

# Lesson 4

## God of Creation (Psalms 65-68)

1. Why is it important to praise God for His creation? How does the psalmist do this in Psalm 65? What does God's care of nature tell His people about His care for His followers?
2. Choose one verse or phrase from Psalms 65—68 that stands out to you. This could be something you're intrigued by, something that makes you uncomfortable, something that puzzles you, something that resonates with you, or just something you want to examine further. Write that here.
3. What strikes you about the tone of the opening verses in Psalm 65? What does the psalmist mean that "praise awaits you"? What does this tell us about the psalmist?
4. What does Psalm 65:5–8 tell us about God's role as ruler? What do verses 9–13 tell us about His role as provider? Why would these descriptions of God have been particularly important to the small nation of Israel? In what ways do they help underscore the chosenness of God's people? How do they speak about God's relationship to the church today?
5. If you didn't know the context in which Psalm 66 was written, what would stand out to you about the message? Review the defeat of Assyria in Isaiah 36—37. How does the meaning of this psalm change if verses 13–20 specifically refer to that event? What does a psalm like this teach us about how God's Word can speak to specific circumstances in history and also far beyond those events?

6. What would have prompted the psalmist to make vows to God, as referenced in Psalm 66:13–20? How does this kind of commitment to God compare and contrast to the way Christians commit to God today? How might the psalmist rewrite this psalm today, in light of Jesus’ sacrifice on our behalf? What does the last verse (v. 20) tell the reader about prayer? Why is this important to the psalmist? To us today?
7. Read Genesis 12:1–3. How does the message of Psalm 67 align with God’s covenant with Abraham? Whom is the psalmist asking God to bless? What is the purpose of God’s blessing?
8. God’s covenant with Israel associated blessing with obedience. After reading some of the psalms, what can you tell about the effects of Israel’s obedience or lack thereof? How is this cause-effect illustrated in the words of the psalms? How does Jesus’ sacrifice redefine the relationship between blessing and obedience?
9. How does David use Psalm 68 both as a record of history and as an encouragement to the Israelites? What is the significance of the phrase “father to the fatherless”? What does it mean that God “sets the lonely in families” and “leads forth the prisoners with singing”? How are these assurances applicable to the church today?
10. Where in the psalm does the shift take place from “God is marching before us” to “God is dwelling with us”? Why was it important to acknowledge God’s presence on Mt. Zion? In what ways might Psalm 68:28–35 be considered prophetic?
11. What does your praise for God look like? In what ways do you praise Him for His creation? Make a list of some good reasons to praise God for creation. What implications does this list have for how you go about your daily life?

12. What are some of the “battles” God has won for you? How have you shown your gratitude to Him for those victories? What are some of the battles you’re currently facing? Is it easy to praise God in the middle of trials? Why or why not? What would it take for you to be able to praise God anyway?
  
13. In the Old Testament, God’s covenant was all about obedience and blessing. In what ways do you live your life according to a similar belief? What are the dangers of believing we can earn God’s blessings, in light of the sacrifice God made through His Son, Jesus? How do God’s blessings rain down on Christians today?
  
14. Think of one or two things that you have learned that you’d like to work on in the coming week. Remember that this is all about quality, not quantity. It’s better to work on one specific area of life and do it well than to work on many and do poorly (or to be so overwhelmed that you simply don’t try).
  
15. Write a prayer below (or simply pray one in silence), inviting God to work on your mind and heart in those areas you’ve previously noted. Be honest about your desires and fears. Real-Life Application Ideas: Take some time to focus on God’s creation. Go for a walk. Visit a park or nature conservatory. Keep in mind that God’s creation is more than nature—it’s animals and people, too! During this focused time, record your praises in a journal.