

# Lesson 8

## The Creator and His Nation (Psalms 102-105)

1. Circle phrases in Psalm 102 that suggest the psalmist is perplexed or bothered by circumstances. How is the psalmist's response to uncertainty similar to things Christians experience today? What are some examples of situations when believers wonder if God has turned His face from them? What is this psalm's answer to that anxiety?
2. Choose one verse or phrase from Psalms 102—105 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 prompts the psalmist's urgency in Psalm 102? What does the contrast of the psalmist's fear (Psalm 102:11) and God's enduring nature (v. 27) teach us about the importance of trusting God?
4. What are some examples of "true praise" in modern church culture? (Not just the praise and worship time during the service.) What are ways people praise God today outside of the corporate setting? What are some of the distractions that make it difficult to praise with all your inmost being?
5. In what ways does Psalm 103 reflect Israel's history with God as a nation? What would you add to the psalm to reflect the church's history with God? How does remembering our shared history affect the way Christians praise God?

6. How does Psalm 104 reflect the content of Genesis 1? What attitudes does this psalm suggest God has toward the nonhuman parts of His creation? Why is it important to recognize the Creator's glory? How can the church do this today?
7. Why is the environment such a controversial topic? How does the truth of God's role as Creator intersect with the conversation about the environment? How does praise for God's creation translate into care for His creation?
8. How does Psalm 104:24–35 demonstrate the wisdom and creativity of our God? What does it say about God that He chose to create such a diverse world? What does it say about us?
9. How does Psalm 105 combine both praise and a record of the Israelites' history? Go through this psalm and circle phrases that describe specific events in the Israelites' history. Why is the role of history so important to the Israelites? Why is it also important to today's church? What are some ways the church can better reflect on God's active role in its history?
10. How does the phrase "God's people live on promises, not explanations" apply to the story and message in Psalm 105? What is the implication of this (and of other similar psalms) for how the Israelites ought to respond to the promises that God has kept? How does that sort of responsibility play out today in light of the new covenant?
11. When have you felt like the psalmist in Psalm 102? What made you wonder if God had turned from you? What was likely really happening during that season of life? What are some appropriate responses to this feeling of abandonment?
12. When have you experienced "true praise"? What were the circumstances that made this praise different from other expressions? How can you be intentional about inviting more praise into your faith life?

13. What is your specific responsibility to the Creator's creation? What are some of the practical things you're doing to care for God's earth? For His creatures (including other people)? How can you sort out the politics of environmental issues and the love for God's world?
  
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).  
**Do you need to invite more true praise into your life? Do you need to change the way you interact with God's creation? Be specific.**
  
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.