, pg. 75.

Concluding the Service:

Leader, read (or ask someone in the congregation to read one of the following verses to the congregation.

Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus: That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Romans 15:5,6 (King James Version)

or:

May our dependably steady and warmly personal God develop maturity in you so that you get along with each other as well as Jesus gets along with us all. Then we'll be a choir—not our voices only, but our very lives singing in harmony in a stunning anthem to the God and Father of our Master Jesus! Romans 15:5,6 (The Message)

or:

May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had, so that with one mind and one voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Romans 15:5,6 (New International Version)

Concluding the Service:

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Use this outline given in the teacher preparation to guide your study. You may put this outline on a whiteboard or large piece of paper or make individual copies for each participant. The outline is given for you to copy.

1. THE PROLOGUE (104:1a).

2. PRAISE FOR THE CREATOR (104:1b-23).

3. PRAISE FOR THE LORD'S DOMINION (104:24-32).

4. PRAYER FOR HARMONY IN CREATION (104:33-35a).

5. EPILOGUE (104:35b).