

# The Teacher's Notes—Lessons of the Past, Lesson 10

## Adult Bible Study Guide, 2024 1Q, "Psalms"

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The Teacher's Notes



Sabbath School Lesson for March 2-8, 2024

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### Overview of Lesson 10, Lessons of the Past

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**Memory Text:** *"Which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from their children, telling to the generation to come the praises of the Lord, and His strength and His wonderful works that He has done."* **Psalms 78:3, 4 NKJV**

We must be faithful in sharing with the children of each generation the historical past of God's people. When this happens, they will sing God's praises with us, recounting all the wonderful things God has done. Together with our children, we will be honored to participate in achieving God's purposes for the salvation of the world. People must know who God is and what He can accomplish when we faithfully work with Him.

Several psalms help us in this mission. They are called the "historical", or "salvation history" psalms. Psalms 78, 105, 106, 80, and 135 easily fit in this category. Knowing this historical past strengthens our trust in God, gives us hope for the future, and allows us to escape a

repetition of our past sins and mistakes.

The Scriptures must not be seen simply as a book of philosophy or religious ideology. It mostly contains narratives that point to the grand finale of our salvation. Some stories reveal the Messiah and others Christ's Second Coming, but they all highlight the magnificent power and grace of our Creator.

- **Sunday: The Lord's Unstoppable Faithfulness**—Ps. 78 shows us God's faithfulness and Israel's unfaithfulness
- **Monday: Remembering History and the Praise of God**—Ps. 105 focuses on God's covenant with Abraham and the Promised Land he was given
- **Tuesday: Remembering History and Repentance**—Ps. 106 expresses hope that God will deliver us from this world of sin
- **Wednesday: The Parable of the Lord's Vine**—Ps. 80 contains an image of a vineyard, representing God's providential care for His people
- **Thursday: The Lord's Supremacy in History**—Ps. 135 encourages us to praise God as our Creator and Savior

## Sunday: The Lord's Unstoppable Faithfulness (Ps. 78)

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**Psalm 78 covers three historical periods in Israel's history**, contrasting God's patience and healing grace with Israel's wandering away from God's commandments. These periods were:

1. **the Exodus from Egypt** (Psalm 78:9-54)
2. **their settlement in Canaan** (Psalm 78:55-64)
3. **the time of David's reign** (Psalm 78: 65-72)

**The Israelites' stubbornness and failure to trust God led them to** several episodes of disloyalty to their Benefactor. Their disobedience was usually manifested in **idolatry, which consisted of human efforts to save themselves**. Such behavior certainly tested God's faithfulness with His people, but **His forgiveness was certain when they returned to Him with repentant hearts**.

### Bible Verses:

Psalm 78:2 and Matthew 13:34, 35

Why does God, and later Jesus, use parables/stories to teach about salvation?

Psalm 78:7, 8

What was the core sin of Israel that caused them to be unfaithful to God?

Psalm 78:58 and Deuteronomy 12:2

What does it mean by “high places” when it talks about idolatry?

Why was idolatry so offensive to God, provoking Him to jealousy?

How does God’s jealousy and anger differ from ours? How is it the same?

## Monday: Remembering History and the Praise of God (Ps. 105)

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**Psalm 105** doesn’t focus as much on God’s people who were unfaithful (as in Ps. 78). Rather, we read **about those patriarchal leaders whose faith was more steadfast than most of their peers.**

This psalm describes the **covenant made with Abraham and his son Isaac, renewing it with Jacob, and finally using Joseph and Moses to save His people** from the horrific bondage they endured in Egypt. All of **these miraculous events inspire us to trust God more and praise Him for His unfailing mercies.**

Through all generations, we receive hope from knowing the history of those fretful times. We are encouraged to trust God and wait patiently for His deliverance, especially in these last days. **All nations who suffer oppression can know that God is on their side, and that His justice will prevail.**

### Bible Verses:

Psalm 105:1-5, 96:1, and 97:1

How and why are all nations of the earth involved in these stories, and should know and study them?

Psalm 105:6-8 and Galatians 3:29

Why should Christians today continue telling these stories about Israel’s past?

## Tuesday: Remembering History and Repentance (Ps. 106)

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Also recounting Israel’s escape from slavery in Egypt, their long journey in the wilderness, and their conquest of Canaan when they arrived, Psalm 106 adds another chapter to their story. **Written by a later psalmist, we find it included the time when they were carried away into exile by the Babylonians** and kept there as unwilling captives for many years. This psalmist illuminated what they should have learned from these experiences.

Their sins, which contributed to such unfortunate episodes in history, were once again forgiven. Many of them were later able to return to Jerusalem, because of God’s steadfast love for His people. **The fervent prayers of Moses, Phineas, and Daniel turned away God’s wrath from them at critical times.**

Thankfully, the **intercessory prayers of our risen Lord and Savior in the heavenly sanctuary are now responsible for any victory we gain from our enemy Satan.**

### **Bible Verses:**

Psalm 106:1-3, 48

Why does this psalm begin and end with praise to God? What value do we find in praising Him?

Psalm 106:8-10, 30, 43-46

What can we learn from these stories about the past?

## **Wednesday: The Parable of the Lord's Vine (Ps. 80)**

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This psalmist **portrays God's people as a once-thriving plant in the Lord's vineyard.** At this time, however, the vine was not thriving and its very existence was threatened. **Psalm 80 is a tearful plea for God to intervene and save them** from total destruction, as He had done in times past. Enemies were overwhelming them, and **only God could restore them to their former state of peace and well-being.**

The horrific suffering of Israel was **considered part of God's judgment** (Psalm 80:6, 16). **They had admittedly turned away from God,** and needed His forgiving grace and intervention to be saved from their enemies (Psalm 80:18, 19).

The word "restore" in Psalm 80:19 comes from a common word that means to "return". It is linked to the word for "**repentance**", **which indicates a turning away from sin and coming back to God.** Psalm 80:3, 7, 18, and 19 convey their need for revival, repentance, and restoration.

### **Bible Verses:**

Psalm 80:8-13, Isaiah 5:1-7, and John 15:1-6

Who is the owner of the vineyard? Who is the vine, and who are the branches?

Why is it helpful to remember our place in God's vineyard?

## **Thursday: The Lord's Supremacy in History (Ps. 135)**

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**Psalm 135** covers a wide, historical time period. It **goes all the way back to Creation** (Psalm 135:6, 7). Then, it highlights their escape from Egypt (Psalm 135:8, 9) and conquering of Canaan (Psalm 135:10-12). All together, it **portrays the wonderful God they worship as both their Creator and their Redeemer.**

We find a contrasting portrayal of the gods of idolatry and the supremacy of the Creator over them all. **We should never trust creation over the Creator. Idols were mere products of their own hands.** They neither spoke, saw, breathed, or moved on their own. They were worthless, compared to the Lord who had worked so many miracles for them. See Psalm 135:15-18.

God's people are referred to as "His special treasure" in Psalm 135:4. When they were oppressed, **the Lord would judge them (Psalm 135:14). In this case, judgment meant His servants would be vindicated.** This must have inspired them to trust God and remain faithful, in spite of their trying circumstances.

### **Bible Verses:**

Psalm 135:6-12, Exodus 20:8-11, and Deuteronomy 5:12-15

For what two reasons are we to worship God, as stated in the fourth commandment?

Psalm 135:15-18

What form does idolatry take in our modern world?

Is it possible to worship people, as well as things? How do we sometimes see this unfold down through history?

## **Friday: Final Thoughts**

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The Bible is a compilation of stories about God and our salvation. Whether narrative, poetic, or prophetic in nature, every book in the Bible helps us see the past, so we can cope with the present, and have hope for our future. It is history, or you might say it's "His story".

Reading the pages of the Bible, "His story", we get the sense that God is personally involved with what happens to us here on earth. Seeing how God dealt with His people in the past gives us insight that allows us to see how He is working with us in the present. Every aspect of our life, personally (our own decisions and actions), and corporately (the events in our church and government), are under God's control and guidance. This gives us strength and confidence that our future with Him is guaranteed.

As Ellen White expressed this concept, it boils down to this...

“We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history.” ~*Life Sketches of Ellen G. White*, p. 196

We can learn a lot from the stories of our Adventist pioneers. In *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, p. 98, she also advised reading Psalm 105 and 106 at least once a week, to keep Israel's history alive in our hearts and minds.

Here's some hymns that remind us that God is our fortress, we stand on His promises, and He leads us day by day:

- **"A Mighty Fortress", #506**
- **"Standing on the Promises, #518**
- **"Day by Day", #532**

***Next Week: Longing for God in Zion***

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