

# **TRUTH AND LIFE**

Doctrinal and Ethical Notes on the Bible

G. Wright Doyle, M.Div., Ph.D.

Part I

**THE OLD TESTAMENT**

Volume 3

**THE PSALMS**

# TRUTH AND LIFE

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL NOTES ON THE BIBLE

PART I

THE OLD TESTAMENT

VOLUME 3

THE PSALMS

G. Wright Doyle, M.Div., Ph.D.

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Note: *Truth and Life* is a work in progress. Sections will be posted over time and may be incomplete. Check back for new and updated documents. This is *Truth and Life: The Old Testament - The Psalms, Version 1 (September 2019)*.

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*The notes for some of these books of the Bible may be incomplete. Check for updated versions at [www.reachingchineseworldwide.org](http://www.reachingchineseworldwide.org). This is *Truth and Life: The Old Testament – The Psalms, Version 1 (September 2019)*.*

# INTRODUCTION to *TRUTH AND LIFE*

## Origin and Nature of this Book

*Truth and Life: Doctrinal and Ethical Notes on the Bible* grew out of a study that I did with several men over a period of three-and-a-half years. Following the order found in *Search the Scriptures*,<sup>1</sup> a Bible reading guide I used at the beginning of my Christian life, we asked two questions of each passage:

What does it say about the usual topics discussed in books on systematic theology (such as the doctrines of revelation, God, Christ, man, sin, salvation, God's people, and "the last things")?

What does it say about how we should live? That is, what does it say about what is usually called "Christian ethics"?

As time went on, I discovered that this way of looking at the Bible was quite helpful for me, since it required me to look closely at the biblical text and to search it carefully for teachings not only on doctrine – that is, general "truth" – but also on the application of doctrine to daily life. Thus, the title: "Truth and Life." Of course, all that the Bible says is true, and all of it bears upon life. Indeed, Jesus said, "The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life."<sup>2</sup> We cannot separate doctrine from our proper response to it.

That is why this book includes notes both about general truths revealed by God in the Bible and about ways in which we could apply these truths at home, school, work, and church, and in society. As much as possible, the advice in each "Life" section comes directly from the corresponding passage of the Scriptures.

## *Distinctive Features*

To my knowledge, this book is unique, at least at present.

There are plenty of study Bibles, Bible commentaries of all sorts, and books on systematic theology and on Christian ethics. I am not aware that anything exists that

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<sup>1</sup> Alan M. Stibbs, general editor, *Search the Scriptures: A Three-Year Bible Study Course* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1984).

<sup>2</sup> John 6:63.

provides brief comments on what each passage of the Bible says both about the usual topics [*topoi*, or *loci*] of theology and about ethics.

As a glance at any page of this book will show, the “Truth” sections follow a topical order based on the standard theological categories, as mentioned above. The “Life” sections follow the order of the passage itself and are not arranged topically.

In treating the theology of each passage, I usually spend a large amount of time drawing out what we can learn from it about the doctrine of revelation – that is, mostly about the Scriptures themselves (“special revelation”). How God has revealed himself to us in his written Word is foundational to everything else we believe about him and his works in the world and in our lives. Sometimes we also find teaching on what is often called “general revelation” – revealed through our moral constitution, the created order, and the events of history.

You will also see that I devote significant attention to the doctrine of God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – which I usually discuss under the headings of “His greatness” and “His goodness.” My goal is to draw our attention away from ourselves and this world so that we may focus again on our great, glorious, and gracious God. Such a reorientation of thinking has been very beneficial to my own soul and life.

After looking at God and his works, we examine what the passage might teach about angels, Satan and demons, mankind, sin, salvation, God’s people, and the last things.

### *Other Characteristics*

Since the Bible is a big book and since the authors of the Scriptures, under God’s inspiration, frequently write about the same topics many times, you will encounter a great deal of repetition here. It simply could not be avoided. Please be patient with me – and with how God has chosen to present what he thinks we need to know! I have found in my own life that I need constant exposure to the same truths day after day, year after year, for them to “sink in” and then be “worked out” into my life.

I have attempted to express myself as concisely as possible. Most sections are presented in outline form for easy reading. I have not aimed for literary elegance or fullness of expression; otherwise, the book would be twice as long. My goal is to give

you as much information as possible in the briefest format. I have written other non-scholarly commentaries and thematic biblical studies in the usual expository style.<sup>3</sup>

*Truth and Life* is not a study Bible or a commentary in the usual sense. It is not at all meant to replace these fundamental aids to understanding the Scriptures, but to be used in conjunction with them. You will not find extensive explanations of historical or cultural backgrounds, word studies, or a verse-by-verse or even paragraph-by-paragraph running commentary.

This book is not exhaustive, but suggestive; much more could have been said. Nor is it an academic publication, though I have drawn upon the writings of learned scholars.

In addition, the wording and format of these notes are not always consistent. I wrote them over a period of several years and did not always adhere to the same format. My editorial assistants and I have tried to make the text consistent as much as possible, but irregularities remain.

In particular, some passages receive very detailed treatment, while others are discussed much more briefly. Further, some include references to a number of parallel or related passages of Scripture, while others merely cite the relevant verse(s) in the section under consideration. Again, this disparity reflects the long time I have spent writing the notes, as well as the amount of energy I had on any particular day! As I said above, the notes are meant to be suggestive, not exhaustive.

Note: When only verse numbers are given, they refer to the chapter (or psalm) being discussed. Thus, in the notes on Romans 1:1–17, “1, 5” means “1:3, 5.” If chapter and verse are given, but no book, the reference is to the book being discussed.

## **My Background**

Though I am not now a professional biblical scholar or an academic theologian, I have had some opportunities to engage in advanced study of the Bible and theology.

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<sup>3</sup> G. Wright Doyle, *Worship and Wisdom: Daily Readings from Psalms and Proverbs with Commentary* (Durham, NC: Torchflame Books, 2015); *Christ the King: Meditations on Matthew* (Durham, NC: Light Messages, 2011); *Jesus: The Complete Man* (Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse, 2008); and *The Lord's Healing Words: Six Months of Daily Readings from the Bible on Physical, Mental, and Spiritual Health (with Commentary)* (Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse, 2008).

At the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, I majored in Latin but also took three years of classical Greek. After graduation I attended the Virginia Theological Seminary in Alexandria. Though it was (and is) a theologically liberal Episcopal school, the seminary faculty included some outstanding evangelicals, and I was able to learn some things even from those who did not believe that the Bible is God's Word written.

From seminary I moved to the pastorate, serving three small Episcopal churches in Eastern North Carolina for two years. This entailed careful study and exposition of the Scriptures along with daily pastoral visitation and care for the people of these congregations.

In 1971 I began doctoral studies in Classics at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, with the aim of equipping myself to teach in a seminary. For two years I read Greek and Latin literature under the instruction of some of the finest Classicists in the world. My doctoral exams dealt with the Greek New Testament, Hellenistic philosophy, and early Christian rhetoric – that is, preaching. My dissertation focused on Augustine's theory of the exegesis and exposition of Scripture as outlined in *de Doctrina Christiana*, as well as on how Augustine "applied" his theory to his sermons on the Gospel of John. The year that I spent with this master-student of the Bible has profoundly affected the way I read and teach the Bible. Always, Augustine aimed to communicate the truths of Scripture in a fashion that would change people's lives.

My wife Dori and I went to Asia as missionaries in 1975. After two years of Chinese language study and one year away on furlough, we returned to Taiwan, where I began teaching Greek and New Testament at China Evangelical Seminary, Taipei. Over the next seven years, I labored to help Chinese Christians understand and apply the Bible to their culture. My familiarity with the Bible benefitted immensely from the five years I spent supervising the translation of Bauer-Arndt-Gingrich's *Lexicon of the Greek New Testament* into Chinese (and then, later, from five more years spent revising the work).

Since our permanent return to the United States in 1988, I have taught intensive courses on "New Testament and Systematic Theology" for various seminaries in Taiwan and North America, preached regularly, composed the volumes mentioned in the note on page ii, and continued my daily study of the Bible. I have also learned a great deal from Carl F. H. Henry. I made an abridgment of his six-volume *God, Revelation, and*

*Authority* for publication in Chinese, and I authored an introduction to his *magnum opus*.<sup>4</sup> From him I learned just how fundamental is the doctrine of revelation.

## Sources

In addition to my own daily reading of the Bible over the past 50 years, other sources have contributed to *Truth and Life*. These are too many to list individually, but here are the main ones:

### *Systematic Theology*

Augustine of Hippo. *Enchiridion; City of God; Confessions; and On Christian Doctrine (Teaching)*. Various editions.

John Calvin. *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. Edited by John T. McNeill. Translated by Ford Lewis Battles. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1960.

Jonathan Edwards. *Religious Affections; The End for Which God Created the World; Charity and its Fruits*; various sermons; and other works. Various editions.

Carl F. H. Henry. *God, Revelation, and Authority*. 6 vols. Waco, TX: Word Books, 1976–83.

Douglas F. Kelly. *Systematic Theology*. Vols. 1 and 2. Tain, Scotland: Christian Focus Publications, 2008, 2014.

Matthew Levering. *The Theology of Augustine. An Introductory Guide to His Most Important Works*. Ada, MI: Baker Academic, 2013.

Gordon R. Lewis and Bruce A. Demarest. *Integrative Theology: Historical, Biblical, Systematic, Apologetic, Practical*. 3 vols. in 1. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1996.

Michael J. McClymond and Gerald R. McDermott. *The Theology of Jonathan Edwards*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.

### *Biblical Theology*

Several works of biblical theology have helped to shape my general outlook and interpretative stance:

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<sup>4</sup> G. Wright Doyle, *Carl Henry: Theologian for All Seasons. An Introduction and Guide to Carl Henry's God, Revelation, and Authority* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2010).

Richard Bauckham. *The Theology of the Book of Revelation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993.

Philip Edgcumbe Hughes. *Interpreting Prophecy: An Essay in Biblical Perspectives*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1976.

George Eldon Ladd. *A Theology of the New Testament*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974.

Leon Morris. *The Cross in the New Testament*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965.

Leon Morris. *New Testament Theology*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990.

Herman Ridderbos. *Paul: An Outline of His Theology*. Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1975.

### *Study Bibles*

To supplement those mostly older studies, in the composition of this book I have relied heavily upon recently published study Bibles. These contain the results of the best evangelical scholarship. After writing my notes, I mined these study Bibles for further information about background, parallel passages in the Scriptures, and generally accepted interpretations. In this way, I hope that I have avoided major errors of interpretation. I freely and gladly acknowledge my debt to the scholars who have contributed to these essential guides for the understanding of the Bible.

The most useful to me have been these:

***ESVSB***: *ESV [English Standard Version] Study Bible*. Wayne Grudem, general editor. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2008.

***HCSBSB***: *HCSB [Holman Christian Standard Bible] Study Bible*. Nashville, TN: B & H Publishing Group, 2010.

***MSB***: *MacArthur Study Bible*. John MacArthur, author and general editor. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Incorporated, 1997.

***NIVSB***: *NIV [New International Version] Study Bible*. Kenneth Barker, general editor. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Bible Publishers, 1985.

***ZNIVSB***: *Zondervan NIV Study Bible*. D. A. Carson, general editor. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2015.

### *Commentaries*

Over the years, I have read a number of commentaries on various parts of the Bible. It would be tedious to list all the volumes that have helped me understand the Scriptures,

but I freely acknowledge my indebtedness to godly scholars who have carefully elucidated the Bible.

Finally, I thank Anna Barnes and Casey Houseworth for their painstaking and skillful editing of my initial draft. They have eliminated many mistakes, made excellent suggestions for improvement, and reduced the inconsistencies to a minimum.

### **The Purpose of *Truth and Life***

Despite all its limitations, this series of doctrinal and ethical notes on the Bible aims to help the ordinary reader discern in the Holy Scriptures what God has said about himself – his nature, will, and ways – and about how we should live in response to his Word.

I pray that God will use these notes to encourage you to read the Bible both *theologically* and *ethically*, with the goal of loving God and your neighbor by the power of the Holy Spirit.

To him be all the glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

G. Wright Doyle

Bastrop, Texas

# PSALMS

# Psalm 1

## Truth

---

### Revelation

#### Its cumulative fullness

- ◆ Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.
- ◆ The “Law of the LORD,” 2, refers to the Torah, the first five books of the Old Testament.
  - These are the Five Books of Moses, otherwise known as the Pentateuch.
  - These books contain various literary forms:
    - ◆ Law, in the sense of commandments
    - ◆ Narrative, beginning with the history of the creation of the world and moving through the days before Israel entered the Promised Land
    - ◆ Poetry
    - ◆ Prophecy

Its content: Biblical revelation presents a way in which to live – a way that is not merely instruction or knowledge, but also an entire worldview and a source of spiritual vitality, 3.

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ As Creator, he rules over the world, including the growth and fruitfulness of plants, 3.
- ◆ As Judge, he has the authority and power to destroy unrepentant workers of wickedness, 5-6.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He revealed his will and his ways to Moses and other special messengers, 1-2.
- ◆ He provides delight to those who meditate upon his written Word, 2.
- ◆ He uses his Word to give spiritual life and growth, as well as success, 3.

- ◆ He punishes unrepentant sinners and ungodly people – that is, those who willingly transgress and even disregard his written revelation, 5-6.
- ◆ He “knows the way of the righteous,” that is, he approves of them and will reward them, 6.

## Christ

### His nature and power

- ◆ He is the incarnate Word of God. *See John 1:1-3.*
- ◆ He is the source of life. *See John 1:3; 11:25; 14:6.*
- ◆ He is the one who spoke words that are “spirit and life,” John 6:63, and whose words now provide communion with himself, thus spiritual fruitfulness, John 15:7.

## Sin

### It includes

- ◆ Ungodliness – that is, disregard of God, 1, 4-6
- ◆ Sin – that is, willful transgression of God’s revealed will, 1, 5
- ◆ Mockery – that is, disdain toward all that is good and true, 1

## Life

---

### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Avoid the way of life of ungodly sinners or constant intimate fellowship with them.
- ◆ Meditate upon God’s written Word day and night.
- ◆ Trust in God to reward our righteous needs.
- ◆ Trust God to punish unrepentant sinners who make fun of us.

# Psalm 2

## Truth

---

### Revelation

#### Its cumulative fullness

- ◆ Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.
- ◆ This psalm refers to events in the Old Testament.
  - God's anointing of Saul and then David to be kings of Israel, 2; *see 1 Samuel 2:10; 12:3-5; 16:13; and 2 Samuel 2:4; 5:3; 22:51.*
  - God's choice of David and his dynasty to rule forever, 2; *see 2 Samuel 7.*
  - God's choice of Zion in Jerusalem as the capital of the kingdom, where he rules through the king of Israel as his vice-regent, 6; *see Psalms 48:2; 132:13; 133:3; and Isaiah 24:23.*
  - God calling David, "My Son," 7; *see 2 Samuel 7:14.*
- ◆ Various themes from this psalm are repeated elsewhere in the Bible.
  - Mt. Zion as earthly capital of God's kingdom, 6; *see Psalms 48:2; 132:13; 133:3; Isaiah 24:23; 60:14; Zechariah 8:3; 9:9; Matthew 21:5; and Revelation 14:1.*
  - The Davidic king as God's "son," 7; *see 1 Chronicles 28:5 and 2 Chronicles 13:8.*
  - The extensive rule of the king, 8; *see Psalm 72:8; Micah 5:4; and Zechariah 9:10.*
- ◆ This psalm is also quoted in the New Testament.
  - "You are My Son, Today I have begotten you," 7. *See Mark 1:11; Acts 13:33; and Hebrews 1:5; 5:5.*
  - "You shall break them with a rod of iron . . .," 9. *See Revelation 2:27; 12:5; 19:15.*

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He sits as King in the heavens, 4.
- ◆ He mocks the pretentious and rebellious rulers of the earth, 4.

- ◆ He has authority to rule the earth through his chosen king, 6-7.
- ◆ He owns the world and will give it to his Son, 7-8.
- ◆ He has the power to enable his Son to destroy enemy rulers, 9.

### His goodness

- ◆ He chose David and his descendants to be his earthly agents, then Christ to be our anointed Savior, the Messiah, 7. *See Hebrews 1:5.*
- ◆ Through Christ, he will fulfill the promises he made to Abraham concerning all the nations, 8. *See Genesis 12:3 and Matthew 28:19-20.*
- ◆ He blesses those who trust in him, 12.
- ◆ He has repeatedly overruled evil rulers through his chosen servants, 4-7.
- ◆ He will judge the unrepentant wicked through Jesus, 9. *See Revelation 2:27.*

## Christ

### His nature and power

- ◆ He is the “Christ,” the Anointed one of God, 2.
- ◆ He is King over all, 6. *See Ephesians 1:20-21.*
- ◆ He is the Son of God, 7.
  - By eternal generation
  - By assumption of the man Jesus
- ◆ He has been given all the nations, 8. *See Matthew 28:18-20.*
- ◆ He will rule them with a rod of iron, 9. *See Revelation 2:26-27; 12:5; 19:15-16.*

## Life

---

### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Do not worry when the rulers of the earth plot together against God and Christ.
- ◆ Thank God for giving us Jesus as his risen and victorious Son who will rule the world.
- ◆ Join with Jesus in asking God for the nations to be given to Christ through the spread of the gospel around the world. *See Mark 16:5 and Luke 24:46-47.*

# Psalms 3–4

## Truth

---

### Revelation

#### Its cumulative fullness

- ◆ Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.
- ◆ These psalms provide several links to other psalms as well as to other parts of the Bible.
  - Psalm 3 is titled, “A Psalm of David when he fled from Absalom his son.” *See 2 Samuel 15:13–17:22.*
  - Other psalms quote the adversaries of the psalmist, 3:2. *See Psalms 22:7–8; 71:10–11.*
  - Psalms 3 and 4 are linked by references to glory, 3:3, 4:2, as well as to David’s sleep at night and to his waking in the morning, 3:5, 4:8.
  - The LORD is described as a shield, 3:3. *See Psalms 7:10; 18:2, 30; 28:7; 33:20; 47:9; 59:11; 84:9, 11; 91:4; 115:9–11; 119:114; 144:2. See also Genesis 15:1; Deuteronomy 33:29; and Proverbs 30:5.*
  - “Your blessing is upon Your people,” 3:8. *See Psalms 25:22; 28:8–9; 51:18.*
  - Paul quotes the line, “Be angry, and do not sin,” 4:4. *See Ephesians 4:26.*

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is omnipotent, able to protect and sustain his people, 3:3, 5.
- ◆ He is omnipresent and omniscient, hearing the prayers of his people, 3:4; 4:1, 3.
- ◆ He dwells in heaven, 3:4.
- ◆ He can destroy the enemies of his people, 3:7.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He protects his people, 3:3; 4:8.
- ◆ He gives them glory and vindication, 3:3.

- ◆ He hears and answers the prayers of his afflicted people, 3:4; 4:1, 3.
- ◆ He brings salvation to his people, 3:8; 4:1.
- ◆ He blesses his people, 3:8.
- ◆ He vindicates his people, 4:1.
- ◆ He pities and shows mercy to his people, 4:1.
- ◆ He has set apart godly ones for himself, 4:3.
- ◆ He lifts the light [or smile] of his countenance upon his people, 4:6.
- ◆ He gives gladness to his people, 4:7.
- ◆ He punishes the enemies of his people, 3:7.

## Life

---

### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Expect trouble to come from the enemies of God.
- ◆ Pray to God when we are in trouble.
- ◆ Trust that God hears us when we pray and that he will protect and deliver us in his own time and manner.
- ◆ Refrain from anger.
- ◆ Meditate on God upon our beds, and rest in his goodness and greatness toward us.

# Psalm 5

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its cumulative fullness

- ◆ Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.
- ◆ Paul quotes, “Their throat is an open tomb,” 9, in Romans 3:13 as part of his universal indictment of all mankind as sinful.

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is omnipresent and omniscient, hearing the prayers and knowing the condition of his servants, 1-2.
- ◆ He is King of the entire universe, 2.
- ◆ He is God – that is, Creator and Master, 2.
- ◆ He is transcendent, dwelling in heaven; hence, David looks “up” to him, 3.
- ◆ He is awesome and worthy of reverent fear, 7.
- ◆ He is the Judge of all mankind, 10.
- ◆ He can punish the wicked, 10.
- ◆ He can protect his people, 12.
- ◆ He is holy, 7.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He hears the prayers of his people, 1-2.
- ◆ He allows himself to be the personal King and God of his servants, 2.
- ◆ He is Yahweh, the covenant God of Israel, 3.
- ◆ He dwells among his people in his Temple, 7.
- ◆ He is abundantly merciful, 7.
- ◆ He leads his people into the righteousness he requires of them, 8.
- ◆ He gives joy to those who trust in him, 11.
- ◆ He defends his people, 11.
- ◆ He is righteous, hating all wickedness and evil, 4-6.

- ◆ He is just, punishing all the unrepentant wicked, 5-6, 10.
- ◆ He blesses the righteous, 12.
- ◆ He surrounds them with favor as with a shield, 12.

## Christ

His humanity: Like many of the psalms, this one opens a window into his human soul and the parlous situation during his ministry.

### His relationship with the Father

- ◆ He prayed to the Father constantly, especially in the early morning, 1-3.
- ◆ He communed with God in the Temple and in his private prayers, 7.
- ◆ He sought the Father's guidance, 8.
- ◆ He was surrounded by wicked, malicious liars and slanderers, 9.
- ◆ He loved the name of God the Father, 11.
- ◆ He trusted in God's defense and blessing, 11-12.

## Sin

### It includes

- ◆ Boasting, 5
- ◆ Working iniquity - that is, lawlessness, 5
- ◆ Lying or speaking any kind of falsehood, 6
- ◆ Murderous malice, 6
- ◆ Deceit of any kind, 6
- ◆ Lack of integrity and trustworthiness in speech, 9
- ◆ Flattery, 9
- ◆ Transgressions of God's law, 10
- ◆ Rebellion against God (the root sin), 10

## Salvation

### Its recipients

- ◆ They pray to God, 1-3.
- ◆ They trust in his goodness, 4-6.
- ◆ They trust in his mercy, 7.
- ◆ They fear, revere, and worship him, 7.

- ◆ They submit to his leading, 8.
- ◆ They hunger for righteousness, 8.
- ◆ They trust in God for protection and deliverance, 11.
- ◆ They love his name – that is, his character and saving conduct, 11.

#### Its substance

- ◆ Assurance that God hears and answers prayer, 1-3
- ◆ Knowledge of God as “my” King and God, 2
- ◆ Access to God’s presence because of his mercy, 7
- ◆ A heart that fears and reveres God, 7
- ◆ God’s leading, 8
- ◆ Joy in believing in God, 11
- ◆ Blessing from God, 12

## **Life**

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#### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Pray to God at all times, but especially in the morning.
- ◆ Avoid all evil.
- ◆ Trust in God’s mercy.
- ◆ Worship God.
- ◆ Ask God to lead us.
- ◆ Rejoice in God’s care and blessing.

# Psalm 6

## Truth

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### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is the sovereign Lord and Judge of the universe, 1.
- ◆ He can heal, 2.
- ◆ He deserves our worship and thanks, 5.
- ◆ He is omnipotent and omniscient, able to hear the prayers of his people, 9.
- ◆ He is Yahweh, the covenant God of Israel and of all believers, 1-4, 8.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He is merciful and gracious to all who call upon him, 2, 4, even though he sometimes waits a long time to deliver his people, 3.
- ◆ He heals his people, 2.
- ◆ He hears and answers the prayers of his people, 8-9.
- ◆ He is righteous and holy and therefore must judge sin, 1.
- ◆ He sometimes uses illness to chasten his people for their sins, 2.
- ◆ He will eventually punish unrepentant sinners, especially those who attack his people, 10.

### Christ

#### His humanity and adversity

- ◆ He was rebuked, chastened, and even punished in God's anger, though he was sinless, 1. *See Isaiah 53:4-6.*
- ◆ He knew physical weakness and pain, 2.
- ◆ He was greatly troubled in his soul, 3. *See John 12:27*, where the same Greek word is used as in the Greek LXX [Septuagint] version of this psalm.
- ◆ He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, largely because of his enemies, 6-7. *See Isaiah 53:3.*

His resurrection: He was delivered from the grave by God, 4-5.

His authority as Judge: He will say, "Depart from me, all you workers of iniquity," on the Judgment Day, 8. *See Matthew 7:23; 25:41.*

# Life

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## Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Pray to God when we are in any trouble.
- ◆ Thank God that Jesus knows all our sufferings and troubles, for he has experienced them, except without sin.
- ◆ Thank God for punishing Jesus for our sins, so that when the Father rebukes and chastens us, it is not in anger but in love. *See Hebrews 12:3-11.*
- ◆ Trust that God will raise us from the dead.
- ◆ Abhor evil and make no intimate friends with evildoers.

# Psalm 7

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its cumulative fullness

- ◆ Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.
- ◆ This psalm provides several references.
  - The image of a fierce lion as the enemy of the righteous, 2; *see Isaiah 38:13 and 1 Peter 5:7.*
  - Asking God to arise in judgment or to “wake up,” 6; *see Psalms 44:23, 26; 94:2.*
  - Appealing to one’s righteousness as a ground for God to help, 8; *see Psalms 18:20; 96:13.*
  - Being “pregnant” with evil and giving birth to wickedness, 14; *see Job 15:35; Isaiah 59:4; and James 1:15.*

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He dwells and rules on high and is Most High, 7, 17.
- ◆ He is omniscient, knowing the hearts of all men, 8.
- ◆ He is the Judge of all the earth, 11.
- ◆ He has the power to punish his wicked enemies, 12–13.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He is Yahweh, the faithful and loving covenant God of Israel, 1.
- ◆ He is just, and therefore angry with the wicked, especially those who attack his people, 6, 11.
- ◆ He saves and delivers his people when they call on him, 1, 10.
- ◆ He is just, and therefore judges according to justice and righteousness, 8, 17.

## Christ

His prefiguration: As the descendant of King David, he is the innocent – the only innocent – Servant of God who is oppressed by wicked enemies and who will be saved by God because of his innocence and righteousness, 3-5, 8, 10.

## Sin

### It includes

- ♦ Attacking God's people, 2
- ♦ Doing evil to those who are at peace with one, 4
- ♦ Having evil in one's heart and allowing it to produce evil fruit, 14
- ♦ Violence, 16

## Salvation

Its recipients: Those who call on God in faith receive salvation, 1, 10.

Its substance: It includes answered prayer, and therefore the motive to praise and thank God, 17.

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Call upon God when we are in trouble.
- ♦ Seek to live blameless lives so that we will have clear consciences when we pray.
- ♦ Give praise and thanks to God for sending Jesus as our Savior.
- ♦ Praise and thank God for saving us, as we are in Christ by faith.

# Psalm 8

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its cumulative fullness

- ◆ Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.
- ◆ This psalm provides several themes that are also seen elsewhere.
  - God ordaining strength as ascriptions of praise spoken by children, 2; *see Matthew 21:16.*
  - God making the heavenly bodies, 3; *see Genesis 1:16 and Isaiah 40:26.*
  - Christ as the “Son of Man”, 4, who was made lower than the angels but who now – crowned with glory and honor – has dominion over all, 5-8; *see Hebrews 1:10; 2:6-8. See also Ephesians 1:22.*
  - Man’s dominion over the earth, 5-8; *see Genesis 1:28.*

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is personal, having a name, 1, 9.
- ◆ He is Lord – that is, sovereign ruler, 1, 9.
- ◆ He is endowed with royal majesty, 1.
- ◆ He is glorious – that is, beautiful and splendid, 1.
- ◆ He rules above the heavens as a transcendent Being, 1.
- ◆ He defeats and shames his enemies, 2.
- ◆ As omnipotent Creator, he made the heavenly bodies, 3.
- ◆ As omniscient master of detail, he knows mankind, 4.
- ◆ He rules over angels and men and determines the role and destiny of each, 5.
- ◆ He is able to bestow glory and honor on whom he pleases, 5.
- ◆ He confers sovereignty and authority upon whom he pleases, 6.
- ◆ He made everything on earth, 6-8.

### His goodness

- ◆ He is Yahweh, the faithful covenant God of his people, 1, 9.
- ◆ He cares for individual people, though they are small, 4.
- ◆ He gives glory and honor to people, especially as they are in Christ by faith, 5-8.

## Christ

His humanity and divinity: He is the Son of Man, who – having been for a while made lower than the angels (that is, having become a man) – is now crowned with glory and honor and endowed with universal sovereignty, 4-5. *See Hebrews 2:6-8.*

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Praise God for his majestic name – that is, the names of Father, Son, and Spirit.
- ◆ Teach our children to praise him.
- ◆ Trust him to overcome his enemies.
- ◆ Thank God for sending Jesus to endure hardship and suffering for us, and to be raised from death and exalted to God's right hand.
- ◆ Trust that God has everything under control.
- ◆ Worship Jesus as our Lord.
- ◆ Exercise proper dominion as God's vice-regents on earth. This means caring for all that he has given us as good stewards.

# Psalm 9

## Truth

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### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is Most High, transcendent and mighty, 2.
- ◆ He is powerful enough to defeat his enemies by his mere appearance, 3.
- ◆ He rules from his heavenly throne, 4, 7.
- ◆ He is eternal, 7.
- ◆ He is strong and secure, 9.
- ◆ He sees everything, including the troubles of his oppressed people, 13.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He is the LORD, Yahweh, the faithful covenant God of his people, known in the New Testament as Jesus (called “Lord”), 1, 7, 9–11, 13, 16, 19–20.
- ◆ He offers a safe place for his people when they are in trouble from their enemies, 9.
- ◆ He remains faithful to those who seek him and call to him in prayer, 10.
- ◆ He condescends to dwell among his people, 11.
- ◆ He is gracious to those who pray to him, 13.
- ◆ He lifts his people up from the very gates of death, that is, he delivers them, 13.
- ◆ He saves his people, 14.
- ◆ He is just, supporting the just cause of his people, executing just judgment, establishing his rule [throne] for the purpose of justice, and judging with uprightness, 4, 7–8.
- ◆ He rebukes wicked nations, 5.
- ◆ He punishes the unrepentant wicked with eternal death and loss of significance, 5.
- ◆ He avenges the deaths of his innocent followers, 12.
- ◆ He does not forget or ignore the cry of the afflicted and poor, 12, 18.
- ◆ He allows evil people to suffer the consequences of their own wickedness by bringing upon them what they have devised against others, 15–16. *See Proverbs 24:16.*

- ◆ He makes himself known to his people and to the wicked by his righteous judgments, 16, but he allows his people to suffer from their enemies, seeming to be “asleep” and needing to be awakened, 19.
- ◆ He reveals his divine power and justice to the wicked in such a way that they come to know that they are mere men, frail and mortal, 20.

## Sin

### It includes

- ◆ Attacking God’s people, 3
- ◆ Oppression of the weak, 9
- ◆ Shedding innocent blood, 12
- ◆ Hatred, 13
- ◆ Devising harm against others, 15–16
- ◆ Forgetting God, 17
- ◆ Imagining that we are more than human and forgetting our mortality, 20

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Thank God for what he has done for us, 1.
- ◆ Recount to ourselves and others the great things he has done, 1, 14.
- ◆ Rejoice in him and in his salvation, 2, 14.
- ◆ Sing praises to God, 2, 11.
- ◆ Seek to do what is right, 4.
- ◆ Seek refuge in God when we are oppressed and in trouble, 9.
- ◆ Seek to know God’s “name” – that is, his character, 10.
- ◆ Always put our trust in God, even when we are in trouble, 10.
- ◆ Seek God above all, 10.
- ◆ Ask God to be gracious to us, 13.
- ◆ Trust God to bring us safely away from danger or to raise us from the dead, 13.
- ◆ Trust God to punish the wicked, 15–17.
- ◆ Be patient when God seems to have forgotten us, 18.

# Psalm 10

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its cumulative fullness

- ◆ Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.
- ◆ This psalm provides several examples.
  - Paul uses the Greek LXX version of verse 7. *See Romans 3:14.*
  - Mentions of the helpless, as well as warnings not to oppress them, 8–10, 14, are found elsewhere in the Old Testament. *See Exodus 22:22 and Deuteronomy 10:18. See also James 5:1–6.*

#### Its structure

- ◆ There are structural correspondences among parts of Scripture.
- ◆ Psalms 9 and 10 together make an almost complete acrostic and share some common themes.
  - God's care for the oppressed, 9:9; 10:18
  - Times of trouble, 9:9; 10:1
  - God's remembrance of the afflicted, 9:12; 10:12
  - Calling on God to "arise," 9:19; 10:12
- ◆ There are differences between the two psalms, however.
  - Psalm 9 is mostly praise, but Psalm 10 is a lament.
  - In Psalm 9 the enemies are Gentiles, 9:5, 8, 15, 17, 19–20; but in Psalm 10 they are faithless Israelites, 10:4, 13.

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He allows the wicked to ignore and even to blaspheme him, 4, 11.
- ◆ He is omniscient, seeing the troubles of his people and hearing their prayers, 14, 17.
- ◆ He sits enthroned as King in heaven, 16.
- ◆ He is eternal, 16.

### His goodness

- ◆ He helps orphans and other helpless people, 14.
- ◆ He hears the desires of the humble and afflicted who pray to him, 17.
- ◆ He prepares their hearts for what he is about to do, 17.
- ◆ Although he sometimes allows his people to endure suffering without a sense of his presence, 1, he sees their trouble and sorrow and will repay evil, 14.
- ◆ He punishes wicked nations and people with total and everlasting destruction, 16.
- ◆ He executes justice for orphans and the oppressed, 18.
- ◆ He removes oppressors from the earth, 18.

## Christ

### His humanity and adversity

- ◆ He asks God why he seems to be absent, 1. *See Matthew 27:46.*
- ◆ He is the “poor,” helpless, and afflicted one who is persecuted by his ruthless enemies, 2, 8-10.
- ◆ He is the one against whom his enemies plot in secret, 8-10.

### His relationship with the Father

- ◆ He is the helpless one who commits himself to God, 14. *See Luke 23:46.*
- ◆ He is the one whose prayer was heard by God, 17. *See Hebrews 5:7.*

## Sin

### It includes

- ◆ Pride, 2
- ◆ Persecuting the poor and helpless, 2
- ◆ Boasting in one’s desires, 3
- ◆ Commending evil people, 3
- ◆ Renouncing God, 3, 13
- ◆ Proudly refusing to seek God, 4
- ◆ Totally ignoring God, 4
- ◆ Complacency, 6
- ◆ Cursing, 7
- ◆ Lying, 7
- ◆ Speaking words that bring about oppression, trouble, and lawlessness, 7

- ◆ Lying in wait to harm the innocent, 8
- ◆ Killing the innocent, 8
- ◆ Watching out for ways to harm the helpless, 8-10
- ◆ Imagining that God takes no notice of evildoing, 11
- ◆ Believing that God will not punish evil, 13

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Call out to God when we are in trouble, even when he seems to be absent.
- ◆ Be aware of the various dimensions of sin and call them by their proper names.
- ◆ Care for the poor, helpless, and oppressed, 12, 14.
- ◆ Declare that God is righteous and will both vindicate the innocent and punish the wicked, 14-18.
- ◆ Commit ourselves to God, who alone can save, 14.
- ◆ Acknowledge and affirm God's sovereign rule, 16.
- ◆ Thank Jesus for enduring so much suffering for our sakes.

# Psalm 11

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its cumulative fullness

- ◆ Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.
- ◆ This psalm provides several examples of parallel passages, which show the unity of the Bible.
  - God assesses or “tests” the hearts of men, 4. *See Psalms 7:9; 17:3.*
  - God tests the righteous by allowing them to suffer trials, 5. *See Genesis 22:1 and 1 Peter 1:6-7.*
  - Fire and brimstone, 6, were rained down upon Sodom and Gomorrah. *See Genesis 19:24.*

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is holy and dwells in a holy temple (probably here referring to his heavenly abode), 4.
- ◆ He is transcendent, sitting high upon his heavenly throne, 4.
- ◆ He rules as universal King, 4.
- ◆ He knows the hearts of all men, 4-5.
- ◆ He has the power to inflict calamity on the wicked, 6.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He takes note of and cares for the upright, 7.
- ◆ He hates the wicked and those who love violence, 5.
- ◆ He punishes the unrepentant wicked, 6.
- ◆ He is righteous, 7.
- ◆ He loves righteousness – among humans and in his dealings with men, 7.

# Life

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## Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Trust in God, who is Yahweh, the faithful covenant God of his people, 1.
- ◆ Do not fear or flee when the wicked prosper and plot against us, 2.
- ◆ Do not fear when the foundations are shaken, 3.
- ◆ Trust that God knows our situations, 4.
- ◆ Accept trials as God's testing of our faith, 5.
- ◆ Believe that God will punish the unrepentant wicked, 6.
- ◆ Love God for his righteousness, 7.
- ◆ Seek to be righteous also, 7. *See Matthew 6:33.*

# Psalm 12

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its source

- ◆ In contrast to the words of sinful men, 2-4, God's words are pure and entirely true, 6. *See also Psalms 18:30; 119:40; and Proverbs 30:5.*
- ◆ In Old Testament times, these words would include the Mosaic Torah, the books written after that, and the oral messages of the priests and prophets.
- ◆ Now for us they comprise the entire Bible: Every word is true; there is no error.

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He has the power to silence sinful men, 3.
- ◆ He has the power to protect his people, 5, 7.
- ◆ He is eternal, 7.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He knows the condition and inner longings of his oppressed people, 5.
- ◆ He allows his people to suffer, but he regards their sufferings and will deliver them, 5.
- ◆ He speaks only what is true, 6.
- ◆ He will preserve and protect his people forever, 7.

### Sin

#### It includes

- ◆ Lack of a God-ward orientation, 1
- ◆ Unfaithfulness, 1
- ◆ Speaking words that are useless, 2
- ◆ Flattery and dissimulation, 2-3
- ◆ Prideful words, 3
- ◆ Confidence in one's own powers of persuasion, 4
- ◆ Total disregard of God and his sovereignty, 4

Its nature: It spreads widely when vileness is approved of among men, as in today's society, 8.

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Cry out to God when we see evil men prospering, 1.
- ◆ Ask God to silence wicked men, 3.
- ◆ Trust that God will someday deliver his people, 5.
- ◆ Trust in all his words as completely true and reliable, 6.
- ◆ Trust in God's everlasting protection, 7.

# Psalm 13

## Truth

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### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is omnipresent and omniscient, hearing, seeing, and knowing all that happens, 1.
- ◆ He is omnipotent, governing all that happens on earth, 2.
- ◆ He has in himself all forms of “light,” physical, intellectual, moral and spiritual, 3.
- ◆ He holds the power of life and death, 3.
- ◆ He has the power to save his people from powerful enemies, 5.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He sometimes seems to hide his face from us and to forget us, 1.
- ◆ He sometimes allows his people to endure sorrow because of the success of their enemies, 2.
- ◆ He is Yahweh [LORD], the covenant God of his people, 3.
- ◆ He allows himself to be known as “my God” to individual believers, 3.
- ◆ He gives physical, spiritual and intellectual light to his believing people, 3.
- ◆ He is full of lovingkindness [mercy], 5.
- ◆ He saves his people, 5.
- ◆ He gives his people joy, 5.
- ◆ He deals generously, bountifully with his believing people, showering them abundantly with gifts that they don’t deserve, 6; *see Luke 11:13; Ephesians 3:19–20; Philipians 4:19; and James 1:4.*

### Sin

#### It includes

- ◆ Troubling God’s people, 4
- ◆ Boasting about victory over God’s people, 4

# Life

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## Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Expect to have times when God seems to have forgotten us and when he seems distant from us, 1.
- ◆ Expect to experience sorrow in this life because of the triumph of the forces of evil, both physical and spiritual, 2.
- ◆ Call out to God in prayer for life and light, both physical and spiritual, 3.
- ◆ Trust in God's unfailing love, 5.
- ◆ Rejoice now in present salvation and in the hope of coming eternal salvation, 5.  
*See Philippians 3:1; 4:4; 1 Thessalonians 5:18; and 1 Peter 1:6-9; 4:12-13.*

# Psalm 14

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its cumulative fullness

- ◆ Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.
- ◆ Several phrases from this psalm are quoted or referred to elsewhere in the Bible.
- ◆ Psalm 14 has a lot in common with Psalms 11 and 12, including the description of the wicked, the request for help from God, and the certainty that a righteous God will punish unrepentant sinners, especially those who persecute his people.
- ◆ This psalm speaks of the “fool,” a theme seen elsewhere in the Bible.
  - Its description of the fool stands in sharp contrast to the person who abides in the presence of God.
  - The fool, 1, figures prominently in Proverbs (much of which was composed by Solomon, the son of David). *See Proverbs 7:22; 10:8, 10, 18, 23; 12:5; 14:16; 15:5; 18:2; 24:7; and often.*
  - The description of the evil heart and wicked conduct of the fool, 1-3, is quoted by Paul in Romans 3:10-12 and in his universal condemnation of all mankind as sinful. *See Romans 3:23.*

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He dwells above this earth, whence he looks “down” upon mankind, seeking and knowing everything, 2.
- ◆ He has the power to protect and save his people from their enemies, 6-7.
- ◆ He chose Israel, and then all believers in Christ, as his special people, 4.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He is with those who are righteous – by faith in Christ and in their conduct, 5.
- ◆ He provides protection for his afflicted people, 6.
- ◆ He dwelt in Zion, in the temple, 7.

- ◆ He brought back his people from captivity in Babylon after they had paid the penalty for their sins, 7.
- ◆ He patiently endures the wicked until the day of judgment, 1–6.
- ◆ He will cause his enemies to be afraid at his presence among his people, 5.

## Christ

### His role as the Messiah

- ◆ Jesus Christ is the salvation who comes to us from Zion, 7.
- ◆ His name, Jesus, means, “Yahweh is salvation.”
- ◆ He stated that “salvation is [comes] from the Jews.” *See John 4:22.*
- ◆ He came to “save his people from their sins.” *See Matthew 1:21.*

## Sin

Its nature: It arises from, and fundamentally consists in, denial of God’s existence and his presence in the world, 1.

### It includes

- ◆ Moral corruption, 1, 3
- ◆ Doing abominable deeds, 1
- ◆ Not doing good, 1, 3
- ◆ Not seeking God, 2
- ◆ Turning aside from God and his revealed moral standards, 3
- ◆ Practicing lawlessness, 4
- ◆ Persecuting God’s people, 4
- ◆ Mocking the value system of God’s afflicted people, especially the poor, 6

## Salvation

### Its recipients

- ◆ They understand that there is a God and seek him, 2.
- ◆ They call upon the LORD [Yahweh] in prayer and faith, 4.
- ◆ They practice righteousness by the power of God, 5.
- ◆ They take refuge in God, 6.
- ◆ They seek the salvation of God, 7.

Its substance: It brings great joy and gladness, 7.

# Life

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## Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Acknowledge God in all our thoughts.
- ◆ Seek God.
- ◆ Call upon him when we are in trouble.
- ◆ Ask him for the power to do good.
- ◆ Long for his salvation to come, that is, long for the return of Jesus. *See Romans 8:19-25 and 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10.*

# Psalm 15

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its cumulative fullness

- ◆ Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.
- ◆ This psalm provides several examples.
  - Dwelling in the tent [house, tabernacle, temple] of the LORD, 1; *see Psalms 23:6; 27:4-6; 61:4; 84:1-10.*
  - God's holy mountain, that is, Mt. Zion, 1; *see Exodus 15:17 and Psalm 2:6.*
  - Qualifications of those who may dwell in God's holy place, 1-5; *see Psalm 24:3-5.*
  - Lending money without interest, 5; *see Deuteronomy 23:19-20.*

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He lives on a "mountain," that is, he is transcendent, 1.
- ◆ He is holy, 1.
- ◆ He deserves reverence and fear, 4.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He accepts those who trust him and practice righteousness, 1-5.
- ◆ He condescends to dwell among humans.
  - First in the Tabernacle and Temple among Israel, 1
  - Then in the person of Jesus
  - Now in the hearts and the community of the faithful
- ◆ He protects and gives stability to his people, 5.

## Christ

### His presence with his people

- ◆ He is the only man who has fully met the requirements in this psalm. *See Hebrews 4:15; 7:26.*
- ◆ He “tabernacled” among his people as God’s temple in their midst, 1. *See John 1:14.*
- ◆ He invites, even commands, his people to “abide” [dwell] in him as God’s spiritual temple, 1. *See John 15:1-7.*
- ◆ By dying and rising for us, he allows believers in him to abide in the gracious presence of God. *See Romans 5:1-2 and Hebrews 4:16; 10:19-22.*

## Sin

### It includes

- ◆ The opposite of the virtues listed in this psalm, 2, 4-5
- ◆ Backbiting and slander, 3
- ◆ Doing evil to one’s neighbor, 3
- ◆ Taking up a charge or accusation against one’s friend, 3

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Long to dwell in the presence of God.
- ◆ Thank God for giving us access to his grace through the work of Jesus, received by faith.
- ◆ By faith, and relying on the power of the Holy Spirit, seek holiness, without which no one will see God. *See Hebrews 12:14.*
- ◆ Walk with integrity and justice, 2.
- ◆ Ponder the truth in our hearts, 2.
- ◆ Honor those who fear God, 4.

# Psalm 16

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its cumulative fullness

- ◆ Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.
- ◆ This psalm alludes to several ideas and themes.
  - “Inheritance,” 5
    - ◆ The parts of the Promised Land that were allotted to the tribes and families of Israel, following the Exodus, when they entered Palestine; *see Numbers 16:14.*
    - ◆ The LORD as his people’s inheritance; *see Psalms 73:26; 119:57; 142:5; and Lamentations 3:24.*
    - ◆ Especially, the inheritance of the Levitical priests, who had not allotted portion in the Promised Land; *see Numbers 18:20 and Deuteronomy 10:9.*
  - “Cup” as a metaphor, 5
    - ◆ The cup of blessing given by God to his people; *see Psalms 23:5; 116:13.*
    - ◆ The cup of wrath that God makes the wicked drink; *see Jeremiah 25:15 and Revelation 14:10; 16:19.*
  - God at our right hand as Sustainer and Protector, 8; *see Psalms 73:23; 109:31; 110:5; 121:5.*
  - The hope of life after death, 10; *see Psalms 17:15; 73:24.*
  - The path of life, 11; *see Proverbs 15:24.*

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is Lord, master of all, 2.
- ◆ He is unique; other “gods” are false idols, 4.
- ◆ He owns the world and gives it to whom he pleases, 5–6.
- ◆ He is omnipresent, 8.

- ◆ He is Lord over death and hell, 10.
- ◆ He is eternal, 11.

### His goodness

- ◆ He is Yahweh, the covenant God of Israel, 2.
- ◆ He is good and the only source of goodness, 2.
- ◆ He is our portion and gives himself to us as our life and “wealth,” 5.
- ◆ He is the source of all blessing, 5.
- ◆ He maintains our promised inheritance, which is good, 5-6.
- ◆ He gives us counsel, even at night, 7.
- ◆ He is near to us at all times, 8.
- ◆ He delivers his people from death and hell, 10.
- ◆ He shows us the path to eternal life, 11.
- ◆ He gives us fullness of joy and everlasting pleasure, 11.
- ◆ He allows us into his presence, 11.

## Christ

His resurrection and power: As the descendant [son] of David, Jesus is the one whom God brought up from the dead on the third day, not leaving him in Sheol and not allowing his body to begin to be corrupted, 10. *See Acts 2:31-32; 13:35-37; and Hebrews 13:20.*

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Call on God to preserve and protect us when we are in trouble, 1.
- ◆ Seek God alone as our supreme good [*summum bonum*], 2.
- ◆ Delight in God’s people, 3.
- ◆ Avoid joining pagans in worship or even mentioning their gods’ names, 4.
- ◆ Thank God for giving us himself as our inheritance, 5.
- ◆ Thank God for giving us a good “inheritance” in this life, whatever our circumstances may be, 6.
- ◆ Seek guidance from God, and thank him when he guides us, 7.
- ◆ Live as if God were right in front of us or at our side, 8.
- ◆ Rejoice in the hope of everlasting life, 9-11.

# Psalm 17

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its cumulative fullness

- ◆ Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.
- ◆ This psalm provides several examples.
  - A plea by a (relatively) righteous man for God’s hearing and vindication, 1; *see the book of Job, as well as Psalms 7; 9:4, 13; 10.*
  - God testing his people to prove their character, 3; *see Job 23:10; Psalms 66:10; 139:23–24; Zechariah 13:9; and 1 Peter 1:6–7.*
  - Keeping oneself pure by meditating upon, believing, and obeying God’s words in Scripture, 4; *see Psalms 1; 119:9, 11; and Matthew 4:1–11.*
  - Confidence that God will hear the prayer of the godly, 6; *see Psalm 10:17.*
  - God saving those who trust in him, 7; *see Psalms 34:17–19; 37:39–40.*
  - God’s people being precious to him, like the “apple” [pupil] of one’s eye, 8; *see Deuteronomy 32:10.*
  - God protecting his people as a bird protects its young under the “shadow” of its wings, 8; *see Psalms 91:1; 121:5; and Isaiah 25:4; 49:2; 51:16 (here referring to God’s hands).*
  - The wicked compared to fierce lions, 12; *see Psalms 7:2; 22:13; and 1 Peter 5:7 (of Satan).*
  - Calling upon God to “arise,” as if from sleep, 13; *see Psalms 3:7; 10:12; 94:2.*
  - Seeing God’s face, 15; *see Psalms 4:6–7; 11:7 (perhaps referring to seeing God’s face or God seeing the face of the upright).*
  - Those who trust in God “awak[ing]” from death in his likeness, 15; *see Isaiah 26:19; Romans 8:28; Philippians 3:21; and 1 John 3:1–2.*

## God

### His greatness

- ◆ He is omniscient and omnipresent, able to hear the prayers of his people and to see their condition, 1-2, and able to discern the thoughts of our hearts, 3.
- ◆ He is able to save those who trust in him, 7.
- ◆ He is able to defeat and destroy those who harm his people, 13.
- ◆ He is living and is able to give life beyond the grave, 15.
- ◆ He communicates to his people through his special verbal revelation, 4.

### His goodness

- ◆ He is attentive to the prayers of his needy people, 1, 6.
- ◆ He communicates to his people through his special verbal revelation, 4.
- ◆ He displays his “marvelous lovingkindness” to his people by saving them from trouble, 7.
- ◆ He protects his people with devotion, 8.
- ◆ He satisfies the deepest earthly longings of his people with his eternal presence after they die and rise again, 15.
- ◆ He is just and is the vindicator of those who have suffered injustice, 2.
- ◆ He is concerned for the inner purity of his people, 3.
- ◆ He allows his people to suffer in order to test and refine them, 3.
- ◆ He guides and upholds his people in the right paths, 5.
- ◆ He sometimes seems to delay in delivering his people from danger and difficulty, 13, but he promises to show his righteous face after death to those who trust in him, 15.

## Christ

His divinity: He was and is the exact likeness [image] of God, fully divine and righteous, 15. *See Hebrews 1:3; 1 John 3:2-3; and Revelation 1:9-16.*

His life and adversity: He was persecuted by wicked men who unjustly surrounded him, scheming to take his life, 9, 11-12.

### His perfection

- ◆ He was completely innocent of any fault, both in action and in inner attitude, 3.

- ◆ He kept himself from succumbing to the temptations of Satan, the “Destroyer,” by quoting the words of God, 4. *See Matthew 4:1-11.*

His relationship with the Father: He always prayed to God in the assurance that he would be heard, 6. *See John 11:41-42.*

#### His resurrection and power

- ◆ He was vindicated by God, as shown by his resurrection, 2. *See Acts 2:23-24, 36; 3:14-15; and Romans 1:4.*
- ◆ He was raised from the dead by God and thus found full satisfaction in God’s eternal presence, 15. *See Isaiah 53:11.*

## Life

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#### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Call out to God when we are in trouble.
- ◆ Expect to be accused and attacked by wicked people even when we are innocent of any crime.
- ◆ Ask God to give us grace to walk uprightly and to have pure hearts.
- ◆ Read, meditate upon, memorize, believe, obey, and quote God’s words from Scripture as a way to resist going astray morally and spiritually.
- ◆ Trust God to vindicate us when he raises us from the dead at the return of Christ.
- ◆ Seek all our satisfaction in our future life with God. *See 1 Peter 1:13.*

# Psalm 18

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its cumulative fullness

- ◆ Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.
- ◆ This psalm provides several examples.
  - The horn of salvation, which probably connotes strength, 2; *see Deuteronomy 33:17 and Psalm 92:10.*
  - God as worthy to be praised, 3; *see Psalms 48:1; 96:4; 145:3.*
  - Being overwhelmed with water, 4; *see Jonah 2:3, 5.*
  - The nearness of death pictured as entanglement with ropes, 5; *see Psalms 116:3; 119:61.*
  - Earthquakes as means of deliverance, 7; *see Judges 5:5 and 1 Samuel 14:15.*
  - God being manifested with smoke and fire, 8; *see Exodus 24:17 and Deuteronomy 4:12, 24; 9:3.*
  - God as a warrior coming to save his people, 9–19; *see Joshua 10–11 and Judges 5:4, 20.*
  - God riding on angels, 10; *see Psalms 19:1; 104:3.*
  - The depths of the sea becoming visible at God's breath, 15; *see Exodus 14:21.*
  - Deliverance as an indication of God's delight, 19; *see Psalm 41:11.*
  - God's making his chosen king head over the nations, 43; *see Psalm 110:1–2 and Jeremiah 31:7.*
  - Praising God among the nations [Gentiles], 49; *see Psalms 57:9; 108:3; and Romans 15:9.*

Its roots in history: Biblical revelation is set within history and culture. This psalm, which is identical with 2 Samuel 22, celebrates David's deliverance from Saul and his other enemies.

### Its content

- ◆ It reveals the will and the ways of God, 22, 30.
- ◆ It is perfect, pure, flawless, tested, and true, 30.
- ◆ It contains passages of unrivalled poetic power and beauty, including the images used in this psalm to describe God and his saving action.

## God

### His greatness

- ◆ He is omnipotent, as expressed in a variety of metaphors indicating both “defensive” and “offensive” strength deployed on behalf of David the king, 1–2, 31–33, 35, 46.
- ◆ He is omnipresent and omniscient, hearing the cry of his people for help, 6.
- ◆ He is transcendent and the “Most High,” dwelling in his temple above the heavens, 6, 9, 13.
- ◆ He rules the universe and all the forces of the created order, including the atmosphere and the geosphere, 7–15.
- ◆ He is the only true “God,” 31. *See Exodus 15:11; Deuteronomy 4:32–40; and Psalms 35:10; 89:8.*
- ◆ He holds universal, sovereign sway over all peoples on earth, 43–48.
- ◆ He is the source of life and lives eternally, 46.

### His goodness

- ◆ He is Yahweh, the faithful covenant God of his people, 1.
- ◆ He delivers his people from their enemies, 2–27, 43–48.
- ◆ He attends to the prayers of his people, 6.
- ◆ He comes “down” out of heaven to save his faithful servants, 9.
- ◆ He upholds his people when they are in danger or distress, 18.
- ◆ He gives strength to his people so that they may serve him and stand against the enemies of God, 34.
- ◆ He deals gently with his people, 35.
- ◆ He shows mercy and lovingkindness to his anointed king (which can refer to David, Christ, and all Christians), 50.
- ◆ He is angry against sin, especially the sin of those who oppress his people, 7–8.
- ◆ He is righteous and rewards righteous conduct, 20–27.

- ◆ He reveals his righteous will and ways to his people, mostly through the written Scriptures, 22.
- ◆ He gives light, that is, both encouragement and guidance, to his people, 28.
- ◆ He is completely perfect in all his dealings with mankind, 30.
- ◆ He does not hear the wicked prayers of unrepentant sinners, 41.

## Christ

### His life and adversity

- ◆ He was surrounded with the pangs, sorrows, and snares of death, 4-5.
- ◆ He was overwhelmed by the flood of ungodliness, 4.

### His person

- ◆ He was rewarded for his righteousness, 20, 24.
- ◆ He was completely innocent before God and men, 20-27.

### His relationship with the Father

- ◆ He called upon God in his distress, 6. *See Matthew 26:36, 39, 42; 27:46; Luke 23:46; and Hebrews 5:7.*
- ◆ He was answered with an earthquake, 7. *See Matthew 27:51.*
- ◆ He was taken up by God, delivered, and brought into a “broad place” – that is, heaven, 16-19. *See Acts 2:24, 32-33.*
- ◆ He was delivered because God the Father delighted in him, 19. *See Matthew 3:17.*

### His exaltation as King

- ◆ He was made the head of the nations, with all things subject to him, 43-48. *See Ephesians 1:20-22.*
- ◆ He is God’s King and Anointed, the Christ, 50.

## Life

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### The Christian life

- ◆ It begins when God raises us from spiritual death by the power of the Spirit. *See Ephesians 2:1-10.*

- ◆ It continues as a lifelong struggle against indwelling sin, Satan, and the temptations of this world. *See Ephesians 6:10-20; James 1:14-15; 4:7; 1 Peter 5:8-9; and 1 John 2:15-17.*

#### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Love God for saving us from sin, wrath, the devil, and Satan.
- ◆ Thank God for sending Jesus to suffer in our place and to gain the victory for us.
- ◆ Declare our love for him in praise and thanks.
- ◆ Call upon him when we are in trouble.
- ◆ Look to God alone to be our salvation, strength, protection, defense, security, light, guide, and all else that we need.
- ◆ Rely on his strength working through us to overcome spiritual enemies.
- ◆ Seek to be blameless and pure, and thus to have greater spiritual power.
- ◆ Order our lives according to the Word of God.
- ◆ Declare unremitting war on our indwelling sins and pursue total victory over them by the power of God.
- ◆ Proclaim the news of God's salvation among all the nations.

# Psalm 19

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its cumulative fullness

- ◆ Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.
- ◆ This psalm contains many common concepts that link to other passages in the Bible.
  - The vastness and immensity of the heavens and the heavenly bodies pointing to God's glory, 1; *see Isaiah 40:22*.
  - The heavens and sky [expanse] as God's handiwork, 1; *see Genesis 1:6*.
  - God as Rock [strength], 14; *see Psalm 18:2*.
  - God as Redeemer, 14; *see Psalm 31:5 and Isaiah 47:4*.

#### General revelation

- ◆ It comes from the created order, especially from the heavens in this psalm, 1–4.
- ◆ It declares the glory of God, their Maker, 1. *See Romans 1:19–20*.
- ◆ It reaches to the entire earth and all of mankind, 3–4.
- ◆ It can point to the existence of a glorious God, but it cannot lead to repentance and faith in Christ, and thus to salvation; only the gospel can have this effect. *See Romans 1:16–21; 10:14–15*.

#### Special revelation

- ◆ In the Old Testament, special – that is, biblical – revelation consists of three sections:
  - The “Law” or Torah: God's teaching, specifically the Pentateuch (the five books of Moses)
  - The Prophets
  - The Writings: Job through the Song of Solomon
- ◆ In the New Testament, it consists of four sections:
  - The four Gospels
  - Acts
  - The Epistles

- The Revelation to John
- ♦ God's written revelation, here represented by the Torah, is priceless, precious, and very delightful, 10.

### The Torah

- ♦ It contains various types of literature: testimonies, statutes, commandments, and judgments, 7-9, as well as historical narratives, genealogies, poetry, and other genres.
- ♦ It is perfect, flawless, without error, and infallible, 7.
- ♦ Properly read, it "converts" the soul by causing it to return to God in repentance and faith, 7.
- ♦ It is sure, right, pure, true, and righteous, 7-9.
- ♦ It gives wisdom, 7.
- ♦ It evokes joy, 8.
- ♦ It provides spiritual and intellectual enlightenment, 8.
- ♦ It produces a proper reverence for God, 9.
- ♦ It warns us and turns us away from sin, 11.
- ♦ When kept, it brings great rewards from God, 11.

## God

### His greatness

- ♦ He is glorious and beautiful, 1.
- ♦ He made the universe, including the heavenly bodies, 1.
- ♦ He reveals his beauty, power, and deity through the created order, 1-4.
- ♦ He controls and rules the sun (which is not a god, as pagans supposed), 4-6.
- ♦ He is eternal, 9.

### His goodness

- ♦ He revealed himself through the books of Moses, the rest of the Old Testament, and the New Testament, 7-11.
- ♦ Like his Word, which reveals his nature, he is the most precious and most delightful "thing" in the world, 10.
- ♦ He warns us from sin through his Word, 11.

- ◆ Through the written Word, received by his people in faith, he shows us our otherwise-hidden faults and delivers us from them through forgiveness and renewal, 12.
- ◆ When we ask, he preserves us from willful and presumptuous sins, 13.
- ◆ He is our Rock (“defensive” place of safety) and Redeemer (“offensive” deliverer from trouble), through the shedding of the blood of Christ, 14.
- ◆ He is perfect, sure [trustworthy, faithful, reliable], right [just], pure, and true, 7-9.
- ◆ He rewards those who obey his will, 11.

## Christ

### His nature and power

- ◆ He is the eternal Word of God, through whom God created the world. *See John 1:1-3; Colossians 1:16-17; and Hebrews 1:3.*
- ◆ He is the one about whom all the Old Testament Scriptures, including the Torah, spoke. *See Luke 24:44 and John 5:39.*
- ◆ He is the Incarnate Word of God, who spoke nothing but truth.
  - As such, he shares in all the qualities of the written Word of God listed here. *See “Revelation” and “God,” above.*
  - As such, his own words possess all the qualities named in this psalm. *See John 6:64; 7:16; 8:28.*
- ◆ He is the light of the world, like the sun, 4-6. *See John 8:12.*

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Praise God for the beauty of this world, including the heavens, as they declare the glory of God himself.
- ◆ “Read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest” the written Word of God, including the Pentateuch and the rest of the Old Testament. *See Psalm 1.*
- ◆ Believe that God’s written Word is perfect in every way and powerful to change lives.
- ◆ Ask God to show us our hidden faults, those of which we are unaware.

- ◆ Ask God to restrain us from open, willful sins of conscious rebellion.
- ◆ Ask God to cause our thoughts and our words to be pleasing to him, like an acceptable sacrifice. *See Romans 12:1-2.*

# Psalm 20

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its cumulative fullness

- ◆ Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.
- ◆ This psalm provides several examples.
  - Calling on God in the day of trouble, referring to a crisis caused by enemies, 1; *see Psalms 50:15; 77:2; 86:7.*
  - The name of God, which stands for his being and actions, 1; *see Exodus 3:13-15; Deuteronomy 12:5, 11; 1 Kings 8:29; Psalms 68:4; 145:1-2; and Proverbs 18:10.*
  - The God of Jacob, 1; *see Genesis 28:1-5; Exodus 3:6, 15; and Matthew 22:32.*
  - God's sanctuary, later settled in Zion [Jerusalem], 2; *see Exodus 25:8 and Psalms 2:6; 128:5; 135:21.*
  - Offerings and burnt sacrifices, 3; *see Leviticus 1-7 and Romans 12:2.*
  - Military banners (often a standard to rally troops in battle), and God as the banner of Israel, 5; *see Exodus 15:3; 17:15.*
  - The king as God's anointed, 6; *see Psalms 2:2; 45:7.*
  - God ruling and saving from his throne in heaven, 6; *see Psalm 68:17.*

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He has the power to defend and to save, 1-2, 5-9.
- ◆ Omniscient and omnipresent, he hears the prayers of his people, 1, 4-6.
- ◆ He dwells in heaven, 6.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He is Yahweh, the faithful covenant God of his people, 1.
- ◆ He dwells in his sanctuary among his people, 2.

- ◆ He instituted the sacrificial system so that his people could approach a holy God, 3.
- ◆ He saves his people when they call to him, 2, 4–8.
- ◆ He grants the heart's desire of his people when they desire his will, 4.
- ◆ He hears and answers the prayers of his people, 5.
- ◆ He chose David and his descendants as anointed rulers of Israel, 6.

## Christ

### His prefiguration

- ◆ As David's descendant, Jesus is the King to whom this prayer is addressed and for whom it is offered.
- ◆ He is also prefigured in this psalm in other ways.
  - His relationship with the Father
    - He was in deep trouble many times, 1. Surely, he prayed to God then. *See Hebrews 5:7.*
    - He was helped by God the Father often, in his life and ministry as well as at his death and resurrection, 2.
    - He offered himself as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God, 3. *See Galatians 2:20; Ephesians 5:2; and Hebrews 7:27.*
    - He will be granted his heart's desire, 4, expressed in John 17.
      - That the Father would be glorified in him
      - That his people would be one
      - That they would be sanctified by the truth, that is, the Word of God
      - That they would someday join him with the Father, sharing the eternal glory of the Godhead
  - His role as the Messiah
    - He was the Anointed, the Christ, the Messiah, sent by God to save his people, 6. *See the name "Christ" throughout the New Testament.*
    - As God's Anointed, he was saved from the power of death and raised to the right hand of the Father, 6.
  - His exaltation as divine King
    - He was raised up, and stands upright, as the risen Son of God, 8.

- As risen King, he hears and answers us when we call, 9. *See John 14:13-14.*

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Praise God the Father for answering the prayers of Jesus, his anointed Son, and delivering him from all his enemies.
- ♦ See ourselves as being in Christ, and therefore as “kings and priests to God.”
- ♦ Thus, see ourselves as proper objects of this prayer, which we should offer to God for each other. *See Revelation 1:6.*
- ♦ Pray this prayer for our Christian friends and for ourselves.
- ♦ Rejoice in the salvation that is ours in Christ, 5. *See Philipians 4:4 and 1 Thessalonians 5:18.*
- ♦ Trust not in what people can do for us, or in our own resources, but in the “name” – that is, the entire character and saving presence – of God, 7.

# Psalm 21

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its cumulative fullness

- ◆ Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.
- ◆ Psalm 20 is a prayer for success for the Davidic king; Psalm 21 celebrates God's answer to that prayer.
- ◆ This psalm refers to several themes seen elsewhere in psalms.
  - Receiving long life, 4; *see Psalms 61:5-6; 133:3.*
  - Glory and honor given by God to the king, symbolic of God's own royal glory, 5; *see Psalms 45:3-4; 145:4-5, 11.*
  - Gladness in the presence of God, 6; *see Psalms 16:11; 45:7.*
  - Faith in God, which brings stability amidst trouble, 7; *see Psalm 62:2, 6.*
  - God destroying his enemies through his king, 8-12; *see Psalm 18:37-42.*

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is strong, 1, 13.
- ◆ He possesses sovereign authority, which he bestows on those whom he chooses, 3.
- ◆ He possesses honor and majesty, 5.
- ◆ He is eternal, 6.
- ◆ He is exalted in incomparable power, 13.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He saves his chosen ones, 1.
- ◆ He answers prayer and grants our heart's desire (assuming that the desire accords with God's will), 2.
- ◆ He blesses his people with goodness and honor, 3, 5.
- ◆ He bestows eternal life, 4.
- ◆ He gives joy to his people, 6.

- ◆ He is merciful, 7.
- ◆ He provides stability and security, 7.
- ◆ He gives victory to his Anointed, 8-12.
- ◆ He consumes all his enemies, 9.

## Christ

His divinity and power: He is prefigured here as the chosen and anointed King to whom God grants all the blessings listed above, specifically these.

- ◆ Royal honor, 3, 5
- ◆ Eternal life, 4
- ◆ Great glory, 5
- ◆ Complete victory over his enemies, 8-12

## Salvation

Its recipients

- ◆ It comes to all who are in Christ by faith, and who are therefore identified with the victorious Messiah (even though they must for now continue to suffer troubles).
- ◆ It comes to those who trust in the Lord, 7.

Its substance: It comes to us as answered prayer and as all the blessings of goodness, eternal life, honor, joy, and gladness.

Its source: It flows from the free mercy of God and is not based on our righteousness.

## Life

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Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Thank God for saving Jesus and giving him eternal glory.
- ◆ Thank God for destroying all his enemies in his time.
- ◆ Thank God for all his goodness to us who are in Christ by faith.
- ◆ Trust God for salvation and all its benefits.

# Psalm 22

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its cumulative fullness

- ◆ Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.
- ◆ The Old Testament contains prophecies about Jesus Christ that were fulfilled literally, including these, seen in this psalm.
  - A cry of desolation, 1; *see Matthew 27:46 and Mark 15:34.*
  - Being despised and mocked by men, 6–8; *see Matthew 27:39–44 and Mark 15:29.*
  - Extreme physical suffering, including thirst, 14–15; *see Matthew 27:35 and John 9:28.*
  - Having one's garments divided by lot, 18; *see Matthew 27:35 and John 19:24.*
- ◆ This psalm also refers to other themes that are seen elsewhere in the Bible.
  - God's holiness, 3; *see Leviticus 19:2; Isaiah 6:3; and 1 Peter 1:16.*
  - God enthroned as King, 3; *see Psalms 2:4; 103:19; Isaiah 6:1; Daniel 7:9; and Revelation 4:2.*
  - God praised by Israel, 3; *see Deuteronomy 10:21 and Psalm 148:14.*
  - The faith of the patriarchs and early Israelites, out of which they cried to God for help, 4–5; *see Genesis 15:6; Numbers 20:16; Deuteronomy 26:7; Judges 3:9, 15; 4:3; 6:6–7; 10:10, 12; 1 Samuel 7:8–9; 12:8; 2 Samuel 22:7; Psalms 34:6; 66:17; 107: 6, 13, 19, 28; and Hebrews 11:4–38.*
  - Declaring God's name to one's brethren, 22; *see Matthew 28:10, 19 and John 20:17.*
  - The post-resurrection victory and universal rule of Christ, when all the ends of the world shall remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations shall worship before him, 27; *see Matthew 28:18–20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:47; and Acts 1:8.*

## God

### His greatness

- ◆ He is holy, 3.
- ◆ He rules from his throne as sovereign King, 3, 28.
- ◆ He is strong, 19.
- ◆ He possesses universal authority, 28.

### His goodness

- ◆ He allowed his beloved Son to suffer separation from the Father in order to save sinners, 1-2. *See the references in "Revelation: Its cumulative fullness: Old Testament" above. See also Romans 5:8-10; 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 2:24; and 1 John 4:10.*
- ◆ He rescues his oppressed and helpless people when they cry to him, 4-5, 24.
- ◆ He takes care of his servants even from their mothers' wombs, 9-10.
- ◆ He does not hide his face from his people when they trust in him, 24.
- ◆ He is righteous, 31.

## Christ

### His nature and power

- ◆ As the divine-human Son of God, he suffered in our place for our redemption.
- ◆ As the risen, vindicated, and victorious Son of God, he is universally worshiped and praised.

## The People of God

Their lives: They often suffer terribly, 1-21.

### Their devotion

- ◆ They worship and praise God, 3, 22-31.
- ◆ They assemble together to remember and to worship God, 22.
- ◆ They fear God, 25.
- ◆ They seek God, 26.
- ◆ They serve God, 30.
- ◆ They tell others, especially their children, about God's saving works, 30-31.

### Their hope

- ◆ They call out to God when they are in trouble, 1-21.
- ◆ They trust God, 8-9.

## **Life**

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Meditate long and often upon the horrible sufferings of Jesus on our behalf.
- ◆ Thank God constantly for what he has done for us in Christ.
- ◆ Praise, worship, and serve Jesus Christ our Savior.
- ◆ Love Christ with a love undying.
- ◆ Put into practice all the marks of the people of God, as described above.
- ◆ Take the gospel of Christ to the ends of the earth.

# Psalm 23

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its cumulative fullness

- ◆ Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.
- ◆ This psalm provides several examples.
  - The king as shepherd of his people, 1; *see 2 Samuel 5:2; Psalm 78:70–72; Isaiah 44:28; Jeremiah 3:15; 23:1–4; and Micah 5:4.*
  - God as the Shepherd–King of his people Israel, 1; *see Genesis 48:15; Psalms 28:9; 79:13; 80:1; 95:7; 100:3; Isaiah 40:11; Jeremiah 17:16; 31:10; 50:19; and Ezekiel 34:11–16.* (David, the author of this psalm, was the great shepherd–king of Israel. *See 1 Samuel 16:11–13 and Psalm 78:70–72.*)
  - Sheep dwelling in peaceful and prosperous pastures, 2; *see Isaiah 14:30; 17:2; Jeremiah 33:12; Ezekiel 34:14–15; and Zephaniah 2:7; 3:13.*
  - The shepherd leading his people, 2; *see Isaiah 40:11.*
  - Refreshment and conversion [turning to God] of the soul, 3; *see Ruth 4:15; Psalm 19:7; Proverbs 25:13; and Haggai 1:16.*
  - God protecting, prospering, forgiving, and leading his people in righteousness for the sake of his name – that is, his reputation and glory, 3; *see 1 Kings 8:41–42; Isaiah 48:9; Jeremiah 14:21; and Ezekiel 20:9, 14, 22.*
  - Righteousness – that is, righteous conduct, 3; *see Proverbs 8:18; 21:21; and Isaiah 48:18.*
  - God’s presence with his people, 4; *see Deuteronomy 31:6, 8 and Psalm 16:8.*
  - God’s comfort, 4; *see Ruth 2:13; Psalms 71:21; 86:17; and Isaiah 12:1; 40:1; 49:13.*
  - Eating together as a sign of friendship, 5; *see Genesis 31:54 and Psalm 41:9.*

- Dining with God as a sign of his favor and fellowship, 5; *see Exodus 24:8-10.*
- Anointing the head with oil as a sign of joy and gladness, and of welcome by the host, 5; *see 2 Samuel 12:30; Ecclesiastes 9:8; Daniel 10:3; and Luke 7:6.*
- A cup of blessing, 5; *see Psalm 16:5.*
- Goodness and mercy [steadfast love] that follow his people.
  - As blessings of the covenant with God, 6; *see Psalm 6:4.*
  - As aspects of God's character; *see Psalms 25:21; 43:3; 79:8; 89:14.*
- Dwelling in the house – that is the tabernacle or temple, of the Lord, 6; *see 1 Samuel 3:1-10 and Psalm 15:1.*

## God

### His greatness

- ♦ He is the great Shepherd-King, 1.
- ♦ He commands infinite resources, 1.
- ♦ He directs the affairs of individuals, 1-6.
- ♦ He is omnipresent, 4.
- ♦ He has the power to protect his people, 4.
- ♦ He is eternal, 6.

### His goodness

- ♦ He gives his people everything they need, 1-6.
  - Sustenance and rest, 2
  - Guidance, 2-3
  - Refreshment and renewal, 3
  - His presence and protection, 4
  - Fellowship with himself and others of his people, 5
  - The anointing of the Holy Spirit, 5
  - Goodness and lovingkindness all our lives, 6
  - Eternal life in his presence, 6
- ♦ He commits his own reputation to his care for his people and to their righteous conduct, 3.
- ♦ He is righteous, 3.

- ◆ He is always with his people, 4.
- ◆ He is good and full of mercy, that is, steadfast covenant love, 6.
- ◆ He dwells among his people in his “house,” 6, here probably referring to his eternal habitation on earth in the new heaven and new earth.

## Christ

His prefiguration: His presence with and provision for his people are prefigured in this psalm.

- ◆ He is our Good Shepherd, 1. *See John 10:1-30; Hebrews 13:20; and 1 Peter 2:25; 5:4.*
- ◆ He feeds us in grassy places, 2. *See John 6:10-13.*
- ◆ He gives us the refreshing waters of the Holy Spirit, 2. *See John 4:14; 7:37-39.*
- ◆ He leads us in paths of righteousness, 3. *See John 10:4.*
- ◆ He promises to be with us always, 4. *See Matthew 28:20.*
- ◆ He prepares the table of the Lord’s Supper for us, 5. *See Matthew 26:26-30; Luke 22:21, 30; and 1 Corinthians 10:21.*

## The Holy Spirit

His prefiguration

- ◆ As the water that sustains and refreshes us, 2; *see John 4:14; 7:37-39. See also the Scriptures that speak of the Spirit being “poured out” upon believers, for example, Joel 2:28-29 and Acts 2:17-18.*
- ◆ As the anointing oil, 5; *see Acts 4:27; 10:38; and Hebrews 1:9.*

## Salvation

Its source: Salvation comes to us through Jesus Christ, our Good Shepherd.

Its substance

- ◆ Provision, 1-2
- ◆ Rest, 2
- ◆ Guidance, 2-3
- ◆ Refreshment, 3
- ◆ Restoration of soul – that is, conversion from sin back to God, 3
- ◆ Assurance of his presence, 4

- ◆ Fellowship with Christ and his people, 5
- ◆ Every spiritual blessing, 5-6
- ◆ Constant goodness and love from God, 6
- ◆ Eternal life, 6

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Trust in Christ to supply all that we need at all times.
- ◆ Seek satisfaction from Christ and from him alone.
- ◆ Follow his guidance.
- ◆ Seek to do what is right.
- ◆ Don't be surprised when he leads us into places that seem like death.
- ◆ Trust in his presence at all times.
- ◆ Enjoy the fellowship of Jesus with his people.
- ◆ Set our hopes fully on the grace that will be brought to us when Christ returns, bringing us eternal life in his new Kingdom.

# Psalm 24

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its cumulative fullness

- ◆ Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.
- ◆ Several phrases from this psalm are quoted or referred to elsewhere in the Bible.
  - “The earth is the Lord’s, and all its fullness,” 1; *see Psalm 89:11 and 1 Corinthians 10:26, 28.*
  - “He has founded it upon the seas,” 2; *see Job 38:4–6 and Psalms 89:11; 93:1; 104:5.*
  - “The hill of the LORD,” that is, Mt. Zion, where the Tabernacle and then the Temple stood, making it a holy place, 3; *see Psalms 2:6; 5:7; 9:11; 15:1.*
- ◆ This psalm also refers to several themes seen elsewhere in the Bible.
  - Dwelling in the house of the Lord, 3; *see Psalm 23:6.*
  - Holiness being required of those who would draw near to God, 3–4; *see Psalms 15:1–5; 51:16–19; Proverbs 15; and Isaiah 1:11–17.*
  - Clean hands as a symbol of righteous conduct, 4; *see Genesis 20:5; Job 17:9; Psalms 26:6; 73:13; and James 7:7.*
  - Purity of heart as a symbol of undivided motives and full consecration to God, 4; *see Matthew 5:8; James 7:7; and 1 Peter 1:22.*
  - Seeking God’s face, 6; *see 1 Chronicles 16:11; 2 Chronicles 7:14; and Psalms 27:4, 8; 105:4.*
  - Jacob, who sought a blessing from God and who saw his face, 6; *see Genesis 32:22–30.*
  - A summons to open the gates of God’s house or city, that the righteous may enter, 7, 9; *see Psalm 118:20 and Isaiah 26:2.*
  - The God of glory, or the glorious God, 7–10; *see Psalms 29:2; 97:6; and Acts 7:2.*
  - God as “the LORD of hosts” – that is, Yahweh, King of the heavenly armies, 8, 10; *see Haggai 2:7.*

## God

### His greatness

- ◆ He created the world and therefore owns it, 1–2. *See Genesis 1:1–2:3, where he is called “God.” See also Psalm 50:12.*
- ◆ He is the glorious King of the universe, 7–10.
- ◆ He is the almighty Lord and King of the heavenly armies, 8, 10. *See Deuteronomy 33:2; Joshua 5:14; Psalm 68:17; and Habakkuk 3:8.*

### His goodness

- ◆ He is holy and without sin, 3.
- ◆ He deigned to dwell among his people in the Tabernacle, then in Christ, and now in his people, 3.
- ◆ He blesses righteous people, 5.
- ◆ He brings vindication and salvation to his people, 5. *See Psalms 7:8; 17:2, 15.*
- ◆ He allows his people to see his face in the face of Christ Jesus, 6. *See John 1:14, 18; 14:9; and 2 Corinthians 3:18.*

## Christ

### His person

- ◆ He is the only righteous man who ever entered the Temple of God, 3–4. *See Hebrews 4:15; 7:26.*
- ◆ He is the Lord of glory, 7–10. *See 1 Corinthians 2:8.*
- ◆ He ascended to God’s right hand in the heavenly places, 7–10. *See Psalm 110:1; Acts 1:9–10; Ephesians 1:19–22; 4:8–10; and Hebrews 1:3–4.*

## Sin

### It includes

- ◆ Lifting up one’s soul to an idol – that is, giving one’s worship, allegiance, and service to anything or anyone other than God, 4
- ◆ Making a false oath or telling lies, 4

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Worship God as the Creator and Lord of the universe, 1.

- ◆ Enjoy all that God has made and given to us. *See 1 Corinthians 10:26–28.*
- ◆ Do not give our hearts to any idols, 4.
- ◆ Seek holiness of conduct and purity of heart, 4.
- ◆ Above all, seek God, his presence, and his favor, 6. *See Colossians 3:1–3.*
- ◆ Thank God for sending Jesus, the only sinless man, to save us from our sins, to grant justification to us, and to enter into the Holy of Holies in heaven as our great High Priest.
- ◆ Open our hearts each day to receive Jesus, the King of glory. *See Ephesians 3:17 and Revelation 3:20.*

*Note: Revelation 3:20 was addressed to Christians, not non-Christians.*

# Psalm 25

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its cumulative fullness

- ◆ Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.
- ◆ Several phrases from this psalm are quoted or referred to elsewhere in the Bible.
  - “To You, O LORD, I lift up my soul,” 1; *see Psalms 86:4; 143:8. Contrast Psalm 24:4.*
  - “Let me not be ashamed,” 2; *see Psalms 22:5; 31:1; 34:8; 69:6; 71:1; 119:31.*
  - “Show me Your ways, O LORD; teach me Your paths,” 4; *see Exodus 133:13; and Psalms 5:8; 27:11; 96:11; 119:27; 143:8.*
  - “Your tender mercies and Your lovingkindnesses [“your mercy and steadfast love,” *ESV*], 6; *see Psalms 103:17; 106:1.*
  - “The sins of my youth,” 7; *see Job 13:26 and Jeremiah 3:25.*
  - “According to Your mercy [Hebrew *chesed*; “steadfast love,” *ESV*] remember me,” 7; *see Exodus 34:6–7 and Psalm 51:1.*
  - “My eyes are ever toward the LORD,” 15; *see Psalms 123:1; 141:8.*
  - “Turn to me,” 16; *see Psalm 69:16.*
  - “Desolate [lonely] and afflicted,” 16; *see Psalm 102:7.*
- ◆ This psalm also refers to several themes seen elsewhere in the Bible.
  - Keeping God’s ways and his paths, as revealed in his laws and commandments, 4; *see Psalms 18:21; 51:13; 81:13; 95:10; 119:3, 15; 128:1. See also Deuteronomy 8:6; 10:12–13; 26:17; 30:16; and Joshua 22:5.*
  - God guiding the humble, 9; *see Proverbs 34.*
  - God’s mercy [steadfast love] and truth [faithfulness], 10; *see John 1:14, “grace and truth.”*
  - God’s covenant – that is, his covenant with Israel given through Moses, 10; *see Psalms 50:5; 78:10, 37; 103:18. See also Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5.*

*Note: [This covenant consists of] God's promises of his unfailing love for his people, along with his guidelines for how to live in relationship with him, 9, Exodus 19:4-6; 24:4; 34:10, 28; Deuteronomy 5:2-3; 29:14-15. (ZNVSB)*

- God blessing his people for his name's sake, based on his promise to forgive sins, 11; *see Psalms 31:3; 79:9; 109:21; 143:1. See also Exodus 34:6-7 and Ezekiel 20:9, 14, 22, 44; 36:22, 32.*
- God's dealings with those who keep his covenant, 12-14; *see Psalm 103:11, 17-18.*
- Inheriting the land promised by God to his faithful people and their children, 13; *see Psalms 37:9, 11, 18, 22, 29, 34; 69:36; and Isaiah 60:21.*
- Redemption – that is, deliverance by God through payment of a price – for God's people, 22; *see Exodus 12; 15:13; Psalms 49:15; 72:14; 130:8; Isaiah 63:16; Luke 1:68; Romans 3:24; 1 Corinthians 1:30; Galatians 3:13; Ephesians 1:7; Hebrews 9:12; 1 Peter 1:18; and Revelation 5:9.*

#### Its literary forms

- ♦ Biblical revelation, especially poetry, uses various literary forms.
- ♦ Two-line parallelism is prominent in the psalms and Proverbs and throughout this psalm.
- ♦ Beginning each line with a letter of the Hebrew alphabet is a structure that makes it hard to outline the flow of thought but provides for depth and breadth. This is seen here, as well as in Psalms 10, 34, 37, and 145.

## God

#### His greatness

- ♦ He is omniscient and omnipresent, hearing, seeing, and knowing all the conditions of his people, as the whole psalm assumes.
- ♦ He can save his people from their enemies and all their troubles, 2, 15-22.
- ♦ He knows what is best for his people and can instruct and guide them, 4-5, 8-10, 12.
- ♦ He has the authority to forgive sins, 6-7, 11, 18.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He is Yahweh, the faithful covenant God of his people, 1, 4, 6-8, 10-12, 14-15.
- ◆ He vindicates and honors those who wait for him – that is, hope in him, 3.
- ◆ He teaches his people his ways for them, 4-5, 8-9, 12.
- ◆ He is true and reveals truth, 5.
- ◆ He is the Savior of his people, 5.
- ◆ He is full of tender mercy and lovingkindness, 6.
- ◆ He is intrinsically and essentially good, 7-8.
- ◆ He is upright in all his doings, 8.
- ◆ He even instructs repentant sinners, 8.
- ◆ He guides the humble, 9.
- ◆ He is full of steadfast love and truth [faithfulness], 10.
- ◆ He made a covenant with his people at Mt. Sinai, 10.
- ◆ He forgives sins, 11, 18.
- ◆ He blesses those who fear him with good things [prosperity], 13.
- ◆ He reveals his inner thoughts – his secret counsel – to those who fear him, 14.
- ◆ He delivers his people from the snares and traps of their enemies, 15.
- ◆ He delivers his people from the troubles or distresses into which he has allowed them to enter or fall, 17, 20.
- ◆ He is aware of and considers our affliction and pain, 18-19.
- ◆ He preserves the souls of those who trust in him, that is, he preserves their lives as long as he wills, and their souls for eternity, 20.
- ◆ He redeems his people from their troubles, 22.
- ◆ He allows the children of the righteous to inherit the land he promised them, 13.

## Christ

His prefiguration: Like all the psalms, this psalm speaks of Christ, both as the innocent sufferer who cries out to God and as the God who saves.

### His life and adversity

- ◆ He looked to God for salvation from his enemies, 2, 15-21.
- ◆ He had a “friend,” Judas, who dealt treacherously with him without cause, 3.
- ◆ He “waited upon” and “waited for” – that is, hoped – in God all day long, 3, 21.
- ◆ He had enemies who hated him cruelly and without cause, 3, 19. *See John 15:25.*

- ◆ Though innocent of sin, Christ, as the sin-bearer appointed by God to be our substitutionary and vicarious sacrifice, took upon himself the status of sinner, 7, 11, 18. *See Isaiah 53:6; John 1:29; and 2 Corinthians 5:21.*

### His nature and purpose

- ◆ He is the unique Son of God.
  - The word “lonely,” 22, is written in the Greek Old Testament as *monogenes*, which is the same word used in John 1:14, 18; 3:16, 18; 1 John 9, to refer to Jesus as God’s “only-begotten Son.”
  - The underlying Hebrew word is used of Isaac, Abraham’s “only” – that is, unique – son, the son of promise, and the one whom he loved. *See Matthew 3:17; 17:5; and Gospel parallels.*
  - As the only Son of God, Jesus came to suffer for our sins, as only he could do.
- ◆ He was the one through whom God redeemed his people, 22. *See Luke 1:68; Romans 3:24; 1 Corinthians 1:30; Galatians 3:13; Ephesians 1:7; Hebrews 9:12; 1 Peter 1:18; and Revelation 5:9.*

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Expect to be hated and persecuted for our faith in Christ.
- ◆ Expect to have many troubles in this life. *See Psalm 34:19 and Romans 5:3.*
- ◆ Always turn to God with trust and hope, especially when we are in trouble.
- ◆ Seek God’s guidance, especially when we are in trouble.
- ◆ Find guidance in God’s revealed will in the Scriptures, especially his ethical instructions.
- ◆ Trust in God to provide for us and protect us.
- ◆ Trust God to reward us and even our children for our integrity and faithfulness to him.
- ◆ Fear God and not men.
- ◆ Confess our sins to God and ask for forgiveness, confident in his promises to forgive those who trust in Christ. *See 1 John 1:9.*
- ◆ Thank God for sending Jesus to suffer so terribly and thus to be a faithful and sympathetic High Priest for us now. *See Hebrews 4:15.*

- ◆ Set our hope fully on the grace to be brought to us when Christ returns. *See Romans 5:1-5; 8:18-39; and 1 Peter 1:13.*
- ◆ Meanwhile, trust that nothing will separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus. *See Romans 8:38-39.*

# Psalm 26

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its cumulative fullness

- ◆ Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.
- ◆ Several phrases from this psalm are quoted or referred to elsewhere in the Bible.
  - I will “tell of all Your wondrous works,” 7; *see Psalm 145:1-7, 12, 21.*
  - “I have loved the habitation of Your house” – that is, the Tabernacle and then the Temple, 8; *see Psalms 23:6; 27:4; 84:1-4, 19.*
- ◆ This psalm also refers to several themes seen elsewhere in the Bible.
  - God’s examination of our inner being, 2; *see Psalms 17:3; 139:23.*
  - God’s lovingkindness and truth [faithfulness], 3; *see Psalm 25:10.*
  - Not sitting, going, or standing with sinners, 4-5; *see Psalm 1:1 and Jeremiah 15:17.*
  - A pledge to walk with integrity, 11; *see Psalm 101:3-8.*
  - God’s redemption of his people, 11; *see Psalms 25:22; 103:4; 130:8.*
  - Blessing and praising God in the company of other believers, 12; *see Psalm 34:1-3.*

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is omniscient and omnipresent and can discern the thoughts and intentions of the heart, 2.
- ◆ He does wondrous works of power and salvation, 7. *See Psalms 71:17; 75:1; 86:10; 105:27. See also Exodus 4:21; 7:3; 11:9-10; 15:11; Deuteronomy 7:19; and Nehemiah 9:17.*

### His goodness

- ◆ He is just and will vindicate the innocent, 1. *See Psalm 103:6.*
- ◆ He is full of lovingkindness [Hebrew *chesed*, grace] and truth [faithfulness], 3. *See Exodus 34:6-7 and Psalms 25:10; 103:8-17.*
- ◆ He established a sacrificial system, focused on the altar, whereby sins could be forgiven through the shedding of the blood of a spotless animal, 6. *See Exodus 27, 29-30, 38, 40.*
- ◆ He condescended to dwell among his people in the Tabernacle and then the Temple, 6, 8, and then in Jesus, the God-man. *See Exodus 25:8; 29:45-46; and John 1:14.*
- ◆ He redeems his people from danger and death because of his mercy, 11. *See Exodus 12; 15:13; Psalms 49:15; 72:14; 130:8; Isaiah 63:16; Luke 1:68; Romans 3:24; 1 Corinthians 1:30; Galatians 3:13; Ephesians 1:7; Hebrews 9:12; 1 Peter 1:18; and Revelation 5:9.*

## Christ

### His perfection and glory

- ◆ He alone, of all men, walked in integrity, fully trusted God, walked according to God's truth, had nothing in his mind or heart that would offend God, and was fully innocent, 1-6, 11. *See Hebrews 15; 7:26.*
- ◆ He embodied God's lovingkindness [grace] and truth, 3. *See John 1:14.*

His mercy and grace: He did sit with sinners and the wicked, 4-5, yet without sin, as the one who came to call not the righteous, but sinners, to repentance. *See Matthew 9:11-13.*

## Sin

### It includes

- ◆ Associating closely with idolatrous worshipers and sinners, 4-5
- ◆ Idolatry, 4
- ◆ Hypocrisy, 4
- ◆ Doing evil, 5
- ◆ Murder and violence, 9
- ◆ Sinister plots, 10
- ◆ Bribery, 10

# Life

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## Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Seek to live lives of inner and outer integrity.
- ◆ Keep our eyes fixed on God's grace in Christ.
- ◆ Ask for strength to walk according to his revealed truth.
- ◆ Do not associate closely with unbelievers and unrepentant sinners.
- ◆ Thank God for sending Jesus to live a morally pure life and to die for our redemption.
- ◆ Thank Jesus for coming to dwell among sinners in order to save us.
- ◆ Worship God with sincerity and without hypocrisy.
- ◆ Look to God to redeem us from evil men now, and finally, from death and his righteous wrath.
- ◆ Praise God in the presence of other believers.

# Psalm 27

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its cumulative fullness

- ◆ Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.
- ◆ Several phrases from this psalm are quoted or referred to elsewhere in the Bible.
  - “Do not hide Your face from me,” 9; *see Psalms 69:17; 143:7.*
  - “Teach me Your way,” 11; *see Psalms 25:4-5, 8-10, 12; 86:11; 119:33.*
  - “Be of good courage,” 14; *see Joshua 6 and 1 Corinthians 16:13.*

*Note: the Greek word means, “be manly, act like a man!”*

- ◆ This psalm also refers to several themes seen elsewhere in the Bible.
  - Light as a symbol for God and his saving presence, 1; *see Psalms 18:28; 84:11; Isaiah 60:1-2, 19-20; Micah 7:8-9; 1 John 1:5; and Revelation 21:23; 22:5.*
  - God as our salvation, 1; *see Exodus 15:2; Psalm 118:14; and Isaiah 12:2; 33:2.*
  - God as our strength, 1; *see Psalms 18:1; 62:7; 118:14.*
  - Dwelling in God’s house, 4; *see Psalms 15:1; 23:6; 26:8; 65:4; and Luke 2:37.*
  - God’s safe hiding place for his people, 5; *see Psalms 31:20; 91:1.*
  - Parents forsaking us, 10; *see Isaiah 49:17.*
  - False witnesses, 12; *see Exodus 20:16; Deuteronomy 19:18-19; and Psalm 35:11.*
  - Wait for – that is, hope in – the LORD, 14; *see Psalms 25:3; 37:34; 40:1; 62:5; 130:5; Proverbs 20:22; and Isaiah 25:9.*

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is light and gives light, 1.
- ◆ He is powerful, 1.

### His goodness

- ◆ He saves his people, 1.
- ◆ He gives strength to his people, 1, 14.
- ◆ He defeats the enemies of his people, 2-3.
- ◆ He protects his people in times of trouble, 2-3, 5.
- ◆ He is beautiful and lovely to behold, 4.
- ◆ He condescended to dwell among his people, first in the Tabernacle, then the Temple, then in Jesus, and now in his people the church, 4.
- ◆ He seeks our intimate fellowship, 8.
- ◆ He accepts us when even our parents reject us, 10.
- ◆ He teaches his people the way in which they should walk, 11.
- ◆ He is good, 13.
- ◆ He lives and gives life, 13.

## Christ

### His nature and power

- ◆ He is the Light of the world, 1. *See John 8:12.*
- ◆ He is our salvation; his name itself means, "Yahweh is salvation," 1. *See Titus 4.*
- ◆ He is our strength, 1. *See Ephesians 6:10 and 2 Timothy 2:2.*

### His presence with his people

- ◆ While on earth, he was the embodied Tabernacle, the dwelling place of God, 4. *See John 1:14, where the Greek word translated as "dwelt" means, literally, "tabernacled" or "pitched his tent."*
- ◆ Now, he is the dwelling place of his followers. *See John 15:5; Ephesians 2:21-22; and all of Paul's uses of the phrase, "in Christ" and "in Him" - for example, Ephesians 1:1, 4-5, 7, 10-11.*

### His life and adversity

- ◆ When he was on the Cross, God the Father turned his face away from his Son Jesus for a while, 9-10. *See Psalm 27:45-46.*
- ◆ False witnesses spoke against him, 12. *See Matthew 26:60; Mark 14:56; and John 19:33.*

# Life

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## Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Expect to have troubles and even fierce enemies in this life. *See John 16:33.*
- ◆ Turn to God in prayer for help in times of trouble.
- ◆ Above all else, seek close fellowship with God in Christ.
- ◆ Trust that God will provide all we need and protect us when we need help.
- ◆ Always seek God's face.
- ◆ Ask God to teach us the way we should walk, especially in times of trial. *See James 1:5.*
- ◆ Wait for God to act.
- ◆ Hope in God, not in men.
- ◆ Be courageous in dangerous days.
- ◆ Thank God for sending Jesus to suffer his wrath in our place, that we might have intimate fellowship with God through faith in Christ.

# Psalm 28

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its cumulative fullness

- ◆ Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.
- ◆ Several themes link Psalms 23–29, such as God as Shepherd of his people, and the individual praying for the whole people at the end of the psalm, 9. *See Psalm 25:22.*
- ◆ This psalm also refers to several themes seen elsewhere in the Bible.
  - The Pit as a symbol for the grave and death, as well as judgment, 1; *see Psalms 30:3, 9; 88:4; 143:7; Isaiah 14:19; and Ezekiel 26:20.*
  - The Most Holy place, 2; *see 1 Kings 6:5.*
  - Lifting up the hands to pray, 2; *see Psalms 63:4; 134:2; 141:2.*

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is strong, steady, stable, immovable, and ageless, like a rock, 1. *See Psalms 18:2; 28:1.*
- ◆ He is omnipresent and omniscient, hearing the prayers of his people, 1–2.
- ◆ He has the power to consign people to death, 3.
- ◆ He has the power to save and protect his people, 7–8.
- ◆ He is eternal, 9.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He is the saving refuge of his people, 1.
- ◆ He condescended to dwell among his people in the Temple, 2.
- ◆ He saved Israel from Egypt by doing mighty works, and he established them as his special people by covenant, 4–5. *See Exodus 6–24.*
- ◆ He hears the prayers of his people, 6. *See Psalm 34:4, 6, 15.*
- ◆ He gives strength and protection to his people, 7–8.
- ◆ He chose David as his special anointed one, 8. *See 2 Samuel 7.*

- ◆ He chose Israel to be his inheritance, 9. *See Deuteronomy 9:29.*
- ◆ He shepherds his people like a flock, 9. *See Psalms 23; 80:1; Isaiah 40:11; Jeremiah 31:10; and Ezekiel 34.*
- ◆ He repays people according to their deeds, 4. *See Psalm 62:12; Matthew 16:27; 2 Timothy 4:14; and Revelation 20:12-13; 22:12.*

## Christ

### His role as the Messiah

- ◆ He is the true Anointed One [Christ], the descendant of David, and the Messianic King sent by God to save his people, 8. *See Matthew 1:1.*
- ◆ He is the ultimate Good Shepherd, 9. *See John 10:11; Hebrews 13:20; and 1 Peter 5:4.*

## Sin

### It includes

- ◆ Doing iniquity, that is, things that are against God's law, 3
- ◆ Being falsely friendly while plotting evil, 3
- ◆ Not regarding, considering, believing, or responding to the saving works of God, 5

## Salvation

Its recipients: It comes to those who pray to God and trust in him, 1-3, 6-7.

### Its substance

- ◆ Protection, 1, 7-8
- ◆ Strength, 7-8
- ◆ Help, 7
- ◆ Joy, 7
- ◆ God's blessing, 9
- ◆ Membership in his people forever, 9

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Cry out to God in fervent prayer when we are in any kind of trouble.
- ◆ Praise God when he answers our prayers.

- ◆ Trust in God for strength, protection, and help.
- ◆ Sing praises to God with joy.
- ◆ Pray for the welfare and ultimate salvation of all God's people.

# Psalm 29

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its cumulative fullness

- ◆ Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.
- ◆ This psalm refers to several themes seen elsewhere in the Bible.
  - The heavenly assembly of angelic beings who praise God for his creative power and reigning majesty, 1-2; *see Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7; Psalms 89:6-7; 103:20; 148:2; Isaiah 6; and Ezekiel 1.*
  - Heaven and earth as his temple, 3-10; *see Psalm 11:4; Isaiah 40:22; and Micah 1:2.*
  - God's power over chaotic waters, 3, 10; *see Genesis 1:6-9.*
  - The cedars of Lebanon, 5-6; *see Judges 9:15; 2 Kings 14:9; Isaiah 2:13; 5:12; and Ezekiel 31:3.*
  - The temple [house] of the Lord, 9; *see Psalms 23-29, where this is a recurrent theme, especially 23:6; 24:3; 26:6; 27:4.*
  - Yahweh sitting enthroned in the Temple over the cherubim and on the praises of his people, 10; *see 1 Samuel 4:4; 2 Samuel 6:2; Psalms 9:11; 11:4; 22:3; and Isaiah 6:1.*
  - God giving strength to his people, 11; *see Psalms 27:1; 28:7-8.*

Its roots in history: Biblical revelation is set within history and culture. The pagan Canaanites worshiped Baal as a god of thunder and storm, but Yahweh, the God of Israel, is the only one who controls the forces of the created order, including thunderstorms and lightning, 3-9.

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is infinitely strong and mighty, 1.
- ◆ He is essentially glorious: beautiful, "heavy" with dignity and deity, resplendent in light and power, 1, 4.
- ◆ He is beautiful and holy, and deserves beautiful, holy worship, 2.

- ◆ He is clothed with his own attributes, including holiness (according to some translations of this verse), 2. *See 2 Chronicles 20:21 and Psalms 93:1; 96:9.*
- ◆ He rules as King over the universe, 10. *See Psalms 10:16; 24:7-9; 95:3; 97:1; 99:1; 103:19.*
- ◆ He is eternal, 10. *See Psalm 10:16.*
- ◆ His power is expressed by his voice.
  - It rules the chaotic waters, as at Creation, at the great Flood of Noah's day, and ever since, 3-4, 10. *See Genesis 1:2; 6:17; Job 38:8, 25; Psalms 68:33; 93:3-4; and Jeremiah 10:13; 51:16.*
  - It shatters even mighty trees, 5.
  - It produces fire, 7.
  - It shakes the earth, 8.
  - It causes animals to give birth, 9.
- ◆ He is personal, with a "voice" that expresses his mind, power, and wisdom, 3-9.

### His goodness

- ◆ He condescended to dwell amidst his people in the Temple, 9.
- ◆ He gives strength to his people, 11.
- ◆ He blesses his people with peace, even amid the storms of nature and life, 11.

## Christ

His prefiguration: He is prefigured in this psalm in these ways.

- ◆ His nature and power
  - He is the creative and governing Word, the voice of God. *See John 1:1; Colossians 1:16-17; and Hebrews 1:3.*
  - His voice commanded the raging waters (and winds), 3, 10. *See Matthew 10:23-27.*
- ◆ His power as King
  - He sits as King, 10. *See Psalm 2:6; John 1:49; 18:36; 1 Corinthians 15:24-26; and Revelation 19:16.*
  - He blesses his people with peace, 11. *See John 14:27; 20:19, 21, 26.*

## Life

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Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Constantly give praise to God for his immense power.
- ◆ Give praise to God for his immanent goodness to us.
- ◆ Trust in God as King over the universe and over all the events of the created order and our individual lives.
- ◆ Look to him for strength.
- ◆ Look to him for peace amidst the storm.

# Psalm 30

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its cumulative fullness

- ◆ Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.
- ◆ This psalm refers to several themes seen elsewhere in the Bible.
  - Dedicating a house to God, title of the psalm; *see Deuteronomy 20:5*.
  - Needing or asking for deliverance from deep waters or a deep pit, and being close to death, 3; *see Psalms 28:1; 69:15; 71:20; 88:6; 130:1; Lamentations 3:55; and Jonah 2:2*.
  - The remembrance of God's name, 4; *see Isaiah 26:8*.
  - Sackcloth as a symbol of mourning, 11; *see Genesis 37:34 and Psalm 35:13*.

Its roots in history: This psalm may reflect David's experience of proudly ordering a census when his position was secure, 6-7, and his preparations for building the Temple, title of the psalm. *See 1 Chronicles 21; 22:1-6*.

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He has the power to deliver from danger and disease, 1, 3.
- ◆ He is eternal, 12.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He saves his people when they call upon him, 1-3.
- ◆ He grants grace and favor to those who repent and cry out to him in faith, 1-3, 5, 8-11.
- ◆ He is holy, 4.
- ◆ He punishes his people's sin, but only for a while, 5.
- ◆ He will not allow his people to become complacent or proud, 6-7.
- ◆ He grants prosperity, 6-7.

- ◆ He is merciful to forgive his repentant people, 10.
- ◆ He grants joy to those who turn from their sins, 11.

## Christ

### His life and adversity

- ◆ He had many foes who mocked him, 1.
- ◆ As the Son of David, he went down to the pit of death, 3.
- ◆ He was brought out from the grave by God, 3.
- ◆ He suffered God's anger for a while on our behalf, 5.

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Cry out to God when we are in trouble, no matter how apparently hopeless the situation may seem.
- ◆ Give thanks to God and praise him for his mercy and salvation, especially salvation from spiritual death. *See Ephesians 1:3-14; 2:1-7.*
- ◆ Beware of prosperity and the prideful complacency it can bring.
- ◆ Confess our sin to God as soon as we become aware of it.
- ◆ Look to God to bring "joy . . . in the morning," 5.
- ◆ Thank God for sending Jesus to suffer his wrath and death for a while so that we would not have to suffer it forever.

# Psalm 31

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its cumulative fullness

- ◆ Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.
- ◆ Several phrases from this psalm are quoted or referred to elsewhere in the Bible.
  - “Into Your hand I commit my spirit,” 5, quoted by Jesus on the Cross; *see Luke 23:46.*
  - “Make Your face shine upon Your servant,” 16; *see Numbers 6:26 and Psalms 4:6; 80:3, 7, 19.*
  - “You shall hide them . . . ; You shall keep them,” 20; *see Psalms 27:5; 32:71; 91:1, 9.*
  - “Be of good courage,” 24; *see Joshua 1:6–7; Psalm 27:14; and 1 Corinthians 13.*
- ◆ This psalm also refers to several themes seen elsewhere in the Bible.
  - Honor for those who trust in God and shame for those who don’t, 1, 17; *see Psalm 25:1–3, 20 and 1 Peter 2:7 (where the translation should be, “Therefore, to you who believe, there is honor”).*
  - God as a rock of refuge and a fortress of defense, 2–3; *see Psalm 18:2.*
  - God’s goodness, 19; *see Romans 2:4; 11:22.*

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is omnipresent and omniscient and can hear the prayers of his people, 1, 22.
- ◆ He is strong and steady, like a rock or fortress, 2–3.
- ◆ He has the power to save from danger and death, 4.
- ◆ He holds all the spirits of all people, 5.
- ◆ He controls all the events of our lives, for he is the Lord of time, 15.
- ◆ He determines the length of our lives and the course of their events, 15.
- ◆ He dwells in a secret place of calm and safety, 20.

## His goodness

- ◆ He is righteous, that is, faithful to his promises, 1, 5.
- ◆ He delivers his people when they call to him, 1, 8.
- ◆ He leads his people for his name's sake, 3. *See Psalms 23:3; 25:11.*
- ◆ He holds our lives and spirits in his loving hand, 5.
- ◆ He redeems his people, that is, he delivers them through the payment of a price, 5.
  - In the Old Testament, the price was a sacrificial animal.
  - In the New Testament, the price is the precious blood of his Servant, Jesus, 16.
- ◆ He takes note of and cares for the troubles of his people, 7.
- ◆ He smiles upon those whom he loves, 16.
- ◆ He shows kindness to his people when they are besieged by troubles and enemies, 21. ("Strong" or "fortified" city could mean "city that is besieged.")
- ◆ He strengthens the hearts of those who act courageously, 24.
- ◆ He rebukes his people for their sins, sometimes through bodily illness or weakness, 18. *See 1 Corinthians 11:29-32.*
- ◆ He is fundamentally good, and he gives good things to those who fear and trust him, 19. *See Matthew 5:12; 6:4, 6; 7:11; Romans 8:28, 32; and 1 Peter 1:5.*
- ◆ He repays the unrepentant wicked for their arrogance and sin, 23.

## Christ

His prefiguration: He is prefigured in this psalm in these ways.

- ◆ His life and adversity
  - He was surrounded by enemies who laid plots for him and constantly schemed to take his life.
  - He suffered intense grief, sorrow, and bodily distress, not for his sins but for ours, 9-10. *See John 12:27; 13:22.*
  - He was constantly mocked and scorned by his enemies, 11.
  - He was misunderstood even by his family, 11.
  - He was forsaken even by his disciples, who fled from him in the Garden of Gethsemane, 11.
  - He was constantly slandered and falsely accused, 13.
- ◆ His relationship with the Father

# Life

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## Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Expect trouble in this life.
- ◆ Expect to be disciplined, perhaps severely, for our sins.
- ◆ Expect to be persecuted for our faith in Christ.
- ◆ Expect people to misunderstand us, reject us, desert us, and abandon us – even our close friends.
- ◆ Expect people to slander us.
- ◆ Turn to God when we are in trouble.
- ◆ Cry out to God in full honesty and tell him all our troubles. *See Philipians 4:6-7 and 1 Peter 5:7.*
- ◆ Trust God to deliver us, either by saving us from danger or by enabling us to endure death and then giving us eternal life.
- ◆ Entrust our inner selves, our spirits, to God's safekeeping.
- ◆ Put our times, that is, the timing of all events in our lives, including the time of their ends, into God's hands.
- ◆ Put our hope completely on the goodness that God has stored up for us in heaven.
- ◆ Do not imagine that God has forsaken us or forgotten us.

# Psalm 32

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its cumulative fullness

- ◆ Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.
- ◆ Several phrases from this psalm are quoted or referred to elsewhere in the Bible.
  - “Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, . . . to whom the LORD does not impute iniquity,” 1-2, quoted by Paul as part of his argument that justification by faith was already taught in the Old Testament; *see Romans 4:6-8*.
  - “You are my hiding place,” 7; *see Psalms 9:9; 27:5; 31:1-3; 91:1-4*.
  - “Songs of deliverance,” 7; *see Exodus 15:1; Judges 5:1; and Psalm 40:3*.
  - “Be glad in the LORD, and rejoice,” 11; *see Psalms 5:11; 64:10; 68:3; 97:12; and Philippians 4:1, 4*.
- ◆ This psalm also refers to several themes seen elsewhere in the Bible.
  - The physical effects of sin and guilt which are brought by God upon the unrepentant, 3-4; *see Psalms 31:9-10; 38:2; 39:10-11; and 1 Corinthians 11:29-32*.
  - Confessing sin to God, 5; *see Psalm 38:18; Proverbs 28:13; and 1 John 1:9*.
  - Sorrow coming to the unrepentant wicked and blessings to those who trust in God, 10; *see Psalms 1; 16:4; 25:1-3; Proverbs 13:21; and Romans 2:6-10*.

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is omniscient and omnipresent and hears the prayers of his people, 6.
- ◆ He has the power to protect his people from all danger, represented here by a great flood of waters, 6.
- ◆ He dwells in a high and safe place, 7.
- ◆ He possesses all wisdom and knowledge, 8.

- ◆ He can communicate with his people, 8.

### His goodness

- ◆ He forgives transgression, covers sin, and does not impute iniquity to those who trust in him, 1-2, 5.
- ◆ He uses bodily illness to turn us to repentance, 3-5.
- ◆ He delivers and protects his people when they call upon him, 6-7.
- ◆ He teaches and guides his faithful people, 8. *See Psalms 23:3; 25:8-10; and James 1:8.*
- ◆ He surrounds those who trust in him with mercy and love, 10.
- ◆ He is righteous and loves righteousness, 11.

## Christ

His prefiguration: He is prefigured in this psalm in this way.

- ◆ His work of salvation: Christ is the one in and through whom salvation comes, for it is his sacrifice that merits our forgiveness, his shed blood that covers our sins, and his righteousness that is imputed to those who trust in him. *See Mark 10:45; Romans 3:21-26; Galatians 3:11-13; Ephesians 1:7; Philippians 3:8-11; Colossians 1:19-22; 2:13-14; 1 Peter 1:18-21; 2:23-25; 3:18; and 1 John 1:9-2:2.*

## Salvation

Its recipients: It comes to those who repent of their sins and trust in God's mercy, 1-5.

### Its substance

- ◆ Forgiveness of sins, 1, 5
- ◆ Covering of sins by the blood of Christ, 1
- ◆ Imputation of righteousness, 2
- ◆ Non-imputation of guilt, 2
- ◆ Experience of the love and mercy of God, 10

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Confess our sin to God as soon as we become aware of it.

- ◆ Trust God to forgive our sin, cover it, and not impute it to us, because of the substitutionary sacrifice of Christ and his righteousness that is imputed to those who believe in him.
- ◆ Call out to God when we are in trouble.
- ◆ Listen to God's instructions, especially as they are contained in Scripture.
- ◆ Rejoice in the Lord, for he has given us salvation in Christ.

# Psalm 33

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its cumulative fullness

- ◆ Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.
- ◆ Several phrases from this psalm are quoted or referred to elsewhere in the Bible.
  - “Sing . . . a new song,” 3; *see Psalms 40:3; 96:1; 98:1; 144:9; Isaiah 42:10; and Revelation 5:9; 14:3.*
  - “The earth is full of the goodness of the LORD,” 5; *see Psalms 36:5-9; 104:27-28.*
  - “By the word of the LORD the heavens were made” and the earth and its waters were ordered, 6-7, 9; *see Genesis 1; Psalm 104:7; Job 38:8-11; John 1:1-3; and Hebrews 11:3.*
- ◆ This psalm also refers to several themes seen elsewhere in the Bible.
  - God ruling and caring for the world through his word, 4-5; *see Psalms 107:20; 147:15, 18.*
  - God collecting the waters, 7; *see Genesis 1:9-10; Job 38:8-11; Psalm 104:9; and Proverbs 8:29.*

### God

His Triune nature: He exists as a Trinity of Father (here called Yahweh), Son (the Word), and Holy Spirit, 4.

#### His greatness

- ◆ He created and formed the world by his word, 6-9.
- ◆ His counsel controls the nations, 10-11.
- ◆ He is eternal, 11.
- ◆ He looks from heaven upon all the world, that is, he is transcendent, omniscient, and omnipresent, 13. *See Psalm 14:2 and Job 28:24.*
- ◆ He not only sees but also fashions the hearts of all men, 15.
- ◆ He has the power to save his people from death and to provide for them, 19. *See Psalm 37:19.*

## His goodness

- ◆ He and his word are right, 4.
- ◆ All his works are done in truth – that is, faithfulness to his character and his promises, 4.
- ◆ He revealed his word to his chosen people, 4.
- ◆ He is good and full of love, 5, 22.
- ◆ He loves righteousness and justice, 5.
- ◆ He frustrates the plans of wicked nations, 10. *See Psalm 2:1–3 and Isaiah 8:10.*
- ◆ He chose Israel to be his special people, his inheritance, 12. *See Exodus 19:5; Deuteronomy 7:6; and Psalm 28:9.*
- ◆ He cares for his people in times of famine and national disaster, 19.
- ◆ He is their help and shield, 20. *See Psalm 28:7.*
- ◆ He frustrates the plans of wicked nations, 10. *See Psalm 2:1–3 and Isaiah 8:10.*
- ◆ He is holy, 21.

## Christ

His nature and power: He is the eternal Word of God, through whom the universe was created and by which it is now governed. *See John 1:1–3; Colossians 1:16; and Hebrews 1:3.*

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Rejoice in the Lord always! *See Philippians 4:4 and 1 Thessalonians 5:18.*
- ◆ Believe that God’s Word, now written in Scripture, is right and true, 4.
- ◆ Trust God to be right, true, faithful, just, and good, 4–5.
- ◆ Fear him and stand in awe of his creative and governing power.
- ◆ Do not fear the plans of great nations and their rulers.
- ◆ Trust in God alone for protection from danger and provision in times of scarcity.
- ◆ Hope in his love always.
- ◆ Trust in his holy name, now revealed to us as Father and Son.

# Psalm 34

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its cumulative fullness

- ◆ Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.
- ◆ Several phrases from this psalm are quoted or echoed elsewhere in the Bible.
  - “I sought the LORD, and He heard me, and delivered me,” 4; *see Psalm 30:2-3*.
  - “They looked to him and were radiant,” 5; *see Exodus 34:29 and 2 Corinthians 18*.
  - “The Angel of the LORD,” 7; *see Genesis 32:1 and Psalm 35:6*.
  - “Taste and see that the LORD is good,” 8; *see Hebrews 6:5 and 1 Peter 2:3*.
  - “There is no want [lack] to those who fear Him,” 9, and “those who seek the LORD shall not lack any good thing,” 10; *see Psalms 23:1; 84:11*.
  - “I will teach you the fear of the LORD,” 11; *see Psalm 32:8 and 1 Peter 3:10-12*.
  - “The eyes of the LORD are on the righteous,” 15; *see Psalm 33:18*.
  - “The LORD is near to those who have a broken heart, and saves such as have a contrite spirit,” 18; *see Psalms 51:17; 145:18; and Isaiah 57:15*.
  - “He guards all his bones; not one of them is broken,” 20; *see John 19:33, 36*.
- ◆ This psalm also speaks about blessing or praising God at all times, 1; this is a recurrent theme in the Bible. *See Ephesians 5:18 and 1 Thessalonians 5:18*.

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is omniscient and omnipresent, hearing the prayers of his people, 4, 6.
- ◆ He has the power to deliver his people from danger, 4, 6.
- ◆ He possesses transforming glory, 5.
- ◆ He possesses all things and can distribute them to his people, 10.

- ◆ He has the authority to acquit and to condemn sinners, 16, 21–22.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He hears and answers the prayers of his needy people, 4–7, 15, 17.
- ◆ He is essentially and intrinsically good, 8.
- ◆ He allows his people to experience his goodness, 8.
- ◆ He provides his people with all they need, 10.
- ◆ He cares for and considers the condition of his people, 15.
- ◆ He rejects and punishes those who do evil without repentance, 16.
- ◆ He particularly pities and comforts those who are brokenhearted and contrite, 18.
- ◆ He limits the amount and degree of evil and harm that his people can suffer, 20.
- ◆ He redeems (saves by paying a price) the souls of his people, 22. *See Psalm 25:22.*
- ◆ He does not condemn those who trust in him, that is, though they are sinners, if they trust in him, he acquits them of guilt and spares them from its penalty, 22.

## Christ

#### His prefiguration

- ◆ He is the innocent Servant of God who suffered a great deal while on earth, 6, 19.
- ◆ He may be the Angel of the Lord referred to here, 7. *See Genesis 28:13–17 and Judges 13:17.*
- ◆ He is the Lord, whose goodness we may taste by faith, 8. *See John 6:35 and 1 Peter 2:2.*
- ◆ God delivered him from the grave by resurrecting him from the dead, 19.
- ◆ His bones were not broken on the Cross, 20.

## The People of God

#### Their devotion

- ◆ They praise the LORD from thankful hearts, 1–3.
- ◆ They are humble, 2.
- ◆ They have tasted the goodness of the Lord through faith, 8.
- ◆ They fear – that is, love, reverence, stand in awe of, and trust – the Lord, 9.
- ◆ They do all they can to turn from evil and do good, 11–14.

- ◆ They are generally righteous in their conduct, 15.
- ◆ They are contrite and repentant about their sins, 18.

### Their hope

- ◆ They seek the Lord in prayer, 4.
- ◆ They look to him constantly, 5.
- ◆ They cry out to him when they are in trouble, 6.

## Salvation

Its recipients: It comes to the people of God, who are described above.

### Its substance

- ◆ Deliverance from evil, 4, 17, 19
  - In the Old Testament, this was deliverance from danger and death.
  - In the New Testament, it is deliverance from Satan and the penalty and power of sin.
  - Eventually, it will be deliverance from eternal death and the presence of sin.
- ◆ A personal experience or “taste” of the goodness and grace of God, 8
- ◆ A sincere desire to fear and obey God, 11-14
- ◆ A changed heart about sin, 18
- ◆ Redemption from the penalty, power, and presence of sin by the shed blood of Jesus, 22; *see Ephesians 1:7 and Titus 2:14.*
- ◆ No condemnation for sin, though we deserve such condemnation, 22; *see Romans 8:1.*

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Praise God always, regardless of our circumstances.
- ◆ Invite others to praise God with us when we have experienced answered prayer.
- ◆ Call out to God when we are in trouble.
- ◆ Try to keep our gaze fixed on Jesus Christ as he is revealed to us in the Bible.
- ◆ Ask God to help us turn from evil and do good.
- ◆ Believe that God will answer our prayers.
- ◆ Expect to suffer in this life, as Jesus did.
- ◆ Look to God to deliver us at death or when Christ returns.

- ◆ Thank God for sending Jesus to die for us and to deliver us from sin and its consequences.

# Psalm 35

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its cumulative fullness

- ◆ Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.
- ◆ This psalm refers to several themes seen elsewhere in the Bible.
  - Shame and dishonor for those who act wickedly, 4, 26; *see Psalms 25:3; 109:29.*
  - The wicked being like chaff before the judgment of God, 5; *see Job 21:18; Psalm 83:13; Isaiah 29:5; and Matthew 3:12.*
  - The Angel of the LORD, 5; *see Psalm 34:7.*
  - The wicked digging a pit to catch and kill the righteous and falling into that same pit, 7-8; *see Psalms 7:15; 9:15; 57:6; Proverbs 26:27; 28:10; and Ecclesiastes 10:8.*
  - Sudden destruction for the wicked, 8; *see Psalm 55:23; Isaiah 47:11; and 1 Thessalonians 5:3.*
  - Rejoicing in God and his salvation, 9; *see Psalm 33:1, 21; Philippians 4:1, 4; and 1 Thessalonians 5:18.*
  - Thanking and praising God in the great assembly of his people, 18, 28; *see Psalms 22:22, 25; 40:9.*

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is a mighty warrior, 1-3.
- ◆ He is unique and incomparable, 10. *See Exodus 15:11; Psalms 71:19; 86:8; Isaiah 40:18; and Micah 7:8.*
- ◆ He knows and sees everything, 22.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He vindicates his faithful followers, 1, 23-24.
- ◆ He helps his people against their enemies, 2-3.

- ◆ He is the salvation of his people, delivering them from enemies who are too strong for them, 3, 9-10.
- ◆ He pursues and destroys the enemies of his people, 6.
- ◆ He takes pleasure in the prosperity of his servants, 27.
- ◆ He is righteous, 28.

## Christ

His identity: His name, Jesus, means “Yahweh is salvation,” 3. *See Matthew 1:21.*

### His life and adversity

- ◆ He was hated and persecuted without cause, 7. *See Psalm 25:3, 19 and John 15:25.*
- ◆ Fierce false witnesses rose up against him, 11. *See Matthew 26:59-62.*
- ◆ His enemies mocked him, saying, “Aha!” 21. *See Matthew 27:39-44.*
- ◆ He experienced the absence of God on the Cross, 22. *See Matthew 27:45.*

His authority as Judge: As the only truly innocent sufferer and as the Son of Man, the righteous Judge, he prays this and other imprecatory psalms against his unrepentant enemies. *See Matthew 23.*

His relationship with the Father: He is the Servant of God, in whom the Father takes pleasure, 27. *See Isaiah 42:1 and Matthew 3:17.*

## Sin

### It includes

- ◆ Seeking to harm others without cause, 1, 3-4, 7, 19
- ◆ Plundering the poor and needy, 10
- ◆ Bearing false and malicious witness against others, and any kind of slander (including imputing positions to them falsely), 11
- ◆ Returning good with evil, 12
- ◆ Rejoicing in the adversity of others, 15, 21
- ◆ Mocking others, 16
- ◆ Plotting evil against those who do no wrong, 20
- ◆ Mocking and scorning those who are suffering, 21
- ◆ Being confident in victory, 25

# Life

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## Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Ask God to vindicate us when we are wrongly accused and attacked.
- ◆ Rejoice in God's salvation all day long.
- ◆ Fast and pray when others, even our enemies, are sick.
- ◆ Give thanks to God among others for his salvation.
- ◆ Speak of God's righteous acts to others all day.

# Psalm 36

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its cumulative fullness

- ◆ Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.
- ◆ Several phrases from this psalm are quoted or referred to elsewhere in the Bible.
  - “There is no fear of God before his eyes,” 1; *see Romans 3:18*.
  - “A way that is not good,” 4; *see Isaiah 66:2*.
- ◆ This psalm also refers to several themes seen elsewhere in the Bible.
  - Planning wickedness while in bed, 4; *see Proverbs 4:16 and Micah 2:11*.
  - God’s mercy [Hebrew *chesed*, lovingkindness, love, steadfast love] and truth [Hebrew *emeth*, faithfulness], 5; *see Exodus 34:6; Psalms 57:3; 61:7; 85:10; 89:14; and John 1:14*.
  - Taking shelter under the shadow of God’s wings, 7; *see Psalms 17:8; 57:1; 91:1, 4*.
  - God feeding his people good things, 8; *see Psalms 23:5–6; 63:5; 65:4; Isaiah 26:6; and Jeremiah 31:12–14*.
  - God’s river, 8; *see Psalm 46:4 and Revelation 22:1*.
  - God’s fountain of life, 9; *see Jeremiah 2:13 and John 4:10, 14*.

#### Its source

- ◆ Biblical revelation consists of the words of God given by him to chosen men, who wrote them down without error.
- ◆ “An oracle within my heart,” 1, refers to a prophetic word from God. *See Numbers 23:7; Isaiah 13:1; Jeremiah 23:33–38; and Ezekiel 12:10*.

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is transcendent, far above the heavens and deeper than the deepest sea, 5–6.
- ◆ He is everlasting, like the mighty mountains, 6.
- ◆ He rules all living things, 6.

- ◆ He has inexhaustible supplies of life, 8–9.
- ◆ He dwells in inapproachable light, 9.

### His goodness

- ◆ He is full of limitless love [*chesed*; “mercy” or “lovingkindness,” NKJV], 5, 7, 10.
- ◆ He is utterly faithful to all his promises, 5.
- ◆ He preserves the lives of men and animals, 6.
- ◆ He allows his people to take shelter under his protection, 7.
- ◆ He satisfies them from his rich resources of life and happiness, 8–9. *See Psalm 16:11.*
- ◆ He gives light to his people, 9.
- ◆ He is completely righteous and just in all his judgments, 6, 10.
- ◆ He punishes the wicked, 11–12.

## Christ

His prefiguration: He is prefigured in this psalm in this way.

- ◆ His nature and power
  - He is the Son of David and the true Servant of the LORD, as the title states. *See Matthew 1:1; 12:18.*
  - He embodies lovingkindness [grace] and truth, 5, 7, 10. *See John 1:14.*
  - He is now exalted above the heavens, 5. *See Ephesians 1:20–23 and Colossians 3:1.*
  - He gives the water of life – that is, the Holy Spirit – to those who believe in him, 8–9. *See John 4:10, 14; 7:37–39.*
  - He is the light of the world, in himself and for us, 9. *See John 8:1 and 1 Peter 2:10.*

## Sin

It includes

- ◆ Not fearing God, 1
- ◆ Deceiving oneself about one’s own sin, 2
- ◆ Speaking words of evil and deceit, 3
- ◆ Turning away from wisdom and goodness, 3
- ◆ Devising wickedness, 4
- ◆ Positioning oneself away from good, 4

- ◆ Not hating evil, 4
- ◆ Pride, 11
- ◆ Doing iniquity – that is, anything contrary to God’s law, 12

Its consequences: It leads to eternal death, 12. *See Romans 6:23.*

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Be sensitive to one’s sin; confess it to God and forsake it immediately.
- ◆ Avoid all the things listed above as “Sin: It includes.”
- ◆ Meditate upon God’s goodness and greatness constantly. *See Colossians 3:1–3.*
- ◆ Trust in God for protection and provision of all good things.
- ◆ Seek satisfaction – pleasure, delight, life, light, and love – in God alone, as he is revealed in Christ.
- ◆ Do not seek satisfaction from any creature, including any person.

# Psalm 37

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its cumulative fullness

- ♦ Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.
- ♦ Several phrases from this psalm are quoted or referred to elsewhere in the Bible.
  - “Do not fret because of evildoers,” 1; *see Psalm 73:3 and Proverbs 23:17; 24:19.*
  - “Delight yourself also in the LORD,” 4; *see Job 22:26; Psalms 16:11; 34:8; 36:8-10; 94:19; and Isaiah 58:14.*
  - “Commit your way to the LORD,” 5; *see Psalm 55:22; Proverbs 16:3; and 1 Peter 5:7.*
  - “Rest in the LORD,” 7; *see Psalm 62:5.*
  - “Wait patiently for Him,” 7; *see Psalms 25:3; 27:14; 40:1; 62:5.*
  - “Cease from anger,” 8; *see Ephesians 4:26.*
  - “Those who wait on the LORD [that is, the meek and the righteous] . . . shall inherit the earth,” 9, 11, 29, 34; *see Psalm 25:3 and Matthew 5:5.*
  - “The wicked shall perish,” 20; their “descendants . . . shall be cut off,” 28; and “the transgressors shall be destroyed together; the future of the wicked shall be cut off,” 38; *see Psalm 1:4-6.*
  - “The steps of a good man are ordered [established] by the LORD,” 23; *see Psalms 40:2; 66:9; 119:5.*
  - “Depart from evil, and do good,” 27; *see Psalm 34:14.*
  - “The LORD . . . does not forsake His saints,” 28; *see Hebrews 13:5.*
  - “The Law of his God is in his heart,” 31; *see Psalm 1:2.*
  - “The salvation of the righteous is from the LORD,” 39; *see Exodus 15:2 and Psalms 3:8; 24:5; 25:5; 27:1; 28:8; 35:3; 62:1-2; 68:19; 118:14.*
  - “He is their strength in the time of trouble,” 39; *see Psalms 28:7; 29:11; 31:4, 24; and Isaiah 40:29-31.*
- ♦ This psalm also refers to several themes seen elsewhere in the Bible.

- Perishing like the grass of the field at the judgment of God, 2; *see Job 14:2; Psalms 90:5-6; 92:7; Isaiah 40:6-8; James 1:11; and 1 Peter 1:24-25.*
- Trusting in the LORD, 3; *see Psalms 4:5; 25:2; 31:6; 40:3-4; 52:8; 55:23; 62:8; 115:9-11; Proverbs 3:5; and Isaiah 26:4.*
- The LORD laughing at the wicked and their schemes, 13; *see Psalms 2:4; 59:8.*
- Satisfaction in righteousness, though having few possessions, 16; *see Proverbs 15:16; 16:8; and 1 Timothy 6:6.*

## God

### His greatness

- ◆ He possesses all resources and can give them to whom he pleases, 4.
- ◆ He is omniscient, knowing the thoughts and desires of our hearts, 4.
- ◆ He can do whatever he wants. In particular, he can vindicate the righteous, 5-6.
- ◆ He is at rest, not perturbed or disturbed by the actions of the wicked, 7.
- ◆ He is patient, taking his time to work out his good purposes, 7.
- ◆ He owns the entire world and can give it to whom he pleases, 9. *See Psalm 24:1.*
- ◆ He laughs at the plans of the wicked, 13.
- ◆ He is all-foreknowing, seeing the appointed destruction of the wicked, 13, and knowing the days of the righteous, 18.
- ◆ He has the power to uphold his people in times of trouble, 17.
- ◆ He is eternal and thus able to grant an eternal inheritance, 18, 27, 29.

### His goodness

- ◆ He is just and will punish unrepentant evildoers, 2, 9, 13-15, 17, 20.
- ◆ He is faithful to his character and to all his promises, 3.
- ◆ He is good, wants us to be and do good, and delights in the good we do, 3, 23.
- ◆ He is inherently delightful, 4. *See Psalms 16:11; 36:8.*
- ◆ He is righteous and just and vindicates his faithful followers, 5-6.
- ◆ He is faithful to his promise to give the land to the descendants of Abraham, and to give the new earth to those who have followed Christ, 9, 18, 29. *See Genesis 12:1; 13:14-17; and Matthew 5:5; 25:34.*
- ◆ He orders, guides, and establishes the steps and life course of his faithful followers, 23.

- ◆ He upholds the righteous in times of trouble, 23–24.
- ◆ He never forsakes his people, 25, 28.
- ◆ He loves justice, 28.
- ◆ He does not condemn his people on the day of judgment; instead, he reckons their faith as righteousness to them, 33.
- ◆ He is wise and gives wisdom to those who meditate on his Word, 30.
- ◆ He is the salvation of his people from both temporal and eternal destruction, 39–40.
- ◆ He strengthens his people in times of trouble, 39.

## Christ

### His provision for his people

- ◆ He gave us an example of meekness and trust in God when he was assailed by enemies, as seen in the entire psalm.
- ◆ In him we may find soul rest, 7. *See Hebrews 4:1–10.*
- ◆ In him we inherit the new heavens and new earth, 11. *See Romans 8:17; Ephesians 1:11; and 1 Peter 1:3–4.*
- ◆ He showed mercy and gave to people all day, 21.

## The People of God

### Their lives

- ◆ They find rest and peace in God when enemies attack them, 1, 7 (as well as the whole psalm).
- ◆ They demonstrate gentleness and meekness to those who would harm them, 11.
- ◆ They are generous and kind to others, 26.
- ◆ They speak words of wisdom and righteousness, 30.

### Their devotion

- ◆ They do good, 3.
- ◆ They delight themselves in God and his goodness, 4.
- ◆ They commit their ways to him, 5.
- ◆ They seek to live righteous and upright lives, 16, 18.
- ◆ They meditate upon God’s Word as revealed in Scripture, 31.

- ◆ They try to adhere to God's way of righteousness, 34.

#### Their hope

- ◆ They trust in the Lord, 3, 40.
- ◆ They wait patiently for the Lord to save them, 9, 34.

## Sin

#### It includes

- ◆ Doing anything lawless, 1
- ◆ Making wicked plans and carrying them out, 7
- ◆ Scheming to harm righteous people, 12, 14, 32
- ◆ Not repaying debts, 21

## The Last Things

#### The final judgment

- ◆ Those who have lived in unrepentant sin will be utterly destroyed, 2, 9-10, 13-15, 20, 22, 28, 34-36, 38. *See Matthew 3:12; 7:19; 13:31; Romans 2:4-10; and Revelation 20:11-15; 21:8.*
- ◆ Those who have trusted and followed him will inherit the world, 9, 11, 18, 22, 29. *See Matthew 5:5; 25:31-46; Romans 2:4-10; 1 Peter 1:3-5; 2 Peter 3:13; and Revelation 21:1-7.*

## Life

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#### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Do not burn with anger when you see the wicked prosper; wait for God to judge them.
- ◆ Do not get upset when you are attacked for your righteousness and your faith in Christ; trust in God to vindicate you at the proper time.
- ◆ Meanwhile, meditate on God's Word and rest in him.
- ◆ Do good as you have the opportunity.
- ◆ Treat your enemies with mildness and gentleness.
- ◆ Seek to delight in God above all else and to make him your heart's desire.

- ◆ Trust that God will supply all you need in difficult days and will deliver you in times of trouble.
- ◆ Set your hope completely on the eternal inheritance that will come to all who patiently wait for Christ's return.

# Psalm 38

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its cumulative fullness

- ◆ Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.
- ◆ Several phrases from this psalm are quoted or referred to elsewhere in the Bible.
  - “Do not rebuke me in Your wrath,” 1; *see Psalm 6:3.*
  - “All my desire is before You,” 9; *see Psalm 37:4.*
  - “My loved ones . . . stand aloof from my plague,” 11; *see Psalms 31:11; 88:18.*
  - “In You, LORD, I hope,” 15; *see Psalms 25:5; 31:24; 39:7.*
  - “I will be in anguish over my sin,” 18; *see 2 Corinthians 8:9-10.*
  - “Do not forsake me,” 21; *see Psalm 27:9.*
  - “O Lord, my salvation,” 22; *see Psalm 37:39-40.*

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He has the power to afflict people with all sorts of punishments, 1-8.
- ◆ He knows everything, including the desires of our hearts, 9.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He hears the prayers of his people, 15.
- ◆ He is the salvation of his believing people, 22.
- ◆ He sent his Son Jesus to suffer on our behalf. *See John 3:16 and 2 Corinthians 5:21.*
- ◆ He is holy, so he responds to sin with wrath, 1.

### Christ

His prefiguration: He is prefigured in this psalm in this way.

- ◆ His life and adversity
  - He was rebuked – even punished – in God’s wrath for us, 1. *See Psalm 22; Isaiah 53; 2 Corinthians 5:21; and 1 Peter 2:24; 3:18.*
  - He endured all sorts of physical and emotional torment as part of his vicarious suffering for us, 2–9. *See Psalm 31:9–10.*
  - He was abandoned, at least to some degree, by his friends and even his relatives, 11. *See Matthew 26:36–54, 69–75; 27:55–56.*
  - His enemies laid traps and snares for him, trying to trick him into saying something they could use to accuse him, 12. *See Psalm 35:4; Matthew 16:1; 22:15–40; and John 8:1–6.*
  - His enemies plotted his destruction, 12. *See Matthew 12:14; 26:1–5, 14–16.*
  - He kept silent at his trial, 13–14. *See Isaiah 53:7 and 1 Peter 2:23.*
  - He was constantly in sorrow, 17. *See Isaiah 53:3 and Matthew 26:37.*
  - His enemies hated him without cause or justification, 19. *See John 15:25.*
  - They were his adversaries because he followed what was good, 20. *See Matthew 12:9–14.*
  - He was forsaken by God on the Cross, 21. *See Psalms 22:1; 27:46.*

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Expect to be hated and wrongly mistreated for the sake of Christ.
- ◆ Thank God for sending Jesus to die for our sins in our place!
- ◆ Read the psalms and listen for the voice of Jesus.
- ◆ Trust in God when we are in trouble.
- ◆ When we are suffering, search our hearts to see whether perhaps God may be disciplining us for sin. If so, confess our sins and ask for his forgiveness, trusting in the work of Christ on the Cross on our behalf to secure our pardon.
- ◆ When we are suffering, realize that Jesus knows. *See Hebrews 4:14–16.*
- ◆ When we are suffering unjustly, see it as a way to know Jesus better and to love him more. *See Philippians 3:10.*
- ◆ Meditate on how much Jesus suffered for us and love him for it with a love undying. *See Ephesians 6:24.*
- ◆ Praise Jesus forever for his loving sacrifice for us. *See Revelation 5:8–10.*

- ◆ Preach the good news of Jesus' saving work to the whole world! *See Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:26-28; Acts 1:8; and John 20:21.*

# Psalm 39

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its cumulative fullness

- ◆ Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.
- ◆ Several phrases from this psalm are quoted or referred to elsewhere in the Bible.
  - “I was mute with silence,” 2; *see Psalm 38:13.*
  - “Lord, make me to know my end,” 4; *see Psalms 90:12; 119:84.*
  - “You have made my days as handbreadths,” 5; *see Psalm 90:3-6.*
  - “Every man . . . is but a vapor, . . . a shadow,” 5-6; *see Psalm 62:9; Ecclesiastes 6:12; and James 4:14.*
  - “My hope is in You,” 7; *see Psalm 38:15.*
  - “Do not make me the reproach of the foolish,” 8; *see Psalms 44:13; 79:4; 119:22.*
  - “Remove Your plague from me,” 10; *see Job 9:34; 13:21.*
  - “With rebukes You correct man for iniquity,” 11; *see Proverbs 3:11-12 and Hebrews 12:3-11.*
  - “I am a stranger with You, a sojourner,” 12; *see Genesis 47:9; Hebrews 11, 13; and 1 Peter 2:11.*

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is eternal, knowing the future without end, 4.
- ◆ He is omniscient, knowing the life spans of all people before they die, 4.
- ◆ He is omniscient and omnipresent, knowing the prayers of his people, 12.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He punished Adam and Eve and their descendants with death for their sins, 5. *See Genesis 3:19 and Romans 5:12.*
- ◆ He can and does deliver his people from the guilt and some of the consequences of their sins, 8.

- ◆ He hears and answers the prayers of his people, 12.
- ◆ He corrects his people for their sins in order that they might learn not to sin again, 11, 13.

## Christ

His prefiguration: He is prefigured in this psalm in this way.

- ◆ His life and adversity
  - He held his tongue when the wicked accused him, 1–2. *See Isaiah 53:7; Matthew 27:12–14; and 1 Peter 2:23.*
  - He endured the reproach and mocking of the foolish, 8. *See Matthew 27:27–31.*
  - He was consumed by the blow of God’s hand, 10. *See Isaiah 53:10.*
  - The punishment he suffered for our sins destroyed his natural appearance, 11. *See Isaiah 53:2.*

## Mankind

Our fallen state

- ◆ We are frail and short-lived, 5–6, 11.
- ◆ We acquire wealth by labor, only to leave it to others, 6. *See Ecclesiastes 2:21–22.*

## Life

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Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Expect to be disciplined by God for sin.
- ◆ Hope in God, not in the vain riches and short days of this mortal life, 6–7.
- ◆ When we are suffering God’s chastisement, let us confess our sins and ask for his forgiveness, 8.
- ◆ Do not complain when God disciplines us, but accept the pain as from a loving Father, 9.
- ◆ Ask God to shorten our time of correction, 10.
- ◆ Realize that this life is short and make the most of the time, 12–13. *See Ephesians 5:15–16.*

- ◆ Thank God for sending Jesus to suffer for our sins in our place so that we might have God's forgiveness and favor now and eternal life after we die.
- ◆ Praise and love Jesus for suffering so much for us.

# Psalm 40

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its cumulative fullness

- ◆ Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.
- ◆ Several phrases from this psalm are quoted or referred to elsewhere in the Bible.
  - “I waited patiently for the LORD,” 1; *see Psalms 25:1; 27:14; 37:7; 62:1.*
  - “Out of the miry clay,” 2; *see Psalm 69:2 and Jeremiah 38:6.*
  - “He . . . set my feet upon a rock,” 2; *see Psalm 27:5.*
  - “A new song,” 3; *see Psalms 32:7; 33:3; 98:1; and Revelation 5:9; 14:3.*
  - “Many will see it and fear, and will trust in the LORD,” 3; *see Psalms 18:49; 22:22–31.*
  - “Blessed is that man who makes the LORD his trust,” 4; *see Psalms 21:1–2; 146:5; and Jeremiah 17:7. See also Psalm 1:2.*
  - “Your wonderful works,” 5; *see Psalm 9:1.*
  - “Your thoughts [that is, plans and intentions] toward us,” 5; *see Psalm 139:17 and Isaiah 25:1; 46:10–11; 55:8.*
  - “Sacrifice and offering You did not desire,” 6; *see 1 Samuel 15:22; Psalm 51:16; Isaiah 1:11; Jeremiah 6:20; 7:22–23; Amos 5:22; and Hebrews 10:5–9.*
  - “My ears You have opened,” 6 – which may be to say, “you made me willing to listen to Your voice.” (Or if the translation should be, “You pierced,” it would refer to piercing the ear of a slave to show that he belonged to his master.) *See Exodus 21:6; Deuteronomy 15:17; Proverbs 28:9; and Isaiah 48:8; 50:4–5.*
  - “I delight to do Your will, O my God,” 8; *see Psalms 1:2; 37:4; and Proverbs 23:1.*
  - “Your law is within my heart,” 8; *see Deuteronomy 17:18–20; 2 Kings 11:12; Psalms 1:1; 37:31; Jeremiah 31:33; and 2 Corinthians 3:3.*
  - “My iniquities have overtaken me,” 12; *see Psalms 38:4; 39:8, 11; 41:4; 65:3.*

- “Let them be ashamed,” 14; *see Psalms 35:4, 26; 70:2.*
- “Who say to me, ‘Aha, aha!’” 15; *see Psalms 35:21, 25; 70:3; and Ezekiel 36:2.*
- “I am poor and needy,” 17; *see Psalms 34:6; 70:5; 86:1; 109:22.*
- “Do not delay, O my God,” 17; *see Psalm 70:5 and Daniel 9:9.*
- ♦ This psalm also refers to several themes seen elsewhere in the Bible.
  - Preaching about God in the assembly, which God prefers to empty sacrifices, 6, 9; *see Psalms 22:22, 25; 50:7–15, 23.*
  - God’s lovingkindness and truth, 10–11; *see Psalms 25:10; 26:3.*
- ♦ Psalm 70 is a revised version of Psalm 40:13–17.

## God

### His greatness

- ♦ He has the power to bring his people up from otherwise impossible situations, including death, 2. *See Ephesians 1:19–21.*
- ♦ He has the power to perform mighty works for his people, 5.
- ♦ His understanding and intelligence are infinite, 5. *See Psalm 147:5; Isaiah 40:12–13, 28; and Romans 11:33.*
- ♦ He knows everything that we do and say, 9.

### His goodness

- ♦ He hears and answers the cries of his people, 1. *See Psalm 34:4, 6, 17.*
- ♦ He delivers his people from danger and death, sometimes through death into eternal life, as with Jesus, 2. *See Acts 2:22–24.*
- ♦ He gives them a “new song,” celebrating a new deliverance, 3.
- ♦ He does mighty works of salvation for his people, 5.
- ♦ He has plans for them – plans for good, 5. *See Jeremiah 29:11.*
- ♦ He has revealed his will to his people through the Scriptures, 7–8. *See Psalms 1:2; 147:19–20; and Romans 9:4.*
- ♦ He is righteous, 9–10.
- ♦ He is faithful to all his promises, 10.
- ♦ He saves his people, 10.
- ♦ He is full of lovingkindness, 10–11.
- ♦ He is full of mercy, 11.
- ♦ He is true in every way, 11.

- ◆ He gives joy to those who seek him and love his salvation, 16.
- ◆ He thinks about and cares for the poor and needy, 17.

## Christ

His prefiguration: He is prefigured in this psalm in these ways.

- ◆ His resurrection
  - He waited patiently for God's salvation, 1.
  - He was brought up from the "pit" of death by God, 2.
  - Many have "seen" his resurrection with their eyes and by faith and have trusted in God as a result, 3. *See Acts 2:14-41.*
- ◆ His perfection and teaching
  - He came to do God's will as written in the Old Testament Scripture, 7-8. *See especially Hebrews 10:5-9. See also Matthew 4:4, 7, 10; 21:42; 26:54, 56; 24:27; and John 4:34; 5:30; 5:39; 13:18; 17:12; 19:28.*
  - He had the law of God in his heart, 8, as seen by the Scriptures cited above and many others, such as Matthew 5:17-48.
  - He proclaimed God's righteousness, love [or mercy], and truth in the great assembly, 9-10. *See Matthew 5-7.*
- ◆ His sacrifice
  - He took upon himself our innumerable iniquities, 12. *See 1 Peter 24.*

## Sin

It includes

- ◆ Pride, 4
- ◆ Respecting those who are proud, 4
- ◆ Lying, 4; *see Revelation 22:15.*
- ◆ Seeking others' harm, 14
- ◆ Mocking those who suffer, 15

## Salvation

Its substance

- ◆ Deliverance from danger and death, 2, 13
- ◆ Joy, 3, 16
- ◆ Experience of God's mercy, love, and faithfulness, 10-11

## The People of God

### Their devotion

- ◆ They sing praises to God, 3.
- ◆ They desire to do God's will as written in Scripture, 7-8.
- ◆ They love the Bible, meditate upon it, and memorize it, 8. *See Psalm 1:2.*
- ◆ They give testimony to God's greatness and goodness and especially to his salvation to others, 9-10. *See Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15; and Acts 1:8.*
- ◆ They honestly confess their sins, 12.

### Their hope

- ◆ They wait patiently for God to save them, 1.
- ◆ They trust in God, 4.
- ◆ They acknowledge their need for God, 12-14, 17.
- ◆ They have joy in and love for God and his salvation, 16.

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Expect to suffer in this life, including suffering for our faith in Christ.
- ◆ Wait patiently for God to deliver us, either from death or through death.
- ◆ Cry out to him when we are in trouble.
- ◆ Praise God when he answers our prayers.
- ◆ Proclaim his goodness and greatness to others.
- ◆ Read, mark, learn, digest, and believe the Bible.
- ◆ Thank God for sending Jesus to save us from our sins.
- ◆ Thank God for raising us from spiritual death through faith in Christ. *See Ephesians 2:1-10 and 1 Peter 1:3-4.*

# Psalm 41

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its cumulative fullness

- ◆ Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.
- ◆ Several phrases and ideas from this psalm are quoted or referred to elsewhere in the Bible.
  - “You will not deliver him to the will of his enemies,” 2; *see Psalm 27:12.*
  - God strengthening his people, 3; *see Psalms 27:14; 28:7; 29:11; 31:4.*
  - “Heal my soul, for I have sinned against You,” 4; *see Psalms 6:2; 103:3; 147:3.*
  - “Blessed be the LORD God of Israel,” 13; *see Psalms 72:18-19; 89:52; 106:48; 150:6.*

Its structure: Biblical revelation employs various literary forms and structures. The Book of Psalms is divided into five “Books,” each ending with a doxology. Psalm 41 concludes the first book.

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He has the power to deliver his people from deep distress, including death and illness, 1-3.
- ◆ He is eternal, 13.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He rescues his people from all sorts of distress, including illness and even death, 1-3, 10.
- ◆ He gives strength to his faithful followers even when he allows them to be sick or weak, 3. *See Isaiah 40:31.*
- ◆ Even when his people have sinned, he shows mercy to them when they are in need and confess their sins to him, 4, 10.
- ◆ He takes pleasure in his faithful servants, 11.

## Christ

His mercy and grace: He considered the poor and needy all his life, 1. *See Luke 4:18, 40; 6:20.*

### His life and adversity

- ◆ His enemies constantly spoke evil against him, 5.
- ◆ His enemies plotted his death, 7. *See Psalm 71:10; Matthew 22:15; 26:3-4; Acts 4:25-26.*
- ◆ His friend Judas, with whom he had often eaten, betrayed him, 9. *See Matthew 26:14-16 and John 13:18, 21-30.*

### His relationship with the Father

- ◆ He is the faithful Servant of God, in whom God was (and is) well pleased, 11. *See Isaiah 42:1 and Matthew 3:17.*
- ◆ God upheld him in his integrity, for he did no wrong, 12.

### His resurrection

- ◆ He was raised up from death by God's power, 10. *See Ephesians 1:19-20.*
- ◆ God set him before his face for all eternity after his resurrection, 12. *See Acts 2:25, quoting Psalm 16:8-11.*

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Cry out to God for help and healing when we are ill.
- ◆ Care for the poor and needy as often as we have the opportunity. *See Galatians 6:10.*
- ◆ Expect people to mistreat us, even our (former) friends.
- ◆ Thank God for sending Jesus to suffer in our place, that we may be raised up to eternal life.

# Psalm 42

## Truth

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### Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ Thirsting for God, 2; *see Psalms 63:1; 84:2; and 143:6.*
- ◆ Tears of sorrow, 3; *see Psalms 80:5 and 102:9.*
- ◆ “They say . . . ‘Where is your God?’” 3; *see Psalms 79:10; 115:2; Joel 2:17; Micah 7:10.*
- ◆ “I pour out my soul,” 4; *see 1 Samuel 1:15 and Psalm 62:8.*
- ◆ “I went with them to the house of God,” 4; *see Psalms 43:3; 122:1; and Isaiah 30:29.*
- ◆ “Why are you cast down, O my soul?” 5, 6, 11; *see Psalm 43:5; Matthew 26:38.*
- ◆ “Hope in God,” 5, 11; *see Psalm 43:5; Romans 5:2; 8:24–25; 12:12; 1 Peter 1:13; and 1 John 3:2–3.*
- ◆ “All Your waves and billows have gone over me,” 7; *see Psalm 69:1–2; 88:7; and Jonah 2:3.*
- ◆ “The LORD will command His lovingkindness,” 8; *see Psalm 133:3 and Deuteronomy 28:8.*
- ◆ “In the night His song will be with me,” 8; *see Job 35:10.*
- ◆ “The God of my life,” 8; *see Ecclesiastes 5:18; John 1:3; 11:25; 14:7; and 1 John 5:13.*
- ◆ “God my Rock,” 9; *see Psalms 18:2, 31, 46; 19:14; 62:2, 7; 95:1; and Deuteronomy 32:31, 37.*
- ◆ “Why have You forgotten me?” 9; *see Matthew 27:46.*
- ◆ “I shall yet praise Him,” 11; *see Psalms 22:22, 25; 71:22–24.*

Its literary forms: Biblical revelation includes many genres and moods, including songs of lament and prayers for deliverance, like this one.

### Its structure

- ◆ Psalm 42 begins Book Two of the Psalter, which is distinguished from Book One primarily by the dominant use of “God” (Elohim) rather than “LORD” (Yahweh).
- ◆ This psalm and Psalm 43 form one structural unit, with three stanzas (42:1–5; 42:6–11; 43:1–5). The two psalms came to be separated at some time.

## God

### His greatness

- ◆ He is “God,” Elohim, the creator of the world, 1–6, 9–11; *see Genesis 1:1*.
- ◆ He alone is the living God, 2; he has life in himself and is the source of life for all living beings, 8; *see Psalm 36:9 and John 5:26*.
- ◆ He has the power to help, that is, to save, his people from all trouble, 5, 11; *see Psalms 40:13, 17; and 41:1*.
- ◆ He commands all that happens, even adversity, 7.
- ◆ He rules over day and night, 8.
- ◆ He is the unique Rock, the strong place, the impregnable fortress, for his people, 9.

### His goodness

- ◆ He graciously dwelt among his people in the Tabernacle and then the Temple in Jerusalem, where his people could come and “appear” before him, 2, 4.
- ◆ He helps his people when they call upon him, 5, 11.
- ◆ He has a “countenance,” that is, a “face,” which as a metaphor for his favorable attention to his people, 5, 11.
- ◆ He hears prayer offered at any time or place, 6, 8.
- ◆ He is full of lovingkindness, which he lavishes upon his faithful people, 8; *see Exodus 34:6 and Psalm 103:8* (where “lovingkindness,” Hebrew *chesed*, is translated as “mercy”).
- ◆ He gives his people a joyful song even in the midst of darkness, 8.

## Christ

### His prefiguration

- ◆ The one who satisfies the soul-thirst of those who trust in him, 2; *see John 4:13–14; 7:37–39*.

- ◆ The one who shed bitter tears, 3; *see Hebrews 5:7.*
- ◆ The one whose soul was supremely “cast down,” 5; *see Matthew 26:38 and John 12:27.*
- ◆ The one who felt abandoned by God, 9; *see Matthew 27:46.*
- ◆ The one whose enemies reproached and mocked him, saying, in effect, “Where is your God?” 10; *see Matthew 27:39–42.*

## Mankind

### Our fallen state

- ◆ We long for God, even if we don’t know that it is he for whom our soul thirsts, 1–2.
- ◆ We experience great sorrows, expressed in tears, 3.

## Sin

It includes: Mocking God’s people when they are in trouble, 3, 10

## Salvation

### Its source and origin

- ◆ God, the living God, 1–6, 8–11
- ◆ The grace, or lovingkindness, of God, that is, his free, unmerited mercy, 8

### Its recipients

- ◆ Those who pray to him when they are in trouble, 1–11
- ◆ Those who trust and hope in God to deliver them, 5, 8, 11

## The People of God

### Their identity

- ◆ Long for intimate communion with God, 1–2
- ◆ Delight to worship God with other believers, 4

- ◆ Set their hope on God, 5, 11
- ◆ Experience times when God sends great trials to test them, 7
- ◆ Trust that God still loves them, and continue to pray to him, 8
- ◆ Suffer rejection and reproach from unbelievers, 10
- ◆ Praise God when he delivers them and even as they wait for him to deliver them, 5, 11

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Expect to have troubles in this life.
- ◆ Cry out to God in earnest prayer when we are in trouble.
- ◆ Remember God's past mercies to us, 4.
- ◆ Speak to our soul and remind ourselves of God's love, 6–8.
- ◆ Set our hope fully on God, who will never forsake us, 5, 11; *see Romans 8:31–39 and Hebrews 13:5.*

# Psalm 43

## Truth

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### Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ “Vindicate me, O God,” *see Psalms 26:1 and 35:24.*
- ◆ “You are the God of my strength,” 2; *see Psalms 18:1, 32; 28:7; 46:1; 62:7; 68:34; Exodus 15:2; 1 Chronicles 16:28; and Job 12:6.*
- ◆ “Send out Your light,” 3; *see Psalms 27:1; 119:105; Genesis 1:3; Proverbs 29:13; 2 Corinthians 4:5; 1 Peter 2:9; and 1 John 1:5.*
- ◆ “And Your truth [faithfulness],” 3; *see Psalms 25:10; 119:142; Genesis 24:48; John 16:13; and Ephesians 6:14.*
- ◆ “Your holy hill,” 3; *see Psalms 2:6; 3:4; 15:1.*
- ◆ “Your tabernacle [dwelling place],” 3; *see Psalms 27:4–5; 46:4; 61:4; 84:1; Exodus 26:1–37; and Revelation 21:3.*
- ◆ “The altar of God,” 4; *see Exodus 27:1–8.*
- ◆ “God, my exceeding joy,” 4; *see Psalms 16:11; 33:1; 68:3; 118:24; Matthew 25:21; John 15:11; 17:13; and Philipians 4:4.*
- ◆ “I will praise You, O God,” 4; *see Psalms 22:25; 34:1; 45:17; 65:1; 67:3; 150:6; Ephesians 12; and Hebrews 13:15.*

### Its literary structure

- ◆ This psalm and Psalm 42 form one structural unit, with three stanzas (42:1–5; 42:6–11; 43:1–5). The two psalms came to be separated at some time.
- ◆ Psalm 43:2 repeats 42:9 almost verbatim.
- ◆ Psalm 43:5 repeats 42:5 and 11.

### God

### His greatness

- ◆ He has the power to demonstrate that his innocent people are right and to deliver them from their enemies, 1.
- ◆ He is strong and is able to strengthen others, 2.

### His goodness

- ◆ He gives strength to his people, 2.
- ◆ He sometimes seems to abandon his people, but his apparent desertion draws his people closer to himself and will end in deliverance, 2, 5.
- ◆ He is light, and in him there is no moral darkness, 3. *See John 8:12; and 1 John 1:5.*
- ◆ He gives “light,” that is, encouragement, guidance, and life, to his people, 3.
- ◆ He is true and faithful, 3.
- ◆ He uses his truth, now recorded in the Bible, to lead and guide us back to himself, 3.
- ◆ He is holy and without any moral blemish, 3.
- ◆ He condescends to dwell among his people, 3.
- ◆ He established a sacrificial system with an altar and sacrifices to deal with our sin; now, in Christ, we have propitiation for our sins, 4. *See Romans 3:24–25; Hebrews 13:10; and 1 John 2:1.*
- ◆ He gives his people joy, 4.
- ◆ He allows himself to be our personal God, 4.

## Christ

### His prefiguration

- ◆ He is prefigured as the one who was persecuted by an ungodly, deceitful, and unjust nation, 1. *See Acts 2:23; 3:13–15; 4:27; and 1 Peter 2:21–24.*
- ◆ He felt as if God had forsaken him, 2. *See Matthew 27:46.*
- ◆ He is the light of the world that leads us to God, 3. *See John 1:4, 18; 8:12; 14:6; 1 Peter 3:18; Revelation 21:23.*
- ◆ He is God’s truth incarnate, 3. *See John 1:14; 14:6.*
- ◆ He was led from death into the presence of God and to eternal joy, 1–4. *See Acts 2:24–33.*
- ◆ He was vindicated by God through his resurrection from the dead, 1, 3–4. *See Acts 2:22–36 and Romans 1:4.*

## Mankind

### Our fallen state

- ◆ We are sometimes falsely accused, 1.
- ◆ We naturally feel great sorrow at those times, 2, 5.

## The People of God

### Their marks

- ◆ Persecution by ungodly people, 1; *see 2 Timothy 3:12.*
- ◆ Times of depression and doubt, 2, 5; *see Psalm 42:3, 5, 9, 11.*
- ◆ A longing to be with God, 3
- ◆ A desire to worship God, 4
- ◆ Rejoicing in God, 4; *see Romans 5:11 and Philippians 4:4.*
- ◆ Singing praises to God, 4; *see Acts 16:25 and Ephesians 5:19–20.*
- ◆ A firm faith in God's future salvation, 5; *see Romans 5:1–2, 9–10; 8:18–39.*

## Sin

### It includes

- ◆ Ungodliness, that is, not fearing and loving God above all else, 1; *see Romans 1:18.*
- ◆ All deception, 1
- ◆ All injustice, 1
- ◆ Oppressing innocent people, especially God's people, 2
- ◆ Remaining depressed when we have all the resources of God to rejoice, 5

## Salvation

### It includes

- ◆ Being vindicated, that is justified, in the eyes of God, even though we have sinned, 1; *see Romans 5:1; 8:1.*
- ◆ Being brought into God's gracious presence, 3; *see Romans 5:1; Ephesians 2:6–7, 16–17; and Hebrews 4:14–16.*

## The Last Things

### Their prefiguration

- ◆ The longing to be in God's presence on his holy hill, that is, Jerusalem, 3; *see Revelation 21:2-3.*
- ◆ The desire for light, 3; *see Revelation 21:3.*
- ◆ The hope of worshiping God joyfully in his temple and at his altar, 4-5; *see Revelation 21:3, 22.*

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Expect to face rejection and even reviling from ungodly people who mock our faith.
- ◆ Expect to have times of depression and doubt.
- ◆ Cry out to God in our distress.
- ◆ Trust God's promises that nothing can separate us from his love in Christ. *See Romans 8:18-39.*
- ◆ Nurture a passionate longing to be with God, now and forever.
- ◆ Set our hopes fully on the grace to be brought to us at the revelation of Christ. *See 1 Peter 1:13.*

# Psalm 44

## Truth

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### Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ “Our fathers have told us,” 1; *see Psalms 22:30; 78:4; 145:4; 48:13; Exodus 12:26–27; Deuteronomy 6:6–8; Joshua 4:21–24; and Ephesians 6:4.*
- ◆ “You drove out the nations,” 2; *see Joshua 3:10 and Acts 7:45.*
- ◆ “But them You planted,” 2; *see Exodus 15:17 and Isaiah 60:21.*
- ◆ “They did not gain possession . . . by their own sword,” 3; *see Deuteronomy 8:17 and Joshua 23:5; 24:12.*
- ◆ “You are my King, O God,” 4; *see Psalms 4:2; 10:16; 74:12; 145:1.*
- ◆ “Through You we will push down our enemies,” 5; *see Psalms 60:12; 108:13; and Ephesians 6:10.*
- ◆ You have saved us from our enemies, 7; *see Judges 2:18 and Isaiah 35–37.*
- ◆ “In God we boast all day long and praise Your name forever,” 8; *see Psalms 34:2 and 145:1–2.*
- ◆ “You have rejected us and humbled us,” 9; *see Psalms 89:38–39 and 107:39.*
- ◆ “You have given us like sheep for food,” 11, 22; *see Romans 8:36.*
- ◆ “You have scattered us among the nations,” 11; *see Leviticus 26:33; Deuteronomy 4:27; and Acts 8:1.*
- ◆ “You sold Your people,” 12; *see Deuteronomy 32:30 and Judges 2:14.*
- ◆ “You make us a reproach to our neighbors,” 13; *see Psalms 79:4; 80:6; and Deuteronomy 28:37.*
- ◆ “Your covenant,” 17; *see Psalm 25:10; Exodus 20; and Deuteronomy 5.*
- ◆ “The place of jackals,” 19; *see Isaiah 34:13.*
- ◆ “The shadow of death,” 19; *see Psalm 23:4.*
- ◆ “He knows the secrets of the heart,” 21; *see 1 Samuel 16:7; 1 Kings 8:39; Proverbs 15:11; and Jeremiah 12:3.*
- ◆ “For Your sake we are killed all day long,” 22; *see Romans 8:36.*
- ◆ “Awake! Why do you sleep, O LORD?” 23; *see Psalm 7:6 and Matthew 8:23–27.*
- ◆ “Redeem us,” 26; *see Psalm 26:11 and 130:8.*

Its literary forms: The psalms include both individual laments, like 42–43, and national laments, like this psalm.

Its source: The mighty works of God were not only written down, but narrated orally by parents to their children, 1.

## God

### His greatness

- ◆ He is powerful enough to drive out nations and give Israel the land of Palestine, 1–3.
- ◆ He is King over all the universes, 4.
- ◆ He can give victories to his people, 4–5.
- ◆ He can also cause his people to suffer defeat and disaster, 9–16.
- ◆ He “owns” his people and can “sell” them as he chooses, 12.

### His goodness

- ◆ He gave the land of Palestine to his people, 2–3.
- ◆ He saved his people from their enemies many times, 7.
- ◆ He sometimes allows his people to suffer innocently, 9–26.
- ◆ He graciously chose the descendants of Abraham to be his people, 12.
- ◆ He made a covenant with Abraham and his descendants, 17; *see Genesis 12:1–3 and Exodus 20.*
- ◆ He showed his will and his ways to his people, 18; *see Psalms 25:8; 147:19–20; and Exodus 20.*
- ◆ He sometimes allows his people to feel as if he has abandoned them, 23–24.

## Christ

### His prefiguration

- ◆ “You are my King, O God!” 4; *see John 1:49; 20:28; and Revelation 19:16.*
- ◆ The one in whom we gain victory over spiritual enemies, 3; *see Ephesians 6:10.*
- ◆ The one who, though perfectly and uniquely innocent, was given over to the wicked will of his enemies for a time, 9–22.
- ◆ The one who was counted as a lamb for slaughter, so that he might take away our sins, 11, 22; *see Isaiah 53:6; John 1:29; and Revelation 4:6, 9.*

- ◆ The one who slept while his people faced danger and imminent death, 23; *see Matthew 8:23–26.*
- ◆ The one who shed his innocent blood to redeem us from our sins, 26; *see Ephesians 1:7 and 1 Peter 1:18–19.*

## The People of God

### Their identity

- ◆ In the Old Testament, God’s people were the descendants of Abraham, who
  - Were brought out of slavery in Egypt and into the Promised Land, 1–3
  - Trusted in God to give them victory, 4–6
  - Praised him constantly, 8
  - Suffered defeat and desolation for no apparent reason, 9–26
  - Were joined to God by a covenant, 17
- ◆ In the New Testament, God’s people are those who trust in God and who also sometimes suffer terribly even though they are (relatively) innocent, 22; *see Romans 8:36.*

## Sin

### It includes

- ◆ Hating God’s people, 10
- ◆ Despoiling God’s people, 10
- ◆ Despising and reviling God’s people, 13–16
- ◆ Forgetting God or his character and his saving works, 17, 20
- ◆ Breaking the covenant God has made for his people; for Christians, that would be the New Covenant, which we break by not trusting fully in Christ or obeying his commands, 17
- ◆ Allowing our hearts to turn away from God, 18
- ◆ Departing from the way of God revealed in Scripture, 18
- ◆ Worshiping any other “god,” whether material, such as an image, or immaterial, like a false ideology or worldly value such as money, fame, success, comfort, pleasure, etc., 17

### Its consequences

*Note: These are implied in the statements of innocence in 17–22.*

- ◆ Being cast off by God, 9
- ◆ Shame, 9
- ◆ Defeat and failure, 9–10
- ◆ Loss of possessions, 10
- ◆ Death, both physical and eternal, 11, 19

## Salvation

### Its source

- ◆ God's unmerited favor = grace, 3; *see Titus 2:12.*
- ◆ The mercy of God, 26
- ◆ His promises, as contained in his covenants, 17
- ◆ The redemption provided by God, 26; *see Ephesians 1:7 and Titus 2:14.*

### Its benefits

- ◆ In Old Testament times, salvation included deliverance from Egypt and all other enemies; in the New Testament, salvation includes deliverance from the penalty, power, and eventually the presence, of sin, 2–3; *see Titus 2:14.*
- ◆ Entrance into the Promised Land, 2–3; in the New Testament, entrance into the kingdom of God through rebirth and the hope of eternal life in the new heavens and new earth; *see John 3:3,5; Matthew 5:3, 5, 10; Galatians; 2 Peter 3:13; and Revelation 3:12.*

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Tell others, especially our children, the great things that God has done for his people throughout the ages, and especially what he has done for us, 1.
- ◆ Trust in God alone to give us victory over sin and Satan.
- ◆ Praise God constantly.
- ◆ Expect to be persecuted for the sake of righteousness and for Christ; *see John 16:33; Philippians 1:19; and 1 Peter 4:1.*
- ◆ Call upon God for deliverance in time of trouble.
- ◆ Trust his goodness even when we are suffering.

# Psalm 45

## Truth

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### Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ “A song of love,” title of the psalm; *see Song of Solomon.*
- ◆ “You are fairer than the sons of men,” 2; *see 1 Samuel 9:2; 16:18; and Song of Solomon 1:15.*
- ◆ “Grace is poured upon Your lips,” 2; *see Proverbs 22:11; Ecclesiastes 10:12; Isaiah 50:4; and Luke 4:22.*
- ◆ “Gird Your sword upon Your thigh,” 3; *see Isaiah 49:2 and Revelation 1:16.*
- ◆ “Your glory and Your majesty,” 3; *see Psalms 63:2; 93:1; 96:6–7; 145:5; Matthew 6:13; and Jude 25.*
- ◆ “In Your majesty ride prosperously,” 4; *see Revelation 6:2.*
- ◆ “Your arrows are sharp in the heart of the King’s enemies,” 5; *see Psalm 2; Psalm 110; Deuteronomy 32:23; Isaiah 49:2; and Hebrews 4:12.*
- ◆ “The peoples fall under you,” 5; *see Psalms 2:8–9; and 110:1–2, 5–6.*
- ◆ “Your throne, O God,” 6; *see Isaiah 6:1; 66:1; Matthew 5:34; and Hebrews 4:16.*
- ◆ “Your Throne . . . is from everlasting,” 6; *see Psalm 93:2.*
- ◆ “A scepter of righteousness,” 6; *see Psalms 92:15; 96:10; 97:6; 98:2; and Genesis 18:25.*
- ◆ “You love righteousness and hate wickedness,” 7; *see Psalms 11:5; 33:5; and 146:8.*
- ◆ “God has anointed You,” 7; *see Psalm 2:2; Isaiah 45:1; 61:1; and Zechariah 4:14.*

Its nature: Biblical revelation was written down for posterity after it was spoken or sung, 1. *See Psalm 102:18.*

Its core theme: All of the Bible speaks of Jesus Christ, the King. *See Hebrews 1:8–9 and Luke 24:27, 44–45.*

## God

### His greatness

- ◆ He is the almighty King of the universe, 3, 6; *see Psalm 97:1.*
- ◆ He is eternal, 6; *see Psalm 102:24-27.*

### His goodness

- ◆ He bestows blessings upon his servants, 2.
- ◆ He is righteous, 6-7.
- ◆ He anointed kings to serve him with joy, 7.

## Christ

### His prefiguration

- ◆ The kingly bridegroom, 2-17; *see Matthew 22:1-11; 25:1-13; John 3:29; Ephesians 5:22-33; and Revelation 19:7, 9.*
- ◆ The King, 1; *see John 1:49 and 20:28.*
- ◆ The fairest of ten thousand, 2; *see Song of Solomon 1:15 and Revelation 1:13-16.*
- ◆ The one whose speech was gracious, 2; *see Luke 4:22.*
- ◆ The Mighty One of God, 3; *see Isaiah 9:6 and Revelation 19:11-16.*
- ◆ The glorious King, 3; *see Psalm 24:8 and Revelation 19:11-14.*
- ◆ He rode, the first time, in humility, 4; *see Matthew 21:5.*
- ◆ He embodied and spoke the truth, 4; *see John 14:6 and 18:37.*
- ◆ He was completely righteous, 4; *see John 18:38 and 1 John 2:1.*
- ◆ He is our Lord, to whom we should submit, 11; *see Ephesians 5:22-33.*
- ◆ He is our Lord, whom we should worship, 11; *see John 20:28.*
- ◆ His name and praise endure forever, 17.

## Mankind

### Our created nature (as male and female)

- ◆ Naturally admire, love, and praise those of great beauty, strength, and virtue, 1-14
- ◆ Gladly submit to those in authority who possess not only competence but also character, 2-5
- ◆ Delight in royal weddings, or even in weddings of ordinary people, 8-17

- ◆ Men delight in feminine submission and beauty, 10–11
- ◆ Desire offspring from marriages, 16

## The People of God

Their marks: The people of God have a love for our King and a desire to praise him, 1–7.

## Salvation

Its substance: In the New Testament, salvation consists in knowing, loving, and being joined forever to Jesus, our heavenly bridegroom.

## The Last Things

Christ's second coming: The temporal victories of righteous kings point to the final victory of Jesus Christ at his second coming, 3–5; *see Revelation 19:11–21*.

# Life

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## Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Read the Scriptures, which are given to us by God's inspiration to enable us to know God, delight in him, serve him, and be saved, 1. *See 2 Timothy 3:15–16*.
- ◆ Tell others about Jesus, his beauty, majesty, grace, power, and love, 1. *See Matthew 28:18–20 and Acts 1:8*.
- ◆ Ask God to enable us to speak with grace, 2. *See Colossians 4:6*.
- ◆ Seek to pursue and exemplify the virtues of truth, humility and righteousness.
- ◆ Love righteousness and hate wickedness.
- ◆ Worship, love, serve, and think about Christ more than anyone or anyone else, 10.
- ◆ Praise God and his Christ constantly, 17.

# Psalm 46

## Truth

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### Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ Though the waters roar, 3; *see Psalm 93:3.*
- ◆ The nations raged against God's people, 6; *see Psalm 2:1–2 and Revelation 11:18.*

Its source: In the Old Testament, God spoke to and through not only prophets like Moses, David and Isaiah, but also the priestly "sons of Korah," 1. These sons of Korah also wrote Psalms 48, 84, and 87.

Its literary structure: This psalm is the first of what are called "psalms of Zion," linked by the theme of Zion as God's city. *See Psalms 48; 76; 84; 87; 122; and 132.*

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is a refuge, like a large rock, steady and able to provide safe shelter, 1; *see Psalms 18:2 and 62:7, 8.*
- ◆ He is infinitely strong, 1; *see Psalms 18:2; 62:11; and 144:1.*
- ◆ He is transcendent over all; he is the Most High, 4, 10; *see Psalms 7:8, 10, 11; 47:9; 57:2; 83:18; Genesis 14:18–20; and Isaiah 6:1.*
- ◆ He has power over all the nations and even over the earth, just by his voice, 5; *see Psalms 2:5 and 9:5; Genesis 1, "And God said"; Jeremiah 25:30; and Amos 1:2.*
- ◆ He is "LORD of hosts," that is, heavenly armies, 7; *see Psalms 103:21 and 148:2.*
- ◆ He rules history and the affairs of nations, causing disastrous defeat, 8–9; *see Psalms 76:3 and Ezekiel 39:9.*

### His goodness

- ◆ He provides a refuge for those who trust in him, 1; *see Psalms 2:12; 18:2; and 59:16.*
- ◆ He provides strength to his people, 1; *see Psalms 18:2; 31:4; 37:39; and 59:17.*
- ◆ He condescended to live among his people in Zion, the city of God, 4, 5, 7, 11; *see Psalms 2:6; 9:11; 48:1–14; and Deuteronomy 12:5–7.*
- ◆ He is holy, totally separated from all sin and moral uncleanness, and thus his earthly dwelling place is also “holy,” set apart from all others and intended for holy uses, 4; *see Leviticus 19:2; Isaiah 6:3; and 1 Peter 1:16.*
- ◆ He supplies a “river” of spiritual refreshment even in places that have no literal river, like Jerusalem, 4; *see Psalm 36:8; Ezekiel 47:1–12; Revelation 22:1–2; see also John 4:14; 7:37–39.*
- ◆ He helps his people, though perhaps he waits until the night is over to do so, 5; *see 1 Chronicles 5:20.*
- ◆ He scatters the enemies of his people, 6, 9; *see Psalm 48:4–7.*
- ◆ He is always “with us,” as our helper and defender, 7, 11; *see Numbers 14:9; 2 Chronicles 13:12; Matthew 1:23; 28:20; and 2 Timothy 2:16–17.*
- ◆ He chose Abraham and his descendants, including the deceitful Jacob, and remained faithful to his covenant promises to them, 7; *see Psalm 105:8–45; Genesis 17:7; 26:24; 28:21; Exodus 3:6; and Matthew 22:32.*

## Christ

### His prefiguration

- ◆ The one who is “very present,” that is, always with us, 1; *see Matthew 28:20.*
- ◆ The one who supplies his people with the “river” of the Holy Spirit, 4; *see John 4:10, 14; 7:37–39.*
- ◆ The one who now dwells in his people, both individually and corporately, by his words and the Holy Spirit, 5; *see John 15:5 and Colossians 1:27.*

## The Holy Spirit

His prefiguration: The Holy Spirit is prefigured by the river that flows in the midst of the city of God, 4; *see Ezekiel 47:1–12 and John 7:10, 14; 7:37–39.*

## The People of God

Their marks: The people of God are marked by the presence of God in their midst, 5, 7, 11.

Their identity: In the Old Testament, God's people were the descendants of Abraham, 7, 11.

## The Last Things

Christ's return: The return of Christ to establish the new heavens and the new earth is prefigured by:

- ◆ The immediate and unmediated presence—"dwelling"—of God amidst his people, 5; *see Revelation 21:3*.
- ◆ The river that will flow in the midst of the city, making it like the Garden of Eden, 4; *see Genesis 2:10; Isaiah 33:21; 51:3; and Ezekiel 31:4–9*.
- ◆ The end of all warfare, 9; *see Revelation 21:4*.

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Expect to have many troubles and tribulations in this life, 1–2; *see John 16:33; James 1:3; and 1 Peter 1:6; 4:12*.
- ◆ Turn to God for help and safety, especially inner peace, when we face overwhelming difficulties and danger, as the psalmist did.
- ◆ Trust that God is in our midst and with us.
- ◆ Look forward to the day when God causes all wars to cease.
- ◆ Be still and wait for God to exalt himself among the nations, 10.
- ◆ Or, as the original seems to say, "stop striving," or "stop waging war," and acknowledge God above all.
- ◆ Memorize and often sing Martin Luther's hymn 'A Mighty Fortress is our God,' which was inspired by this psalm.

# Psalm 47

## Truth

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### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is Most High, exalted above all, 2, 5, 9.
- ◆ He is King over all the earth, sovereign ruler of all people, events, and the created order, 2, 6–8; *see Isaiah 52:7*.
- ◆ He has the power to subdue the enemies of God, 3; *see 2 Samuel 5:17–25; 10:1–19*.
- ◆ He owns the earth and can allot portions of it to whomever he pleases, giving Israel the Promised Land as their inheritance, 4; *see Genesis 12:7; 17:8; Exodus 3:8; Deuteronomy 1:8; and Jeremiah 3:18*.
- ◆ Even pagan kings—the probable meaning of “shields”—belong to God, that is, they are under his divine sovereignty, 9; *see Psalms 7:10; 59:11; 84:9; and 89:18*.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He subdues his people’s enemies under them, 3.
- ◆ He gave Israel the Promised Land, keeping his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, 4.
- ◆ He has graciously brought Gentiles into the covenant people, so that they are now also “the people of the God of Abraham,” 9; *see Genesis 12:2–3; 17:4–6; 22:27–28; Matthew 28:18; Acts 1:8; 2:6–12; 10:34, 43; 11:17–18; and Galatians 3:7–9, 26–20*.

### Christ

#### His prefiguration

- He is the great King over all the earth, 2; *see Revelation 19:16*.
- He has “gone up” to heaven in great victory and is now “greatly exalted,” 5, 9; *see Acts 1:9–11 and Ephesians 1:19–23*.
- He “subdues” nations under the “feet” of the gospel as it is preached to all nations, bringing about the obedience of faith, 3; *see Matthew 28:18–20 and Romans 1:5; 10:14–18*.

## Mankind

Our fallen state: In our fallen state, we are in rebellion against God, and need to be “subdued,” 3; *see Romans 5:10 and Colossians 1:21.*

## Salvation

### It includes

- ◆ In the Old Testament, salvation included victory over the enemies of God’s people, 3, and the inheritance of the Promised Land, 4.
- ◆ In the New Testament, salvation includes victory over spiritual enemies—the world, the flesh, and the devil—and the promise of an inheritance in the New Heaven and New Earth; *see Ephesians 6:10–20; 1 John 2:12–17; 5:5 (victory); and Colossians 1:12; Hebrews 11:13–15; and 1 Peter 1:3–4 (inheritance).*

## The People of God

### Their identity

- ◆ In the Old Testament, God’s people were “the people of the God of Abraham,” 9.
- ◆ In the New Testament, God’s people are those from “all the nations” who trust in Christ, 1, 8–9; *Matthew 28:18–19; Romans 1:5; Galatians 3:26–29; Ephesians 2:11–22; and Colossians 3:11.*

## The Last Things

Christ’s return: When Christ returns, his victory will be complete and God will reign in the midst of his redeemed people, 8–9; *see Revelation 21:1–4, 22–27.*

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Praise God daily for his majesty and his victory over all his enemies.
- ◆ Thank God for giving us “a share in the inheritance of the saints in light.”

- ◆ Worship God for his universal sovereignty and grace.
- ◆ Trust God, that he is exercising his will and dominion over all the nations, even though at present they are still in rebellion against him.
- ◆ Preach the gospel to all nations, that they too may share in the blessings of the people of God.

# Psalm 48

## Truth

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### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is fundamentally and essentially great in every way, 1; *see Psalms 96:4; 99:2; 145:3; 1 Chronicles 16:25; and Isaiah 12:6.*
- ◆ He deserves our utmost worship, honor, and praise, 1; *see 1 Chronicles 16:25.*
- ◆ He is the great King, the universal sovereign of the universe, 2; *see Psalms 47:2, 6–7; 93–99; and 145.*
- ◆ He has the power to break ships and thus deliver his enemies, 7.
- ◆ He is the Lord of hosts, that is, heavenly armies of angels, 8.
- ◆ He is eternal and can thus establish his city forever, 8, and he is “our God, forever and ever,” 14; *see Psalm 145:13.*

#### His goodness

- ◆ He is beautiful and makes his dwelling–place beautiful, 2; *see Psalm 84:1.*
- ◆ He condescends to dwell among his people, 1–3, 9; *see Psalm 47:4–7, 11.*
- ◆ He chose Zion (Jerusalem) as his earthly abode as the city of the great King, 1–2, 8; *see Psalms 2:6; 9:11; 47:4; 48:1–14; Deuteronomy 12:5–7; and Matthew 5:35.*
- ◆ He even calls Jerusalem his holy mountain, even though it is not the highest mountain in the region and his people are not intrinsically holy, but because his presence sanctifies it, 1.
- ◆ He provides refuge and safety for his people, 3; *see Psalms 2:12; 18:2; 46:1; and 59:16.*
- ◆ He delivers his people from their enemies, 4–7; *see 2 Kings 19:35–36; 2 Chronicles 20:1–30; and 2 Chronicles 20:19.*
- ◆ He allows his people to call him, “our God,” 8, 14.
- ◆ He is full of lovingkindness, 9; *see Psalms 103:8 and 145:8–9.*
- ◆ He dwelt within his temple, in the Holy of Holies, 9.
- ◆ He has a name; he is personal, 10; the names of God here are “God,” that is, Elohim, and “LORD,” that is, Yahweh, the personal name of the covenant God of Israel, 1.

- ◆ He is righteous in all he does by his “right hand,” that is, his power, 10; *see Psalms 35:28; 50:6; 45:4, 7; and 145:17.*
- ◆ He judges justly, 11; *see Psalm 96:13.*
- ◆ He guides his people all their lives, even unto death, 14; *see Psalm 23:2–3 and Isaiah 58:11.*

## Christ

### His prefiguration

- ◆ He is prefigured as the guiding shepherd.
- ◆ As our Good Shepherd, Jesus guides us all our days, 14; *see John 10:11; 1 Peter 2:25; and Hebrews 13:20.*

## Mankind

Our fallen state: In our current fallen condition, women experience great pain in childbirth, 6; *see Genesis 3:16.*

## Salvation

### It includes (in the Old Testament)

- ◆ Enjoying the presence of God among his people, especially in Jerusalem, 1–3, 9, 11.
- ◆ Knowing God as our refuge, 3.
- ◆ Receiving his lovingkindness [*chesed*], that is his unmerited favor and grace, 9.
- ◆ Being able to draw near to God in worship, 9.
- ◆ Having God as our guide, 14.

## The People of God

### Their identity

- ◆ In the Old Testament, God’s people were the descendants of Abraham whom God gave the land of Israel and among whom he dwelt in his temple on Mt. Zion in Jerusalem, 1–3, 8–14.
- ◆ In the New Testament, God’s people are those from “all the nations” who trust in Christ, 1, 8–9. *See Matthew 28:18–19; Romans 1:5; Galatians 3:26–29;*

*Ephesians 2:11–22; and Colossians 3:11.* They are the temple of God, individually and corporately, 6. *See 1 Corinthians 3:9, 16.*

## The Last Things

### The last days

- ◆ All peoples will come to the New Jerusalem as God's holy dwelling place, 1. *See Isaiah 2:2 and Revelation 21:24, 26.*
- ◆ God will dwell personally and directly among his people. *See Revelation 21:3.*

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Praise God constantly for his person and his saving works, 1, 10.
- ◆ Rejoice in the presence of God in us, individually and corporately, 2–3.
- ◆ Tell others about God and his salvation, so that they too may “hear,” 8. *See Matthew 28:18–20 and Mark 16:15.*
- ◆ Think about God and his grace to us, 9.
- ◆ Make a careful study of the church, both past and present, and pass down the facts and lessons of God's dealings with his people, 12–13.
- ◆ Tell the next generation about God and his works, 13. *See Deuteronomy 6:20–25 and Ephesians 6:4.*

# Psalm 49

## Truth

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### Revelation

Its literary forms: This is a wisdom psalm, like Psalms 1, 19, 32, 34, 37, 73, 112, 119, 128. Like many of the Proverbs, these psalms often note “the contrast between the ways of the righteous and the wicked, or between the wise person and the fool. Wisdom texts also emphasize practical advice and instruction, the fear of the Lord, retribution, and a focus on God’s word.” (Zondervan NIV Study Bible, introduction to Psalm 34)

Its universal application: The Bible speaks to all mankind, even those who don’t believe in God, 1–2.

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is the heavenly Judge, who requires a “payment” for the sins of all men, 7.
- ◆ He is eternal, as implied in the reference to the possibility of our living eternally if a redemption is provided for us, 9.
- ◆ He has the power of life and death, not only temporally but eternally, 7–9, 15.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He provided redemption, that is, freedom from eternal death, for his people through the death of his Son Jesus, 8, 15. *See Ephesians 1:7.*
- ◆ He will “receive” his people, that is, he will welcome them graciously and accept them into fellowship with himself, as he did with Enoch and Elijah, 15. *See Psalms 73:24; Genesis 5:24; and 2 Kings 2:1, 11–12.*

### Christ

#### His prefiguration

- ◆ The psalmist, who spoke wisdom to all sorts of people, 1–4; *see Matthew 5–7.*
- ◆ The one who gave himself as a ransom, or redemption, that can deliver us from the penalty of sin, which is eternal death, 7–8, 15; *see Romans 3:24–25; Ephesians 1:7; Titus 2:14; and Hebrews 9:12.*

- ◆ The one who was brought out from the Pit to live eternally with God, 15a, and who was “received” into heaven to sit at the right hand of God, 15b; *see Acts 1:11; 3:31.*

## Mankind

### Our fallen state

- ◆ There are social and economic disparities that will never be removed, 2. *See John 12:8.*
- ◆ We are “indebted” to God for our sins, 7–8.
- ◆ Both wise and foolish die, 10, 12, 14.
- ◆ We seek some form of immortality, 11.
- ◆ We tend to praise those who succeed, 18.
- ◆ If we lack true understanding, we are like brute beasts, 20.

## Sin

### It includes

- ◆ Failure to hear and heed God’s Word, 1–3
- ◆ Trusting in wealth to save us from temporal or eternal death, 6
- ◆ Boasting in our wealth or success, 6
- ◆ Being foolish, because of not heeding God’s Word, 10, 13
- ◆ Seeking immortality, or at least temporal fame, by naming lands (or enterprises) after ourselves, 11
- ◆ Approving of the words of foolish people, even if they are our parents, 13
- ◆ Seeking glory and wealth more than God, 16–17
- ◆ Thinking that we can take our wealth with us when we die, 17
- ◆ Praising ourselves for our success, 18

### Its consequences

- ◆ Fear of future trouble, 5
- ◆ Feeling the consequences of sin, 5
- ◆ Leaving this world without any of our possessions, 6, 17
- ◆ Being “Indebted” to God for our sins, 7–8
- ◆ Physical death, 10, 12, 14, 19–20
- ◆ Eternal death in hell, here called the Pit, 9
- ◆ Leaving all our wealth to others, 10
- ◆ Lack of permanence, 12

- ◆ Being just like the brute beasts, without understanding, 12
- ◆ Being ruled over by righteous men after we are all raised from the dead, 14
- ◆ Complete loss of beauty, 14
- ◆ Separation from our earthly home and all the people we know, 14
- ◆ Total loss of all honor and glory, 16
- ◆ Banishment to total and permanent darkness, 19

## Salvation

### It includes

- ◆ Redemption from the penalty of sin and entrance into eternal life, 7–9, 15; *see Romans 3:24–25; Ephesians 1:7; Titus 2:14; and Hebrews 9:12.*
- ◆ Being “received,” that is, accepted and taken to himself, by God, 15; *see Romans 15:7.*

## The Last Things

Christ’s return: When Christ returns, he will raise all men from the dead and give his followers eternal life with himself and all the redeemed, 9, 15. *See 1 Corinthians 15:35–57.*

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ “Listen” to the words of wisdom recorded for us in the Scriptures, 1–4.
- ◆ Do not fear in troubled times, even when death approaches, but trust in God, 5, 15.
- ◆ Refuse to trust in our wealth or other resources to save us from eternal death, 6.
- ◆ Reflect often upon the universal fate that awaits all men—death, 10–12.
- ◆ Do not envy those who prosper, for they will soon die and leave it all, 16–19.
- ◆ Lay up treasures in heaven. *See Matthew 6:19–21.*
- ◆ Thank God for sending Jesus to redeem us from eternal death and give us eternal life.

# Psalm 50

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its source

- ◆ Biblical revelation comes to us from God, who spoke to all people through his chosen messengers in Israel, 1–3, 7.
- ◆ As a result, biblical revelation communicates the instruction of God himself and is his very words (plural and particular), 17.

#### Its content: Biblical revelation includes

- ◆ The narrative of his covenant, 5
- ◆ God's rebuke, 7–21
- ◆ His promises, 15
- ◆ His statutes, 16
- ◆ His covenant provisions, 16

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is the Mighty One, 1.
- ◆ He is God, the Creator of the earth, 1.
- ◆ He is the God of his people, 3, 6, 7.
- ◆ He is the Lord of the entire world, 1. *See Psalms 47:2 and 48:2.*
- ◆ He has the power to destroy the earth by fire, for he is a consuming fire, 3. *See Leviticus 10:2; Numbers 16:35; 97:3; and Hebrews 12:29.*
- ◆ He commands both heaven and earth, 4.
- ◆ He is the final Judge, 6.
- ◆ He owns everything on earth, 10–12.
- ◆ He knows everything on earth, 11.
- ◆ He is Most High, transcendent over all the world, 14. *See Psalm 47:2.*
- ◆ He knows the hearts of all people, 17–18.
- ◆ He will utterly destroy the unrepentant wicked, 22.

### His goodness

- ◆ He graciously reveals himself to his people and through them to all peoples, 1-7.
- ◆ He is the LORD—Yahweh—the covenant God of his people Israel, 1.
- ◆ He chose Zion, that is, Jerusalem, and especially the temple, as the place of his dwelling and special revelation, 2. *See Psalm 48:12-14.*
- ◆ He graciously established a covenant with Israel, 5. *See Exodus 20.*
- ◆ He instituted a sacrificial system to deal with sin, 5. *See Exodus 20:22-26; 25:1-9; and Leviticus 1:1-7:21.*
- ◆ He is righteous, 6.
- ◆ He made Israel into his own special people, so that he is their God, 7. *See Psalm 48:13.*
- ◆ He delivers those who call upon him in sincere faith, 15. *See Psalm 49:15.*
- ◆ He severely rebukes the wicked, with the intent that they should repent, 21.
- ◆ He saves those who seek to obey his revealed will, 23.

## The People of God

### Their identity

- ◆ In the Old Testament, God's people were the descendants of Israel who were included in the covenant made by God with Abraham and thereafter by the sacrifice of animals, 5, 8-9.
- ◆ In the New Testament, God's people are those who have entered by faith into the covenant made by the sacrifice of Christ for our sins.

Their hope: In the Old Testament, God's people received his revelation in the law of Moses, 16, and received his words through the prophets, 16-17; in the New Testament God's people have the Old Testament plus the revelation given in Christ and in the apostles.

Their relationship to God: God's people will be judged or chastened by him when they fail to heed his Word, 4-6; *see 1 Peter 4:17.*

## Sin

### It includes

- ◆ Failure to thank God, 14
- ◆ Failure to pay our vows to God, that is failure to do what we promised him we would do, especially when we were in trouble, 14
- ◆ Failure to call upon God when in trouble, 15
- ◆ Declaring God's laws hypocritically, 16
- ◆ "Hating," that is disregarding and disobeying, God's laws, and speaking of the covenant without living according to its provisions, 16.
- ◆ Hating God's instruction, that is, ignoring his instruction, 17
- ◆ Stealing, 18
- ◆ Agreeing with the actions of a thief even if we do not ourselves steal; this might include watching movies that glorify stealing, 18
- ◆ Adultery, that is any sexual relations outside of marriage of one man and one woman for life, 18
- ◆ Participating in adultery, even vicariously, by enjoying movies that portray adultery, 18
- ◆ Speaking any kind of evil words, 19
- ◆ Deceit of any kind, 19
- ◆ Slander, or even legitimate criticism, behind someone's back, 20
- ◆ Imagining that God does not see or would not punish sin, 21
- ◆ Forgetting God, 22

## Salvation

### Its benefits

- ◆ Belonging to the people of God, 4
- ◆ Being considered holy, "saints," 5
- ◆ Being included in the covenant of God made by sacrifice, 5
- ◆ Forgiveness of sins through the sacrifice of animals in the Old Testament or of Christ in the New Testament, 5
- ◆ The privilege of calling upon God in prayer, 15
- ◆ Being delivered by God, either temporally or eternally, 15

## The Last Things

Christ's return: On the last day, when Christ returns, the world will be destroyed, or perhaps cleansed, by the fire of God's judgment, 3. *See 2 Peter 3:7.*

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Tremble before the holiness of our righteous Judge.
- ◆ Worship him with sincerity.
- ◆ Listen to him when he rebukes us, 7.
- ◆ Fulfill all our promises to God, especially our marriage vows, 14.
- ◆ Call upon God in all our troubles, 15. *See Philippians 4:6-7.*
- ◆ Glorify God at all times, but especially for his salvation and any other benefits he gives us; 15. *See Psalm 103 and Ephesians 1:3-14.*
- ◆ Praise God for who he is and not just for what he has done for us, 23.
- ◆ Order our conduct according to his Word, 23.

# Psalm 51

## Truth

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### Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ♦ “Purge me with hyssop,” 7; *see Exodus 12:22; Leviticus 14:4; Numbers 19:18; and Hebrews 9:19–28.*

Its historical setting: Psalm 51 was written “when Nathan the prophet went to him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba,” title of the psalm. David’s multiple crimes with regard to Bathsheba, and some of the consequences, are recorded in 2 Samuel 11:1–12:25.

Its literary forms: This psalm is one of several “penitential” psalms, in which the psalmist laments his sins and asks for forgiveness. *See Psalms 6; 32; 38; 102; 130; 143.*

### God

#### His greatness

- ♦ As King and righteous Judge, he has the authority to forgive sins and to “blot them out” of his record, 1, 4.
- ♦ He is omnipresent, so all “secret” things are known to him, 4, 6.
- ♦ He is the ultimate King and Judge, the Lawgiver, so that all sins directly offend him, 4. *See Genesis 20:6; 39:6–9; 2 Samuel 12:13; and Luke 15:18.*
- ♦ He—and he alone—has the power to change the human heart, “creating” a new heart, 10. *See Jeremiah 31:33; 32:39; Ezekiel 18:31; and Ephesians 2:10.*
- ♦ He is almighty and has the power to save his people from all evil, 12, 14.

#### His goodness

- ♦ He is filled with lovingkindness and tender mercy. *See Exodus 34:6; 7; Numbers 14:18; Nehemiah 9:17; Psalm 86:15; 103:7–10; 145:8; Joel 2:13; and Jonah 4:2.*
- ♦ He is utterly righteous and cannot overlook sin or leave it unpunished, 4, 14. *See Psalms 35:28; 50:6; 45:4, 7; 145:17; Exodus 34:7; and Romans 3:4, 21–26.*

- ◆ He is a God of truth, that is, his thoughts, words, and deeds are all in accordance with his character, 6. *See John 14:6.*
- ◆ He is all-wise, 6. *See Isaiah 40:13-14; Romans 16:27; Jude 25.*
- ◆ He sometimes severely disciplines his people with bodily suffering, 8. *See Proverbs 3:11-12 and Hebrews 12:3-11.*
- ◆ He does save his people from the guilt and power of their sins, 12, 14.
- ◆ He instituted the sacrificial system to allow sincerely repentant sinners to draw near to him, 16-17, 19.
- ◆ He gently and lovingly accepts those who are broken and contrite over their sin, 17. *See Luke 18:10-14.*

## Christ

### His prefiguration

- ◆ The washing and cleansing from sin that come through his shed blood, 2; *see 1 Corinthians 6:11 and 1 John 1:9.*
- ◆ The only one who was not tainted by sin from birth, 5; *see Luke 1:35.*

*Note: This does not mean that Mary was without sin, as Roman Catholics believe.*

## The Holy Spirit

### His person and work

- ◆ He is God's Spirit, 11-12.
- ◆ He is holy, just as God is holy, 11. *See Luke 11:13.*
- ◆ He mediates God's presence to us, 11.
- ◆ He is the gift of God the Father and God the Son to his believing people, 11. *See Luke 11:13 and John 14:26.*
- ◆ In the Old Testament, he was "given" to chosen people temporarily, empowering them for service, but he could be "taken away," as happened with King Saul, 11. *See 1 Samuel 16:14.*
- ◆ He gives joy to repentant believers, 8, 12. *See Galatians 5:22.*
- ◆ He upholds and strengthens those who trust in God, 12.
- ◆ He enables believers to praise God and proclaim his truth, 13-15. *See Acts 2:1-36.*

## Mankind

Our fallen state: In our current fallen state, we are all infected with a sinful nature, though we still bear the image of God, 5–6.

## The People of God

Their marks: They are those marked by the qualities of repentant sinners listed above

## Sin

### It includes

- ◆ Adultery, title of the psalm.

*Note: Adultery includes lust and sexual relations of any sort with anyone outside of marriage of one man to one woman for life; this includes remarriage after divorce; see Matthew 5:27–32.*

- ◆ Refusing to acknowledge our sin and confess it to God, 1–9, 14.
- ◆ Murder, including resentment and hatred, 14; *see Matthew 5:21–26.*

## Salvation

### Its recipients

- ◆ Those who ask for mercy, trusting in God's lovingkindness and grace, 1–2, 7–9
- ◆ Those who acknowledge their sins and their sinful nature, without excusing themselves, 3–6
- ◆ Those who genuinely desire to live a different life, one of obedience to God from a new heart, 10
- ◆ Those who desire above all to have access to God, 11
- ◆ Those who are brokenhearted and contrite about their sins, 17

### Its benefits

- ◆ Blotting out our transgressions from God's record, 1; *see Isaiah 43:25; 44:22; Acts 3:19; and Colossians 2:14.*
- ◆ Washing and cleansing from the stain, and thus ritual impurity, of sin, 2, 7; *see 1 Corinthians 6:11 and 1 John 1:9.*

*Note: This does not mean that all sinful tendencies are flushed out of us.*

- ◆ Joy and gladness, 8, 12
- ◆ In the New Testament: a new heart, otherwise called regeneration, enabling us to live according to God's laws more of the time, 10; *see Jeremiah 31:31–34; Ezekiel 18:31; and Ephesians 2:10.*
- ◆ In the New Testament: the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit, 11–12; *see John 14:16–17 and Romans 8:9–16.*
- ◆ The upholding and strengthening of the Holy Spirit, 12
- ◆ The ability to teach others the ways of God, 13
- ◆ A new ability to praise God, 14–15; *see Ephesians 1:3–14; 5:18.*

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Imitate Nathan the prophet and tell other believers about their obvious sins, but with gentleness and humility. *See Galatians 6:1.*
- ◆ Acknowledge our sins and transgressions to God and to anyone whom we have offended.
- ◆ Ask for, and receive by faith, God's mercy and forgiveness.
- ◆ Look for a possible sin behind "broken bones" or other possible signs of God's discipline, without supposing that all sins immediately result in a particular form of suffering.
- ◆ Thank God for giving us forgiveness and restoration as often as we ask it out of a sincerely repentant heart.
- ◆ Thank God for giving us a new heart in Christ Jesus. *See 2 Corinthians 5:17 and Ephesians 2:10.*
- ◆ Rely on the Holy Spirit to put to death the evil deeds of our sinful nature. *See Romans 8:13.*
- ◆ Teach others about the will and the ways of God.
- ◆ Praise God constantly for his mercy and grace towards us.
- ◆ Comfort those who are genuinely repentant and who trust in Christ. *See Isaiah 40:1–2 and 2 Corinthians 1:3–5.*

# Psalm 52

## Truth

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### Revelation

Its historical setting: The Bible is set within history; this psalm was written at a particularly low point in David's life, title of the psalm. *See 1 Samuel 22:9–10.*

### God

#### His greatness

- ♦ He is eternal and never changes, 1, 8, 9.
- ♦ He has the power to destroy evil men forever, 5.
- ♦ He is strong, 7.

#### His goodness

- ♦ He is fundamentally, consistently, and eternally good, 1, 9. *See Psalm 100:5.*
- ♦ He is just and will punish evildoers, 5. *See Psalm 1:5–6.*
- ♦ He is righteous and rewards righteousness, 6. *See Psalms 71:16 and 145:7.*
- ♦ He gives his strength to those who trust in him, 7. *See Psalms 68:35; 71:16; Isaiah 40:29–31; and Ephesians 1:19; 6:10.*
- ♦ He condescended to dwell among his people Israel and he now dwells in his house=temple, that is, the church, 8. *See Psalm 23:6; Exodus 40:34–38; 1 Corinthians 3:9, 17; and Ephesians 2:19–22.*
- ♦ He is full of mercy and lovingkindness, 8. *See Exodus 34:6–7; Numbers 14:18; Nehemiah 9:17; Psalm 86:15; 103:7–10; 145:8; Joel 2:13; and Jonah 4:2.*

### Christ

His prefiguration: David's experience of suffering persecution and betrayal by men who spoke evil and deceitful words, 1–4. *See Matthew 26:59–61.*

### The People of God

#### Their marks

- ♦ The qualities of salvation's recipients listed above
- ♦ Persecution by wicked men, 1–4
- ♦ Righteous conduct, 6
- ♦ Congregating in God's presence to worship him, 8–9

- ◆ Holiness that evokes the title of “saints,” 9; *see Ephesians 1:1*.

## Sin

### It includes

- ◆ Delighting in and even boasting in evil, 1
- ◆ Speaking destructive words, 2, 4
- ◆ Speaking lying words, 2–4
- ◆ Loving evil more than good, 3
- ◆ Loving words that harm others, whether spoken by oneself or another, 4
- ◆ Not relying on God for all kinds of strength, 7
- ◆ Trusting in our own resources, especially money, 7

### Its consequences

- ◆ Destruction by God, 5
- ◆ Being uprooted from the earth by death, 5; *see Psalm 1:4–6*.

## Salvation

### Its source: Salvation comes from

- ◆ The goodness of God, 1
- ◆ The mercy—lovingkindness—of God, 8; *see Psalm 23:6*.
- ◆ God’s sovereign action, 9

### Its recipients: Salvation comes to those who

- ◆ Trust in God’s goodness and mercy, 1, 8, 9
- ◆ Rely on God rather than on themselves, 7
- ◆ Wait upon his name, that is, his character as revealed (now) in Scripture, 9

## The Last Things

### Christ’s return

- ◆ He will punish all unrepentant wicked people with eternal banishment from his presence, here typified by the “land” that God promised his people, 5. *See Revelation 22:15*.
- ◆ He will reward his faithful followers, the relatively “righteous,” with vindication, 7, and with life eternal in his presence, 8–9, where they will praise him together forever, 9. *See Psalm 23:6*.

# Life

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## Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Trust in God's goodness even when evil prevails.
- ◆ Avoid all deceptive speech.
- ◆ Love good more than evil.
- ◆ Trust that God will punish the unrepentant wicked.
- ◆ Rely entirely on God's strength for all that we have to do and endure.
- ◆ Dwell in God's house by abiding in Christ; this is done by hearing his words and responding with prayer and obedience. *See John 15:1-10.*
- ◆ Praise God constantly.

# Psalm 53

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its cumulative fullness

- ◆ Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.
- ◆ This psalm almost exactly repeats Psalm 14, except that it uses “God” rather than “Yahweh”; verses 5–6 are different from 14:5–6; and the title is different; *see Psalm 14:1–7*.
- ◆ “They are corrupt . . . no, not one,” 1, 3; *see Romans 3:10–12*.

Its literary structure: This psalm follows naturally upon Psalm 52, which describes Doeg, an arrogant enemy of God’s people; *see Psalm 52:1–4*.

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is omniscient and omnipresent, seeing into the inmost thoughts of all men, 1, 2. *See Psalm 51:6*.
- ◆ He is highly exalted, dwelling in heaven as King over all and searching the hearts of men, 2. *See Psalm 33:13*.
- ◆ He has the power to defeat the enemies of his people, 5. *See Psalms 1:6; 2:5; 52:5*.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He hates all corrupt and sinful conduct, 1, 3.
- ◆ He chose the descendants of Abraham to be his people, 4. *See Genesis 12:3; 18:18; 26:4*.
- ◆ He destroys the enemies of his people, 5.
- ◆ He chose Zion in Jerusalem as his earthly dwelling place, 6. *See Psalms 2:6; 48:12–14*.
- ◆ He saves his people from captivity, 6.

## Christ

His prefiguration: The “salvation [that] would come out of Zion,” 6; *see Matthew 1:1–17, 22; John 4:22, 26; Romans 11:26–27; and Revelation 5:5–6, 9–10.*

## Mankind

Our fallen state: We are all corrupt, doing abominable iniquity, and not doing good, 1, 3.

## The People of God

Their identity: The people of God include Abraham’s descendants, 6, as well as people from all nations who are blessed if they have faith in Jesus Christ, 18. *See Psalms 12:3; 18:18; 26:4; Galatians 3:7–9, 14–18; and Revelation 5:9–10; 7:9–10.*

### Their marks

- Seeking God, 2
- Doing good, 3
- Persecution by wicked men, 4
- Calling upon God in prayer, 4; *see Psalm 50:15 and 1 Corinthians 1:2.*
- A longing for God’s salvation, 6

## Sin

### It includes

- ◆ Refusing to acknowledge God, 1
- ◆ Practicing iniquity, 1, 4
- ◆ Not doing good, 1
- ◆ Not seeking God, 2, 3
- ◆ Turning aside from the ways of God, 3; *see Isaiah 53:6.*
- ◆ Persecuting God’s people, 4–5

### Its consequences

- ◆ Increasing moral corruption, 3; *see Romans 1:18–32.*
- ◆ Great fear, 5
- ◆ Death and destruction from God, 5
- ◆ Shame, especially God’s contempt, 5

## Salvation

Its source: God is the source of salvation, 5, 6.

### Its benefits

- ◆ Deliverance from enemies, both human and spiritual, 5–6
- ◆ Release from captivity, both physical and spiritual, 6; *see John 8:32 and Colossians 1:13.*

## The Last Things

### Christ's return

- He will judge and punish all unrepentant wicked people, 5. *See Matthew 7:21–23; 25:45; and Revelation 22:12, 15.*
- He will indicate and reward all who have faithfully followed him, 5. *See above Scriptures.*

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Recognize that we, along with all others, are corrupt, wicked, and deserving of judgment.
- ◆ Seek God in his Word daily and constantly.
- ◆ Call upon God in the name of Jesus to forgive us for our sins daily and to transform us. *See Matthew 6:10, 12.*
- ◆ Expect to be persecuted by unbelievers. *See Matthew 5:10–12.*
- ◆ Long for the salvation that Jesus will bring. *See Matthew 6:10.*
- ◆ Rejoice even now that we are saved from God's wrath. *See Romans 5:1–5, 11.*

# Psalm 54

## Truth

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### Revelation

Its historical setting: Biblical revelation is set within history; this psalm comes from a time when David was betrayed by an enemy, title, 5. *See 1 Samuel 3:19.*

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is strong and powerful, 1; he has the power to help his people, 4, 7.
- ◆ He has the power and authority to punish the enemies of his people, 5–6, 7.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He saves and vindicates his people, 1, 4, 7.
- ◆ He hears the prayers of his people, 2.
- ◆ He helps his people in times of trouble, 4, 7.
- ◆ He is true, that is, he keeps all his promises, 5.
- ◆ He punishes the unrepentant wicked, 5, 7.
- ◆ His name, that is, his character, is fundamentally good, 6.

### Christ

His prefiguration: He was prefigured by David, who suffered betrayal from his enemies, 1. *See Matthew 26:14–16.*

### The People of God

#### Their marks

- ◆ Persecution and betrayal, 1, 3
- ◆ Slander and false accusations, 1
- ◆ Constant prayer, 2
- ◆ The presence of God, 4
- ◆ Worship and praise, 6
- ◆ Faith in God's goodness, 6

## Sin

### It includes

- ◆ Betraying God's people to their enemies, title of the psalm
- ◆ Seeking to harm God's people, 3
- ◆ Not setting God before our eyes, that is, not fearing him, trusting him, and living all of life before him, 3; *see Psalms 50:22; 53:1; and Colossians 3:23–4:1.*

### Its consequences

- ◆ Being repaid for one's crimes against God and his people, 5; *see Psalm 62:2 and Romans 2:5–9.*
- ◆ Being cut off, that is, destroyed and banished from God's presence, 5; *see Psalm 52:5 and 2 Thessalonians 1:6–10.*

## Salvation

### Its benefits

- ◆ Being delivered from all danger, both literal and spiritual; the latter includes sin, Satan, and God's wrath, 1, 7; *see Romans 5:6–10.*
- ◆ Vindication from the charges made against us, whether slanders from our enemies or the warranted conviction of sin, 1; *see Romans 8:1.*

### Its recipients: Salvation comes to those who

- ◆ Cry out to God in faith, 1, 2
- ◆ Trust in his promises, 1
- ◆ Rely on his help, 4

## The Last Things

### Christ's return

- ◆ He will punish all the unrepentant wicked, 5, 7.
- ◆ He will deliver his people from all danger, 4, 7.

# Life

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## Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Expect to be betrayed and accused falsely.
- ◆ Continue to pray to God for deliverance.
- ◆ Rely on God to help us in times of need.
- ◆ Continue to worship God and praise his name. *See Ephesians 5:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:18; and Hebrews 13:15.*

# Psalm 55

## Truth

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### Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ “I . . . moan noisily,” 2; *see Isaiah 38:14; 59:11; and Ezekiel 7:16.*
- ◆ “They bring down trouble upon me,” 3; *see 2 Samuel 16:7.*
- ◆ “My heart is severely pained with me,” 4; *see Psalm 116:3.*
- ◆ “Fearfulness and trembling have come upon me,” 5; *see Job 4:14 and 2 Corinthians 7:15.*
- ◆ “Horror has overwhelmed me,” 5; *see Deuteronomy 28:67 and Isaiah 21:4..*
- ◆ “Divide their tongues,” 9; *see Genesis 11:6–8.*
- ◆ “I have seen violence and strife in the city,” 9; *see Jeremiah 6:7.*
- ◆ “It is not an enemy who reproaches me,” 12; *see Psalm 41:9.*
- ◆ “My companion and my acquaintance. We took sweet counsel together,” 13–14; *see 2 Samuel 15:12; 16:15–17:4.*
- ◆ “He has put forth his hands against those who were at peace with him,” 20; *see Psalm 7:4.*
- ◆ “The words of his mouth were smoother than butter, but war was in his heart,” 21; *see Psalm 28:3; 57:4.*
- ◆ “Cast your burden on the LORD, and He shall sustain you,” 22; *see Psalm 37:5; Matthew 6:25–34; and 1 Peter 5:7.*
- ◆ “Bloodthirsty and deceitful men shall not live out half their days,” 23; *see Psalm 5:6 and Proverbs 10:27.*

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is omnipresent and omniscient, and thus can hear our prayers from anywhere, 1, 17.
- ◆ He has the power to destroy the plans of wicked men and to disperse them, 9.
- ◆ He has the power to save his people from strong enemies, 16, 18.
- ◆ He is eternal, 19.

### His goodness

- ◆ He hears the prayers of his people, 1, 17.
- ◆ He condescended to dwell among his people Israel in the Tabernacle and altar in the temple at Jerusalem, 14. *See Psalm 23:6; Exodus 40:34–38; 1 Corinthians 3:9, 17; and Ephesians 2:19–22.*
- ◆ He saves them from their enemies, 16.
- ◆ He will justly punish those who persecute his people, 19, 23.
- ◆ He sustains those who trust in him, 22.
- ◆ He is righteous, and he upholds the righteous, 22.

## Christ

### His prefiguration

- ◆ Loud and strong cries of supplication to God, 1–2; *see Hebrews 5:7.*
- ◆ Persecution by enemies who hated him, 2–3
- ◆ Strong emotions of pain, terror, and horror, 4–5; *see Matthew 26:38, 39 and John 12:27.*
- ◆ Thought of fleeing to safety, except that he immediately rejected that idea, 6–8; *see John 12:27.*
- ◆ Betrayal by a close friend, 12–14, 20–21; *see Matthew 26:14–16, 21–25; and John 13:18–30.*
- ◆ Confidence that God would save him, 16–18; *see Matthew 16:21; 17:22–23; 20:18–19.*

## Mankind

### Our fallen state

- ◆ We fear suffering and death, 5.
- ◆ We want to escape trouble, 6–8.
- ◆ We react in horror to betrayal, 12–13.
- ◆ We desire that the wicked be punished, 15.
- ◆ We have many burdens, both physical and mental, 22.

## The People of God

### Their marks

- ◆ Trouble, danger, persecution, sorrow, sadness, 2–5; *see John 16:33; Acts 14:22; and 1 Peter 1:6–7.*
- ◆ Prayer to God, 1, 16–17
- ◆ Faith in God, 23

## Sin

### It includes

- ◆ Oppression of the poor and helpless, especially God's people, 3, 11
- ◆ Violence and strife, 9
- ◆ Iniquity, that is, any lawless deed, 10
- ◆ Deceit, 11, 21, 23
- ◆ Betrayal of a friend, 12–14, 20–21
- ◆ Refusal to change and repent, 19
- ◆ Harming those with whom we are at peace, 20
- ◆ Breaking promises, including our marriage vows, 20

## Salvation

Its source: Salvation comes from God alone, 1, 9, 16, 18, 22.

### Its benefits

- ◆ Deliverance from danger and death, both physical and spiritual, 16
- ◆ Redemption through the payment of a price, which in the New Testament is shown to be the blood of Jesus, 18. *See Romans 3:24–25; Galatians 4:5; Ephesians 1:7; and Titus 2:14.*

### Its recipients

- ◆ Those who call upon God in prayer, 1–2, 16–17
- ◆ Those who entrust themselves and their troubles to God, 22–23

## The Last Things

### Christ's return

- ◆ He will deliver his people from death, 18.
- ◆ He will destroy all his unrepentant enemies, 23. *See Romans 2:5-9.*

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Expect to have trouble and trials in this life.
- ◆ Expect to experience betrayal by those who seemed to be our friends.
- ◆ Call out to God in times of distress.
- ◆ Trust him to deliver us, either in this life or the next.
- ◆ Cast all our cares and burdens upon God each day.
- ◆ Thank God for sending Jesus to be our Savior and Redeemer.

# Psalm 56

## Truth

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### Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ “Cast down the peoples [“Bring the nations down” (NIV)], 7; *see Psalm 55:23.*
- ◆ “You number my wanderings,” 8; *see Psalms 87:6; 139:16; Exodus 32:32–33; Nehemiah 13:14; Daniel 7:10; and Malachi 3:16.*
- ◆ Vows and thank offerings, 12; *see Psalm 50:14.*
- ◆ “Light of life,” 13; *see Psalm 49:19; Job 32:28, 30; and Isaiah 53:11.*

Its divine origin and nature: Biblical revelation is God’s word and is thus, as the verbal expression of God himself, worthy of trust and praise, 3–4.

Its historical setting: The setting for this psalm is found in 1 Samuel 21:10–15.

Its veracity: Biblical revelation does not hide the fears and flaws of the writers, 3, 8–9.

### Its literary structure

- ◆ “This is the ninth psalm with a ‘historical’ title connecting it to events in David’s life. . . . It is also the fourth in a sequence of eight psalms with historical titles in Book II . . . and part of the ongoing sequence of psalms dealing with David’s enemies.” (ZNIVSB)
- ◆ “I will trust in You,” 3, 11, picks up on the last verse in Psalm 55.

## God

### His greatness

- ◆ He is infinitely transcendent, the Most High God, 2.
- ◆ He is omniscient, knowing all our troubles and tears, 8.
- ◆ He is able to deliver us from our enemies, 9.
- ◆ He has the power of life and death, 13.
- ◆ He eternal, possessing unending life, 13.

### His goodness

- ◆ He is merciful, 1.
- ◆ He is trustworthy, 3.
- ◆ He revealed himself to his people through his words to his chosen messengers, 4.
- ◆ He knows our troubles and cares about them, 8.
- ◆ He hears our prayers for deliverance from our enemies, 9.
- ◆ He is for us when others are against us, 9. *See Psalm 118:6–7 and Romans 8:31, 33.*
- ◆ He delivers our soul from eternal death, 13.
- ◆ He keeps us from falling into ruinous temptation and sin, 13. *See Matthew 6:13 and 1 Corinthians 10:13*
- ◆ He is light, 13. *See 1 John 1:5.*

## Christ

### His prefiguration

- ◆ Constant surveillance and hostile hounding by enemies, 2; *see Matthew 21:16, 23; 22:15; and Mark 2:7, 23; 3:2, 22.*
- ◆ Twisting and misconstruing his words in order to harm him, 5; *see Matthew 26:59–61, compared with John 2:19.*
- ◆ “They lie in wait for my life,” 6; *see Matthew 26:3–5.*
- ◆ Those who weep, 8; *see John 11:35.*
- ◆ David, who had no permanent home, 8; *see Matthew 8:20.*
- ◆ Deliverance from death into everlasting life, 13; *see Acts 2:23–32.*

## Mankind

Our fallen state: In our fallen state, we are liable to fear, 3.

## The People of God

### Their marks

- ◆ Persecution by evil men, 1–2, 5–7
- ◆ Insecurity, 8
- ◆ Sorrow and tears, 8
- ◆ Trust in God, 3–4, 11

- ◆ Trust in God’s revealed Word, now given to us in the Bible, 3, 10–11
- ◆ Prayer to God, 1, 9
- ◆ Praising God, 4, 10
- ◆ Fulfilling obligations to God, including vows made at baptism and weddings
- ◆ Hope in the resurrection from the dead, 13

## Sin

### It includes

- ◆ Seeking to “devour,” oppress, and harass others, 1–2
- ◆ Twisting another’s words to harm him, 5
- ◆ Harboring malicious thoughts and intentions toward another, 5; *see Matthew 5:21–22.*
- ◆ Conspiring with others to harm someone, 6

### Its consequences

- ◆ Being subject to the wrath of God, 7; *see Romans 2:5–9 and Colossians 1:21.*
- ◆ Being prevented from carrying out evil plans, 8
- ◆ Having God as one’s adversary, 9

## Salvation

### Its substance

- ◆ In the Old Testament, salvation largely consisted in deliverance from physical danger and death, 13.
- ◆ In the New Testament, salvation includes the hope of resurrection from the dead and life in a glorified body; *see John 5:28–29; 6:40; Romans 8:19–23; 1 Corinthians 15:50–55; and Philipians 3:20–21.*

## The Last Things

### Christ’s return

- ◆ He will punish all unrepentant wicked people, 7.
- ◆ He will deliver his people from death and the grave, 13.

# Life

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## Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Call out to God in times of trouble.
- ◆ Trust in God at all times.
- ◆ Read and rely on the promises in his Word.
- ◆ Believe that God knows our sorrows and cares about us.
- ◆ Fulfill all promises we have made to God.
- ◆ Set our hope fully on the grace to be brought to us when Christ returns.

# Psalm 57

## Truth

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### Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ “Be merciful to me,” 1; *see Psalms 25:16; 51:1; 56:1.*
- ◆ “My soul trusts in You,” 1; *see Psalm 56:3, 11.*
- ◆ “In the shadow of Your wings I will make my refuge,” 1; *see Psalms 17:8; 63:7; 91:2; and Ruth 2:12.*
- ◆ God Most High, 2; *see Psalms 7:8; 56:2; and Genesis 14:19.*
- ◆ “God who performs all things for me,” 2; *see Psalm 138:8 and Philippians 2:12–13.*
- ◆ “He shall send from heaven and save me,” 2; *see Psalm 144:5, 7.*
- ◆ “He shall send forth His mercy [lovingkindness] and His truth [faithfulness],” 3; *see Psalms 26:3; 40:10; 43:3; and John 1:14.*
- ◆ “My soul is among lions,” 4; *see Psalms 7:2; 22:13; and Daniel 6:10–17.*
- ◆ Sharp tongues, 4; *see Psalm 52:2 and Proverbs 30:14.*
- ◆ “Be exalted, O LORD,” 5; *see Psalm 108:5.*
- ◆ “They have prepared a net for my steps, . . . they have dug a pit,” 6; *see Psalms 9:15; 10:9; 35:7–8; and 140:5.*
- ◆ “My heart is steadfast . . .,” 7; *see Psalm 108:1–5.*
- ◆ “Awake . . . Awake . . . awaken,” 8; *see Isaiah 51:9, 17; 52:1.*
- ◆ “I will praise You, O Lord, among the peoples, . . . nations,” 9; *see Psalm 67:3–5; 108:3; and Genesis 12:3.*

Its historical setting: David wrote this psalm, like several others, when he was fleeing Saul, title of the psalm. *See 1 Samuel 22:1; 24:1–3; Psalm 59: title; Psalm 142: title of the psalm.*

### Its literary structure

- ◆ “It begins a sequence of seven psalms (excluding Psalm 58) emphasizing the theme of God as a refuge.”
- ◆ “It is also part of the continuing sequence of psalms dealing with David’s enemies.” (*ZNIVSB*)

- ◆ It shares some similarities with Psalm 56.

## God

### His greatness

- ◆ He has the authority to be the supreme Judge and to acquit or condemn whom he pleases, 1, 3.
- ◆ He has the power to protect his people, 1.
- ◆ He is God Most High, the transcendent Lord of the universe, 2.
- ◆ He is able to perform all his will in us, 2.
- ◆ He lives in heaven, indeed, above the heavens, that is, he is far above us, 3, 5, 10, 11.
- ◆ He has the power to save his people from danger and death, both physical and spiritual, 3.
- ◆ He is sovereign Lord and Savior of people from all the nations, 9.

### His goodness

- ◆ He is full of mercy and love, 1, 3, 10.
- ◆ He performs his gracious will for us and in us; he does things in and for us that we could never do, 2.
- ◆ He sends salvation to his people from heaven, that is, he saves us with divine power, 3.
- ◆ He is true, that is, faithful to all his words and promises, 3, 10.
- ◆ He is uniquely and sublimely glorious, possessing unsurpassed majesty and beauty, 5.

## Christ

His person: He embodies the mercy [lovingkindness, grace] and truth of God, 3, 10. *See John 1:14.*

### His work

- ◆ He was sent by God from heaven to save us, 3. *See John 3:17; 5:24; 20:21.*
- ◆ He was raised from the dead and exalted to God's right hand, 5, 11. *See Acts 1:11; 2:24, 33; and Ephesians 1:20–22.*

## The People of God

### Their marks

- ◆ Trust in God, 1
- ◆ Prayer to God in times of need, 2
- ◆ Trouble and persecution, 4, 6
- ◆ A desire for God to be glorified, 5, 11
- ◆ Praise to God even in the midst of trouble, 7–9
- ◆ A desire for God to be made known in the whole world, 9; *see Mark 16:15*.

## Sin

### It includes

- ◆ Seeking to “devour” another, that is, to dominate or destroy, 3
- ◆ Malicious, hateful speech, 4
- ◆ Preparing danger and harm for others, 6

### Its consequences

- ◆ God’s wrathful rebuke, 3
- ◆ Falling into the trap we have laid for others, ultimately falling into the pit of hell, which is the lake of fire, 6; *see Revelation 20:15*.

## Salvation

### Its benefits

- ◆ Protection by God, 1
- ◆ Experience of God’s mercy [lovingkindness] and truth [faithfulness to his promises], 3, 10
- ◆ Deliverance from our spiritual enemies, Satan and his demons, who lay plots and snares for us to cause us to sin, 3; *see Matthew 6:13*.

## The Last Things

### Christ’s return

- ◆ He will finally rescue us from all difficulty, danger, and death, 3.
- ◆ He will punish those who have persecuted his people, 6. *See 2 Thessalonians 1:5–10*.

# Life

---

## Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Expect to encounter persecution, difficulty, and danger.
- ◆ Rely on God to care for us.
- ◆ Believe that God will accomplish his will for us and in us, as we rely on him, 2.  
*See Philippians 1:6; 2:12–13; and Hebrews 13:21.*
- ◆ Trust in God's mercy and faithfulness.
- ◆ Call out to him for help and deliverance.
- ◆ Seek God's glory above all else.
- ◆ Praise him at all times.

# Psalm 58

## Truth

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### Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ♦ “Silent ones” is literally, “gods,” in verse 1; this refers to judges or rulers; *see Psalm 82:6 and John 10:34–36.*
- ♦ “The wicked are estranged from the womb,” 3; *see Psalm 51:5 and Isaiah 48:8.*
- ♦ “Their poison is like the poison of a serpent,” 4; *see Psalm 140:3; Ecclesiastes 10:11; Matthew 3:7; 23:33; and James 3:8.*
- ♦ Young lions, 6; *see Psalm 57:7.*
- ♦ “Pots can feel the burning wrath,” 9; *see Psalm 118:12 and Ecclesiastes 7:6.*
- ♦ “He shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked,” 10; *see Psalm 68:23 and Revelation 14:19–20; 19:11–15.*
- ♦ “There is a reward for the righteous,” 11; *see Psalm 62:12 and Romans 2:6–7, 10.*

### Its occasional difficulty

- ♦ Some passages are difficult to translate, and different versions give different renderings, as in 1, 7–9.
- ♦ Other passages seem harsh and even cruel, like 10.

## God

### His greatness

- ♦ He has the power to punish and destroy evil rulers, 6–10.
- ♦ He is the supreme Judge of all the earth, 11.

### His goodness

- ♦ He will punish the unrepentant wicked, 6–10.
- ♦ He burns with unquenchable wrath against sin and unrepentant sinners, 10. *See Romans 1:18–32; 2:8–9.*
- ♦ He will reward those who by his grace obey his laws, 11. *See Romans 2:6–7, 10.*

## Christ

His person: He is the true and only divine human person, rightly to be called “god,” 1 (in the literal translation of the Hebrew). *See John 10:34–36.*

His work: He is the one through whom God will judge the world, 11. *See Matthew 7:21–23; 31–46; John 5:25–30; and Acts 17:30–31.*

## Mankind

### Our fallen state

- ◆ Some men are given authority to rule in the place of God, 1.
- ◆ Our heart—the seat of our will and judgment—motivates our hands to action, that is, evil thoughts breed evil deeds, 2.
- ◆ All of us go astray from birth; indeed, we are already enemies of God while in the womb, 3.
- ◆ There are only two kinds of people: the unrepentant wicked and those who are righteous by faith in Christ and then, relying on his Spirit, do works of righteousness, 3, 10–11. *See Romans 3:9–26; 6:4–7:6; 8:13.*

## Sin

### It includes

- ◆ Evil thoughts and motives, 2
- ◆ Evil and violent actions, 2
- ◆ Lying and deception, 3
- ◆ Malicious speech, 4

### Its consequences

- ◆ Destruction by God, 6–8
- ◆ Suffering God’s righteous wrath, 9

## Salvation

### Its recipients

- ◆ Those who trust in God and cry out to him in prayer, 6–8
- ◆ Those who are “righteous,” that is, who trust in God to forgive them and who then do good works, 10–11; *see Ephesians 1:13; 2:1–10.*

## The Last Things

### Christ's return

- ◆ He will punish all the unrepentant wicked, 9–10.
- ◆ He will reward all those who have faithfully followed him, 11.

## Life

---

### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Expect that many rulers will be evil men who make evil judgments.
- ◆ Cry out to God in prayer for the punishment of the unrepentant wicked, trusting that he will execute justice in his own time.
- ◆ Pray for all in authority over us. *See 1 Timothy 2:1–2.*
- ◆ Warn people of the impending judgment of God.
- ◆ Trust that God will reward our righteous acts if they are done by his Spirit and for his glory.
- ◆ Set our hope completely on the grace to be brought to us when Christ returns. *See 1 Peter 1:13.*

# Psalm 59

## Truth

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### Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ “Deliver me [literally, set me on high] from my enemies,” 1; *see Psalm 143:9.*
- ◆ “The mighty gather against me,” 3; *see Psalm 56:6.*
- ◆ “They lie in wait,” 3; *see Psalm 10:8–9.*
- ◆ “Not for my transgression nor for my sin,” 3; *see Psalm 7:3–5 and 1 Samuel 24:11.*
- ◆ “Awake,” 4; *see Psalm 35:23.*
- ◆ “Punish the nations . . . transgressors,” 5; *see Psalms 1:4–6; 2:8–12; 110:5–6.*
- ◆ “LORD God of hosts,” 5; *see Psalms 24:10; 68:17; Deuteronomy 33:2; Joshua 5:14; and Habakkuk 3:8.*
- ◆ God of Israel, 5; *see Genesis 17:7; Exodus 6:7; 19:5–6; Leviticus 18:2; and often in the Old Testament.*
- ◆ “Swords are in their lips,” 7; *see Psalm 57:4.*
- ◆ “You . . . shall laugh at them,” 8; *see Psalm 2:4 and Proverbs 1:24–27.*
- ◆ “God is my defense,” 9; *see Psalms 18:1–2; 91:1–2.*
- ◆ “God shall let me see my desire on my enemies,” 10; *see Psalms 54:7; 58:10.*
- ◆ “O LORD our shield,” 11; *see Psalms 18:2; 84:11.*
- ◆ “Consume them in Your wrath,” 13; *see Psalm 104:35 and Romans 1:18; 2:5, 8, 9.*
- ◆ “And let them know that God rules in Jacob,” 13; *see Psalm 83:18 and 1 Kings 18:36.*
- ◆ “To You, O my Strength,” 17; *see Psalm 18:1.*

Its historical setting: This psalm was written after the events described in 1 Samuel 19:11–17.

## God

### His greatness

- ◆ He has the power to rescue his people from their enemies, both physical and spiritual, 1–28, 8, 10, 11, 13, 16.
- ◆ He is God, Elohim, the Creator of heaven and earth, 1. *See Genesis 1:1.*
- ◆ He is strong, 9, 16.
- ◆ He rules both his people (Jacob) and the entire world, including all the nations, 13. *See Matthew 28:18–20.*

### His goodness

- ◆ He is Yahweh [LORD], the covenant God of his people Israel, 3, 5, 8.
- ◆ He sometimes allows his people to suffer, seeming to be asleep, but he will “awake” and save them when the time comes, 4, 10. *See Mark 4:35–41.*
- ◆ He will punish all the unrepentant nations that oppress his people, either now or later, 5, 8.
- ◆ He gives his strength to his trusting people, 9.
- ◆ He protects and shelters his people, 9, 16, 17.
- ◆ He is full of mercy [lovingkindness] for his people, 10, 16, 17.
- ◆ He allows his people eventually to see the demise of their (and his) enemies, 10.
- ◆ He is full of wrath towards the unrepentant persecutors of his people, 13.
- ◆ He will utterly consume the unrepentant wicked, 13.

## Christ

### His prefiguration

- ◆ David, who, though innocent, is hatefully slandered and persecuted by his enemies, 1–4; *see 1 Peter 2:18–25.*
- ◆ The God who seems to be sleeping and has to be awakened to deliver his people, 4; *see Mark 4:38–39.*
- ◆ The divine Son of God, whom he has appointed as heir and judge of the nations and who will laugh in derision at their vain attempts to throw off his yoke, 8; *see Psalm 2:7–9.*
- ◆ The Strength of his people, 17; *see Ephesians 6:10.*

## Sin

### It includes

- ◆ Rising up against God's people, 1
- ◆ Working any kind of iniquity, that is, injustice or lawlessness, 2
- ◆ Seeking to kill another, 2
- ◆ Conspiring with others to seek the harm of another, 3–4
- ◆ Wickedness of any kind, 5
- ◆ Transgression of God's laws, 5
- ◆ Speaking malicious and harmful words, including cursing and lying, 7, 12
- ◆ Assuming that God does not see or judge evil, 7
- ◆ An insatiable appetite for doing wrong, 6, 14–15
- ◆ Pride, 12

### Its consequences

- ◆ God's opposition, 1
- ◆ God's punishment, 5
- ◆ God's wrath and lack of mercy, 5, 13
- ◆ Frustration of one's evil plans, 11
- ◆ Utter destruction by God, 13
- ◆ Unwilling recognition of God's sovereign rule, 13

## Salvation

### Its benefits

- ◆ In the Old Testament, deliverance from human enemies, 1–2, 10, 16–17
- ◆ God's mercy, that is, his love, 10, 16, 17
- ◆ In the New Testament, deliverance from sin and its eternal consequences; see *Matthew 1:21; Romans 5: 9–10; and 1 Thessalonians 1:10.*

## The Last Things

Christ's return: At his return, he will punish those who have persecuted his people, 6. See *2 Thessalonians 1:5–10.*

# Life

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## Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Pray to God when we are in any difficulty or danger, whether physical or spiritual.
- ◆ Trust in God to be our defense and helper.
- ◆ Believe that God will eventually destroy all unrepentant wicked people when Christ returns.
- ◆ Wait for God in faith.
- ◆ Believe that God loves us even when we are in dire distress.
- ◆ Sing praises to him for his power and his love, as well as for his help.

# Psalm 60

## Truth

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### Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ “You have cast us off,” 1; *see Psalms 44:9; 89:38–45.*
- ◆ “Restore us,” 1; *see Psalm 80:3, 7, 19.*
- ◆ “You have shown Your people hard things,” 3; *see Psalm 71:20.*
- ◆ “You have made us drink the wine of confusion,” 3; *see Isaiah 51:17, 22 and Jeremiah 25:15.*
- ◆ “A banner for those who fear You,” 4; this may be a banner to rally the troops for victory, or—more likely—a banner to signal retreat; *see Jeremiah 4:6.*
- ◆ Verses 5–12 appear again in Psalm 108:6–13.
- ◆ “The help of man is useless,” 11; *see Psalms 118:8 and 146:3.*
- ◆ “Through God we will do valiantly,” 12; *see Numbers 24:18 and Romans 8:37.*

Its historical setting: Biblical revelation is set within history.

- ◆ The title refers to two campaigns, one in the north (Mesopotamia) and another to repulse an attack from Edom in the south. *See 2 Samuel 8:1–13 and 1 Chronicles 18:3–13.*

Its occasional difficulty: The numbers of enemy slain in this psalm, 2 Samuel, and 1 Chronicles do not match. This discrepancy may result from the length and different locations of these campaigns; different ways of recording casualties; or a copyist’s error.

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ As God—Elohim—Creator of the earth, he has the power to cause earthquakes, 2.
- ◆ He is also sovereign over the lives of his people, 3, 10.
- ◆ He has the power to save his people from their enemies, 5, 9–12.
- ◆ He owns the earth and can distribute portions of it to whomever he wills, 6–8.

### His goodness

- ◆ He sometimes chastises his people with bitter suffering, so that they will return to him and trust him, 1, 3. *See Psalm 118:18; Proverbs 3:11–12; and Hebrews 12:3–11.*
- ◆ He set his love upon his people and especially upon David and his descendants, and supremely in Christ, the “Beloved,” 5. *See Psalm 89:10–29, 33; Deuteronomy 7:7–8; and Ephesians 1:5–6.*
- ◆ He is holy, set apart from the world and from all that is sinful and wrong, 6. *See Isaiah 6:3.*
- ◆ He strengthens his people to wage victorious war against their enemies; in the Old Testament, these are pagan nations and ungodly men. In the New Testament, they are the devil and his demons, 11–12. *See Ephesians 6:10–20.*

## Christ

### His prefiguration

- ◆ The one who was “cast off” and rejected by God on the cross, 1–3; *see Matthew 27:46 and Isaiah 53:5–6, 8.*  
*Note: An earthquake occurred while Jesus was crucified. See Matthew 27:51.*
- ◆ On the cross, he drank the cup of God’s wrath, 3. *See Matthew 20:22; 26:39, 42.*
- ◆ He was—and is—God’s Beloved, whom God did deliver through the resurrection from the dead, 5. *See Matthew 3:17 and Acts 2:22–35.*

## The People of God

### Their marks

- ◆ Times of apparent abandonment by God, as experienced in distress and defeat, 1–3, 10; *see 2 Timothy 3:12 and 1 Peter 1:7; 4:12–19.*
- ◆ Belief in God’s providence, that he is the one behind all our troubles, 3
- ◆ Crying out to God for deliverance, 1–5, 9–11
- ◆ Reliance on God to enable them to overcome their [spiritual] enemies, 12

## Salvation

Its substance: In the Old Testament, salvation consisted mainly in deliverance from earthly enemies, 5, 11–12.

## The Last Things

Christ's return: God will make the unrepentant wicked drink the “cup of his wrath.” *See Revelation 14:10; 16:19.*

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Expect to encounter trouble and trial in this life.
- ◆ Receive “hard things” as from the hand of a loving God. *See Romans 8:28.*
- ◆ Call out to him for deliverance, 5, 11.
- ◆ Rely on God to empower us to overcome all spiritual enemies, 12. *See Ephesians 6:10–20.*

# Psalm 61

## Truth

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### Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ “Hear my cry, O God,” 1; *see Psalms 5:1; 55:1; 64:1.*
- ◆ “The rock that is higher than I,” 2; *see Psalm 18:2.*
- ◆ “I will abide in Your tabernacle forever,” 4; *see Psalms 15:1; 23:6.*
- ◆ “The shelter of Your wings,” 4; *see Psalms 17:8; 36:7; 91:4.*
- ◆ “You have heard my vows,” 5; *see Psalms 50:14; 66:14.*
- ◆ “You have given me the heritage of those who fear Your name,” 5; the land of Canaan was the inheritance; *see Deuteronomy 1:21; Joshua 1:2–3.* Those who feared the Lord would remain in the land; *see Deuteronomy 4:40; 11:9.*
- ◆ “You will prolong the king’s life,” 6; *see Psalm 91:16 and 2 Samuel 7:16, 29.*
- ◆ “Mercy [lovingkindness, steadfast love] and truth [faithfulness],” 7; *see Psalms 25:10; 85:10; and John 1:14.*

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is omniscient, hearing the prayers of his people “from the ends of the earth,” 1, 5.
- ◆ He has the power to deliver his people and to set them on a high and secure rock, 3.
- ◆ He is eternal, 4, 6, 7, 8.
- ◆ He owns the earth and can give parts of it to whomever he pleases, 5.
- ◆ He is the great King, who appoints kings on earth, but especially David and then his great descendant Jesus Christ, 6.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He is a safe and secure shelter for his people, 3.
- ◆ He condescended to dwell among his people Israel in the tabernacle and then the temple in Jerusalem, then in the person of Jesus Christ, and now in his

people, the church, 4. *See Psalm 23:6; Exodus 40:34–38; John 1:14; 1 Corinthians 3:9; and Ephesians 2:19–22.*

- ◆ He gave the land of Canaan to Abraham’s descendants, 5.
- ◆ He established David as the head of a dynasty that, in Christ, will never end, 6–7. *See 2 Samuel 7 and Matthew 1:1.*
- ◆ He is full of lovingkindness and truth [faithfulness], 7. *See Exodus 34:6.*

## Christ

### His prefiguration

- ◆ David, who cried out to God for help when he was overwhelmed, 1–2; *see Matthew 26:36–44; John 12:27–29; and Hebrews 5:7–8.*
- ◆ The “rock” that is higher than all of us, 2; *see 1 Peter: 2:6–7; 3:22.*
- ◆ The tabernacle, the dwelling place of God, in whom his people dwell forever, 4; *see Ephesians 2:20–22.*
- ◆ The King whose life has been “prolonged” to all eternity by the resurrection from the dead, 6; *see Revelation 1:4–5, 18; 19:16.*
- ◆ The one in whom God’s boundless love [mercy] and truth were embodied, 7; *see John 1:14.*

## Salvation

### Its benefits

- ◆ In the Old Testament, salvation consisted mainly in deliverance from earthly enemies, 1–6.
- ◆ In the New Testament, salvation consists in the gift of abiding in the presence of God and enjoying his love and truth now and forever, 3–6. *See John 3:16; 15:4–5; and Revelation 21:3.*

## The Last Things

Christ’s return: He will raise his people from the dead and give them eternal life in his presence, 7–8. *See Revelation 21:3–4.*

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Cry out to God in prayer when we are troubled.
- ◆ Run to God for protection and shelter.
- ◆ Trust in him to protect us and provide for us.
- ◆ Remember how he has answered our prayers in the past, 5.
- ◆ Remember that he has promised us an eternal inheritance, 5. *See Romans 8:16–17, 20–23, 30.*
- ◆ Thank God for giving us a Savior who has been exalted to God’s right hand and has all authority and power to care for us, 6. *See Ephesians 1:19–23.*
- ◆ Sing praises to God daily, 8. *See Psalm 34:1; Ephesians 5:18; and 1 Thessalonians 5:18.*
- ◆ Keep the promises we have made to him, especially the vows we made at baptism and, if we are married, at our wedding.

# Psalm 62

## Truth

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### Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ “My soul . . . waits for God,” 1; *see Psalms 25:5; 27:14; 37:7; 32:20; and 40:1.*
- ◆ “From Him comes my salvation,” 1–2, 7; *see Psalms 3:8; 14:7; 18:2, 46; 35:5; 35:3; 27:1; 42:5, 11; 43:5, where “help” is literally “salvation”; see Exodus 14:13 and 1 Chronicles 16:35.*
- ◆ “Like a leaning wall,” 3; *see Isaiah 30:13.*
- ◆ “They bless with their mouths, but they curse inwardly,” 4; *see Psalm 28:3.*
- ◆ “Rock, defense,” 6; *see Psalms 2:12 and 18:1–2.*
- ◆ “Pour out your heart before Him,” 8; *see 1 Samuel 1:15; Psalm 42:4; Lamentations 2:19; and James 5:13.*
- ◆ “Surely men . . . are a vapor,” 9; *see Psalms 39:6; 37:1–2; 78:39; 90; 103:14–16; 144:4; and James 4:13–14.*
- ◆ “If riches increase, do not set your heart on them,” 10; *see Job 31:25; Mark 10:17–24; Luke 12:16–21; 1 Timothy 6:6–10, 17–19; and James 5:1–6.*
- ◆ “Power belongs to God,” 11; *see Revelation 19:1, 6.*
- ◆ “For you render to each one according to his work,” 12; *see Matthew 16:27; Romans 2:6; 1 Corinthians 3:8; and Ephesians 6:5–7.*

Its source: Biblical revelation came to God’s chosen messengers, in this case David, through direct speech from God, though we cannot describe exactly how this took place, 11; *see Hebrews 1:1.*

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He has the power to deliver his people from danger and death, 1, 7.
- ◆ He is infinitely strong and stable, an impregnable fortress of safety for his people, 2, 6, 7, 8.
- ◆ He is omniscient and omnipresent, and thus able to read the inner thoughts of people and to hear the prayers of his people everywhere, 5, 8.

- ◆ He has the capacity to speak to his people, 11.
- ◆ He is infinitely powerful, 11.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He does deliver his people from all sorts of danger and even death, 1, 2, 6, 7.
- ◆ He also defends them from the attacks of their enemies, both physical and spiritual, 2, 6, 7, 8.
- ◆ He saves those who wait for him in faith and hope, 1, 5.
- ◆ He hears our prayers of complaint, sorrow, and urgent need, 8.
- ◆ He revealed himself to his chosen messengers, 11.
- ◆ He is full of lovingkindness [mercy], 12.
- ◆ He is just, and rewards each person for his works, 12.

*Note: This does not deny the truth of justification by faith; it only affirms God's justice and fairness in rewarding and punishing good and evil, though he does not pour out his wrath on those who trust in Christ.*

## Christ

#### His prefiguration

- ◆ The one who embodied, accomplished, and brought to us full salvation, 1; *see Titus 2:13-14.*
- ◆ The one against whom wicked men conspired to bring harm, 3-4.
- ◆ The one who embodied God's grace [mercy], 12; *see John 1:14 and Titus 2:11, 13.*

## Mankind

Our nature: As mortal creatures, we are inherently transitory and evanescent; we shall all die, 9. *See Psalm 103:15-16.*

## Sin

#### It includes

- ◆ Attacking an innocent man, 1
- ◆ Conspiring with others to harm someone, 4
- ◆ Delighting in, and practicing, lying, 4

- ◆ Acting with dissimulation and deceit, pretending to intend good for someone while actually planning to do evil, 4
- ◆ Cursing anyone, 4
- ◆ Trusting in one's ability to oppress another, 10
- ◆ Robbery or stealing of any kind, 10
- ◆ Trusting in one's wealth, 10

#### Its consequences

- ◆ Death, both physical and spiritual, 3
- ◆ Ultimate retribution from God, 12; *see Romans 2:5–9.*

## Salvation

#### Its benefits

- ◆ In the Old Testament, salvation consisted largely in protection from harm and deliverance from danger and death.
- ◆ In the New Testament, salvation consists mostly in deliverance from eternal death because of God's wrath. *See Romans 5:6–11 and 1 Thessalonians 1:10.*

## The Last Things

#### Christ's return

- ◆ It will bring eternal salvation to those who have trusted in him, 7. *See Romans 5:6–11.*
- ◆ It will bring eternal honor and glorified bodies to his faithful followers, 7. *See Romans 5:1–2; 8:30; 1 Thessalonians 1:12; and 1 Peter 1:7.*

## Life

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#### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Wait patiently for God to deliver us from all our troubles, 1. *See Psalm 40:1.*
- ◆ Trust in God's protection and ultimate salvation, 2.
- ◆ Expect people to seek to hurt us because of our allegiance to Christ, 3–4. *See John 16:33.*
- ◆ Trust at all times in God, even when we are in great distress, 8.

- ◆ Pour out our hearts to God in earnest prayer, 8.
- ◆ Remember that we are but dust and will soon die, 9.
- ◆ Do not set our hopes on earthly wealth, 10.
- ◆ Believe that God will finally reward good and evil, 12.
- ◆ Trust in Christ alone for our relationship with God, now and forever. *See John 3:16; 5:24.*

# Psalm 63

## Truth

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### Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ “In the wilderness,” Title; *see 2 Samuel 15:23–28; 16:2, 14; 17:16, 29.*
- ◆ “I will seek you . . . in the sanctuary,” 1–2; *see Psalms 5:7; 27:4; 60:6.*
- ◆ “My soul thirsts for You,” 1; *see Psalm 42:2; Matthew 5:6; and John 7:37–39.*
- ◆ “Your lovingkindness is better than life,” 3; *see Psalms 36:7; 48:9; 62:12, where it is translated as “mercy”; 138:2.*
- ◆ “Lift up my hands” in praise, 3; *see Psalm 134:2; usually lifting of the hands signifies prayer; see Psalms 28:2; 44:20; 77:2; 88:9 (ZNVSB).*
- ◆ “My soul shall be satisfied,” 5; *see Psalm 36:8 and Matthew 5:6.*
- ◆ “When I remember you on my bed . . . in the watches of the night,” 6; *see Psalms 4:4; 16:7; 90:4; 119:148; and Deuteronomy 6:4–9.*
- ◆ “You have been my help,” 7; *see Psalms 27:9; 118:7.*
- ◆ “The shadow of your wings, 7; *see Psalms 36:7; 91:4.*
- ◆ “My soul follows close behind [literally, clings to] God,” 8; *see Genesis 2:24; Deuteronomy 10:20; 11:22; 13:4; 30:20; Joshua 22:5; 23:8; and 1 Kings 18:5–6.*
- ◆ “Your right hand upholds me,” 8; *see Psalm 41:12 and Isaiah 41:10.*
- ◆ The destruction of God’s enemies, 9–10, 11; *see Psalms 52:5; 53:5; 55:23; 57:6; 58:6–11; 59:10; and Revelation 18:1–8; 19:18–21; 20:7–10; 22:15.*

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is God, Elohim, the great and only Creator, 1. *See Genesis 1:1.*
- ◆ He is omnipotent, full of power, 2. *See Psalm 62:11.*
- ◆ He is glorious, resplendent in majesty, 2; only God possesses this unique “weightiness,” as the Hebrew word connotes.

### His goodness

- ◆ He deigned to dwell among his people in the tabernacle and then in the temple in Jerusalem, 2.
- ◆ He is glorious, resplendent in majesty and beauty, 2.
- ◆ He is full of lovingkindness [mercy, steadfast love], 3; *see Psalms 86:15; 103:7-10; 145:8; Exodus 34:6-7; Numbers 14:18; Nehemiah 9:17; Joel 2:13; and Jonah 4:2.*
- ◆ He is personal and has a personal name, Yahweh, which he revealed to his people Israel, 4. *See Exodus 3:14-15.*
- ◆ He helps his people when they call on him, 7, 8. *See Psalms 27:9 and 118:7.*
- ◆ He punishes the unrepentant wicked, 9-10, 11.

## Christ

### His prefiguration

- ◆ The one who satisfies our deepest thirst by giving us the Holy Spirit when we are born again and then continually as we ask him in faith, 3; *see John 3:3, 5; 4:13-14; 7:37-39; 6:35; and Acts 2:33.*
- ◆ The one who is our life, who satisfies our deepest hunger now and will raise us up to eternal life with God when he returns, 3; *see John 6:35, 48-51; 14:6; and Colossians 3:3.*
- ◆ The descendant of David, the true King who now rejoices in God in heaven, 11.

## The Holy Spirit

His prefiguration: The constant supply of refreshing waters of life, 1, 5; *see Romans 8:10* (where the NKJV has the correct translation, “the Spirit is life”).

## Sin

### It includes

- ◆ Seeking to harm God’s innocent people, 9
- ◆ Lying, 11

### Its consequences

- ◆ Eternal death, 9
- ◆ Physical death, 10

- ◆ The silencing and repudiation of their lying speech, 11

## Salvation

### Its benefits

- ◆ In the Old Testament, salvation mostly includes deliverance from enemies, 9–11, but sometimes, as here, also spiritual life in communion with God, 1–8.
- ◆ Old Testament spiritual blessings also included
  - “Seeing” God’s power and glory in the sanctuary, 2
  - Experiencing his unfailing love, 1
  - Freedom to praise God, 4
  - Satisfaction of soul, 5
  - Joy, 7, 11
  - Some sense of intimacy with God, 8
- ◆ In the New Testament, salvation consists in the gift of abiding in the presence of God and enjoying his love and truth now and forever, 2–5, 11; *see Scriptures cited immediately above, and also John 3:16; 15:4–5; and Revelation 21:3.*

## The Last Things

### Christ’s return

- ◆ He will give glory and eternal joy to his faithful followers, 11.
- ◆ He will punish the unrepentant wicked, 11.

## Life

---

### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Seek God early in the morning by reading the Bible and praying to him, 1.
- ◆ Seek God with all our heart and soul, 1.
- ◆ See that all our deepest longings will be met only in him, 1, 5.
- ◆ Seek God in the fellowship of his people, who are now God’s temple, 2.
- ◆ See God’s love as better than life itself, 1.
- ◆ Praise God continually, regardless of our circumstances, 3–4.
- ◆ Remember God’s past mercies to us, especially at night when we tend to worry and fret, 6–7.
- ◆ Recall God’s previous help and seek refuge and help in him alone now, 7.

- ◆ Cling to God with all our heart and soul, 8.
- ◆ Believe that our enemies, especially our spiritual enemies, will someday be destroyed, 9.
- ◆ Rejoice in God as we share the victory of our King Jesus, 11.

# Psalm 64

## Truth

---

### Revelation

Its literary form: Biblical revelation, especially the psalms, contains many different types of literature including

- ◆ Complaints, the literal meaning of the word “meditation” here, 1
- ◆ Prayers for protection and deliverance, 1-2
- ◆ Descriptions of evil people, 3-6
- ◆ Predictions of the future, 7-10

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is omnipresent and omniscient, hearing the prayers of his people no matter where they are, 1.
- ◆ Being omniscient, he also knows the inward thoughts of all people, 6.
- ◆ He has the power to punish the unrepentant wicked, 7-9.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He condescends to hear the prayers of his people, 1, 7-10.
- ◆ He answers prayers for protection and deliverance, though sometimes the answer comes after suffering and death, 7-10.
- ◆ He punishes the unrepentant wicked who persecute his people, 7-9.
- ◆ He is righteous and shares his righteousness with his people, 1.
- ◆ He gives joy to those who trust and follow him, 10.

### Christ

#### His prefiguration

- ◆ The innocent servant of God who suffers the active persecution of wicked men, who band together to destroy him, 1-6.
- ◆ The righteous person who will see God’s vindication and will rejoice in God forever, 10.

## Mankind

Our nature: Our inward thoughts and our heart are very deep, so that only God can discern them, 6, 10. *See Hebrews 4:12.*

## Sin

### It includes

- ◆ Plotting to harm the innocent, especially God's people, 2-5
- ◆ Imagining that God will not see what they plan or do in secret, 5
- ◆ Devising iniquity, 6

### Its consequences

- ◆ Destruction from God, 7-8
- ◆ Punishment that matches the offense, and sometimes comes through the very instrument of wrongdoing, as here, where they stumble over their own tongue and are pierced with arrows from God, 3-4, 7-8

## Salvation

### Its benefits

- ◆ Deliverance from danger and death, both physical and spiritual, 7-9
- ◆ Joy, 10

## The Last Things

Christ's return: He will fully and finally punish the unrepentant wicked and reward those who are upright in heart, 7-10. *See Matthew 7:13-23; 25:31-46; Romans 2:5-10; and Revelation 22:14-15.*

## Life

---

### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Call out to God in earnest prayer when we are in physical or spiritual danger, 1.
- ◆ Expect to be slandered by evil and unbelieving people, 2-4. *See Matthew 5:11-12.*
- ◆ Trust that God will eventually punish all those who persecute his people, 7-8.
- ◆ Pray for those who persecute us. *See Matthew 5:43-45.*

- ◆ Declare the saving works of God, 9. *See 1 Peter 2:9–10.*
- ◆ Ask God to give us righteousness by faith and actual righteousness of conduct, 10.
- ◆ Trust in God at all times, 10.
- ◆ Rejoice in the Lord always, 10. *See 1 Thessalonians 5:18.*
- ◆ Ask God to give us an upright heart, 10.

# Psalm 65

## Truth

---

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is God, Elohim, the Creator, 1, 5, hearing the prayers of his people wherever they are, 1.
- ◆ He possesses universal sovereignty over all peoples everywhere, 2.
- ◆ He has the power to save his people through awesome deeds, often called “signs,” such as the deliver and at the Red Sea, 5, 8. *See Exodus 14.*
- ◆ He created the world and everything on it and in it, 6.
- ◆ He is all-powerful, 6.
- ◆ He can still the noise of the waves and the tumults of all peoples, 7.
- ◆ He cares for the earth and all its creatures through what some people call “natural” processes, but which are the direct operations of his power and wisdom, 9–13.
- ◆ He has the resources to provide all that his people need, 9.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He condescended to choose Zion, that is, Jerusalem, as his earthly dwelling place where he could be worshiped, 1, 4.
- ◆ He hears and answers the prayers of his people and of all who trust in him, 2, 5. *See 1 Kings 10:1–10 and Matthew 2:1–12.*
- ◆ He provided atonement for the sins of his people, first in the Old Testament sacrifices and then in the sacrifice of Jesus, 3. *See Leviticus 16 and Hebrews 9:16–10:18.*
- ◆ He chooses some to have an intimate relationship with himself, based on the atonement he has provided, 4. *See Romans 3:21–26; 5:1; 8:29–20; and Ephesians 1:3–8; 2:14–18.*
- ◆ He satisfies the deepest longings of his people, 4. *See Psalm 36:8 and John 6:35.*
- ◆ He is holy, 4.

- ◆ He is righteous and performs wonders for his people out of his righteousness, 5.
- ◆ He saves his people from danger and destruction, but physical and spiritual, 5.
- ◆ He welcomes people of all nations to trust in him and be saved, 5, 8. *See Isaiah 45:22; Matthew 28:18–20; and Romans 4:13–25.*
- ◆ He gives joy, 8.
- ◆ He provides food for all people, 9–13.

## Christ

### His prefiguration

- ◆ The atonement that God provided for his people, 3; *see Romans 3:24–25 and 1 John 2:1.*
- ◆ The satisfaction of soul that God gives to those who approach him in faith, 4; *see John 6:35.*
- ◆ The incarnate temple of God, in whom all the fullness of God dwells and in whom, now, Christians dwell in the temple of God, 4; *see John 2:18–21; Ephesians 2:19–22; and Colossians 2:9.*
- ◆ The divine–human Son of God who stilled the waves and the storm, 7; *see Matthew 8:23–27.*
- ◆ The one who provided “grain,” that is, food, for his people, 9; *see John 6:1–14.*

## Salvation

### Its benefits

- ◆ Full access to a prayer–answering God, 2; *see Romans 5:1; Ephesians 3:11–12; and Hebrews 4:14–16; 10:19–22.*
- ◆ Forgiveness of sins, 3; *see Ephesians 1:7.*
- ◆ Intimate and satisfying communion with God, 4; *John 6:35; 7:37–39.*
- ◆ Deliverance from danger and death, both physical and spiritual, 5.
- ◆ Provision of all our daily needs, 9; *Matthew 6:11, 25–34.*

## The Last Things

Their prefiguration: The last things are prefigured by the abundance, beauty, and joy of the world that God created, 9–13. *See Revelation 22:1–5.*

# Life

---

## Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Praise God constantly, 1. *See Psalms 34:1; 145–150; and Ephesians 1:3–14; 5:18.*
- ◆ Pay our vows to God, especially our vows made at baptism and marriage, 1.
- ◆ Pray constantly to God, in the conviction that he will answer us, 2. *See Luke 18:1; Ephesians 6:18; Colossians 4:2–3; and 1 Thessalonians 5:18.*
- ◆ Confess our sins to God daily, expecting him to forgive us, 3. *See John 1:9–10.*
- ◆ Draw near to God constantly by reading the Bible and prayer, both privately and with other believers, 4. *See Acts 2:42 and Hebrews 10:19–25.*
- ◆ Praise God for making such a beautiful and bountiful world, 9–11.
- ◆ Thank God daily for his provision for our material needs, 9–13.
- ◆ Preach the gospel in all the world, so that all flesh may come to God in faith and prayer, 2. *See Isaiah 66:19, 23; Matthew 28:18–20; and Romans 15:8–13.*

# Psalm 66

## Truth

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### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is omnipotent, mighty in power and able to do anything he wants to do, consistent with his character, 3, 5, 6
- ◆ He rules the world and all in it, 7.
- ◆ He is eternal, 7.
- ◆ He is omniscient, seeing and knowing all, 6. 18.
- ◆ He is omnipresent, hearing the prayers of his people everywhere, 19.
- ◆ He governs all that happens to his people, 9–12.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He has made known his name to his people, 2.  
*Note: In this psalm God is called Elohim, God, whereas elsewhere he is also called by his personal name, Yahweh.*
- ◆ He causes his enemies to submit to him, 3.
- ◆ He saved his people Israel from the Egyptian army at the miraculous crossing of the Red Sea and then later enabled them to cross the Jordan River on dry ground, 6. *See Exodus 14:21 and Joshua 3:14–16.*
- ◆ He allows himself to be known by all people of the earth, 8.
- ◆ He protects and delivers his people from physical and spiritual death, 9.
- ◆ He tests his people through various trials, often by the malicious actions of sinful people, 10–12. *See Hebrews 12:3–11; James 1:2–4, 12; and 1 Peter 1:6–7; 4:12–13.*
- ◆ He will eventually bring his people out of all their troubles, often through death, 12. *See Psalm 34:19.*
- ◆ He condescended to dwell among his people Israel in the Tabernacle and then in the Temple in Jerusalem, 13.

- ◆ He instituted a system of offerings for his people Israel, 13;15; now these are replaced by offerings of themselves, thanks and praise, and good works, by believers. *See Romans 12:1 and Hebrews 13:15–16.*
- ◆ He is full of mercy and kindness, 20.
- ◆ He answers the prayers of his people, 17–20.

## Christ

His prefiguration: He is prefigured in this psalm in these ways.

- ◆ The God whom all nations will worship, 4; *see Philipians 2:10–11.*
- ◆ The God who disciplines his people, 10; *see Revelation 3:19.*

## Sin

It includes

- ◆ Rebelling against God’s laws and against God himself, 7
- ◆ Afflicting God’s people, 12
- ◆ Praying with known sin unconfessed and unrepented in our hearts, 18

## Salvation

Its benefits: In the Old Testament, salvation consisted mostly in deliverance from physical danger and death, 6, 9, 12.

# Life

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Ethical Imperatives

- Praise God for all his mighty works on behalf of his people in times past, 1–7.
- Thank God for his constant preservation of his people, 9.
- Submit to, and even rejoice in, God’s holy discipline, 10–12. *See Hebrews 12:9–11; James 1:2–3; and 1 Peter 1:6–7.*
- Trust that God will bring us through trials to a place of rich fulfillment, 12.
- Fulfill the promises we have made to God, especially those made at baptism and at our wedding, 13.

- Offer to God the sacrifices of thanksgiving, self-sacrifice, and good deeds to the poor, 13–14.
- Thank God for providing Jesus as a sacrifice for us, 13–15. *See Psalm 9:23–28; and 10:5–18.*
- Tell others what God has done for us, 16–20.
- Preach the gospel to all the nations, that they too may know, love, serve, and worship God, 1. *See Matthew 28:18–20; Mark 16:15; and Acts 1:8.*

# Psalm 67

## Truth

---

### Revelation

Its source: Revelation came from God, through his chosen people Israel, 2. *See Psalm 147:19-20 and Romans 3:1-2; 9:4-5.*

Its content: The principal content of special revelation is God's salvation of his people, 2.

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is all-powerful, the Ruler of the earth, so he can shower his material blessings upon his people, 1, 6-7.
- ◆ He holds universal sway over all nations, 2.
- ◆ He is the King and Judge of all the earth, 4.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He is full of mercy, 1. *See Exodus 34:6-7; Numbers 14:18; Nehemiah 9:17; Psalms 86:15; 103:7-10; 145:8; Joel 2:13; and Jonah 4:2.*
- ◆ He blesses his people with both material and spiritual benefits, 1. *See Psalm 103:1-14 and Ephesians 2:3-14.*
- ◆ He shows his favor to his people in allowing them to see his smiling and loving face (through mediators), 1. *See John 1:14, 18; and 2 Corinthians 3:18; 4:4, 6.*
- ◆ He revealed his "way," that is his own moral character and conduct, and the ways in which he wants his people to walk, 2.
- ◆ He sent salvation, both physical and spiritual, to his people, 2.
- ◆ He wants people of all nations to come to know him, 2-4, 5, 7. *See Matthew 28:18-20.*

### Christ

#### His person

- ◆ He is the Way of God, and the way to God, 2. *See John 14:6.*
- ◆ He is the one in and through whom comes the salvation of God, 2.

- ◆ He died so that people of all nations may be saved, 2. *See John 3:16 and 1 John 2:2 where “world” refers to all the nations of the world, not to every individual born into the world.*

## Salvation

### Its benefits

- ◆ God’s mercy, that is, his love, grace, and forgiveness of our sins, 1
- ◆ Manifold spiritual blessings, 1; *see Scriptures cited above.*
- ◆ The revelation of his “face,” that is his grace and glory, in and through Jesus Christ, 1; *see Scriptures cited above.*
- ◆ The knowledge of his way in Jesus Christ; *see Scriptures cited above.*
- ◆ It brings abundant joy, 4.

Its conveyance: Salvation comes through God’s people to the world as his people praise him for his manifold blessings, 1–2. *See Acts 2:4–12 and 1 Peter 2:9.*

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Cry out to God in prayer for his mercy, blessings, and self–revelation to us in Jesus Christ on an ongoing basis, 1.
- ◆ Spread the knowledge of God’s salvation to the entire world. *See Matthew 28:18–20; Mark 16:5; Luke 24: 46–47; John 20:21; and Acts 1:8.*
- ◆ Praise God at all times, 4.
- ◆ Rejoice in the Lord always and sing for joy, 4. *See Ephesians 5:18 and 1 Thessalonians 5:18.*
- ◆ Eagerly wait for Christ to come to judge this world, 4.
- ◆ Give thanks to God for his righteous governance of this world, 4. *See Psalm 96:13 and Acts 17:31.*
- ◆ Trust that God will give us all that we need for daily living, 6.
- ◆ Fear God, that is, trust, love, and obey him, 7.

# Psalm 68

## Truth

---

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He has the power to destroy his enemies by his mere presence, 1–2, 12, 14, 21–22.
- ◆ He is omnipresent, so that his people are “before him” at all times and in all places, 2, 4.
- ◆ He is transcendent, “riding” on the clouds, 4, 33.
- ◆ He has the power to provide for orphans and defend widows, 5.
- ◆ He can create progeny for the barren, provide homes for the homeless, deliver and prosper prisoners, 5–6, 18.
- ◆ He rules over the created order; his power and presence cause the earth to shake, the heavens to give rain, and mountains to move. 7–9.
- ◆ He commands a vast army of heavenly beings, 17.
- ◆ He dwells on high, 18.
- ◆ He has the power of life and death, 20.
- ◆ He rules as King over his people and over the whole world, 24.
- ◆ He possesses all power, 28, 33, 34, 35.
- ◆ He holds universal sovereignty over all kingdoms, 32.
- ◆ He is utterly awesome, 35.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He destroys the unrepentant wicked, 1–2, 14, 21–23.
- ◆ He rewards the righteous with joy and his presence, 3.
- ◆ He revealed his personal name Yah (Yahweh) to his people, 4.
- ◆ He provides for the weak and needy, 5–6.
- ◆ He redeemed his people Israel from bondage in Egypt, 7–8.
- ◆ He led his people into the Promised Land and provided for them, 9–10.
- ◆ He condescended to “dwell” in the tabernacle on Mt. Zion in Jerusalem, 16, 27–28, 29.
- ◆ He is holy, 17, 18, 35.

- ◆ He daily bears our burdens [or, “loads us with benefits”; the Hebrew could mean either], 19.
- ◆ He saves his people from all danger and death, physical and spiritual, 20.
- ◆ He gives strength to his people, 28, 35.
- ◆ He reveals his “excellence” to his people, 34.

## Christ

### His prefiguration

- ◆ The one before whose judging face the wicked will flee, 1–2; *see Revelation 6:16.*
- ◆ The one in whom the righteous (by faith) may now rejoice, 3; *see Philippians 3:1; 4:4.*
- ◆ The one who will one day return on clouds of glory to judge the earth, 4; *see Matthew 24:30; Acts 1:9–11; and 1 Thessalonians 4:17 (by implication).*
- ◆ The one who, after his resurrection, “ascended on high,” 18; *see Acts 1:9–11; Ephesians 1:20–22; and Hebrews 1:3.*
- ◆ The one who, having ascended “gave gifts to men,” 18; *see Ephesians 4:8.*

*Note: This passage is difficult to interpret, since the psalm says, “received gifts from men.” Various suggestions include the possibility that Paul refers to the ascended Christ as having first received gifts, then gives to his church. But this is not clear.*

- ◆ The one who, through his Spirit, dwells among his people, 18; *see Ephesians 2:20–22 and 1 Peter 2:4–5.*
- ◆ The one who gives strength to his believing people, 35; *see Ephesians 6:10 and Philippians 4:13.*

## Sin

### It includes

- ◆ Hating God, 1; this includes loving him less than we love other things; *see Romans 9:13.*
- ◆ Exploiting widows, orphans, and other relatively weak people, 5
- ◆ Rebellion against God or against rulers, 6, 18; *see 1 Peter 2:13–17.*
- ◆ Taking people captive, especially God’s people, 18
- ◆ Being at enmity with God, 21; *see Colossians 1:21.*
- ◆ Delighting in war, 30

### Its consequences

- ◆ Being scattered and then destroyed by God's coming in wrath, 2, 21, 23
- ◆ Dwelling in a dry land, that is, living a life that is barren and without refreshment, 6
- ◆ Being utterly frustrated in one's evil designs, 18, 22
- ◆ Being forced to submit to God, 29–21

## Salvation

Its source: Salvation comes entirely from God. *See the entire psalm, including 1–3, 5–14, 17–23, 28–31, 33–35.*

Its conveyance: In the New Testament, salvation comes through the preaching of the message of Christ, received by faith, as foreshadowed in 1. *See Romans 10:14–17.*

### Its benefits

- ◆ Joy in the God of their salvation, 3, 4
- ◆ His fatherly care, 5
- ◆ Constant provision for all our needs, 9–10
- ◆ Many spiritual blessings, 19; *see Ephesians 1:3–14.*
- ◆ Escape from physical (Old Testament) and spiritual (New Testament) death, 20
- ◆ Membership in the people of God, 24–27
- ◆ Daily provision of strength to serve God, 28, 35
- ◆ The joy of worshiping God with his people, 24–27, 32

## The Last Things

Christ's return: When Christ returns, all the things spoken of God's deliverance of his people and destruction of his enemies will be fully and finally accomplished.

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Praise God constantly for the great victory he has won in Christ for his people.
- ◆ Thank God for sending his Son to die for us when we were still his enemies. *See Romans 5:10.*

- ◆ Trust God to take care of us when we are weak and helpless, like widows and orphans.
- ◆ Take care of all who are weak and helpless, especially those in the church. *See 1 Timothy 5:3-16.*
- ◆ Remember God's awesome deeds of salvation in the past, like the Exodus, the occupation of Canaan, all the deliverances of his people by God in the Old Testament, the miracles, life, death, resurrection, ascension and sitting down at God's right hand of Jesus, the works of the apostles, and the wonderful ways he has worked in the lives of Christians since then, including our own lives, 7-12.
- ◆ Provide for the poor, as God does, 10. *See Galatians 6:10.*
- ◆ Tell others of the great deeds of God, 11.
- ◆ Thank God for giving spiritual gifts to his church, 18-19. *See Romans 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 12:1-14:40; Ephesians 4:7-16; and 1 Peter 4:10-11.*
- ◆ Use our spiritual gift(s), and encourage others to use theirs, in the ways directed by the Apostles. *See Scriptures cited above.*
- ◆ Join with others in "blessing," that is, praising God, 26, 32. *See Ephesians 5:18-21 and Colossians 3:16.*
- ◆ Trust God to give strength each day adequate for serving him, 35. *See Colossians 1:11 and 1 Peter 4:11.*

# Psalm 69

## Truth

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### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is omnipotent and thus able to save his people, 1.
- ◆ He is omniscient and omnipresent, hearing the prayers of his people and knowing their inward thoughts, including their hidden sins and folly, 1, 5.
- ◆ He is the God of heavenly armies of angels, another indication of his omnipotence, 6.
- ◆ He waits until his appointed time to act upon the prayers of his people, 13.
- ◆ He is transcendent over heaven and earth, which are all made for his glory, 34.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He hears the prayers of his people, 1, 13, 16, 23.
- ◆ He delivers his people from danger and death, both physical and spiritual, 1, 13, 18, 29, 35.
- ◆ He allows his people to go through deep waters, 2
- ◆ He allows his people to suffer persecution unjustly, 4, 5–12, 19–21.
- ◆ He graciously chose Abraham and his descendants, often called “Israel” after Isaac’s son Jacob, whose name was later changed by God to Israel, 6.
- ◆ He condescended to dwell in a “house,” or temple on earth, specifically in Zion, or Jerusalem, and now in the church, his people, 35. *See Psalm 23:6; Exodus 40:34–38; 1 Corinthians 3:9, 17; and Ephesians 2:19–22.*
- ◆ He made known his personal name Yahweh—translated as LORD in most English Bibles—to his people, 13.
- ◆ He is full of lovingkindness [mercy], 13, 16.
- ◆ He is utterly true to his word, including his promises; he is faithful and reliable, 13.
- ◆ He is good, 16.
- ◆ He is full of tender mercy and compassion, 16.
- ◆ He chooses some of his people to be his special servants, 17.

- ◆ He is pleased with the praises of his people, that is, he is pleased with them when they are pleased with him, 30–31.
- ◆ He gives “life” to those who seek him, 32.
- ◆ He cares for the poor and afflicted, 33.
- ◆ He gives a lasting “home” to those who love his name, that is, who love his character as he reveals it, 36.

## Christ

### His prefiguration

- ◆ This entire psalm, which is often listed among the “Messianic” psalms, although all the psalms point to Christ in one way or another
- ◆ The one who is, figuratively speaking, in deep waters and mud, that is, a situation of great danger, which Jesus was all during his career as a preacher, 1–2, 13–15
- ◆ The one who waited for God to act for him, 3
- ◆ The one who was hated without cause, 4; *see Psalm 35:19 and John 15:25.*
- ◆ The one whose enemies were mighty and powerful, like the religious and political rulers of Jesus’ day, 4; *Matthew 26:57; 27:1–2.*
- ◆ The one who, for our sakes, was accounted as “foolish” and full of sin by God, 5; *see Isaiah 53:4–6 and 2 Corinthians 5:21.*
- ◆ The one who was reproached—mocked, reviled, cursed—for God’s sake, 7, 9; *see Isaiah 53:3; Matthew 27: 27–31, 39–44; Romans 15:3; and 1 Peter 2:23.*
- ◆ The one who was misunderstood by his brothers and even alienated from them, 8; *see Matthew 12:46–47 and John 7:3–5.*
- ◆ The one who was consumed by zeal for the house (Temple) of the Lord, 9; *see John 2:17.*
- ◆ The one who prayed constantly to God, 13; *see Luke 6:12; 22:39–46.*
- ◆ The one true, faithful and sinless Servant of God, 17; *see Isaiah 42:1–4; 53:11; and Acts 4:27.*
- ◆ The one away from whom, for a time, God turned his face in anger, 17; *see Matthew 27:46.*
- ◆ The one who had no comforters in his death, 20; *see Mark 15:16*, where the women stood far way.

- ◆ The one to whom vinegar—that is, sour wine—was given when he was thirsty, 21; *see Matthew 27:34, 48; Mark 15:23, 36; Luke 23:36; and John 19:28–30.*
- ◆ The one who was struck by God in our place, 26; *see Isaiah 53:4 and 1 Peter 2:24.*
- ◆ The one whose prayers God heard and answered, 33; *see Hebrews 5:7.*

## Sin

### It includes

- ◆ Hating someone for no good reason, 4
- ◆ Seeking to destroy another without cause, 4
- ◆ Forcing someone to pay for a crime he did not commit, 4
- ◆ Speaking critically of an innocent person, 12
- ◆ Reviling and mocking another, 19–20
- ◆ Lack of pity for those in pain, 20
- ◆ Refusing to offer comfort to those who are suffering, 20
- ◆ Adding to another’s suffering and pain, 21
- ◆ Persecuting people who are being disciplined by God, 26
- ◆ Talking lightly or scornfully of another’s grief and sorrow, 26

### Its consequences

- ◆ Being entrapped in a supposedly secure place, 22
- ◆ Blindness, both physical and spiritual, 23
- ◆ Pain in the abdomen, 23
- ◆ Suffering God’s righteous anger and wrath, 24
- ◆ Being homeless and having one’s home destroyed, 25
- ◆ Being counted sinful before God, 27
- ◆ Being denied access to God’s righteous presence and his vindication of one, 27
- ◆ Eternal exclusion from life with God and his people, 28

## Salvation

### Its recipients

- ◆ Salvation comes to those who cry out to God in prayer, 1–3.
- ◆ Salvation comes to those who acknowledge and repent of their sins, 5.

### Its source

- ◆ Salvation comes entirely from God.
- ◆ God alone can deliver us from extreme danger and eternal death, 1, 6, 13–14, 16, 29, 33, 35.

### Its conveyance

- ◆ Salvation comes through the mediatorial work of Christ, whose sufferings are graphically foretold in this psalm.
- ◆ Salvation comes from God's mercy and love alone, 16. *See Ephesians 2:4–5.*

### Its benefits

- ◆ Salvation from physical and spiritual death, 1; *see above Scriptures also; 2 Corinthians 1:9–10; Galatians 1:4; and 1 Thessalonians 1:10.*
- ◆ God's loving acceptance and presence, 16–18
- ◆ Redemption from sin, 18; *see Ephesians 1:7 and Colossians 1:14.*
- ◆ Corporate salvation, that is, the deliverance and restoration of God's people as a whole, 35–36.

## The Last Things

### Christ's return

- ◆ He will fully and finally save his people. *See Colossians 3:20–21 and Revelation 21:1–22:4.*
- ◆ He will completely and forever punish the unrepentant wicked. *See Revelation 20:11–15; 22:15.*

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Expect to be hated and persecuted for no cause other than righteousness and/or faithfulness to Jesus Christ. *See Matthew 5:10–12; 10:22–26; 24:9–13.*
- ◆ Cry out to God in prayer when we encounter trouble.
- ◆ Admit our sins to God and seek his forgiveness.
- ◆ Be zealous for the advance of the gospel and the growth of the church of Christ, which is now his "house." *See 1 Corinthians 3:9, 16–17.*
- ◆ Fast and pray for the welfare of others, 10–11.

- ◆ Trust that God knows all our troubles and that Jesus is our sympathetic High Priest, 19. *See Hebrews 4:14-15.*
- ◆ Thank God when we have an opportunity to enter into the sufferings of Christ and thereby to know him better and appreciate more his sacrificial love for us.
- ◆ Praise God, even when in trouble, believing that he will raise us up and give us grace to praise him forever, 29-33.
- ◆ Look forward with eagerness to obtaining our eternal inheritance, 35-36. *See Hebrews 11:13-16; 12:27-28; 13:14; and 1 Peter 1:3-9.*

# Psalm 70

## Truth

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### Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ “Make haste, O God,” 1; *see Psalm 40:17.*
- ◆ “Let them be ashamed and confounded,” 2–3; *see Psalms 25:3; 35:4, 26; 40:15.*
- ◆ “Who say, ‘Aha, aha!’” 3; *see Psalm 40:15; Matthew 27:39–40; and Mark 15:29.*
- ◆ “Those who seek You,” 4; *see 2 Chronicles 7:14; Isaiah 55:6; and Colossians 3:1.*
- ◆ “Let all those who seek You rejoice and be glad in You,” 4; *see Philippians 3:1; 4:4.*
- ◆ “Let God be magnified!” 4; *see Psalm 34:3; 2 Samuel 7:20; and Luke 1:46.*
- ◆ “I am poor and needy,” 5; *see Psalms 34:6; 40:17; 74:21; 74:21; and Matthew 5:3.*

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is omniscient and omnipresent, so he can hear his people’s prayers, 1, 5.
- ◆ He has the power to save his people from physical and spiritual danger, 1, 5.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He revealed his personal and covenantal name, Yahweh to his people, 1, 5.
- ◆ He gives joy to those who seek and love him, 4.
- ◆ He saves his people, 4.
- ◆ He is the help and deliverer of his people, 5; *see 46:2; 62:7; 70:29.*
- ◆ He sometimes allows his people to suffer greatly for a while, and even delays his deliverance for his own secret purposes, 1–5. *See Matthew 8:23–27 and John 11:1, 3–6, 21, 32; and 1 Peter 3:8–9.*

*Note: Peter here speaks of God's purpose to give his people time to repent; it is not to save everyone born into the world.*

## Christ

### His prefiguration

- ◆ The innocent man who is persecuted by his enemies, 2–3.
- ◆ The one who for our sakes became “poor and needy” in every respect, 5; *see 2 Corinthians 8:9.*

## Sin

### It includes

- ◆ Seeking to hurt another person who is innocent, 2
- ◆ Mocking someone who is suffering, 3

### Its consequences

- ◆ Being shamed by God, 2, 3
- ◆ Being frustrated in one's plots by God, 2
- ◆ Confusion from God, 2

## Salvation

Its source: Salvation comes entirely from God, and God alone delivers, 1, 5.

### Its benefits

- ◆ In the Old Testament, deliverance was mostly from danger and death, 1, 5.
- ◆ Salvation also brings joy in the Lord, 4.

Its recipients: Salvation comes to those who turn to God in humble prayer, 1, 5.

## The Last Things

Christ's return: When Christ returns, he will fully and finally save his people, who will join the angels in praising him for all eternity for his salvation. *See Revelation 5:11–13; 7:9–12.*

*Note: These passages refer to the present situation of the departed saints but reflect our eternal state as well.*

# Life

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## Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Expect to be persecuted by wicked people, 2–3.
- ◆ Cry out to God when in difficulty and danger, 1–5.
- ◆ Seek God above all else, 4. *See Psalms 27:4, 8; 34:10; Matthew 6:33; and Colossians 3:1.*
- ◆ Rejoice in the Lord always, 4. *See Philippians 4:6 and 1 Thessalonians 5:18.*
- ◆ Love God and his saving grace, 4.
- ◆ Praise God constantly, 4. *See Luke 2:47 and 1 Peter 2:10.*

# Psalm 71

## Truth

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### Revelation

Its source: Biblical revelation comes to us from God, who spoke to his chosen messengers, who then wrote down the words of God, 17. *See 2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20–21; and Hebrews 1:1.*

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is all-powerful, and thus able to deliver his people from danger, 2, 3, 4, 16, 18.
- ◆ He is omnipresent and thus able to hear the prayers of his people in any place, 2.
- ◆ He is stable and steadfast, strong and secure, an impregnable fortress for his people, 3, 7.
- ◆ He is sovereign over our entire lives, from beginning all the way to our old age and death, 5–6, 9.
- ◆ He is eternal, living from “generation to generation” of men, as well as before and after all human life on earth, 18.
- ◆ He is transcendent, dwelling “on high” above all the world, 19.
- ◆ He is able to do “great things,” especially miracles of deliverance, 19.
- ◆ He is unique and incomparable; all other so-called “gods” or only human inventions, 20.
- ◆ He has the power over life and death, 20.
- ◆ His sovereignty extends even to the depths of the earth, 20.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He is righteous, 2.
- ◆ He does deliver his people, 2, 3, 4, 15.
- ◆ He is a strong fortress and place of safety for his people, 3, 7.
- ◆ He cares for us from birth to death, 6.

- ◆ He is near to those who call upon him, 12. *See Psalms 34:18 and 145:18.*
- ◆ He teaches some of his people from an early age, 17. *See 2 Timothy 1:5; 3:14–15.*
- ◆ He shows his people "great and severe troubles" for a variety of purposes, 20. *See Psalms 34:19; 118:10–13, 17–18; 2 Corinthians 1:3–6, 8–9; 11:23–33; James 1:3–4; Hebrews 12:3–11; and 1 Peter 1:6–7.*
- ◆ He brings his people out of troubles in this life, and also out of eternal death for the next life, 20. *See Psalms 40:1; 89: 15, 29; Hosea 6:1–2; 1 Corinthians 15:20–28; 2 Corinthians 1:9–10; and James 5:15.*

## Christ

His prefiguration: He was the one who

- ◆ Cried out to God for help in extreme danger, 4
- ◆ Was persecuted by wicked men, 4
- ◆ Trusted in God from his childhood, 5
- ◆ Upheld and protected him from his infancy, 6; *see Matthew 2:13–18.*
- ◆ Was considered a "wonder," in this case, a strange person, 7; *see Mark 2:16; 3:20–22, 31.*
- ◆ Was spoken against constantly by his enemies, who plotted against him, 10, 13; *see Mark 2:6–7; 3:6; 11:18; 14:1.*
- ◆ Felt as though God was far from him; indeed, for a while, God did forsake him as he bore our sins, 12; *see Mark 15:22 and Isaiah 53:5–6.*
- ◆ Was taught by God from his youth, 17; *see Luke 2:41–47.*
- ◆ Was shown "great and severe troubles," 20
- ◆ Was "revived," that is, brought back to life from the "depths of the earth," that is, the grave, 20; *see Acts 2:23–32.*
- ◆ Had his greatness "increased" by being exalted as the now-victorious God-man to God's right hand, 21; *see Ephesians 1:19–23; Philippians 2:5–11; Colossians 1:15–18; Hebrews 1:2–4.*

## Mankind

Our fallen state: In our current fallen state, we are subject to aging and consequent weakness, 9, 18.

## Sin

### It includes

- ◆ All sorts of wickedness, 1
- ◆ Unrighteousness, that is, failure to conform to the righteous standards of God, 4; *see Romans 3:10–12*.
- ◆ Cruelty, 4
- ◆ Speaking against someone wrongfully, 10
- ◆ Plotting with others to harm someone, 10
- ◆ Presuming to know the state of another person's soul before God, 11
- ◆ Seeking another's harm, 13

### Its consequences

- ◆ Seeing one's enemy delivered by God, 4
- ◆ Confusion from God, 13
- ◆ Being consumed, that is, destroyed, by God, 13

## Salvation

### Its recipients

- ◆ Those who trust in God alone, 1
- ◆ Those who cry out to God in prayer, 2–4
- ◆ Those who hope in God alone, 3
- ◆ Those who do not claim their own righteousness or boast in their own goodness or ability, but who seek only the righteousness of God that comes by faith, 2, 16, 19; *see Romans 3:21–26; 5:1; 10:3–13; Galatians 2:20–21; 6:14; and Philippians 3:8–11*.

### Its benefits

- ◆ Vindication and reversal of shame, 1
- ◆ Deliverance from physical and spiritual danger, 2–4

- ◆ Hope that God will save, 5
- ◆ Strength when we are weak, 9, 16
- ◆ The presence of God, 12; *see Matthew 28:10.*
- ◆ Joy in the Lord, 23; *see Galatians 5:22; Philipians 4:1; and Thessalonians 5:18.*

## The Last Things

### Christ's return

- ◆ He will fully and finally deliver us from the hands of evil men and especially from the hand of Satan, our principal adversary in this life, 2. *See Revelation 20:7-15; 21:1-8.*
- ◆ He will finally raise us up from the dead to live with him eternally, 20. *See John 5:25-29; 6:39-40 and 1 Corinthians 15:50-57.*

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Expect to be troubled, even unto death, by evil men and Satan, 4, 10-11, 13.
- ◆ Cry out to God for help; *this entire Psalm.*
- ◆ Trust in God as our only refuge, defense, and deliverer, 1, 3, 5, etc.
- ◆ Thank God for upholding us from our birth until now, 6.
- ◆ Praise God constantly, 6, 8, 14, 22-24.; *see Psalm 34:1.*
- ◆ Turn to God in times of weakness and frailty, 9, 18.
- ◆ Speak of God's righteousness, not our own supposed righteousness, 15, 16, 19-24.
- ◆ Go about our day and encounter each trial trusting in God's strength, 16.
- ◆ Speak often of God's wondrous works, 17-18.
- ◆ Tell the younger generation(s) about God's strength and his saving marvels to us and to all God's people, 17-18.
- ◆ Trust God to bring us out of severe trials, even though that may mean allowing us to die and then giving us eternal life with himself, 20.
- ◆ Worship God as the Holy One of Israel, 22.

# Psalm 72

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its cumulative fullness

- ◆ “Until the moon is no more, 7; *see Psalm 89:3–4, 29, 36, 37; 2 Samuel 7:16; Jeremiah 33:23–26; and Luke 1:30–31;*
- ◆ Tarshish, 10; *see Psalm 48:7.*
- ◆ Sheba, whose queen visited Solomon, 10; *see 1 Kings 10:1–3.*
- ◆ Sheba was a land rich in gold, frankincense, spices and precious stones, 10; *see 1 Kings 10:2; Isaiah 60:6; Jeremiah 6:20; and Ezekiel 27:22.*
- ◆ Kings will bring presents, 10; *see 1 Kings 4:21; 10:1, 23, 24; Isaiah 60:4–7; and Jeremiah 6:20.*

#### Its source

- ◆ Biblical revelation came from God to and through his chosen messengers, in this case King Solomon. *See also Psalm 127.*
- ◆ Solomon wrote many proverbs and songs. *See 1 Kings 4:29–34.*

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He rules over all earthly rulers, as this psalm implies, 8–11. *See Psalm 2:4–12; Proverbs 21:1; Daniel 4:34–37; and Romans 13:1–6.*
- ◆ He is the great King over all the earth, whose rule is typified by and expressed through the deeds of good earthly kings. *See Psalms 103:19 and 145:1–21.*
- ◆ He is everlasting, 5, 17, 19.
- ◆ He is unique in his power to do “wondrous things,” 18.
- ◆ He deserves to be, is, and will be, glorified throughout the world, 19.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He is righteous and just, the source of all righteousness and justice that earthly rulers dispense, 1–2, 4. *See Psalms 4:1; 45:6–7; 145:7.*

- ◆ He cares for the poor and needy, 2, 4, 12–13. *See Psalms 34:6; 82:3–4; and Luke 1:52–53.*
- ◆ His presence brings blessings of all sorts, including favorable weather, but also spiritual blessings, 7, 16. *See Genesis 12:3; Galatians 3:8–9; and Revelation 7:9–10.*
- ◆ He causes the righteous to flourish, 7, 16. *See Psalms 1:1–3; 92:12–13.*
- ◆ He provides redemption for those enslaved by oppression and violence, 14.
- ◆ He counts the death (“blood”) of his people precious, 14. *See Psalm 116:15; Revelation 18:20; 19:2.*

## Christ

### His prefiguration

- ◆ This entire psalm, which speaks of his spiritual reign now and his eternal reign in the new heavens and new earth; *see Ephesians 1:20–22; Colossians 1:13–16; Hebrews 1:1–4, 8–9, 13; 1 Peter 3:21–22; and Revelation 1:6; 12:9–10; 21:22–26; 22:2.*
- ◆ Solomon, the son of David, title; *see Matthew 122:42.*
- ◆ The King to whom prominent men from afar gave precious gifts, 10; *see Matthew 2:1–12.*
- ◆ The king who brings redemption for those oppressed by sin and Satan by shedding his own blood, 14; *see Galatians 4:4–5; Titus 2:14; and Revelation 5:9.*
- ◆ The one in whom, by faith, people of all nations are blessed, 17; *see Genesis 12:3 and Galatians 3:7–9, 13–14.*

## The Last Things

### Christ’s return

- ◆ When Jesus Christ returns, he will conquer all his enemies and establish his eternal and righteous kingdom on earth, to be enjoyed by all his saints; see Scriptures referenced above. *See also Psalm 2:1–12 and 2 Samuel 7:12, 13.*
- ◆ Some believe that this psalm describes a literal millennial kingdom of ten thousand years on earth, with Jesus ruling from the Davidic throne in Jerusalem.

The difficulty with this view, of course, is the reference to the eternity of the kingdom here described.

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Thank God for sending Jesus to save us from sin, Satan and death, and transfer us into the kingdom of Christ. *See Colossians 1:13.*
- ◆ Thank God for the promise of a coming everlasting kingdom of justice, peace, and prosperity.
- ◆ Offer all we have to Christ, even our most precious “things,” including our lives. *See John 12:1–8.*
- ◆ Give to the poor and needy and do all we can to rescue them from oppression.
- ◆ Pray for all kings and rulers and those in authority; this whole psalm is a prayer for the kings, 15. *See 1 Timothy 2:1–2.*

# Psalm 73

## Truth

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### Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ “You set them in slippery places,” 18; *see Psalm 35:6 and Jeremiah 23:12.*

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He has the power to destroy the wicked, 18.
- ◆ He is omnipresent and eternal, 23.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He chose Israel—the descendants of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel—to be his special people, 1. *See Genesis 12:1–3; 15:5; 17:1–19; 18:9–15; 22:17–18; and Exodus 3:15.*
- ◆ He was good to Israel in many ways, especially by delivering them from Egypt and bringing them into the Promised Land of Canaan, and by declaring to them his will and ways, 1. *See Psalms 78:1–55; 136:1–26; 146:19–20.*
- ◆ He condescended to dwell among his people in the sanctuary, later the temple in Jerusalem, and now in his people, the church, 17. *See Psalm 23:6; Exodus 40:34–38; 1 Corinthians 3:9, 17; and Ephesians 2:19–22.*
- ◆ He destroys the wicked, by earthly disaster and by eternal wrath, 18–19, 27. *See Psalms 1:4–5; 2:12; 5:4–6, 10; 7:11–13, 15–16; 119:155; Matthew 7:21–23; and Romans 2:5–9.*
- ◆ He is constantly present in a gracious way to his faithful people, 23.
- ◆ He holds and upholds us by his hand, 23. *See Isaiah 41:10.*
- ◆ He guides his people, 2. *See Psalms 23:3; 32:8; 48:14; and Isaiah 58:11.*

- ◆ He will finally receive his people into eternal glory, 24. *See Romans 5:2; 8:30; 1 Corinthians 15:42–43; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 4:17; 1 Thessalonians 2:12; and 1 Peter 1:7; 5:10.*
- ◆ He strengthens the heart of his people, 26.
- ◆ He is their people’s portion, or inheritance, 26. *See Psalm 16:5.*
- ◆ He allows his people to draw near to him by faith, 28. *See Hebrews 10:22 and James 4:8.*

## Christ

### His prefiguration

- ◆ The one who was constantly with God on earth, and is now in heaven with him forever, 23.
- ◆ The one whom God guided and upheld during his earthly life, 24.
- ◆ The one whom God raised into glory after his resurrection from the dead, 24; *see Acts 2:24–28, 34–35; Ephesians 1:30–22; and 1 Peter 1:11.*

## Sin

### It includes

- ◆ Boasting, 3, 8
- ◆ Pride, 6; *see Proverbs 3:34; 16:18; Mark 7:22; James 4:7, 10, 13; 1 Peter 5:5.*
- ◆ Violent behavior, 6
- ◆ Overindulgence, 7
- ◆ Scorning and mocking the concept of sin, 8
- ◆ Oppression of others, 8
- ◆ Taunting, scorning, and mocking God, 9
- ◆ Imagining that God does not see or know what we do, 11
- ◆ Complacency in one’s own wealth, 12
- ◆ Constantly seeking to acquire more money, 12
- ◆ Not drawing near to God in repentance and faith, but living “far away” from him, 27

### Its consequences

- ◆ Being put into a place that leads to falling by God, 18
- ◆ Destruction, both physical and spiritual, 18–19, 27

- ◆ Terror, 19
- ◆ God's disgust and condemnation, 20

## Salvation

Its source: Salvation comes entirely from God, 23–26.

### Its benefits

- ◆ God's presence always, 23
- ◆ God's help, 23
- ◆ God's guidance, 24
- ◆ Everlasting glory, 24
- ◆ The "possession" of God, 25–26
- ◆ A constant supply of strength, 26

Its conveyance: Salvation comes to those who repent of their sin and trust in God, 21–22, 28.

## The Last Things

Christ's return: When he returns, he will utterly punish the unrepentant wicked and completely save those who trust in him.

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Seek purity of heart before God, 1. *See Matthew 5:8 and James 4:8.*
- ◆ Do not envy the wicked in their apparent prosperity, 3. *See Psalm 37:1–40 and Proverbs 24:1–2.*
- ◆ Remember that God will punish the unrepentant wicked.
- ◆ By faith, enter into the "sanctuary" of God's presence in prayer and with his people, to complete the entire revelation of God, 17.
- ◆ Repent of our grumbling against God and our folly, 21–22.
- ◆ Realize that God is with us always, to support us.
- ◆ Seek God's guidance daily, 24. *See Ephesians 5:17 and James 1:5.*

- ◆ Set our hope fully on the grace to be brought to us when Christ returns, 24. *See 1 Peter 1:13.*
- ◆ Desire nothing but God himself, and him alone, 25–26.
- ◆ Seek, and receive by faith, God’s constant supply of strength, 26. *See Ephesians 6:10.*
- ◆ Draw near to God in prayer and hearing his Word daily, 28.
- ◆ Trust in God at all times and for all things, 28.
- ◆ Praise God openly for what he has done for us, 28. *See 1 Peter 2:9..*

# Psalm 74

## Truth

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### Revelation

Its source and conveyance: God spoke through many prophets, some of whom wrote down what he had revealed, 9. *See Hebrews 1:1 and 1 Peter 1:10-12.*

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is the great and universal King, 12.
- ◆ He is eternal, 12.
- ◆ He is omnipotent, able to work wonders for his people, 13-15.
- ◆ He governs all time and all that occurs, 16.
- ◆ He created the universe, including the light (Day 1 and the stars (Day 4).
- ◆ He governs the seasons, 17.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He is holy and righteous, and therefore angry at sin, 1.
- ◆ He chose Israel to be his “flock,” the “sheep of his pasture,” 1. *See Psalms 23; 95:7; 100:3; Isaiah 40:11; and Ezekiel 34:30-31.*
- ◆ He “purchased” his people, redeeming them from bondage in Egypt, 2.
- ◆ He condescended to dwell among his people in the Tabernacle and then the Temple in Jerusalem, 2, 3-8. *See Psalm 23:6; Exodus 40:34-38; 1 Corinthians 3:9, 17; and Ephesians 2:19-22.*
- ◆ He revealed his “name,” that is, his personal identity, character, and will, to his people Israel, 7, 10.
- ◆ He sent prophets to communicate to his people, and confirmed their words with miracles, 9.
- ◆ He allows his people to suffer at the hands of his enemies and theirs, 3-11, 18-23.
- ◆ He works “salvation in the midst of the earth,” for his people, 12.

- ◆ He delivered his people from the Egyptians and led them through the Red Sea, while the Egyptian army perished in the waters, 13. *See Exodus 14:21.*
- ◆ He dried up the waters of the Jordan while his people crossed over into Canaan, 15. *See Joshua 2:10; 3:13.*
- ◆ He kindly made a covenant with his people Israel, 20. *See Genesis 12:1–3 and Exodus 20.*
- ◆ He provided drink for his people out of a rock in the wilderness. *See Exodus 17:5–6 and Numbers 20:11.*
- ◆ He cherishes his people affectionately, like a beautiful dove, 19. *See Song of Solomon 2:12, 14; 5:2; 6:9.*

## Christ

### His prefiguration

- ◆ The image of God's people as the sheep of his pasture, 1; *see Mark 6:34; John 10; Hebrews 13:20; and 1 Peter 2:25.*
- ◆ The one who has purchased and redeemed us from sin and death through shedding his own blood, 2; *see Mark 10:45; Ephesians 1:7; Romans 3:24–25; Titus 2:14; and 1 Peter 1:18–19.*

## Sin

### It includes

- ◆ Damaging or destroying the dwelling place of God, 3, 5–8; *see 1 Corinthians 3:16–17.*
- ◆ Mocking, scorning, and blaspheming God's name, including his character and his ways, 10, 18, 22
- ◆ Seeking to kill God's people, 19–20
- ◆ Cruelty, violence, 20
- ◆ Oppression and exploitation of those who are weaker, 21
- ◆ Rebellion against God, 23

## Salvation

### Its source

- ◆ Salvation comes entirely from God.

- ◆ He alone saved Israel from Egypt, 2.
- ◆ He alone works salvation in the earth, 12.

## The Last Things

### Christ's return

- ◆ He will destroy his enemies and the enemies of his people, 11.
- ◆ He will deliver his people from eternal death and hell, 19. *See John 10:28.*

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Expect to experience times when God seems to have cast us off, 1.
- ◆ Expect to be persecuted by wicked men, 3–8. *See Philipians 1:19 and 1 Peter 1:21; 4:1, 12.*
- ◆ Cry out to God in times of danger and extreme trouble.
- ◆ “Remind” God of his saving works in the past and his sovereign governance of the world today, 12–17.
- ◆ Trust God to give sufficient grace and help in time of need. *See 2 Corinthians 12:9 and Hebrews 4:16.*

# Psalm 75

## Truth

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### Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ It contains backward-looking references, like God's "wondrous works," 1. *See Psalm 74:12-17.*
- ◆ It also contains forward-looking words and concepts, like the cup of God's wrath, 8. *See Matthew 26:39 and Revelation 14:10, 16:19.*

Its source: It comes through many different authors, including Asaph. *See Psalms 73-83.*

Its literary forms: It includes many genres and moods—songs of lament (like Psalm 74) and songs of praise and confidence (like Psalm 75).

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is almighty to save, working miracles on behalf of his people, 1.
- ◆ He establishes the earth firmly, despite chaos among men, 3.
- ◆ He rules sovereignly over the world, putting down one king or nation and raising up another, 7.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He is the just Judge of all the earth, 1.
- ◆ He protects and raises up his people, those who trust in him and praise him, 1, 9.
- ◆ He opposes the proud, 4-5.
- ◆ He pours out his wrath upon the unrepentant wicked, 8.

### Salvation

#### Its conveyance

- ◆ It came to Israel through God's intervention in history.
- ◆ It comes to us because Jesus drank the cup of God's wrath in our place, 8.

- ◆ It will come finally when God judges all the nations of the earth, fully punishing all the unrepentant wicked and rewarding those who trust in him and show their faith by their righteous deeds, 10. *See Matthew 25:46.*

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Praise God for all his wondrous works of salvation in the past, both those recorded in the Bible and those that have happened in our own lives.
- ◆ Do not boast of any “exaltation” God may grant us, for he will put down all the proud.
- ◆ Do not fret because of the prosperity of the wicked, for they will be judged and punished at God’s own time.
- ◆ Look forward to our coming salvation when Christ returns.

# Psalm 76

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its source

- ◆ In Old Testament times, special revelation came to and through the chosen people of God – Israel, including Judah – where alone God was “known,” 1.
- ◆ Though God fills heaven and earth, his special revelation included the special manifestation of his presence in the tabernacle, which finally came to rest in Jerusalem, 2.
- ◆ It comes even through the actions of wrathful, wicked men, as they are rebuked and thwarted by God in their attempts to eliminate his people, 10.

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is filled with supreme glory, more than the greatest things we can see on earth, 4.
- ◆ He rules sovereignly over all nations, including pagan ones, which he defeats at times to deliver his people, 5–6. *See especially Exodus.*
- ◆ He deserves our fear—that is, reverence and awe—respect, dependence, and love, 7, 11.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He made himself known uniquely to Israel, and especially in the Tabernacle, 1–2.
- ◆ He allows himself to be addressed personally by his faithful people as “You,” “Yahweh,” and “God,” 7, 11.
- ◆ He becomes angry at the sins of men who do not believe or obey him, 7.
- ◆ He judges the people of this world with holy wrath and heavy punishments, 8–9.

# Life

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## Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Trust God to rule the affairs of men and nations for the ultimate good of his people.
- ◆ Stand before him in fear, awe, reverence, humility, trust, and love.
- ◆ Pay our vows to God, especially those made at baptism and marriage.

# Psalm 77

## Truth

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### Revelation

Its content: It includes the anguished cries of God's people when they were buffeted by doubts and even despair, 1-10.

Its source: It came in history through God's mighty works to save his people from their enemies, as interpreted by him through his prophets and apostles, 10-20.

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is supremely and uniquely great, 13.
- ◆ He is omnipotent, doing wondrous works among men and through his created order, 14-20.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He sometimes allows his people to suffer so much that they wonder whether he has utterly abandoned them, yet he is merciful and demonstrates mercy and grace to his people, 7-9.
- ◆ He gave promises to his people, 8.
- ◆ He showed himself in his sanctuary, 13.
- ◆ He chose Israel to be his special people, and he delivered and sustained them in history, 15-20.
- ◆ He took Israel to be his "flock," and cared for them as their Shepherd, using humans as his agents, 20.

### Christ

#### His prefiguration

- ◆ His death—as the Redeemer and the Shepherd who lays down his life for the sheep—is prefigured by the redemption of Israel from Egypt through the death of the first-born of Egypt and the offering of the Passover lamb by Israel, 15.  
*See John 10:1-29.*

- ◆ He is prefigured in the Old Testament as the Good Shepherd, both through the work of Moses, who shepherded Israel for forty years, and through the life of David, who represented Christ on earth, 20.

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Pour out our hearts to God when we are in trouble, perhaps using the words of the psalms.
- ◆ Remember God's acts of redemption in history, especially the death of Jesus for our sins, which demonstrated once and for all his love for us. *See Romans 5:8.*
- ◆ Recall God's mighty works of deliverance and provision recorded in the Old and New Testaments, as well as in church history, as encouragements to us when we are low.
- ◆ Remember the time when God converted us and raised us from spiritual death, giving us new life and full reconciliation with himself. *See Ephesians 2.*
- ◆ Do not depend on our feelings to assess our relationship with God or whether he loves us; these are unreliable. Instead, look to Scripture and to what God has done in our lives to strengthen our faith when he allows us to suffer.

# Psalm 78:1–39

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its content

- ◆ It is meant to be passed on from one generation to the next, from parents to their children, as they recite the Scriptural narrative and related doctrines, 1–7.
- ◆ It calls us to remember God’s mighty works in the past and to set our hope on him alone, 7–8, that is, its purpose is not merely to provide information.
- ◆ It speaks frankly of the sins of God’s people; rather than covering them up, it relates them to us so that we might take them as a warning, 7–8.

Its literary forms: It comes in various genres, such as parables, riddles, historical narratives, and poetry, 1–39. These genres may combine within a single passage.

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is omnipotent, able to work wonders in the created order to save his people, 13–31.
- ◆ He is Most High God, 35.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He is holy and therefore furious at his people’s unbelief and rebellion, and he chastens them severely to cause them to repent, 21, 31, 33.
- ◆ He is the Rock and Redeemer of his people, 35.
- ◆ He makes covenants with his people—for example, with Noah, Abraham, Moses, and us through Christ—which he keeps, though they do not, 37.
- ◆ He is merciful, not eliminating Israel but repeatedly forgiving them, 38–39.

### Mankind

Our fallen state: We are made of “flesh,” that is, we are frail and perishable. We are also now inclined to sin, 39.

## Sin

### It includes

- ◆ It includes forgetting God's mercy and gracious acts, rebelling against him, and craving more than we need, 11, 17, 29-30.
- ◆ It consists primarily in not setting our hearts fully upon God in belief, 8, 22.

## Salvation

Its prefiguration: It expresses itself in sacrificial redemption of sins by the shed blood of Christ, prefigured by the sacrificial system of the Old Testament, 35.

Its source: It flows from God's compassion and mercy, 38.

Its substance: It consists in forgiveness and long forbearance, 38.

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Constantly review God's great saving acts as recorded in the Bible – especially the Exodus and the work of Redemption completed in Christ at the Cross and through the Resurrection, the Ascension, and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.
- ◆ Tell the younger generation these things, warning them not to imitate the unbelief and rebellion of many who have professed to be God's people in the past.
- ◆ Seek to set our hearts upon God alone, to believe in his love for us and his promises to provide, and not to crave the things of earth more than we desire God himself. *See Matthew 6:33; Colossians 3:1-4; and 1 John 2:15.*

# Psalm 78:40–72

## Truth

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### God

His greatness: He is Most High God, deserving of full worship and obedience, 56.

His goodness

- ◆ He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love.
- ◆ He does not treat his people as their sins deserve, as shown by this narrative of Israel's repeated apostasy and his repeated deliverance of them.
- ◆ He is grieved by his people's lack of faith in him, 40.
- ◆ He redeemed them from slavery by the Passover lamb, which pointed toward Christ, 42.
- ◆ He was faithful to his promise to give Abraham's descendants the land of Israel, 54–55.
- ◆ He chose Israel as his inheritance, his own special people, 62.
- ◆ He condescended to dwell with them in the Tabernacle, 60, and in the altar in the Temple in Jerusalem, and now in the church, his people, 69. *See Psalm 23:6; Exodus 40:34–38; 1 Corinthians 3:9, 17; and Ephesians 2:19–22.*
- ◆ He showed his love to them by choosing Judah over Joseph and by sending David to shepherd them as king, 71.
- ◆ He punishes all who oppress and persecute his people, as he did the Egyptians for enslaving the Hebrews and subjecting them to hard labor, 43–53.
- ◆ He is furious at his people's ingratitude and forgetfulness of his goodness to them and at their turning away from him, rebellion, and idolatry, and he will severely chastise them for these sins, cutting off unfaithful members of the people in the process, 56–64.

### Christ

His prefiguration

- ◆ In the "redemption" of Israel from Egypt
- ◆ In the sacrificial system, 60
- ◆ By the image of God as Shepherd, 52

- ◆ By King David, who, like Moses, was a literal shepherd before being called to rule his people as a shepherd leads and cares for his sheep, 70–72. *See Psalm 23; John 10:11; Hebrews 13:20; and 1 Peter 2:25.*

His divinity: He is indirectly, but quite clearly, demonstrated to be equal with God, who is revealed as “Shepherd” of Israel.

## Salvation

Its substance: It involves the mighty working of God’s power to deliver us from spiritual enemies, including our sins.

Its source

- ◆ It flows from the mercy and compassion of God. *See Psalm 106:44–46.*
- ◆ It is made possible by the redemption provided by Christ on the Cross. *See Romans 3:25–26.*

Its conveyance

- ◆ It often comes to us through the ministry of others, such as God’s chosen leaders.
- ◆ It must be received by faith.
- ◆ It must be followed by obedience.

## Life

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Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Do not fret when evil people oppress and persecute the church, for they, like the Egyptians, will be destroyed unless they repent. Their time is coming.
- ◆ Do not forget God or follow the awful example of the rebellious Israelites, lest we bring shame to God’s name and suffer very severe discipline.

Qualifications for Christian leaders

- ◆ They must be called by God, 70.
- ◆ They must have good character [integrity], 72.
- ◆ They must possess competence for their task, like David, 72.
- ◆ They must be willing to spend years in humble, even menial service, like Moses, David, and Christ, before being given greater responsibilities.

# Psalm 79

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its cumulative fullness

- ◆ Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.
- ◆ In the psalms, as elsewhere, we find organization within each psalm as well as connections between one psalm and another, as with Psalms 78–81, which are linked by references to the destruction of Jerusalem, laments from the exiled Jews, and the idea of God as Shepherd of his people.

### God

#### His goodness

- ◆ He chose Israel as his inheritance, and the temple in Jerusalem as his earthly “dwelling place” – that is, his place of unique presence and self-manifestation, 1.
- ◆ He forgives his people for their sins out of his mercy and through the atonement which was prefigured by the sacrificial system and fulfilled in Christ’s death on the Cross, 8–9.
- ◆ He showed anger and wrath toward his Old Testament people when they were rebellious (though not now toward Christians, despite his displeasure at their sin and his harsh discipline of them as his beloved children), 5, 8.
- ◆ Out of jealousy for his own reputation or name, he pours out his wrath upon wicked nations and individuals who persecute his people, 9–10, 12. *See also throughout Old Testament history.*
- ◆ As we know from Israel’s history, he helps them when they call upon him in repentance and faith, 13.

## Christ

### His prefiguration

- ◆ As the atonement for which the psalmist prayed after the temple was destroyed, 9
- ◆ As Shepherd of his people, who are described as sheep, 13

## Sin

### Its substance

- ◆ Not knowing God – that is, not choosing to know him as God from his self-revelation in Creation; *see Romans 1:18-28*.
- ◆ Not calling on his name in faith and prayer, 6
- ◆ Despising his people and therefore his grace and sovereign choice of Israel, 10, 12

## Salvation

### Its substance

- ◆ Forgiveness of sins, 8
- ◆ Help in times of need, especially from people and indwelling sin that keep us from serving him, 9
- ◆ Answers to prayer, 11
- ◆ A heart to praise God for his salvation, 13

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Read the Old Testament, including the psalms, as books foretelling Jesus Christ and his earthly existence (like this lament), his saving work, and his victories at the Cross, resurrection, and ascension, as well as at his return.
- ◆ When we are brought low by God's discipline or other workings of his providence, confess our sins and call upon him for mercy and deliverance.
- ◆ Praise God daily for his mercies to us in Christ, including forgiveness, new life, access to the Throne of Grace in prayer, constant help, and hope of eternal life.

# Psalm 80

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its cumulative fullness

- ◆ Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones. Progressively and gradually, it unveils more and more truth about God and his ways.
- ◆ In this psalm, Israel is pictured as a vine that God planted but which was uprooted and destroyed because the people failed to bear fruit, 8-16. *See Isaiah 5:1, 7; Jeremiah 2:21; and Ezekiel 15:6. See also Jesus' reference to himself as the true Vine, which replaces Israel and bears fruit through his faithful people, John 15:1-8.*

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is Lord of hosts, the armies of heaven 4, 7, 14, 19.
- ◆ He is transcendent, dwelling in "heaven" – that is, far "above" this world, 14.
- ◆ He is also immanent, as Shepherd of his people, dwelling amidst them in the tabernacle, 1, and seeing all that happens on earth, 14.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He seems sometimes to turn his back upon them, 3, 7, 14, 19.
- ◆ He allows his people to suffer at the hands of sinners and as a result of their own sins, 4-6, 12-13, 16.
- ◆ He delivered the people of Israel from Egypt and gave them the Promised Land in which to dwell and flourish, 8-11.

### Christ

#### His prefiguration

- ◆ As Good Shepherd of his people, 1; *see John 10.*
- ◆ As the vine, 8-11; *see John 15.*

- ◆ As the “man of God’s right hand,” 17, referring first to David and his heirs and then to Jesus Christ, the Son of Man who is mighty to save

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ When we are oppressed, sorrowful, and troubled, we should confess our sins and ask for forgiveness, pouring out our hearts to God and asking him to revive us, show us his gracious face, and save us.
- ◆ Read the Old Testament, including the psalms, as written about Jesus Christ.
- ◆ Remember God’s previous works of grace to his people in the Bible, in Christ, in Christian history, and in our own lives, as encouragements to pray to God for mercy and renewed salvation.

# Psalm 81

## Truth

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### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is powerful and gives strength to his people, 1.
- ◆ He is unique and deserving of our total and exclusive allegiance and love, 9.
- ◆ He is the God of Jacob, who was the grandson of Abraham, to whom he gave promises to make his descendants a great nation and to give them the Promised Land, 4.
- ◆ He is Yahweh, the self-existent, self-sufficient God who showed both his power and his faithfulness to his promise to Abraham when he delivered Israel from Egypt, 10.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He seeks the joy of his people, which he knows will only come as they adore and praise him with all their being, 1-2.
- ◆ He gave specific directions to his people on how to worship him, 3-5.
- ◆ He answers the prayers of his people when they are in trouble and delivers them, 7.
- ◆ He longs to satisfy his people with every sort of blessing, far beyond what they can imagine, if they will only listen to him, rely on him, and obey him, 10-16.
- ◆ He sometimes tests the faith and loyalty of his people by depriving them for a while of things they think they need, 7. *See Exodus 17:6-7 and Numbers 20:13.*
- ◆ He requires that his people hear and heed his words of warning and instruction, especially his command that they worship and serve him alone, 8-9.
- ◆ He sometimes allows people to follow their own sinful desires and to suffer the terrible consequences if they refuse to hear and heed his words, 12.

### Christ

His prefiguration: He is the one who provides for and satisfies the soul. This role is symbolized by both solid food (wheat) and liquid food (honey), and it is fulfilled in his self-description as the Bread of Life and the Giver of living waters, 16. *See John 6:35, 37-39.*

## Sin

### It includes

- ◆ Not worshipping God alone, but seeking “life” elsewhere, 9
- ◆ Not listening to God, 11, 13
- ◆ Not wanting to have anything to do with God, either actively or by neglect, 11
- ◆ Walking according to our own hearts’ desires, 12
- ◆ Stubborn refusal to turn to God, 12

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Praise and thank God with music, not only corporately at stated times, but also always, everywhere, and for everything. *See Ephesians 5:18-20.*
- ◆ “Listen” to God daily by reading his Word and meditating upon it.
- ◆ Be careful to believe his promises and to draw near to him in faith, asking for all that we really need, especially spiritual refreshment and revival.
- ◆ Also, be careful to obey all his clear commands, especially those in the New Testament, which are for all people at all times and which summarize, restate, clarify, and deepen all the Ten Commandments (except the Fourth, but the Sabbath principle is elsewhere confirmed as an ordinance of creation; *see Genesis 2:2 and Exodus 20:8-11*).

# Psalm 82

## Truth

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### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is Most High, greater than all other “gods,” whether they are mighty men or idols made and worshiped by men, 1, 6.
- ◆ He is judge of all men (especially kings) and all nations, 1, 8.
- ◆ He is holy and just, caring for the helpless and weak, and he requires that earthly rulers imitate him in these ways, 3-4.
- ◆ He owns and will eventually rule visibly over all nations of the earth, 8.

### Mankind

#### Earthly rulers

- ◆ These rulers stand in the place of God as his servants to dispense justice on earth, 1-2, 6.
- ◆ As members of God’s people Israel, called God’s “son,” these rulers are, in some sense, “children” of God, 6.
- ◆ However, they are flawed.
  - They tend toward oppression and exploitation of others, 2.
  - They often do not know God or understand his will for justice on earth, 5.
  - They will die like all other earthly rulers before them and be judged by God at the last day, 7-8.

### Christ

His divinity and power: He is the Son of God, even more than earthly rulers are, as explained by Jesus when he commented on this psalm. *See John 10:24-36.*

## Life

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#### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Attend to God’s Word, including the Old Testament, to understand this world, including politics.
- ◆ Pray for our political leaders, that they may rule justly.

- ◆ Care for the poor and fatherless, the afflicted and needy.
- ◆ Do not fret when wicked men rule; they will die and face God's judgment.
- ◆ Thank God for sending Jesus to be God's true Son, the ideal man, and the eventual judge of the world.

# Psalm 83

## Truth

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### Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ “Do not keep silent, O God!”, 1; *see Psalm 28:1.*
- ◆ God’s enemies, 2; *see Psalm 81:15.*
- ◆ “Your sheltered ones,” 3; *see Psalms 27:5 and 91:1.*
- ◆ God’s enemies plot against his people, 3–5; *see Psalm 2:1–2.*
- ◆ Moab and Ammon, 6, 7; *see 2 Chronicles 20:1.*
- ◆ Edom, 6; *see Psalm 137:7; Isaiah 34:5; and Jeremiah 49:7.*
- ◆ Amalek, 7; *see Genesis 14:7; Exodus 17:8–16; Judges 6:3; and 1 Samuel 15:5.*
- ◆ Assyria, 8; *see 2 Kings 18:17–37.*
- ◆ “As with Midian,” 9; *see Judges 7:22.*
- ◆ “As with Sisera,” 9; *see Judges 4:15–24, 5:20, 21.*

### Its historical setting and character

- ◆ Biblical revelation is set within human history and records events of history, especially the history of God’s dealings with his people, 9–12.

### Its literary forms

- ◆ Some psalms call upon God to punish the enemies of his people, who are also his enemies. These are called “imprecatory psalms,” for they call down a malediction, or curse, upon evil people. These psalms must be understood in the light of
  - God’s righteousness and holiness: he must punish sin.
  - God’s love for his people.
  - God’s love for sinners, as expressed in the Cross of Jesus Christ, who bore God’s curse on behalf of all who trust in him; *see 2 Corinthians 5:21 and Galatians 3:10–14.*

## God

### His greatness

- ◆ He is God, Elohim, the Creator of heaven and earth, 1. *See Genesis 1:1.*
- ◆ He is like a mighty storm or consuming fire in his wrath, 13–15.
- ◆ He is most High over all the earth, utterly transcendent and powerful, 18.

### His goodness

- ◆ He graciously chose Abraham and his descendants to be his special people, 3. *See Genesis 12:1–3; 15:5; 17:1–19; 18:9–15; 22:17–18; and Exodus 3:15.*
- ◆ He has often delivered his people from their enemies and his, 9–12.
- ◆ He is Yahweh, the covenant God of his people, 16, 18.
- ◆ He will utterly dishonor and destroy his unrepentant enemies, 17. *See Revelation 20:15; 21:8.*

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Expect to be hated and persecuted by the enemies of God, 2–4. *See John 15:18–25.*
- ◆ Cry out to God when we are persecuted, 1–18.
- ◆ Remember God's past deliverances of his people, 9–12.
- ◆ Pray for God's enemies to come to know his name, 16.
- ◆ Trust that God will someday vindicate his people and punish his unrepentant enemies, 13–18.

# Psalm 84

## Truth

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### Revelation

Its literary forms: This psalm is universally considered to be one of the loveliest in the entire Psalter, reflecting the loveliness of God and his dwelling place, 1.

#### Its authors

- ◆ This psalm is one of eight by the “sons of Korah,” title of the psalm.
- ◆ This psalm echoes Psalms 42–43, also by the sons of Korah.

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is the commander of the heavenly “hosts,” or armies of angels, symbolizing his omnipotence, 1, 3, 8, 12.
- ◆ He is God, Elohim, the Creator of heaven and earth, 2, 8, 9, 11. *See Genesis 1:3.*
- ◆ He has life in himself; he is therefore eternal; he is alive in every way, 2. *See John 5:26 and 1 Timothy 6:16.*
- ◆ He is the universal King over all the world, 3.
- ◆ He is omnipresent, and thus able to hear the prayers of his people, 8.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He condescended to dwell among his people in the tabernacle and then in the Temple in Jerusalem, 1–4, 7, 10. *See Psalms 27:4 and 46:4.*
- ◆ He and his dwelling place are “lovely,” that is, lovable, desirable, attractive, 1.
- ◆ He revealed his personal name, Yahweh, to his people Israel as his covenant people, 1–2, 11. *See Exodus 3:14–16.*
- ◆ His tender care reaches even to the smallest of creatures, 3. *See Matthew 10:29–31.*
- ◆ He graciously instituted a system of sacrifices upon altars, whereby his unworthy people could draw near to him, 3. *See Leviticus 4:7.*
- ◆ He allows individual believers to know and love him as their personal King and God, 3, 10.

- ◆ He gives strength to his believing people, 5, 7. *See Psalms 68:35; 71:16; and Isaiah 40:31.*
- ◆ He hears the prayers of his people, 8. *See Psalm 34:15.*
- ◆ He was the God of erring Jacob, whom he forgave and changed, and to whom he continued to extend his promises to Abraham, 8. *See Genesis 12:1–3; 27:1–29; 28:1–5, 13–15; and Matthew 22:32.*
- ◆ He chose and anointed David and his descendants to rule over his people, 9. *See 2:2; 1 Samuel 16:1–13; and 2 Samuel 7:1–16.*
- ◆ He is like the sun in his radiant brilliance and life-giving light, warmth and energy, 11. *See Isaiah 60:19–20 and Revelation 21:23.;*
- ◆ He is like a protecting shield to his embattled people, 11. *See Psalm 18:2 and Genesis 15:1.*
- ◆ He gives grace – unmerited favor and love – to his people now, 11. *See Romans 1:7 and Ephesians 2:8.*
- ◆ He will give his faithful people eternal glory when Christ returns, 11. *See Romans 5:2; 8:30; 1 Thessalonians 2:12; and 1 Peter 1:7; 5:10.*
- ◆ He gradually glorifies them in this life as they look to him in faith, 11. *See 2 Corinthians 3:18.*
- ◆ He gives every good thing to those who, by faith, walk with integrity, 11. *See Matthew 7:11; Romans 8:32; and James 1:17.*

## Christ

His prefiguration: He fulfills many of God's Old Testament promises.

- ◆ He was the dwelling place of God on earth, 1–4. *See John 2:19–21; 17:21; and Colossians 1:19; 2:9.*
- ◆ He is now the temple in whom we dwell, 1–4. *See John 15:1–7,*
- ◆ He too deserves to be called “my King and my God,” 3. *See John 20:28.*
- ◆ He is the one in whom we now have increasing strength, 7. *See Ephesians 6:10.*
- ◆ He is the Anointed One of God, the Christ, 9. *See Matthew 1:1; 3:16–17; 16:16; and Acts 2:36.*
- ◆ He is the Sun of Righteousness, 11. *See Malachi 4:2 and Revelation 1:16.*
- ◆ He gives grace to his people, 12. *See Romans 1:7, and all other epistles of Paul except Galatians.*

## Salvation

### Its substance

- ◆ Constant abiding in God through Jesus Christ, by the Holy Spirit, 1–4; *see John 15:1–7; Ephesians 1: frequent mention of being “in Christ”; 1 John 2:24, 28; 3:6.*
- ◆ Access to the presence of God now by faith, and fully later in the New Heaven and New Earth, 7; *see Ephesians 3:12; Hebrews 4:16; 10:19–22; and Revelation 22:4.*
- ◆ “Grace and glory,” 11; *see Scriptures referenced above.*

## The People of God

Their identity: The people of God are a pilgrim people; they belong to the next world, not this world, 5–7. *See John 17:14–16; and 1 Peter 1:1; 2:11.*

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Earnestly seek the things above, where Christ is. *See Colossians 3:1–3.*
- ◆ Cry out to God for a sense of his presence, 2.
- ◆ Abide in Christ by faith now, listening to his Word and responding in prayer. *See John 15:7.*
- ◆ See this life as a pilgrimage, as we set our hearts on our future hope; don’t become too attached to this world. *See 1 Peter 1:13; 2:11.*
- ◆ Seek strength from Christ, 5. *See 1 Corinthians 7:29–31; 1 John 2:15–17; Ephesians 6:10; and Colossians 1:11.*
- ◆ Expect to walk through the valley of Baca [Weeping, Tears] in this life, 6.
- ◆ Turn this valley into a place of refreshing springs by calling on God for strength and grace, 6–7.
- ◆ Seek heavenly happiness, not earthly bliss, 10–11.
- ◆ Look to God for light, life, energy, warmth and protection, 11.
- ◆ Ask God in faith for all “good things,” which are the spiritual and material blessings that he in his wisdom gives us, 11. *See Matthew 7:11; Romans 8:32; and James 1:17.*
- ◆ Trust in God and in his Word constantly and for all things, 12.

# Psalm 85

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its literary forms

- ◆ It usually comes in a well-ordered literary form, using parallelism, contrast, theme development, and other devices to form a coherent yet dynamic whole.
- ◆ Here, the poem is divided into two sections with seven verses each (in Hebrew).
- ◆ Each division contains a three-line stanza followed by a four-line stanza, with the corresponding stanzas of the second half answering to those of the first: Verses 1–3 speak of mercies granted, while vv. 8–9 speak of mercies soon to come; vv. 4–7 voice the prayer, and vv. 10–13 offer the blessed reassurance that the prayer will be heard. Each of the four stanzas contains one reference to the “LORD.” (*NIVSB*)

Its recipients: Revelation comes through God’s word to those who will slow down, quiet themselves, and hear what he has said through the prophets (including the psalmists) and apostles, 8.

### God

#### His goodness

- ◆ He is Yahweh, the covenant God of Israel, 1, 7–8, 12.
- ◆ He is merciful and gracious, forgiving the sins of his repentant people, 2–3, 10.
- ◆ He is the God of repeated salvation for those who turn from sin toward him and show godly reverence and fear, 4, 9.
- ◆ He is the source of life and renewed life, both material and spiritual, to those who turn to him in faith and fear, 6.
- ◆ Through his forgiveness and mercy, he gives his people peace—that is, pardon, his own presence, protection, prosperity, and personal inner quiet and rest, 8.
- ◆ He is righteous and holy; therefore, he is angry when his people sin and disciplines them with all kinds of hardship, 4–5, 11.

*Note: Most interpreters take the qualities mentioned in verses 10–11 to refer to attributes of God; others think that “from earth” indicates human behavior prompted by*

*God's grace, and "from heaven" refers to God's answering mercy and peace to his repentant, trusting, and obedient people.*

## Christ

His prefiguration: He fulfills many of God's Old Testament promises.

- ◆ Freedom from captivity, 1
- ◆ Forgiveness of sins, 2
- ◆ The nearness of salvation; "Jesus" means "Yahweh is salvation," 1
- ◆ The convergence of mercy and truth, 10
- ◆ Righteousness, 10
- ◆ Peace, 10

## Salvation

Its substance

- ◆ Renewed favor, mostly spiritual now but also sometimes material, as in the Old Testament, 1, 12
- ◆ Deliverance from captivity, both the return from Exile for Israel and the freedom from sin, the Law, Satan, and death for New Testament believers, 1
- ◆ Atonement for sin, covering of sin, forgiveness for sin, 2
- ◆ Cessation of God's holy anger toward sinners, 4-5
- ◆ Revival and renewal of life, both physical (in Old Testament history and in the future resurrection from the dead for believers) and spiritual (for example, renewed trust, fear, love, and obedience toward God), 6

Its source

- ◆ It is based upon his unconditional covenant promises to Israel and then to all believers in Christ.
  - The promises God made to Jacob extend to all of Israel, 1.
  - He is faithful, 10 [where "truth" probably means "faithfulness"], to his covenant with his people, 6.
- ◆ It flows from God's mercy, 7.

# Life

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## Ethical imperatives

- ◆ When we feel God's displeasure and are under his discipline, remember his past actions of love and mercy to his people, especially what he has done in Christ, as well as his past dealings with us.
- ◆ Pour out our hearts to God when we are in difficulty.
- ◆ When we ask for revival, plead for his characteristics (such as mercy) and his commitment in his covenants to us.
- ◆ Always sense our desperate need for spiritual revival. Admit our sins frankly and beg him to come to us in mercy and in transforming power, leading to genuine, God-engendered joy, 6.
- ◆ Ask God to help us walk in his ways and to keep us from returning to our habits of moral stupidity [folly], 8.
- ◆ Be confident that God will hear and answer the prayers of truly penitent believers who intend to walk according to his righteous ways.

# Psalm 86

## Truth

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### Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ This psalm refers to Exodus 34:6, a key passage in the entire Bible describing God's character, 15.

Its purpose: Much—perhaps most—of the Bible comes from situations in which believers are being persecuted; it is a book for those in trouble, 14.

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is great, unique among all heavenly beings, 8.
- ◆ He is the only true God, 10.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He is ready to forgive the penitent believer, and he is abundant in mercy, 5, 13.  
*See Exodus 34:6.*
- ◆ He is good, hearing the prayers of his people and doing wonders for them, 7, 10.
- ◆ He allows himself to be called "my God," 12.
- ◆ He delivers those who call upon him in trouble, 13.

### Christ

#### His prefiguration

- ◆ As a poor and needy man surrounded by enemies who seek his life, 1, 14
- ◆ As one who prays constantly to God for help, 1-3
- ◆ As a holy and committed believer, 2
- ◆ As God's Servant, 2, 16
- ◆ As the Suffering Servant
  - He was accounted sinful as a representative and vicarious offering for our sins, 5.

- He was certain that he would be delivered from Sheol (after his death), 13.
- He would someday be worshiped by all nations of the earth, 9. *See Philipians 2:9-11.*
- ♦ As the son of a humble handmaiden of God, 16; *see Luke 1:48.*

## Sin

### It includes

- ♦ A heart that is divided, that is, split between worshiping and serving God and worshiping and serving creatures, including ourselves; this is true even of sincere believers, 11.
- ♦ Disregarding God entirely, 14

## Life

---

### Ethical imperatives

- ♦ When we are in trouble, let us pray to God constantly and humbly, confessing sin, trusting in his mercy, and believing that he is both great and good and will deal kindly and justly with us.
- ♦ Read the psalms as descriptions of the heart of Jesus while he was on earth.
- ♦ Expect persecution from wicked and ungodly men.
- ♦ Ask God to give us hearts totally dedicated to him, 11.
- ♦ Praise him always, 12.
- ♦ Ask him to teach us how to walk in a way that pleases him, 13.

# Psalm 87

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its cumulative fullness

- ◆ Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.
- ◆ In this psalm the “register of the people” who will worship God in Zion, 4-6, follows up Psalm 86:9 and looks forward to future fulfillments.
  - The Day of Pentecost: On this day, people of all nations came to faith in Christ and worshiped him, Acts 2.
  - The Church: The people brought together during Pentecost were the beginnings of God’s church, in which “there is neither Jew nor Greek, . . . barbarian, Scythian, slave, or free,” Colossians 3:11.
  - The new heavens and new earth: People from all nations will finally gather in the new heavens and new earth to worship the Lamb who was slain, Revelation 7:9-17.
  - All this also hearkens back to God’s creation of all mankind in Adam and his promise to Abraham that in him “all the families of the earth” would be blessed, Genesis 12:3.

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is transcendent, as Most High, 7.
- ◆ He is also immanent, as Yahweh, covenant God of Israel, 2, 6.
- ◆ He dwells especially among them in the Temple of Jerusalem—Zion—the “city of God,” 2-3.

### Christ

His prefiguration: He is the dwelling place of God on earth and the one in whom all nations will be joined together as the people of God, 4-6. *See Ephesians 2:11-22.*

## The Holy Spirit

His prefiguration: It is seen in the “springs” that are available to those who worship God in Christ, 7. *See John 4:13-14, 23-24.*

## The Last Things

The kingdom of God: Peoples from all nations who have believed in Christ will gather to worship God, 4-6. *See Revelation 15:4.*

## Life

---

### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Those of us who are not Jewish should daily thank God for allowing us to be “born [again],” thereby joined to God’s chosen people and able to “know” him by faith in Christ, 4. *See Jeremiah 31:33-34; John 3:5; Hebrews 8:11; and 1 Peter 1:3.*
- ◆ We should rejoice in the ways in which God showed himself to Israel in the past, in the ways that he is now building his “city” on earth through the spread of the gospel, and in the “glorious things” which will be seen when Christ returns, and the New Jerusalem descends from heaven to earth, 1. *See Revelation 21:10-11.*
- ◆ We should hasten this day by taking the gospel to all nations of the earth.
- ◆ We should find all our “springs” of joy and worship in God, through faith in Jesus, who grants us the Holy Spirit in answer to prayer.

# Psalm 88

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its cumulative fullness

- ◆ Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.
- ◆ The Old Testament is Christ-centered, as Jesus said, “all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me,” Luke 24:44–45.
- ◆ This psalm describes in detail the sufferings of Jesus, especially his internal pain.

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He has the power to cast someone into death and even hell, 6. *See Matthew 10:28.*
- ◆ He shows his mighty power by doing wondrous works, 10, 12.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He is the God of salvation for his people, 1.
- ◆ He is full of loving-kindness, 11.
- ◆ He is faithful to his promises, 11.
- ◆ As a righteous God, 12, he justly sends his wrath upon sinners, expressed through internal and external pain and suffering 7, 16.

### Christ

#### His prefiguration

- ◆ This psalm gives vent to feelings of horrible pain, especially emotional torment over the loss of intimacy with God and with friends and loved ones.
- ◆ Though innocent, Jesus endured the wrath of God on the Cross in our place, even the terrible sense of God’s rejection and withdrawal, 14. *See Psalm 22:1, quoted by Jesus on the Cross.*

## Mankind

### Our created nature

- ◆ We were created to know God in intimate fellowship and praise him for all his excellent attributes, 10-12.
- ◆ We suffer inestimable loss when this fellowship is withdrawn, 14-15.
- ◆ We also desire human companionship, 8, 18.

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Meditate often upon psalms like this and upon the Gospels' depictions of the passion of Christ.
- ◆ Let these meditations prompt us to offer him thanks and praise for enduring in our place what we justly deserve and to praise the love of the Father, who sent his only Son into the world to save us from our sins.
- ◆ Never think that our sufferings surpass the ones of those who have gone before us, especially of Jesus, the guiltless, divine-human Messiah, who bore the wrath of God in our place.
- ◆ In all our distress, let us cry out constantly to God in prayer, 1-2, 9, 13.
- ◆ When we pray, remember and "remind" God of his attributes, including his power to save and his mercy, righteousness, and love, perhaps using the words of this psalm and others to utter our inmost thoughts and emotions.

### Words of encouragement

- ◆ Since Jesus has suffered in our place, we have been delivered from God's wrath, Romans 5:9-10, and nothing can separate us from his love, Romans 8:39.
- ◆ Therefore, let us see our current afflictions not as expressions of God's wrath, but as his way of expressing love - whether he is disciplining us for our sins, testing our faith, sustaining us to show others how to face troubles, or working for some purpose unknown to us. *See 2 Corinthians 12:7-10; Hebrews 12:4-11; and 1 Peter 1:6-7.*

# Psalm 89:1–37

## Truth

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### Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ This psalm refers to God’s words to David through the prophets Samuel and Nathan, and before that to Moses at the burning bush. *See Exodus 34:6; 1 Samuel 12:14; 16:1–13; and 2 Samuel 1–17.*
- ◆ Later in the New Testament, these words are applied to Jesus.

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is utterly unique among spiritual beings [angels], 5–8.
- ◆ He rules and masters the forces of chaos in this fallen world, 9–10.
- ◆ He created and founded the earth in the beginning, 11.
- ◆ He manifested power and might in the created order and in saving his people, 13.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He is full of mercy and faithfulness [truth], 1–2, 5, 8, 14, 24, 28, 33.
- ◆ He did wonders for his people, 5.
- ◆ He chose David and his “sons” to be his anointed kings over Israel, constantly saved them from their enemies, and through them delivered his people, 3–4, 19–29.
- ◆ He chose his people to be his own and “exalted” them over others through the power of the divinely appointed king, 15–18.
- ◆ He is righteous and just, 14, 16.
- ◆ Therefore, he punishes wicked rulers, 30–32.
- ◆ He never forsook his people or broke his promises to David and his descendants [sons], 33–37.

### Christ

#### His prefiguration

- ◆ As the descendant [Son] of David, and as the recipient of all the promises of an eternal kingship made to David; *see Matthew 1:1 and Luke 1:69-71.*
- ◆ As the eternal and divine Son of God who will rule eternally over all God's people; *see Ephesians 1:20-23; Hebrews 1:6-9; and Revelation 19:16.*

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Read the historical, poetic, and prophetic books of the Old Testament in order to understand the background of the New Testament.
- ◆ Read the psalms as about Jesus, both in his earthly career and in his victorious rule over the world, now and forever.
- ◆ Praise God constantly for his goodness and greatness, especially as they are manifested in Christ and in his salvation of all who believe in him.
- ◆ Do not fret when Christian leaders go astray, for God will never forsake his people, and Christ will rule eternally with mercy, faithfulness, justice, and righteousness.

# Psalm 89:38–52

## Truth

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### Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ♦ The Old Testament, especially the psalms, often speaks both of contemporary persons and events—such as the Exile, which is probably in view here, though some other calamity might be the occasion for this psalm – as well as future ones – especially the career of Jesus Christ, whose sufferings are vividly depicted in advance.

Its content: It includes both personal and communal laments, in which the singular “I” and the plural “we” are sometimes used interchangeably, and in which the third person “he” sometimes refers to an individual and sometimes to Israel as a whole, 38–45, 47–48. Here, “he” refers to the king as anointed ruler of Israel, 38.

### God

His goodness: He sometimes withdraws a sense of his gracious presence and pours out his disciplinary (and, in the Old Testament, punitive) displeasure upon his erring people, often using pagans to do so, 40–43, 46, 50–51. He thereby manifests his impartial holiness and righteousness as well as his power and sovereign rule.

### Christ

#### His prefiguration

- ♦ In the physical and emotional sufferings of the king of Israel during a terrible defeat, including a sense of God’s wrath being poured out on him, 38–46
- ♦ In the experiences of reproach by enemies, public shame, and mockery, 41–45, 50–51
- ♦ In the fate of an early death, 45, 47

## Mankind

### Our fallen state

- ◆ We are prone to attack others, even innocent ones, to mock them when they suffer, 41, 50–51, and even to rejoice at the calamities of others, 42.
- ◆ We are mortal and may die young if God wills, 47.
- ◆ We are doomed to futility unless we know God and his salvation, 47.
- ◆ We can in no way save ourselves from death or make ourselves alive again, 48.

## Salvation

Its conveyance: It comes to us now on the basis of the vicarious, substitutionary sufferings of Jesus Christ—God’s totally innocent and holy Anointed One—on our behalf.

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Live each day as if it might be our last, since our lives are fragile.
- ◆ Thank God constantly for sending Jesus to die for our sins, that we might be saved.
- ◆ Love and praise Jesus for enduring unspeakable pain of every sort, all of which we deserve, in order to bring us to God and to give us eternal life.
- ◆ Expect to be persecuted by the enemies of God and of his people.

# Psalm 90

## Truth

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### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is eternal, 1-2, 4.
- ◆ He is glorious in his works, especially his works of salvation, 1, 16.
- ◆ He is omniscient, knowing even our secret sins, 8.
- ◆ He is beautiful, 17.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He is compassionate and merciful, 13-14.
- ◆ He can make up to us all the years of sorrow with which his wrath righteously afflicted us, 15.
- ◆ He is holy, and therefore must carry out his threat to punish the sin of Adam and Eve with death for them and their descendants, who, without exception, also provoke God's wrath by their sin, 3, 5-8, 11.

### Mankind

#### Our fallen state

- ◆ Like Adam and Eve, we are condemned to a life of labor and sorrow, which will end in death, 3-12.
- ◆ We are guilty of many sins, some of which are secret, 8.

### Salvation

#### Its substance

- ◆ An intimate relationship with God, in whom we "abide" or "dwell," 1
- ◆ Compassion, mercy, and forgiveness, 13-14
- ◆ Knowledge of God, his works, and his beauty, 14-17
- ◆ Joy, 14
- ◆ Eternal life, 15
- ◆ Confirmation, establishment, affirmation, and fruitfulness of our labor, 17

# Life

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## Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Acknowledge our mortality and admit that it comes from our sins.
- ◆ Do not plan to live very long, for we may die suddenly.
- ◆ Use our time well, to God's glory.
- ◆ Seek wisdom from God.
- ◆ Pray for God to have mercy upon us.
- ◆ Seek satisfaction in his love alone.
- ◆ Set our hope on the next life, in which God will give us joy for far more years than he afflicted us with sorrow.

# Psalm 91

## Truth

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### Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ This psalm provides several examples.
  - Its references to dwelling in God's shelter echo Psalm 90:1.
  - Its reference to long life balances and complements Psalm 90:9-10 and answers the prayer in Psalm 90:15.

### Its literary forms

- ◆ Poetry, including biblical poetry, uses figures of speech and concrete images to picture immaterial realities.
- ◆ The physical enemies and dangers seen here—including the arrows of enemies, the lion, and the serpent—also represent Satan and his demons and all their attacks upon God's people.

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is the Most High, 1, 9.
- ◆ He is the Almighty, 1.
- ◆ He is God, 2.
- ◆ He can save from all danger, 3.
- ◆ He is Yahweh, the covenant God of his people, 9.

#### His goodness

- ◆ As a place of refuge and safety, he protects and delivers his people from the dangers which he inflicts upon sinners, 3-8, 10-13.
- ◆ He exalts them, hears their prayers, is with them in trouble, and saves them, 14-16.

## Christ

### His prefiguration

- ◆ He is the one in whom believers “dwell” [abide], 1. *See John 15:1–7.*
- ◆ He is the one who completely loves and trusts God, 2, 9, 14–15.
- ◆ He did not succumb when Satan misused this psalm to tempt Jesus to “tempt God” by throwing himself off the pinnacle of the Temple, 11–12. *See Matthew 4:6 and Luke 4:9–11.*
- ◆ He fulfilled the promise to Adam that his “seed” [descendant] would “bruise the head of the serpent.” *See Genesis 3:15.*
- ◆ He is the one to whom God granted ultimate exaltation, 14, and long life – that is, eternal life after his bodily resurrection, 16.

## Salvation

### Its conveyance

- ◆ Through faith, 2, 9, expressed through prayer, 15
- ◆ Through the agency of angels, though we may not see them at work, 11–12
- ◆ By “knowing his name”—that is, by acknowledging God’s names as expressive of his character, and thus believing in him and cherishing him with a love that attaches the heart to God (as a man is attached to a beautiful woman), 14

### Its substance

- ◆ Safety and salvation from the troubles that come upon the wicked, in this life and especially at the Last Day when all will be judged, 3–8
- ◆ Deliverance from the arrows of Satan’s lies and the many snares he lays for us; *see Genesis 3:1 and 1 Peter 5:8, where Satan is portrayed as a serpent or lion.*
- ◆ Answered prayers, 15
- ◆ The presence of God even amid trouble and danger, 15
- ◆ Eventual honor and reward in heaven, 15
- ◆ Eternal life, 16

Its promise: Salvation is not a guarantee of a pain-free or trouble-free life, but of the peace that comes from knowing that we will be protected from anything that could separate us from the love of God and the safety of our souls. However, it also includes

frequent instances of physical deliverance in this life while unbelievers suffer God's punitive wrath.

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Seek to “abide in Christ” by hearing his word and praying to him, along with others who believe in him. *See John 15:1-7.*
- ◆ Trust fully in God – the Almighty, the Most High, Yahweh, and the covenant-keeping, loving Father – who takes care of his children even amid trouble.
- ◆ Set our love completely upon God, 14, and not on anyone or anything else.
- ◆ Call out to God in prayer when we are in trouble.
- ◆ Praise Jesus for his steadfast faithfulness to God and his resistance to all of Satan's attempts to deter him from walking the way of the Cross.
- ◆ Look forward to eternal life with God in heaven.

# Psalm 92

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its cumulative fullness

- ◆ Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.
- ◆ Various names of God occur throughout the Old Testament.
  - God Most High, 1
  - Yahweh [translated “LORD”], 4-5, 8-9, 13, 15
  - God, 13
- ◆ Various characteristics of God are consistently portrayed from beginning to end:
  - His lovingkindness [Hebrew *chesed*, steadfast love], 2
  - His faithfulness, 2
  - His exaltation on high, 8
  - His eternity, 8
  - His punishment of his enemies and vindication of his people, 8-11
- ◆ This psalm also refers to other ideas seen elsewhere in the Bible.
  - The concept of the house of the Lord, 13
  - The image of the righteous person flourishing like a tree planted by waters, 14; *see Psalm 1:3*.

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is Most High, exalted, 1, 8.
- ◆ He is the source and theme of all beauty, including harmonious music, 3.
- ◆ He is powerful in his works, 4.
- ◆ He is incomprehensible in his inmost plans for the world, 5.
- ◆ He is just and righteous in all his ways, 6-9, 15.
- ◆ He is eternal, 8.
- ◆ He is immovable, 15.

## His goodness

- ◆ He is full of lovingkindness and faithfulness, 2.
- ◆ He is faithful to his people, 10-15.
- ◆ He is the source of all life and sustenance for his creation and his people, 13-14.

## Christ

His prefiguration: He is the one who was temporarily defeated by wicked enemies of God but who was highly exalted by his resurrection and ascension to God's right hand, 10-11. *See Ephesians 1:19-23; Philippians 2:5-11; and 1 Peter 3:18, 21-22.*

## The Last Things

### The final judgment

- ◆ When Christ returns, unrepentant sinners will be cast into eternal destruction and unending punishment, 7-9.
- ◆ Those who trust in God will enjoy everlasting life and flourish in God's presence in a new heaven and new earth, 12-15.

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Expect the wicked to flourish for a while in this world, perhaps even to the time of their deaths.
- ◆ Expect that God's people will meet with all sorts of trouble and be terribly treated by the enemies of God, even unto death.
- ◆ Do not fret or lose heart, for all this is known to God, allowed by God, even planned by God, for his glory and our good.
- ◆ Find our chief joy in the works of God in judgment and salvation.
- ◆ Seek to "abide" in Christ through hearing his word and responding in prayer, along with his people, that we may bear spiritual fruit all our lives and into eternity. *See John 15:1-10.*
- ◆ Praise God constantly, and always proclaim his justice, even when the wicked prosper and those who are righteous by faith and obedience to Christ suffer.

- ◆ Just as this psalm was appointed for Sabbath worship (*see its title*), let us observe one day in seven for personal, family, and corporate worship, and let us sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs at this time.

# Psalm 93

## Truth

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### Revelation

Its content: The Scriptures are comprised in their entirety by God's "testimonies," which are "very sure," that is, they are true and abiding in every respect, 5. *See 2 Timothy 3:15-16.*

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He rules over the universe, 1-2.
- ◆ He is almighty, 1.
- ◆ He is splendid and majestic, 1.
- ◆ He is Creator and sustainer of the world, 1.
- ◆ He is Yahweh, the covenant God of Israel, 1, 3, 5.
- ◆ He is eternal, 2.
- ◆ He is high above and sovereign over all powers of chaos and darkness, symbolized here by floods and ocean waves, 3-4.
- ◆ He is holy, separated from sin, uncleanness, impurity, and wickedness, 5.
- ◆ He has revealed himself to his people in the Scriptures, which contain "testimonies" – that is, the narratives of his dealings with the world and with mankind, his promises to his people, and his laws and statutes for conduct, 5.
- ◆ He dwells among his people, 5.
  - In Old Testament times: in the Temple
  - In New Testament times: in Christ
  - In present times: in the church and in each individual believer

### Creation

#### Its nature

- ◆ It is sustained by God, 1.
- ◆ It is created, not eternal, 1-2.
- ◆ It is threatened by forces of chaos and darkness, 3-4.

## Salvation

### Its substance

- ◆ It comes to us as the revelation of God's greatness and his goodness amidst a world with many dangers, 5.
- ◆ It comes as God's abiding presence among us, 5.
- ◆ It includes our transformation by God unto a holiness like his, 5.

## Life

---

### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Worship God for his transcendent greatness and for his goodness toward his people.
- ◆ Trust God even when the world, including our personal world, is shaken by "flood," such as war, natural disaster, economic crises, financial straits, marriage and family conflict, illness, unruly passions, and unstable emotions.
- ◆ Seek to abide in his house – that is, to abide consciously in Christ through hearing his Word and responding in prayer, along with other believers. *See John 15:1-10.*
- ◆ Strive for holiness in the presence of God more than we seek anything else. *See 1 Peter 1:15-16.*

# Psalm 94

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its content

- ◆ It includes personal and community laments, like this one, in which the singer asks God, “How long will the wicked triumph?” 3.
- ◆ It speaks to all situations in life, including the problem of the prosperity of the wicked and the sufferings of the (relatively) innocent, and it uses logical argumentation, such as, “from the greater to the lesser,” in which a “big” thing that is commonly assumed is used to demonstrate a smaller thing, 9.
- ◆ It reaches in some way to the unbelieving nations, usually through the events of history, 10.
- ◆ It includes supremely God’s written revelation, here termed “Law,” but now including the entire Bible, 12.
- ◆ It requires God himself to explain his written revelation to us and to make us understand it from the heart, 12.

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He rules as Judge over all the earth, 2.
- ◆ He created mankind and knows all our thoughts, 8-11.
- ◆ He can help, protect, and deliver his people, 17, 22.
- ◆ He rules from his throne of justice, 20.
- ◆ He has power to destroy all wicked rulers and people, 23.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He reveals himself to his people through his written Word and through internal instruction, 12.
- ◆ He gives rest to his people in the days of trouble, 13.
- ◆ He will take care of his people, 14, 22.
- ◆ He will not cast off his people, 15.
- ◆ He exercises mercy by comforting his people, 18-19.

- ◆ He executes vengeance on all wrongdoing, 1.
- ◆ Though he often “hides” himself for a while and allows evil to prosper, he will in his own time “shine forth” and punish all evil men, including wicked rulers, 2, 23.

## Christ

His prefiguration: He is the innocent sufferer who cries out to God for vengeance against evil rulers and people who afflict God’s people, 1–23.

## Sin

It includes

- ◆ Speaking insolently against the weak, 4
- ◆ Boasting, 4
- ◆ Afflicting God’s people, 5
- ◆ Oppressing the weak and helpless, 6
- ◆ Foolishly imagining that God does not see, hear, or know our words, deeds, and thoughts, 7
- ◆ Thinking false and futile thoughts, 11
- ◆ Enacting unjust laws, 20
- ◆ Joining with others in hurting God’s people, 21

## The Last Things

The final judgment: God’s punishment of the wicked in this life is provisional and incomplete; when Christ returns, all who have not trusted in Christ and submitted to God’s law will be cast into eternal hell.

## Life

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Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Do not be surprised when evil men abuse their authority to oppress the poor and weak and to attack God’s people.
- ◆ Cry out to God in our troubles and anxieties and look to him to defend, uphold, and comfort us.

- ◆ Do not take vengeance or join in armed rebellion.
- ◆ Cry out to God and ask him to execute justice in his own way and time.
- ◆ Continue to trust that God is good and powerful and will someday rule visibly and justly on this earth, having destroyed all workers of iniquity.

# Psalm 95

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its cumulative fullness

- ◆ Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.
- ◆ This psalm provides several examples.
  - The experience of Israel in the wilderness after leaving Egypt is referred to as a warning, 8–11. *See Exodus 17:2–7; Numbers 20:13; and Hebrews 3:7–4:10.*
  - In both this psalm and in Hebrews, the meaning of the concept of “rest” is changed from peaceful dwelling in the Promised Land to unbroken fellowship with God by faith and obedience.

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is steady and immovable like a rock, 1.
- ◆ He deserves our praise, 1–2, and our complete trust and obedience, 8.
- ◆ He is a great God, 3.
- ◆ He is King of all other so-called “gods,” 3.
- ◆ He is Creator, preserver, owner, and ruler of all the earth, 4, and of mankind, 6.
- ◆ He “created” Israel as his own possession, 6.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He saves his people, 1.
- ◆ He is the great Shepherd of his people, caring for them and protecting them, 7.
- ◆ He is the one who speaks especially to them, 7.
- ◆ He is also holy and just, and he will punish severely those among his professing people who do not hear and heed his voice, but who respond in unbelief and disobedience, 9–11.

## Christ

### His prefiguration

- ◆ As Savior, 1
- ◆ As Creator, 6; *see John 1:3 and Colossians 1:16.*
- ◆ Especially as Shepherd, 7
- ◆ As the Rock from whom living waters flowed in the wilderness, 8; *see 1 Corinthians 10:4.*

## Sin

It includes: It includes failure to trust God's word that he will provide for us, prosper us, and protect us, 8-11.

## The Last Things

Their prefiguration: They are prefigured here as the "rest" into which all who trust and follow Christ will enter after Jesus returns, 11. *See Matthew 11:28-29 and Hebrews 4:9-10.*

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Come together often to praise God for his greatness and his goodness toward us.
- ◆ Worship not only with joy, but with reverence, for he is great as well as good.
- ◆ Study the Bible as a whole, so that we can see its marvelous inter-connectedness.
- ◆ Trust God to take care of us as his sheep.
- ◆ Attend carefully and prayerfully to God's Word and beware lest we harden our hearts and thus lose the rest he promises those who trust and follow Christ.
- ◆ Encourage and warn others also, as this psalmist does.

# Psalm 96

## Truth

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### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is almighty and works wonders among the people, 3.
- ◆ He possesses transcendent beauty, also described as glory, 3, 6.
- ◆ He is great in himself and deserves great praise, 4.
- ◆ He is the only true God and rules over all so-called “gods,” who are only man-made idols, 4-5.
- ◆ He is almighty and eternal and made the heavens (and the earth), 5.
- ◆ He possesses strength and power, 6-7.
- ◆ He has royal honor and majesty, 6.
- ◆ He is holy, separated from all that is unclean, impure, and sinful, 9.
- ◆ He reigns as King over all the universe, including the world of men, 10.
- ◆ Having created the earth, he keeps it steady, 10.
- ◆ He is Yahweh, the covenant God of Israel, 1-2, 4, etc.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He brings salvation to his people, who now include the nations and families of the world, 2-3.
- ◆ He is true, that is, he is reliable and faithful in all that he says and does, 13.
- ◆ He is righteous and judges righteously, 10, 13.

### Christ

#### His prefiguration

- ◆ As the one who made the world; *see John 1:3.*
- ◆ As the one who possesses the glory of God himself; *see John 1:14.*
- ◆ As the one who is to be honored and worshiped by all creation, including all the peoples of the earth; *see Philippians 2:10-11.*
- ◆ As the one who will come to judge all nations with his justice; *see Matthew 25:31-32.*

## Sin

### It includes

- ◆ It includes the worship of idols, that is, all man-made objects of adoration, trust, and obedience, 5.
- ◆ It also includes not praising and worshiping God, since the call to praise is a command, 1-3, 7-8.

## Salvation

Its recipients: It comes now to all peoples of the world.

Its conveyance: It comes through the proclamation of the gospel to the ends of the earth, 2-3.

### Its substance

- ◆ Liberation from the worship of worthless idols, 5; *see 1 Peter 2:9*.
- ◆ The privilege to worship and praise God in his sanctuary, 6-7, the one thing for which we were created
- ◆ Joy, especially in the knowledge that God will one day judge and rule the world manifestly and openly with righteousness and truth, 11-13
- ◆ Restoration of the entire created order which, like humans, was cast into futility and death by the fall of man, 11-12; *see Romans 8:22-23*.

## The Church

Its prefiguration: It is prefigured here by the summons to all nations to worship God with joy, for it now includes believers and followers of Christ from all families of the earth.

## The Last Things

### The "last days"

- ◆ They began with the incarnation, ministry, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ and his outpouring of the Holy Spirit. *See Acts 2:14-36*.
- ◆ They feature the worldwide preaching of the gospel, with the accession of people of all nations into the joyful company of the people of God.
- ◆ This age will conclude when Christ returns to judge the world with righteousness. *See Revelation 19:11*.

# Life

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## Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Worship the Lord with all our hearts and voices.
- ◆ Contemplate his beauty, glory, majesty, might, greatness, and salvation.
- ◆ Summon others to worship him also.
- ◆ Declare his glory among the nations of the world, that they too may worship the only true God.
- ◆ Worship God in a manner that befits his holiness.
- ◆ Eagerly await the coming of Christ, and do not fret because of the temporary triumph of false faith and wicked rulers, for their day of doom is coming soon.

# Psalm 97

## Truth

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### Revelation

General revelation: Our universe reveals enough about God's greatness and character to impel even Gentiles to worship him, 6.

#### Its literary forms

- ◆ Biblical revelation—notably the psalms and the words of the Old Testament prophets—often takes the form of poetry.
- ◆ Hebrew poetry uses various mechanisms.
  - Figures of speech, including similes, metaphors, personification of created things like mountains, direct address, etc.
  - The employment of pagan categories like “gods” in a new way, 1–8

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ As King and Sovereign, he governs the entire universe, 1.
- ◆ He is Yahweh, the covenant God of Israel, 1, 8, 10, 12.
- ◆ He is incomprehensible (though not unknowable), 2.
- ◆ He is a consuming fire, 3.
- ◆ He is Lord of the lightning and thunder, 4.
- ◆ He is more powerful than the mighty mountains, 5.
- ◆ He is glorious in his beauty, 6.
- ◆ He is most high above all the earth, transcending all so-called “gods,” 9.
- ◆ He is the source of all light, 11.
- ◆ He is holy, 12.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He preserves the souls of his saints, 10.
- ◆ He delivers his people from the hands of the wicked, 10.

- ◆ He is righteous and just, 6.
- ◆ He executes judgment in vindication and deliverance of his people, 8.
- ◆ He hates evil, 10.

## Christ

### His prefiguration

- ◆ As the risen Lord of the universe, working all things for the sake of the good of his people and manifesting his glory to all the nations through the proclamation of the gospel worldwide, 6; *see Ephesians 2:20-23*.
- ◆ As the one who preserves the souls of his people from eternal death, 10; *see John 10:28*.
- ◆ As the giver of joy, 12; *see Philippians 3:1; 4:4-5*.

## Salvation

### Its substance

- ◆ In the history of Israel: Deliverance from enemies by the intervention of God, first in Egypt and then many other times
- ◆ In present times
  - Deliverance from the power of Satan
  - Enlightenment through God's revelation in the created order and his Word, 6, 8, 11
  - Joy amid the judgments of God which fall upon this world because of evil, 12
- ◆ In the future: Final salvation from all that is evil

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Rejoice in the universal revelation of God's righteousness, power, and glory seen through the events of history, the life and work of Christ, and his written Word (as in this psalm).
- ◆ Tremble before his majesty and power, even as we rejoice in his goodness toward us.
- ◆ Do not seek to understand everything about God, such as the mystery of the Trinity, God's dealings with us and others, and especially the way he allows the

temporary prosperity of the wicked; some things remained veiled in darkness from our ken.

- ◆ Flee from idolatry, that is, from the inordinate delight in and reliance upon the works of our hands.
- ◆ Hate all that is evil, all that contravenes the revealed will of God.
- ◆ Seek righteousness, for joy comes only for the upright in heart.
- ◆ Remember God's holiness and give thanks to him for it.

# Psalm 98

## Truth

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### God

#### His greatness

- ♦ All-powerful, he can save his people through marvelous works, 1.
- ♦ As King, he has authority to judge and rule the entire world, 6, 9.

#### His goodness

- ♦ He is holy and demonstrates his holiness by saving his people, 1.
- ♦ He saved his people many times, in faithfulness to his covenant with them as Yahweh, 2.
- ♦ He reveals himself to his people and even to pagans, 2.
- ♦ He is righteous, which here means that he acts righteously by vindicating and delivering his people from pagan nations, 2, 9.
- ♦ He is merciful – that is, full of covenant love toward his people, 3.
- ♦ He is faithful to his promises to them, 3.
- ♦ He is just and upright in all his dealings, even when he punishes wicked nations and people, 9.

### Christ

His prefiguration: He is seen here as the coming Judge of all the earth, 9.

### The Church

Its prefiguration: It is shown here as the “nations” [Gentiles] who have “seen” the salvation of God by hearing the gospel of Jesus Christ, 3. *See Luke 3:6 and Acts 13:47; 28:28.*

## Life

---

#### Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Praise God for his greatness and his goodness, especially as it is shown to us in the great salvation that he brought to Israel many times in its history and the even greater salvation that he has given us in Christ.

- ◆ Summon everyone else to praise God also.
- ◆ Take the gospel to all nations so that they, too, may know God and his salvation.
- ◆ Rejoice that Christ will come to judge this wicked world with justice.

# Psalm 99

## Truth

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### Revelation

Its source: It was given in this case to Moses and Aaron.

- ◆ Through the visible manifestation of the pillar of cloud by day and light by night, indicating both God's mysterious otherness and his condescension to be with and among his people, 7; *see Exodus 13:21*.
- ◆ Through explicit commands and ordinances, which God commanded Moses to write down, 7; *see the books of Exodus, Leviticus, and Deuteronomy*.

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He rules as King over the universe, and on earth he rules over his people, 1.
  - In Old Testament times, through the king in Jerusalem
  - Now, through the Spirit, sent by the risen Lord Jesus to his followers
- ◆ He is not only great in Zion, but "high above all the peoples" of the earth, 2.
- ◆ He is holy, separated from all that is impure and wrong, as is said three times in this psalm, 3, 5, 9.
- ◆ He is awesome, 3.
- ◆ He is powerful, 4.
- ◆ He is exalted, high, and lifted up, 5.
- ◆ He dwells among his people.
- ◆ In Old Testament times he dwelt above the cherubim – that is, over the Ark of the Covenant, on which was sprinkled the blood of sacrifices that allowed his people's sins to be forgiven, 1.
- ◆ He chose the Jews as his people, and Zion (especially the Temple) as his earthly dwelling place, 1–2.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He is just and righteous in all his judgments, 4.
- ◆ He is gracious to enlist people in his service and to answer their prayers, 6, 8.
- ◆ He reveals himself through his chosen servants, 7.

- ◆ He reveals his will to them, 7.
- ◆ He forgives sins, 8.
- ◆ He chastises his forgiven people, without regard to their status, for their disobedience, 8.

## Christ

### His prefiguration

- ◆ As King, exalted above the earth and ruling as Lord, 1-5; *see John 1:49; 20:28; and Ephesians 1:20-23.*
- ◆ As holy, 3, 5, 9; *see Mark 24.*
- ◆ As a Servant-Prophet-Priest of God, 6

## Life

---

### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Praise God and worship him from our hearts.
- ◆ Call others to praise and worship him also.
- ◆ Call upon his name in prayer, especially asking for forgiveness.
- ◆ Seek to keep all his ordinances as revealed in the Bible, especially the New Testament (where the Mosaic regulations are abolished but the ethical principles are reaffirmed, even deepened).
- ◆ Seek to be holy, as he is holy.
- ◆ Expect, and do not despise, the chastening of the Lord when it comes to us, even as we trust him for full forgiveness of our sins and thus continue to come to him in faith and worship.

# Psalm 100

## Truth

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### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is ruler over all the nations, 1.
- ◆ He is Yahweh, covenant God of Israel, 1-3, 5.
- ◆ He is God, the maker of the world, 3.
- ◆ He is the “maker” of his people Israel as his own special possession, 3.
- ◆ He reveals his name, and thus his personality and nature, to his people, 4.
- ◆ He is eternal, 5.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He is the Shepherd of his people, for whom he cares and whom he protects, 3.
- ◆ He dwelt among his people in the Temple at Jerusalem, 4. *See Psalm 23:6; Exodus 40:34-38; 1 Corinthians 3:9-17; and Ephesians 2:19-22.*
- ◆ He is fundamentally, essentially, and intrinsically good, 5.
- ◆ He expresses his goodness through undying and unconditional steadfast love [“mercy” in some translations], and faithfulness [“truth” in some translations], 5.

### Christ

His prefiguration: He is prefigured in this psalm in these ways.

- ◆ As the Lord and Savior of all the nations, 1
- ◆ As the Good Shepherd of his people, 3; *see also Psalm 23; John 10:1-10; and Hebrews 13:20.*
- ◆ As the new and true Temple of God, replacing the one in Jerusalem, 4; *see John 2:19-21.*
- ◆ As Jesus, the embodiment of “grace and truth,” 5; *see John 1:14.*

### The Church

Its prefiguration: It is shown here as people from all nations who worship God through Jesus Christ, trusting in his grace and truth.

# Life

---

## Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Worship God with joy.
- ◆ Serve him with gladness, not just out of a sense of obligation.
- ◆ Love, trust, and worship Jesus as our Good Shepherd, who laid down his life for us.
- ◆ Thank him constantly. *See 1 Thessalonians 5:18.*
- ◆ Speak well of his name to others, including non-believers.

# Psalm 101

## Truth

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### God

#### His goodness

- ◆ He is filled with steadfast love and justice and rules the world accordingly, 1.
- ◆ He is in some sense “absent” from his people, who long for him to “come” to them in manifest fashion, 2.
- ◆ He dwells among his people.
  - In Old Testament times: In the Temple at Jerusalem, the “city of Yahweh,” 8
  - In present times: By the Holy Spirit in each believer and in the church as a body

### Christ

His prefiguration: He is prefigured in this psalm in these ways.

- ◆ In the person of David, the best king Israel ever had
- ◆ As one who is full of love and justice, rewarding the good and punishing evil

### Sin

#### It includes

- ◆ Looking at things that are worthless, 3
- ◆ Falling away from God, 3
- ◆ A perverse, twisted heart, 4
- ◆ Slander, 5
- ◆ Disdain for others and a proud heart, 5
- ◆ Deceit of intention and action, 7
- ◆ Lying, 7
- ◆ Doing any sort of evil, 8

## Righteousness

### It includes

- ◆ Praising God for his mercy and justice, 2
- ◆ Behaving wisely at home – that is, with fear and reverence toward God, 1
- ◆ Being faithful to God, and associating with those who are faithful, 3
- ◆ Not looking at anything worthless, 3
- ◆ Hating evil, 3
- ◆ Rejecting perversity and evil, 4
- ◆ Hiring those who are blameless in their conduct, 6

## The Last Things

### Their interpretation

- ◆ Some think this psalm points to the righteous rule of Christ on earth from Jerusalem during a literal 1,000-year reign.
- ◆ Others believe it portrays the ideal godly ruler, reflects the characteristics of God and of his Christ, and points toward the New Heaven and New Earth, where righteousness will dwell.

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Praise God daily for his love and justice.
- ◆ Avoid all the sins mentioned in this psalm and seek to walk before God with a heart that is focused on him and his ways.
- ◆ Avoid watching or reading anything that does not build us up in godliness – on TV, on the Internet, in the theater, or in books or magazines.
- ◆ Pray for God to raise up good and righteous leaders for our nation and community.
- ◆ Follow the example of David.
- ◆ Pray for Christ to come soon!

# Psalm 102

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its cumulative fullness

- ◆ Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.
- ◆ This psalm provides several examples.
  - Frequent allusions to or quotations of other passages in the psalms and other books of the Old Testament; the *NIVSB* lists 100 of these.
  - The quotation and application of verses 25–27 in Hebrews 1:10–12

#### Its interpretation

- ◆ It is self–interpreting, as the Hebrews passage explains that “LORD” in the Old Testament can refer to the Word or Son of God.
- ◆ It is meant for all peoples, 15–22.
- ◆ It was written down for generations after the initial recipients, 18.

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is eternal, 12, 24, 27–28.
- ◆ He is transcendentally exalted in heaven, 19.
- ◆ He is almighty Creator, 25.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He is merciful to his people, 1, 13.
- ◆ He is stern with his people on occasions, either inflicting pain upon them or allowing others to do so, 1–11, 23.
- ◆ He is holy, and therefore wrathful against sin, 10.
- ◆ He is faithful to his promises to Abraham – to preserve his descendants and to cause them to increase and to be a blessing to all nations, 15, 22, 28.
- ◆ He promises to appear to his people again in glory, as he did during the Exodus and at the dedication of the Temple, 16.
- ◆ He answers the prayers of the needy, 17.

- ◆ He is aware of and concerned for the sufferings of his people, 19–20.

## Christ

His prefiguration: He is prefigured in this psalm in these ways.

- ◆ In the physical, emotional, relational, and spiritual torment as God’s Servant, 1–11, 23
- ◆ As the one who is “LORD” and therefore God – eternal, unchanging Creator, 25–27; *see Hebrews 1:10–12.*

## The Church

Its prefiguration: It is foreshadowed here in the sufferings of God’s Servant and of his people, who cry out desperately to him for help and who trust that he will come to them and deliver them for his glory to be known in all the world.

## Life

---

### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Cry out to God in our distress, using the words of the psalms as an aid, just as Jesus did on the Cross when he quoted Psalm 22:1. *See Matthew 27:46.*
- ◆ Trust that God will hear us, regard our sufferings, and eventually come to deliver us.
- ◆ Read the psalms as descriptive of Christ in his humanity and divinity, and thus come to know him more fully through them.

# Psalm 103

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its cumulative fullness

- ◆ Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.
- ◆ This psalm by David assumes the Pentateuch and the historical events of Israel up to his time.
- ◆ Many concepts spoken of in this psalm find antecedents and echoes throughout the Old Testament and later in the New Testament.
  - Forgiveness of sins, 3
  - Redemption from destruction by the payment of blood, 4
  - Characteristics of God as revealed to Moses, such as righteousness and justice, 6-7, and especially lovingkindness and mercy, revealed in his divine name, 8; *see Exodus 34:6-7*.
  - God's covenant and commandments revealed at Sinai, 18; *see Exodus 20*.
  - God's royal rule from heaven, 19

#### Its literary forms

- ◆ Biblical revelation is almost always marked by careful, even intricate, literary composition.
- ◆ This psalm opens with a call to praise, 1-2.
- ◆ The central section is divided into two unequal parts.
  - Benefits to the individual believer, 3-5
  - Benefits to the whole people who trust in God, 6-19; this part is further divided into six couplets framed by verses 6 and 19.
- ◆ This psalm concludes with another call to praise, 20-22.
- ◆ *See the NIVSB notes for even more details.*

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is the source of all good things out of his infinite being, 4-5.

- ◆ He is high above heaven, 11.
- ◆ He rules as King from heaven, 19.
- ◆ He commands myriads of angels to perform his will, 20–22.
- ◆ He exercises dominion over all the universe, 22.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He forgives sins, 3.
- ◆ He heals from sin-caused illness, 3.
- ◆ He redeems from destruction, 4.
- ◆ He extends lovingkindness and mercy, 4, 8–14, 17.
- ◆ He gives good things, 4.
- ◆ He treats his children tenderly, like a loving father, 13.
- ◆ He executes justice and righteousness, 6.
- ◆ He reveals himself, 7.

### Mankind

Our created nature: Originally composed only of dust, we are weak and frail, 14.

#### Our fallen state

- ◆ We are sinners, destined for destruction in the Pit of hell, 4.
- ◆ We are oppressed by other sinners, 6.
- ◆ We are guilty of sins and offenses against God, 10.
- ◆ We are subject to the “wind” of God’s wrath, 15. *See Isaiah 40:6–7.*
- ◆ We are ephemeral, 15.
- ◆ We are weaker, lower, and less obedient than the angels, 20–21.

### Salvation

#### Its substance

- ◆ It came in the Old Testament (to David as an individual and Israel as a nation) and to us now in Christ as these benefits.
  - Forgiveness
  - Redemption from eternal death
  - Renewal of vitality
  - Liberation from oppression
  - God’s patience, longsuffering, mercy, forgiveness, and fatherly pity and compassion

- Unending grace throughout all the ages to them and to their faithful children
- ◆ Salvation may also come as physical healing, 3, although David is probably here referring mainly to the “sickness” of sin. *See Isaiah 6:10; 53:5; Jeremiah 3:22; and Hosea 14:4. 1 Peter 2:24–25 probably also refers to the healing of spiritual illness, since it speaks of our returning to the “Shepherd and Bishop [overseer] of our souls.”*

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Praise and thank God always and with all our hearts for his many benefits to us.
- ◆ Thank him principally for his mercy and forgiveness of our sins, with all the consequent spiritual blessings.
- ◆ Look to him, and to him alone, to satisfy our souls with good things – namely, the knowledge and love of God.
- ◆ Out of gratitude, seek to know and obey his commands, thus confirming our faith in his mercy and our membership in his covenant people.
- ◆ Meditate constantly upon God’s character and his dealings with his people, as recorded in Scripture, to strengthen our faith.

# Psalm 104

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### General revelation

- ◆ It comes to us through the created order, which manifests God's glory, that is, his "Eternal power and deity" – through the diversity and unity of the world around us. *See Romans 1:20.*
- ◆ We must ask where all these things come from.
  - Beauty, 1
  - Light, 2
  - The sky
  - The waters from above
  - The fixed boundaries of the sea
  - The life-giving power of water
  - The nurturing benefit of vegetation for cattle, which then turn grass into food for us
  - The relationship between animals and the places that serve as their natural habitats
  - The unvarying movement of the moon and sun in relation to the earth
  - Most importantly, the life that abounds in plants, animals, and humans
- ◆ Without an intelligent, beneficent, and generous Maker and Sustainer, all these phenomena have no reasonable explanation, 24, 27–29.

#### Special revelation

- ◆ It is written down for us in Scripture and explains who this Creator is and what he is like, both toward the rest of creation and toward mankind.
- ◆ Only through special revelation can we know this God as Yahweh, the covenant God of Israel, so that we praise and thank him, 1, 33–35.

## God

### His greatness

- ◆ He is great, majestic, and beautiful, 1.
- ◆ He is utterly sovereign.
  - Over inanimate matter and the energy and information that produce all the things we see, 3-10, 19-20, 32
  - Over angels, 4
  - Over living creatures of all sorts, both animal and vegetable, 11-18, 21-23, 25-30
- ◆ He is possessed of infinite wisdom and power, 24.
- ◆ He is the absolute owner of and therefore Lord over everything, 24.
- ◆ He is the source of life for all, 28-30.
- ◆ He is eternal, 31.
- ◆ He is uniquely glorious and deserving of all our praise, 31, 33, 35.
- ◆ He is omniscient, seeing into the hearts and thoughts of all, 34.

### His goodness

- ◆ He is very beautiful; this is both great and good, 1-2.
- ◆ He is kind, generous, and solicitous for the life and welfare of his creatures, 10-27.
- ◆ He is full of joy in what he has made and does, 31.
- ◆ He is the source of joy for those who love him, 34.
- ◆ He is just and holy, and therefore committed to punishing sinners, 35.

## Christ

His prefiguration: He is the wisdom by which God made and sustains the universe, 24.  
*See John 1:1-3; Colossians 1:15-17; 2:9-10; and Hebrews 1:2-3.*

## The Holy Spirit

### His person

- ◆ He possesses wisdom, 24.
- ◆ As the Spirit of God, He is distinguishable from God the Father yet inseparable from him, 30.
- ◆ Both descriptions point toward the New Testament revelation of God as Father, Son and Word (Wisdom), and Spirit.

## Mankind

Our created nature: We are the crown of creation, yet, like all of creation, we are utterly dependent upon God for life and health and breath, 14-15, 23, 28-30.

### Our purpose

- ◆ We were created to enjoy this world and to praise God, 15, 31, 33-35.
- ◆ We were also created to imitate God by going forth to work, 23.

## Life

---

### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Praise and thank God for this created world and the wisdom, beauty, power, and love that it manifests.
- ◆ Wait upon God for all that we need and acknowledge our dependence upon him for everything, even as we work for our food.
- ◆ Meditate upon him, his world, and his word all day.
- ◆ Rejoice in this world and in the God who made and sustains it.
- ◆ Live, speak, and act for God's glory and honor above all.
- ◆ Avoid evil, and pray against the works of the wicked, 35.

# Psalm 105

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its cumulative fullness

- ◆ Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.
- ◆ This psalm briefly recounts the early history of God's people, from Abraham to the conquest, as the reason why we should praise the LORD.

#### Its literary forms

- ◆ Most of the Bible is historical narrative based on actual events, for God works within history to complete the plan of salvation which he has had from all eternity.
- ◆ Revelation also comes in specific statutes and laws, like those in the books of Moses, 45.

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is almighty, being strong in himself and giving his strength to his people, 4.
- ◆ He does wondrous works, including many miracles within and through the created order, 16, 27-36, 39-41.
- ◆ He rules over all the events of human history, 14-15, 17-22, 25, 37-38, 44.
- ◆ He is Yahweh, the covenant God of Israel, 1, 8.
- ◆ He chose Abraham and his descendants, promising them the land of Canaan, protecting them when they were few and weak, providing for them during famine, causing them to increase in number, delivering them from Egypt, providing for them in the wilderness, and giving them the land of the Gentiles.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He is holy, 3, 42.
- ◆ He allows his people to seek him and his strength, 4.
- ◆ He judges and rules justly, according to his character and promises, 7.
- ◆ He sends special servants like Joseph and Moses to lead his people, 17, 26.

- ◆ He is faithful to his promises, 42.
- ◆ He revealed his will through statutes and laws, 45.

## Christ

His prefiguration: He is seen in Joseph, Moses, and the rock from which water flowed, 41. *See also 1 Corinthians 10:4.*

## The Church

Its prefiguration: It is seen here as the nations and peoples who hear of God's name and works, 1.

# Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Give thanks to God for all his wondrous works on behalf of his people.
- ◆ Call upon his name in prayer.
- ◆ Remember and make known his deeds, especially those done in Christ, to all the nations.
- ◆ Seek God, his strength, and especially his "face" – that is, his presence and favor.
- ◆ Be glad in what he has done for our salvation, 43. *See Philipians 4:1 and 1 Thessalonians 5:18.*
- ◆ Strive, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to keep the commands given to us in the Bible, especially in the New Testament.
- ◆ Sing to him and worship him.

# Psalm 106

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its roots in history

- ◆ It abounds with historical narratives and references; this psalm refers constantly to events recorded in the Mosaic books of Exodus and Numbers.
- ◆ It is interpreted history, not just bare facts; this psalm repeatedly interprets, evaluates, and applies the sordid history of Israel's continuous rebellion.

#### Its purpose

- ◆ It is meant to lead us to praise God for his greatness and goodness, not just to be aware of certain past events.
- ◆ It is meant to increase our faith in God as our only Lord and Savior.

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is eternal, 1.
- ◆ He does mighty works by his immense power, 2, 7-11, 17-18, 21-22.
- ◆ He has a Word, which communicates his will to his people, 24.
- ◆ He also has a Spirit—the Holy Spirit—who is a Person against whom people often rebel, 33.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He is filled with lovingkindness [mercy, covenant love] that never ends, 1.
- ◆ He shows favor to his people, 1.
- ◆ He gives salvation to individuals and to his chosen people, 4.
- ◆ He chose Israel as his special possession, 5.
- ◆ He gave Israel the Promised Land as an inheritance, 5.
- ◆ He is abundant in mercies, showing pity to his people even when they suffer the just consequences of their sins, 44-45.
- ◆ He remains faithful to his covenant promises to Abraham, 45.
- ◆ He is holy and filled with righteous wrath; therefore, he must punish sin among his people, 13-43.

- ◆ However, he repeatedly saves his rebellious people, 6–46.

## Christ

His prefiguration: He is seen in Moses, Aaron, and Phineas.

## Sin

Its names: It is also referred to as iniquity or wickedness, 6.

It includes

- ◆ Not understanding God’s wondrous works on behalf of his people, and thus forgetting his mercies, 7
- ◆ Rebellion against his revealed will by not believing in him to save us, 7
- ◆ Forgetting what God has done for us, 13, 21–22
- ◆ Not waiting for God’s counsel, that is, not waiting to hear and then do his bidding, 13
- ◆ Lusting for earthly things more than for God, and not being satisfied with what he has given us already, 14
- ◆ Testing God by calling into question whether he will provide for us, 15
- ◆ Envyng those in positions of leadership and spiritual privilege, 16
- ◆ All idolatry, that is, exchanging God’s glory for some created thing, including a graven image, 19–20, 35
- ◆ Forgetting God himself as the only Savior, 21
- ◆ Despising the good things which he has given us, 24
- ◆ Not believing his word, 24
- ◆ Complaining about our circumstances, as they have come to us from God, 25, 32
- ◆ Not heeding or obeying God’s voice, 25
- ◆ Joining in close alliance, especially marriage, with unbelievers, 28
- ◆ Eating food offered to idols, 28
- ◆ Getting so angry at people who sin that we speak rashly in contempt of them or transgress the limits of our authority or the explicit instructions of God in dealing with them, 33
- ◆ Not fully carrying out God’s commands to exterminate all temptations to sin, 34
- ◆ Mingling with unbelievers in such a way as to imitate their idolatrous ways, 35
- ◆ Contriving or serving idols, that is, false “gods,” including worldly value systems, 35

- ◆ Sacrificing the welfare or even the lives of our children to the gods of this world, 37
- ◆ Shedding innocent blood, 38
- ◆ Abandoning God and committing spiritual adultery by cleaving to and serving man-made “gods,” 39
- ◆ Rebelling against God’s revealed will by committing sins of all sorts, 43

## Salvation

### Its conveyance

- ◆ To Israel in the Old Testament
  - Through God’s covenant with Abraham
  - Through his servants, such as Moses
  - Through his repeated deliverance of his people from their enemies, into whose hands he had given them for their sins
- ◆ To his people in and following New Testament times
  - Through the New Covenant in Jesus’ blood
  - Through constant forgiveness for those who confess their sins and trust in Christ alone to be their Savior. *See 1 John 1:9-2:2.*

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Constantly praise God for his great mercy to us in Christ.
- ◆ Read and remember the records of God’s dealings with his people in the Old Testament so that we may avoid the sins they committed and praise him for his lovingkindness and mercy.
- ◆ Beware of sinning against God, for we, like the psalmist, share humanity’s sinful and rebellious nature and are prone to perpetuate its foolish and self-destructive unbelief and disobedience.

# Psalm 107

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its structure

- ◆ Biblical revelation usually comes in extremely well-crafted and organized units, including individual sentences, paragraphs, sections (often represented by our chapter divisions), and entire books.
- ◆ This psalm, although opening Book Five of the Psalter, belongs structurally to the series of psalms beginning with Psalm 103. (*See notes in the NIVSB.*)
  - Psalms 103 and 107 celebrate God's manifold goodness to his people.
  - Psalms 104 and 106 praise his works of creation and redemption.
  - Psalm 105 laments the continual rebellion of Israel while also praising God for his mercy.
- ◆ Psalm 107 itself displays a carefully composed structure.
  - Verses 1-3 and 43 enclose six stanzas, which are themselves balanced in theme.
  - The whole is unified by the refrain, "give thanks to the LORD, for . . .," 1, 8, 15, 21, 31.

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is eternal, 1.
- ◆ He rules history by bringing Israel back from exile in Babylon and other places, 3.
- ◆ He has the power to heal the sick by his powerful word, 20.
- ◆ He governs even the wild sea, 25-29.
- ◆ He changes the face of the environment at will, 33-35.

#### His goodness

- ◆ His goodness is the main theme of this psalm.
- ◆ Fundamentally, he acts with love – covenant love that never fails, 1.
- ◆ He saved Israel from Exile in fidelity to his promises and prophecies, 2-3.

- ◆ He led them through trackless wilderness to a peaceful home, 4–6.
- ◆ He repeatedly answered their heartfelt cries for help, 6, 13, 19, 28.
- ◆ He satisfied their physical needs, 9.
- ◆ He set prisoners free, 10–14.
- ◆ He healed the sick, 20.
- ◆ He delivered sailors from dangers at sea, 23–30.
- ◆ He fed the hungry and gave drink to the thirsty, 35–36.
- ◆ He increased the number of his covenant people, 38.
- ◆ He rescued them from cruel oppressors, whom he justly punished, 39–41.
- ◆ He is holy and must therefore chastise his people for their sins and stubborn stupidity (the Exile being the extreme example), 11–12, 17, 33–34, 40.

## Christ

### His prefiguration

- ◆ In the word “redeemed,” 2, which comes from the redemption of Israel from bondage in Egypt through the sacrifice of the Passover Lamb
- ◆ In feeding the hungry in the wilderness; *see John 6.*
- ◆ In opening the eyes of the blind and thus delivering them from darkness; *see John 9.*
- ◆ In healing the sick; *see Matthew 8:1–17.*
- ◆ In calming storms at sea; *see Matthew 8:23–27.*

His loving care: The care that he—as Risen Lord—continues to provide for his people, beginning in the early church as recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, is prefigured by all forms of God’s deliverance and providential care throughout the ages.

## Salvation

### Its substance

- ◆ For Israel in the Old Testament
  - It came largely as physical rescue, guidance, deliverance from enemies, provision, and possession of the Promised Land.
  - All of these were based on God’s mercy and kindness, involving and presupposing his forgiveness of his people’s sins.
- ◆ For his people in present times
  - It still may come in the same physical ways.

- Fundamentally, however, it comes as spiritual deliverance, provision, and guidance, and finally as eternal peace in the new heaven and new earth.

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Thank God constantly for his love, mercy, kindness, grace, and many gifts to us and to his people around the world and throughout the ages.
- ♦ Remember and take warning from his severe chastisement of his people Israel, for he deals with us in the same way. *See Hebrews 12:4-13.*
- ♦ When we are in trouble of any kind, let us repent of any known sins and beg God for forgiveness and deliverance from our difficulties.
- ♦ Place our full hope on the final salvation – in every sense of the word – that will come to us when Christ returns.
- ♦ Call upon other believers to thank and praise God always.

# Psalm 108

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its cumulative fullness

- ◆ Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.
- ◆ Two previous psalms by David are combined to form this one with its own emphasis.
  - Verses 1–5 repeat Psalm 57:7–11.
  - Verses 6–13 repeat Psalm 60:5–12.

Its literary forms: It contains great poetry, much of it by David—the singing shepherd-king—including lines like, “I will awaken the dawn,” 2.

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He deserves our utmost praise, 1.
- ◆ He is above the heavens, 5.
- ◆ He is above the earth in glory, that is, in his supreme and unique excellence of beauty, character, and conduct, 5.
- ◆ He has great power, symbolized by his “right hand,” 6.
- ◆ He is holy, 7.
- ◆ He rules sovereignly over the nations, 7–9.
- ◆ As divine warrior, he uses his people as armies to overcome his enemies on earth, 9–10, 12.
  - Here, these enemies are the physical, human foes of Israel.
  - For Christians, the enemies are Satan, the temptations of the world, and our own flesh. *See Ephesians 5:10–18.*
- ◆ He sovereignly decides when he will allow his people to fail and when he will enable them to succeed, 10–12.

### His goodness

- ◆ His covenant love and faithfulness [or mercy and truth] are infinitely great, 3.
- ◆ He loves his chosen people, 6.
- ◆ He hears and answers prayer, 6, 13.
- ◆ He gives his people promises and keeps those promises, 7–9.
- ◆ He will strengthen his people to wage valiant and victorious warfare against his enemies, 13.

## Christ

His prefiguration: He is seen here as the embodiment of “grace and truth” [steadfast love and faithfulness] that has now been exalted above the heavens, 4. *See John 1:14; Ephesians 1:19–22; and Philippians 2:9.*

## Mankind

Our purpose: We were created to praise God, 1–2.

Our fallen state: We need help from God to be delivered from our spiritual and fleshly enemies, 6, 12.

## The Church

Its prefiguration: It is shown here in the promise to thank and praise God “among the peoples,” that is, the Gentiles who would later become God’s people through faith in Christ, 3.

# Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Praise God for his loving and faithful character.
- ◆ Thank him for his promises and help.
- ◆ Seek God’s glory above all else.
- ◆ When we are in trouble, let us call out to God in prayer.
- ◆ Trust in God’s promises to deliver and help us, and then go forth in faith, seeking to do his will.

- ◆ In prayer, use God's own promises as the grounds for our requests and for our confidence that he will answer.
- ◆ Do our part as God's "soldiers" on earth as we fight against Satan, the false values of the world, and our own flesh. *See Ephesians 6:10-20.*

# Psalm 109

## Truth

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### Revelation

Its content: Some psalms call down curses on the enemies of God and of his people.

- ◆ These assume that the wicked persons mentioned will not repent.
- ◆ Christians now may not use these against any particular people, but they still may pray them against Satan and all enemies of God's people who are not chosen to be saved, though we do not know who these people are.
- ◆ This psalm was later invoked by the Apostles in reference to Judas, who did not repent of his sins, 8. *See Acts 1:20*. This shows that all the Bible is inspired by God and useful for us in appropriate situations.

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is God and therefore Lord of all the earth, 21.
- ◆ He can punish evildoers and come to the aid of his people, 26.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He hears and regards prayers and praises from his people, 1.
- ◆ He is filled with steadfast love for his people, 26.
- ◆ While he sometimes allows his people to suffer at the hands of evil men, as he did with Christ, 27, he stands near to the needy to comfort and strengthen them and to deliver their souls from eternal destruction, 31.
- ◆ He punishes unrepentant sinners in this life and in the life to come.

### Christ

His prefiguration: He is prefigured in this psalm in these ways.

- ◆ As a good and sinless man who was nevertheless treated terribly, with malice and hatred, by wicked men and who endured horrible inner pain as a result, 22
- ◆ As a man of faith who trusted in God even in extreme suffering, 26, 30-31

## Sin

### It includes

- ◆ Lying, feeling hatred, using hateful words, attacking someone who is innocent, returning love with false accusations, and rewarding good with evil, 2-5
- ◆ Forgetting to show kindness, 16
- ◆ Pursuing the poor, needy, and brokenhearted with malice, 16
- ◆ Cursing others, 17-18
- ◆ Not delighting in blessing, 17
- ◆ Speaking evil against others, 20
- ◆ Scorning those who are suffering under the hand of God, 25

### Its consequences

- ◆ Death of all sorts, often in the very ways that we have sinned, including bondage to sin itself; *see Romans 6:23*.
- ◆ Accusation from others and God, 6
- ◆ Conviction of guilt by God, 7
- ◆ Shortened life, 8
- ◆ Dispossession by others, 8
- ◆ Desolation for our families, 9-10, 12
- ◆ Loss of material goods, 11
- ◆ Total absence of anyone to show kindness to us or to our children left behind when we die, 12
- ◆ Lack of descendants, 13
- ◆ Lack even of the memories of our names, 13
- ◆ Guilt and punishment for our fathers' and mothers' sins, 14-15
- ◆ Being cursed by others and by God, 18-19
- ◆ Lack of blessings said to or for us, 20
- ◆ Shame and dishonor, now and forever, 28-29

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ When we are falsely accused and spitefully treated, even with murderous hatred, let us turn in prayer to God as Jesus and the Apostles did, not to retributive violence.

- ◆ Avoid all the sins listed in this psalm, especially malice, ingratitude, and ignoring the poor, needy, and brokenhearted.
- ◆ Thank Jesus for going through such terrible afflictions in order to deliver us from our sins and to bring us to God.
- ◆ Praise God always, knowing that he is with us and has promised future grace to us.
- ◆ When we undergo suffering, believe that it is allowed—even sent—by God and that he will bring glory to himself and eventual good to us after this trial.
- ◆ When others—even “bad” people—suffer, let us sometimes fast and pray for them and always do good to them.

# Psalm 110

## Truth

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### Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ This psalm provides several examples.
  - It is built upon God's promise to make David (who comes from the tribe of Judah) the founder of an eternal and universal dynasty. *See Genesis 49:10; 2 Samuel 7:14-17; and Psalm 89:29.*
  - It refers to Melchizedek, who received tithes from victorious Abraham, 4. *See Genesis 14:17-24.*
  - The New Testament refers to Psalm 110 more than to any other psalm, always with reference to Jesus both as the divine-human King who has been exalted to God's right hand and as the Priest-King, like Melchizedek. *See Acts 2:34-35; 1 Corinthians 15:25; Ephesians 1:20; Colossians 3:1; Hebrews 1:3; 7:17, 21; and 1 Peter 3:22.*

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is Lord of all, with authority to install kings—specially the final Messianic King, Jesus, 1-2.
- ◆ He is powerful, 3.
- ◆ He is eternal, 4.
- ◆ He can give victory to the Davidic king and final victory to the Messiah, 5.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He is always connected with holiness, 3.
- ◆ He keeps his promises forever, 4.
- ◆ He will judge the nations, 6.

## Christ

### His prefiguration

- ◆ As the Messiah from David's line whom God promised, 1-2, 4
- ◆ As the one who is exalted to God's right hand after his death and resurrection, 1; *see Acts 2:34-35; Ephesians 1:20; Colossians 3:1; Hebrews 1:3; and 1 Peter 3:22.*
- ◆ As ruler over all earthly kings, 2
- ◆ As leader of a vast "army" of followers, 3
- ◆ As High Priest, fulfilling the hints given in the orders of the Melchizedek and Aaronic priesthoods, 4; *see Hebrews 7:17, 21.*
- ◆ As the one coming to crush unrepentant evil rulers, 5
- ◆ As Judge of the nations, 6; *see Matthew 25:31-46.*

## The Church

Its prefiguration: It is seen here as the priest-king's army of followers who volunteer their services to him and to his campaign to establish God's righteous authority on earth, 3.

## The Last Things

Their prediction: They are foreshadowed as the time when God and his Christ will destroy all opposing rulers and rule without hindrance, 1, 5-6.

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Thank God for giving us Jesus as our King, who saves us from all sin and will rule kindly over us forever.
- ◆ Thank God for giving us Jesus as our eternal, royal High Priest, who forever intercedes for us at God's right hand.
- ◆ Offer ourselves willingly to Christ to follow him and to serve in his spiritual (not earthly military) battles against sin and Satan.

# Psalm 111

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its structure

- ♦ The written form of revelation sometimes indicates a passage's structural flow.
- ♦ This psalm (like others, including 34, 112, and 119) is an acrostic: Each line begins with the successive letter of the Hebrew alphabet.

#### Its content

- ♦ All its precepts are trustworthy, that is, they are reliable, true, infallible, and eternally confirmed by God, 7.
- ♦ This statement applies also to everything else that is in the Bible. *See 2 Timothy 3:15-16.*

### God

#### His greatness

- ♦ He is almighty and does great works, 2.
- ♦ His righteousness and all his attributes are eternal and filled with splendor and royal majesty, 3.
- ♦ He can provide for his people, 5.
- ♦ He has power over nations and can give the lands of one nation to another people, 6.
- ♦ He is awesome in his name, that is, in his being and character, 9.
- ♦ He is to be feared, 10.
- ♦ He is the source of all wisdom, 10.

#### His goodness

- ♦ He is delightful in his being and works, 2.
- ♦ He is beautiful, 3.
- ♦ He is righteous, 3.
- ♦ He is gracious and merciful, 4.
- ♦ He generously provides for the material needs of his people, 5.
- ♦ He remains faithful to his covenant promises, 5.

- ◆ He gave the Promised Land to the Israelites, 6.
- ◆ He is faithful and just in all that he does, 7.
- ◆ He is trustworthy and true in all he says, 7-8.
- ◆ He redeemed his people from slavery in Egypt, 9.
- ◆ He made a lasting covenant with them, 9.
- ◆ He is holy, 9.

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Praise God always, calling to mind his attributes of greatness and goodness.
- ◆ Trust God to provide generously all that we need.
- ◆ Trust in God's goodness, kindness, mercy, and faithfulness, no matter what troubles we encounter.
- ◆ Study his revealed Word and seek to obey his commands.
- ◆ Fear God, that is, hold him in reverence and awe, love him, seek him above all else, and be afraid of disobeying him.

# Psalm 112

## Truth

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### Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ “Blessed is the man who fears the LORD, who delights greatly in His commandments,” 1; *see Psalms 1:1–2; 112:10; 128:1; and Genesis 12:1–3.*
- ◆ “His descendants will be mighty in the land,” 2; *see Psalms 28; 103:17–18.*
- ◆ “Wealth and riches will be in his house,” 3; *see Proverbs 3:16; 6:18.*
- ◆ “His righteousness endures forever,” 3, 9; *see Psalm 111:3.*
- ◆ “Unto the upright there arises light in the darkness,” 4; *see Psalm 97:11 and Proverbs 3:16; 8:18.*
- ◆ “He is gracious and compassionate,” 4; *see Psalm 111:4 and Exodus 34:6.*
- ◆ “A good man deals graciously and lends,” 5; *see Psalm 37:26 and Luke 6:35.*
- ◆ “He will guide his affairs with discretion,” 5; *see Ephesians 5:15 and Colossians 4:5.*
- ◆ “He will never be shaken,” 6; *see Psalms 15:5; 16:8; 62:2, 6.*
- ◆ He will be remembered forever, 6; *see Psalm 111:4–5.*
- ◆ “He will not be afraid,” 7, 8; *see Psalms 23:4; 118:6.*
- ◆ “Until he sees his desire upon his enemies,” 8; *see Psalms 118:7; 108:13.*
- ◆ “He has dispersed abroad, he has given to the poor,” 9; *see Psalm 111:5 and 2 Corinthians 9:8–11.*
- ◆ The wicked contrasted with the righteous, 10; *see Psalm 1:6.*
- ◆ “He will gnash his teeth,” 10; *see Matthew 8:12; 13:42, 50; 24:51; 25:30.*

### Its literary forms

- ◆ Psalm 112 is classified as a wisdom psalm, like Psalm 1 and others.
- ◆ It has a close relationship with Psalm 111, which talks about the Lord, while 112 talks about the one who fears the Lord.
- ◆ The two “are nearly identical in length and share vocabulary and themes.”  
(*ZNIVSB*)
- ◆ Like Psalm 111, it is an acrostic psalm.

## God

### His greatness

- ◆ He has the power and resources to confer material blessings upon his people, 2–4, 6, 9.
- ◆ He is eternal, enduring forever, and thus able to protect his people forever and to give the righteous eternal remembrance, 3; *see Psalm 111:3*.

### His goodness

- ◆ He revealed his ways and his will to his chosen messengers, especially Moses, 1.
- ◆ He rewards those who seek and serve him, 2–4, 6.
- ◆ He is light and gives light, 4; *see 1 John 1:5*.
- ◆ He is gracious and full of compassion, and thus able to empower others to imitate him, 4; *see Psalm 111:4*.
- ◆ He does protect his people, 6.
- ◆ He rewards the righteous with eternal life, 6.
- ◆ He gives his people the resources to imitate his own generosity, 9: *see 2 Corinthians 9:8–10*.
- ◆ He cares for the poor and needy, and moves his people to care for them also, 9; *see Psalm 111:5*.
- ◆ He punishes the unrepentant wicked with eternal loss, 10.

## Christ

His prefiguration: He fulfills many of God's Old Testament types and promises.

- ◆ This entire psalm describes Christ, who alone fulfills all its description of the person who fears the Lord, delights in his commands, and does his will perfectly, 1, 4, 9, and who therefore receives all the blessings promised to such a person, 2–3, 6–9.
- He will punish his unrepentant enemies, 10. *See Matthew 7:21–23; 25:41–46*.

## Salvation

### Its benefits

- ◆ In the Old Testament: Lasting blessing for oneself and one's children, 2; in the New Testament, these blessings are spiritual and the "children" are those who

have come to Christ; see through us. *See Ephesians 1:3–14; and Galatians 3:8–9; 4:5–6.*

- ◆ Spiritual wealth, 3; see *Colossians 2:2.*
- ◆ The status of righteousness that lasts; see *Romans 5:1.*
- ◆ Spiritual light, 4; see *John 8:12; Colossians 1:11–12; and 1 Peter 2:9.*
- ◆ Lasting stability, 5; see *Matthew 7:24–25; 1 Corinthians 15:57; 1 Peter 5:11; and Revelation 3:12.*
- Confidence about the future; lack of fear; hope, 7–8; see *John 16:33; Romans 5:2; 8:18–39; and Philipians 4:6–7.*

### Its beneficiaries

- ◆ Those who fear, love, reverence God, 1
- ◆ Those who delight in his revealed Word, 1
- ◆ Those who trust in the Lord, 7

### Its fruits

- ◆ Upright conduct, 4; see *Philipians 1:11.*
- ◆ Graciousness, compassion, kindness toward others, 4; see *Ephesians 4:24; 5:1.*
- ◆ Discretion and wisdom, 5; see *Ephesians 5:8–17; Colossians 1:9–10.*

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Ask God to give us a heart to fear, love, trust, and follow him.
- ◆ Spend much time in the Word of God, delighting in it as a treasure, 1. See *Psalms 1:2 and 1 Peter 2:2.*
- ◆ Thank God for the many spiritual blessings he has bestowed on us in Christ.
- ◆ Imitate the graciousness and generosity of God.
- ◆ Entrust our future and the future of our children and grandchildren to God.

# Psalm 113

## Truth

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### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is eternal and will receive unending praise, 2.
- ◆ He exercises universal dominion, 3.
- ◆ He is exalted above the heavens, 4.
- ◆ He is unique and incomparable, 5.
- ◆ He rules as King on high over all the universe, 5.
- ◆ He can see all that is on earth, for he is omniscient and omnipresent, 6.
- ◆ He can change anyone's station or situation, 7.
- ◆ He establishes nobility and rulers at will, 8.
- ◆ He can give new life in the form of little children, 9.
- ◆ He is personal and has revealed his name to his people so that they can relate to him personally, 1-3.

#### His goodness

- ◆ As Yahweh, the covenant God of the people of Israel, he is always with them and remains faithful to them, 1.
- ◆ Although he is transcendent, he condescends also to be immanent, involving himself graciously in the affairs of men and women, 6-9.
- ◆ He raises up the poor and needy, 7-8.
- ◆ He gives children to barren or childless women, 9.

## Life

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#### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ See ourselves as privileged servants of God.
- ◆ Praise him all day long for his attributes and his actions toward us.
- ◆ Trust him to provide all we need, including food, position in life, children, and happiness.

# Psalm 114

## Truth

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### Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ Here, the psalmist remembers events in Israel's history.
  - Israel's Exodus from Egypt and travels to the Promised Land, 1, 3-6, 8
  - The formation of the tabernacle, where God's glory dwelt, 2

### God

His greatness: He brought Israel out of Egypt with mighty wonders, demonstrating his almighty power, 1, 3, 5, 8.

- ◆ He inflicted disasters on the hardhearted king of Egypt and his people, 1.
- ◆ He parted the waters of the Red Sea, 3.
- ◆ He stopped the flow of the Jordan River, 3, 5.
- ◆ He gave water from a rock, 8.

His goodness: He delivered his people from bondage in Egypt, led them across the Red Sea, provided for them in the wilderness, and took them into the land he had promised to Abraham long before.

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Trust God to deliver us from bondage to sin and Satan and to provide for all our needs, using miracles if necessary.
- ◆ Tremble in holy reverence before God, who rules the entire universe.
- ◆ Remember God's mighty works of salvation for his people in the past to encourage us in our walk with him today.

# Psalm 115

## Truth

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### Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ This psalm provides several examples.
  - God's steadfast love and faithfulness, 1; *see Exodus 34:6.*
  - The futility and folly of idolatry, 4–8; *see also Deuteronomy 4:28; 27:15; 31:29; 2 Kings 19:18; Isaiah 2:8; Jeremiah 1:16; and Micah 5:13. See especially Isaiah 44:9–20.*
  - God as help and shield, 8–11; *see Deuteronomy 33:28 and Psalms 28:7; 33:20.*
  - The “house of Aaron,” 10; *see Exodus 28:1; Numbers 16:8–11; and Psalm 118:2–4.*
  - God's blessing of his people, 12–14; *see Genesis 1:28, 31 and Deuteronomy 1:11.*
  - This psalm also has close verbal connections with Psalm 135.

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He lives in “heaven,” a “place” or realm of infinite transcendence, 3.
- ◆ He is free from all external constraints [forces, compulsions, or influences] and thus utterly sovereign over the entire universe, 3. *See Isaiah 46:10; Daniel 4:35; and Jonah 1:14.*
- ◆ He is personal and has a will, 3.
- ◆ He is powerful and able to help, to give strength, and to protect, 9–11.
- ◆ He can give his people what they need, 12–13.
- ◆ He made heaven and earth, 15.
- ◆ He rules especially over the heavenly realms above us, 16.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He is filled with steadfast love and faithfulness, 1.

- ◆ He helps and protects his chosen people, 9-11.
- ◆ He remembers his people and gives all sorts of blessings to them, 12-15.
- ◆ He has graciously given the earth to mankind to care for and to enjoy, 16.

## The Church

Its prefiguration: It is seen here in the reference to “[those] who fear the Lord,” 11, 13. This later became a technical term for Gentiles who joined themselves to God’s people. *See Acts 10:2; 13:16.*

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Praise God always for his greatness and goodness.
- ◆ Seek to live for God’s glory alone, and do not boast in ourselves or seek to advance our own honor.
- ◆ Avoid all sorts of idolatry, including idols of the heart.
- ◆ Fear the Lord and trust him.
- ◆ Pray for God to bless all his people.

# Psalm 116

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its cumulative fullness

- ◆ Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.
- ◆ This psalm provides several examples.
  - Calling upon the name of the LORD in private and public prayer and worship, 2, 4, 13, 17; *see Genesis 4:26; 12:8; and Psalm 105:1.*
  - God's description of himself as gracious, 5; *see Exodus 34:6.*
  - "Walking" – that is, living – before the LORD, 9; *see Genesis 17:1; and Ephesians 4:1; 5:8.*
  - Speaking in faith amid trials, 10; *see 2 Corinthians 4:13.*
  - "All men being liars," 11; *see Romans 3:3.*
  - Loving God for all his blessings to his people, 12; *see Deuteronomy 6:5; 11:1.*
  - Paying vows to God, 14, 18
  - God delivering his people from bondage, 16
- ◆ This psalm also has several words and ideas in common with Jonah 2:2–9.

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is transcendent yet able to "hear" the prayers of his people, 2.
- ◆ He can save from danger and even death, 6, 8.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He hears his people when they cry out to him in trouble, 1–2.
- ◆ He protects his people when they are in danger, 6.
- ◆ He saves his people when they are in need, 6.
- ◆ He deals bountifully [generously] with his people, 7.
- ◆ He is good and gives his people many good things, 12.

- ◆ Although he may allow his servants to suffer or even die, he regards their service and suffering as precious and valuable, 15.

## Mankind

### Our fallen state

- ◆ We are all weak and prone to danger and death, 3.
- ◆ We are all liars at heart, 11.

## Salvation

### Its substance

- ◆ In the Old Testament: Deliverance from danger, slavery, and even death.
- ◆ In the New Testament and in present times.
  - Deliverance from hell and the cup of God's wrath
  - Freedom from the bondage of sin

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Love God.
- ◆ Praise him always and with our whole hearts.
- ◆ Pray to him for deliverance when we are in danger.
- ◆ See our lives as "walking before God," and live unto him.
- ◆ Receive his salvation with faith and thanksgiving.
- ◆ Trust that we are precious to God, even when we are suffering.
- ◆ "Pay our vows to God," that is, fulfill all promises we have made to him, especially our baptism vows (to follow him) and our marriage vows.
- ◆ Urge others to praise God and to fulfill their vows, also.

# Psalm 117

## Truth

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### Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ For example, Paul quotes this psalm in Romans 15:11. *See also Genesis 12:2-3; Exodus 19:5-6; and 1 Kings 8:41-43.*

### Its source and purpose

- ◆ God originally gave his revelation to and through his chosen people, the Israelites.
- ◆ He also intended it for the Gentiles who would fear God and, later, who would become his people by trusting in Christ, 1.

### God

His greatness: He is eternal in his person and attributes, including his mercy and faithfulness, 2.

His goodness: He is marked by merciful kindness and faithfulness [truth] toward his people, 2.

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Praise God for his kindness and faithfulness.
- ◆ Summon others to praise him, also.
- ◆ Take the gospel to all the nations so that others may know and praise God for his mercy and truth.

# Psalm 118

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its cumulative fullness

- ◆ Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.
- ◆ Several phrases and ideas from this psalm are quoted or seen elsewhere in the Bible.
  - God's enduring mercy [steadfast love], 1; *see Exodus 34:6, where this specific quality is first mentioned.*
  - The absence of fear, resulting from God's help, 6; *see Hebrews 13:6.*
  - "The LORD is my strength and song . . .," 14, which uses the song sung by Moses, Miriam, and the Israelites after the overthrow of the Egyptians in the Red Sea; *see Exodus 15:2. See Isaiah 12:2.*
  - "The right hand of the Lord," 15–16; *see Exodus 15:6.*
  - God's discipline, 18, a frequent theme in Proverbs; *see Proverbs 3:11–12. See also Hebrews 12:3–11.*
  - The rejected stone, 22, a metaphor used to refer to Christ; *see Matthew 21:42; Mark 12:10–11; Luke 20:17; Acts 4:11; and 1 Peter 2:7.*
  - "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD," 26, a proclamation used at Jesus' entry into Jerusalem; *see Matthew 21:9; Mark 11:9; and Luke 19:38. See also Matthew 23:39.*

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is eternal, 1–4.
- ◆ Omnipresent and omniscient, he hears the prayers of his people, 5.
- ◆ He is willing and able to strengthen his people to wage victorious spiritual warfare against their spiritual enemies, 10–12.
- ◆ He is powerful and strong, 14–16.
- ◆ He is sovereign ruler of all time and its events, 24.

- ◆ He is God, Yahweh, immense and powerful but also personal, 27.
- ◆ He is the source of all light—physical, moral, and spiritual, 28.

### His goodness

- ◆ He is fundamentally, intrinsically, and always good, 1.
- ◆ He is full of endless mercy and lovingkindness, 1–4.
- ◆ He hears and answers prayer, 1.
- ◆ He is present with his people and stands up for them, 6. *See Romans 8:31.*
- ◆ He is trustworthy, 8–9.
- ◆ He helps his people, 13.
- ◆ He gives strength and salvation to his people; in fact, he is their strength and salvation, 14.
- ◆ He is willing to have fellowship with his people on the basis of vicarious sacrifice, 27.
- ◆ He chastens his people, sometimes severely, in order to refine them, 18. *See Hebrews 12:3–11.*
- ◆ He is righteous and imputes righteousness to his faithful people, 19–20.

## Christ

### His prefiguration

- ◆ As the innocent sufferer of persecution, like David, who was persecuted by Saul and was later attacked by foreign and domestic enemies 5–7, 10–13, 22
- ◆ As one who was sorely afflicted yet was never fully or finally deserted, but who was restored to his original place of glory and honor, 5, 14, 17–18, 21
- ◆ As the King of Israel, who leads his people in victorious battle, 10–12, 15–16
- ◆ As the rejected stone which becomes the cornerstone of a new building, 22
- ◆ As the Messiah, the One who came – and will come – in the name of the Lord to save his people, 26
- ◆ As the sacrifice bound to the altar, 27
- ◆ As the one who sang praise to God even on the night of his betrayal and arrest; *see Matthew 26:30.* (In fact, Jesus and his disciples probably sang this psalm, as it is the appointed psalm for that day in the Jewish ritual calendar.)

## The Church

### Its prefiguration

- ◆ As (relatively, that is, legally) innocent sufferers of persecution who will eventually be saved by God
- ◆ As those who sing and worship even amid danger and who thank God after they have been delivered
- ◆ As those who pray to God always
- ◆ As the “living stones” now joined to Christ, the Cornerstone, in a new and living temple; *see 1 Peter 2:4-7.*

## Life

---

### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Call upon God whenever we are in trouble.
- ◆ Expect to be disciplined by God.
- ◆ Expect to be persecuted by enemies for the sake of Christ.
- ◆ Trust God always to be our strength and salvation.
- ◆ Sing praises to God and worship him at all times (as well as at stated times) with his people.
- ◆ Thank God for sending Jesus to suffer in our place and – by the power of God – to overcome, thus winning eternal salvation for us.
- ◆ Do not trust in any man, however powerful, to save us or to give us “life” in any sense.
- ◆ Stand in wonder at the beauty of Scripture, which is so rich in meaning and in its revelation of God’s immense greatness, love, and beauty.

# Psalm 119:1–24

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its source

- ◆ God is the author of revelation.
- ◆ He caused it to be written down by Moses and other servants of his, including the psalmists.
- ◆ It is, therefore, described as “Your” revelation, 1–6 (and almost every verse in this psalm).

#### Its literary forms

- ◆ God’s written revelation comes in many forms, most of which are referred to in this psalm.
  - Law [Torah, instruction], 1
  - Testimonies, 2
  - Precepts, 4
  - Statutes, 5, 8
  - Commandments, 6
  - Judgments, 7
  - Word, 16
- ◆ Word and Law are the widest categories and include all the others.
- ◆ “Law” is often applied to the entire Pentateuch and thus includes history, especially salvation history.

#### Its structure

- ◆ God’s revelation in the psalms comes through poetry, having a parallel structure which is often expressed in two consecutive lines of poetry.
- ◆ Some psalms are also acrostic poems, like this one.
  - The lines of each stanza begin with the same letter of the Hebrew alphabet.
  - This means that this psalm is not organized chronologically or thematically; many themes can occur within any one stanza.

### Its purpose

- ◆ It is meant to evoke different responses.
  - Obedience, 1–2, 22
  - Longing for greater holiness, 5, 10
  - Shame over disobedience, 6
  - Praise, 7
  - Memorization and meditation, 9–11, 15–16
  - Prayer for more insight into the Scriptures, 12, 18–19
  - Telling others what one has learned, 13
  - Joy, 14
  - Delight, 16, 24
  - Longing for more knowledge, 20
- ◆ Most revelation in the Bible came to people who were being persecuted or who were under threat of persecution; it was therefore intended to guide and strengthen them, 21–23.
- ◆ It also reveals God’s character.

## God

### His greatness

- ◆ He is holy, righteous, and totally opposed to all sin, 3, 21.
- ◆ He is pure, 9.
- ◆ He is wonderful, 18.
- ◆ He is hidden unless he specially reveals himself, 19.

## Christ

### His prefiguration

- ◆ As the self-revelation of God—the Word of God incarnate; *see John 1:14*.
- ◆ As the Teacher whose words are true instruction and authoritative commandments, statutes, and precepts
- ◆ As the only sinless man; *see Hebrews 4:15*.
- ◆ As one who was completely “undefiled in the way” and who walked “in the law of the Lord,” 1
- ◆ As one who above all sought God’s word and obedience to it, 2
- ◆ As one who pondered God’s words constantly, 9, 11, 24

- ♦ As one who suffered innocently at the hands of proud and wicked men, and against whom rulers conspired together, 21–23
- ♦ As one whose entire life was guided by God’s testimonies, that is, prophecies, promises, etc., 24

## Sin

### It includes

- ♦ Neglecting God’s written word and failing to meditate on it or to obey it, 1, 9
- ♦ Wandering from God’s word, 21
- ♦ Pride and scorn toward God and his people, 21
- ♦ Conspiring to oppose God’s Kingdom, 23

## Salvation

### Its substance

- ♦ Knowledge of God’s character and commands, as revealed in his written word and to which this entire psalm speaks
- ♦ Advance in holiness by the power of God’s word as we pray for God to cause us to live and walk in it, 1, etc.
- ♦ Constant illumination by God’s Spirit, who directs us to understand, 12, 18
- ♦ Guidance, 24

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Imitate the psalmist and especially Jesus, who longed for, sought, delighted in, and loved God’s word.
- ♦ Imitate the psalmist and especially Jesus, who sought to understand and to obey God’s written revelation.
- ♦ Memorize and meditation upon the Scriptures day and night. *See Psalm 1:2.*
- ♦ Pray for God to reveal the inner meaning of his word to us and to conform our lives to his word.
- ♦ Express to others our delight in God’s word and share with them our understanding of it as we seek to put it into practice.

- ◆ Echo the words of the psalmist in our own prayers to God.
- ◆ Thank God for giving us his written revelation and especially for giving us Jesus, who taught and embodied God's word and died so that we might be saved by God's grace and empowered by his Spirit to know and follow the word of God.

# Psalm 119:25–48

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its characteristics

- ◆ It is life-giving, 25.
- ◆ It gives strength, 28.
- ◆ It is true in every respect, 29–30.
- ◆ It enables us to know and (by the power of the Spirit) to do God's will, 34.
- ◆ It is good, 39.
- ◆ It has abiding truth and authority, 44.
- ◆ It gives inner liberty, allowing us to keep God's commands, 45. *See John 8:32–33.*
- ◆ It is delightful, 47.

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He has power to raise people from the dead, both spiritually and materially, 25.
- ◆ He possesses a powerful word, 28. *See also Psalm 33:6; Colossians 1:11; and Hebrews 1:3.*
- ◆ He can change the human heart, 32.
- ◆ He deserves our fear and reverence, 38.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He answers prayer, 26.
- ◆ He strengthens us, 28.
- ◆ He is merciful, 41.
- ◆ He saves his people when they call upon him, 41.
- ◆ He teaches us his statutes by the indwelling Holy Spirit, 26. *See Matthew 23:8.*
- ◆ He opposes all lying, 29.
- ◆ He is righteous, 40.

### Christ

#### His prefiguration

- ◆ As the one whose soul “clung to the dust” in death and whom God brought back to life, according to his promise in the Old Testament, 25
- ◆ As the one who always prayed to God, especially when he faced trouble in Gethsemane, 25
- ◆ As the one whose soul melted from heaviness and sorrow, 28
- ◆ As the one who chose the way of truth and who was, in fact, the Way and the Truth, 30; *see John 14:6; 18:37.*
- ◆ As the one who ran in the course of God’s commandments, 32
- ◆ As the one who kept God’s statutes to the end, 33; *see Matthew 3:15 and John 13:1.*
- ◆ As the one for whom God’s word of promise was established when he raised Jesus from the dead, 38, 41
- ◆ As the one who constantly kept God’s law, 44
- ◆ As the one who spoke of God’s righteousness before kings and rulers, 46
- ◆ As the one who clearly delighted in God’s commandments and meditated upon them continuously, 47–48

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Let our life be permeated, saturated, and dominated by God’s written revelation.
  - Seek to understand it, 26–27.
  - Find strength from God in it, 28.
  - Ask God to reveal it to us, 29.
  - Contemplate and meditate upon it day and night, 30, 48.
  - Delight in it, 35, 47.
  - Consider it good in every aspect, 39.
  - Trust God’s promises to give mercy and salvation, 41.
  - Trust in God’s Word, 42.
  - Hope in it – that is, probably, hope in the promises of God contained in his Word, 43.
  - Speak of it to others, 46.
  - Love it, 48.
- ◆ Pray to God before, during, and after reading his Word and meditating upon it, and make our various requests of him.

- To revive us, 25, 37, 40
  - To teach us, 26–27, 33
  - To strengthen us, 28
  - To keep us from all lies and to fill our minds with truth instead, 29
  - To give us understanding of his Word, 33
  - To cause us to obey his Word, 35
  - To turn our attention away from vanities (especially TV, the Internet, non-edifying entertainment, pornography, advertisements, etc.) to his Word, 36–37
  - To show us his mercy and truth, 41
- ◆ In reading or thinking about God’s written Word, seek to see in it Jesus, God’s Incarnate Word.
  - ◆ Indeed, translate all our prayers into prayers for God to give us Jesus in all his richness of truth, power, and love.
  - ◆ Obey God’s written revelation. Knowledge and even faith are not enough; they must be completed by walking in God’s Word by the power of the Spirit.

# Psalm 119:49–80

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its effects

- ◆ It gives hope, life, and comfort, 49–50, 52.
- ◆ It is a source of joy and singing, 54.
- ◆ It is more valuable to the believer than all the wealth in the world, 72.

### God

His greatness: He created the world and everything and everyone in it, 73.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He gives himself to us as our portion and inheritance, 57.
- ◆ He fills the earth with his mercy and love, 64.
- ◆ He deals well with his servants, 65.
- ◆ He afflicts his people when they go astray, so that they might return to him in repentance, renewed faith, and greater obedience, 67.
- ◆ He is good and does good always, even when he afflicts us, 67–68.
- ◆ He executes righteous judgment, 75.
- ◆ He is faithful to himself and to his word, even when he afflicts us, 75.
- ◆ He promises and gives merciful kindness to his followers, 76.
- ◆ He gives new life through his tender mercies, 77.

### Christ

#### His prefiguration

- ◆ As the one who was held in derision by the proud and self-righteous Pharisees, but who did not turn aside from God's law, 51
- ◆ As the one who was indignant when the wicked, especially wicked religious rulers, forsook God's law, 53; *see Matthew 23*.
- ◆ As the one who kept God's law completely, 56
- ◆ As the one who did not forget God's word even when he was bound by his enemies' cords, 61
- ◆ As the one against whom the proud forged a lying conspiracy, 69

- ◆ As the one who learned obedience through what he suffered, 71; *see Hebrews 5:8*.
- ◆ As the one who made glad those who feared God when they saw Jesus resurrected from the dead – that is, his disciples, 74.

## Sin

### It includes

- ◆ Pride, 51, 69, 78
- ◆ Scorning and deriding others, 51.
- ◆ Forsaking God's law or any part of it, 53.
- ◆ Oppressing the innocent, 61
- ◆ Lying about others to harm them, 68, 78

## Salvation

### Its substance

- ◆ Hope, 49
- ◆ Spiritual life from God's Word, 50
- ◆ Joy amid wandering, 54
- ◆ Having God as our eternal "possession" and portion, 57
- ◆ Mercy, 58, 76
- ◆ Repentance and turning to God from sin, 59–60
- ◆ Fellowship with others who fear and love God, 63
- ◆ Being taught by God from his Word, 64
- ◆ Discipline for sin and the chance to return to God, 67, 71, 75
- ◆ Possession of the Scriptures, 72
- ◆ Understanding from God that leads to obedience, 73
- ◆ Influencing others to fear God, 79

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Thank God for giving us his holy and righteous commandments, which show us his will.
- ◆ Thank God when he afflicts us, knowing that he is teaching us greater obedience and drawing us back to himself.

- ◆ Meditate on God's Word day and night.
- ◆ Delight in God's Word and in his ways with us.
- ◆ See ourselves as pilgrims on this earth, and make God's promises our source and ground of hope and joy.
- ◆ Pray for greater understanding of God's Word and for God to lead us to obey his revealed will.

# Psalm 119:81–104

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Special revelation

- ◆ God's written revelation, including the commands in the Old Testament, is faithful, 86.
- ◆ His words are permanent, embedded into the very structure of the universe, 89, 91.
- ◆ His commands reflect his very nature and are thus enduring and reliable, like the earth itself, 90.
- ◆ Indeed, they are beyond all perfection known to man, 96.

*Note: Though the Mosaic Law is not obligatory for Christians, and though we are under no bondage to any law to establish our righteousness before God, the Mosaic Law's moral principles are all repeated in the New Testament (see Matthew 19:18–19; Romans 13:19); its ceremonial regulations are fulfilled in Christ and form the indispensable background for our understanding of his person and work; and its civil laws contain wisdom that still applies to the world today. In these senses, even the Mosaic Law is permanent and enduring.*

- ◆ His revelation surpasses the wisdom of men, even the wisest of them, 99–100.
- ◆ Obedience leads to greater understanding of his word and will, 100–101.

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is eternal, 89–90.
- ◆ He is the omnipotent Creator of the universe, 90.
- ◆ Like his written revelation, he is infinitely perfect in every way – having wisdom, knowledge, power, life, beauty, love, justice, faithfulness, etc., 96.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He is fully faithful in his words, 86.
- ◆ He is the source of all life and gives new life through his word received in faith by those who pray to him, 88, 93.

- ◆ He is full of lovingkindness, 88.
- ◆ He executes judgment on evildoers, 92.

## Christ

His prefiguration: He is the innocent sufferer of unjust and malicious persecution.

- ◆ He cries out to God for deliverance and vindication, 81–88.
- ◆ He seeks comfort and strength in the written revelation of God, especially its promises, 92–96.
- ◆ He delights in and meditates constantly upon God's words, gaining a wisdom greater than that of the learned teachers of his day, 97–100.
- ◆ He completely and perfectly obeys all the commands of the law, 101–2.
- ◆ He loves God's words more than anything else, 103.
- ◆ He fully abhors all evil, 104.

His nature and power

- ◆ He is the eternal Word of God through whom the world was created, 89–91.
- ◆ Thus, he is the source of life for believers, 93. *See John 14:6.*

## Sin

It includes

- ◆ Persecuting God's people, 84–85, 95
- ◆ Pride, 85

## Salvation

Its conveyance: It comes through faith in God's word as contained in Scripture, 93.

Its substance

- ◆ Hope, 81
- ◆ Help in times of trouble, 86
- ◆ Revival of spirits and of life itself, 88
- ◆ Obedience to God's law as a result of revival, 88
- ◆ Delight in God's words in Scripture, 92
- ◆ New life in Christ, 93
- ◆ Wisdom greater than that available to those who do not love, ponder, or obey God's word, 98–100
- ◆ Avoidance of evil through hearing God's word, 101

- ◆ Constant instruction by God's Spirit through his revealed word, 102
- ◆ The sweet experience of enjoying God's words, 103
- ◆ Moral understanding that creates a hatred of evil, 104

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Meditate upon God's word day and night; for this, we need to read, study, and memorize it.
- ◆ Thank God for all that Jesus is to us: an example, a fellow sufferer (though he endured much more than we will), a righteous teacher, a revealer of God's truth, and an embodiment of God's faithfulness, love, wisdom, and salvation.
- ◆ Ask God to give us wisdom as we read and ponder his word.
- ◆ Ask God to fill us with delight in his word.
- ◆ As followers of Jesus, expect to be wrongfully accused and wickedly persecuted by unbelievers.
- ◆ Hold on to God's promises and presence during all afflictions and troubles.

# Psalm 119:105–28

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Special revelation

- ◆ God's written revelation reflects God's own being as light, including moral light; those who attend to his word will find daily and even momentary guidance, 105. *See Ephesians 5:8–16 and 1 John 1:5–7.*
- ◆ We need God's illumination by the Spirit, however, in order to understand and apply God's revelation, 108, 125.

#### Its effects

- ◆ Testimonies of God's past faithfulness bring joy and provide hope in times of trouble, 111, 114.
- ◆ It should evoke holy reverence and fear from us, 120.
- ◆ It is absolutely right in all its parts, 128.

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is light, and his revelation reflects that light, 105.
- ◆ He has life-giving power, exercised through his word, 107.
- ◆ He has power to protect his servants and to punish evildoers, 114, 118.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He is righteous, 106, 123.
- ◆ He allows his people to be in danger from the plots and malice of wicked men, 110, 114, 121, 126, but he provides safe shelter for his faithful followers, 114.
- ◆ He is merciful and treats his servants mercifully, 124.
- ◆ He grants understanding to those who seek it, 125.
- ◆ He utterly and eternally rejects those who stray from his commandments and practice wickedness, 117–18.

## Christ

### His prefiguration

- ◆ As the light of the world, whose example and teaching enable us to walk in the light and not stumble, 105; *see John 12:35-36.*
- ◆ As one who resolved to keep God's righteous laws and fulfilled that vow, 106
- ◆ As one who was greatly afflicted, 107
- ◆ As one who was encompassed by snares and traps that his enemies laid for him, 110; *see Matthew 22:15-18 and John 8:2-6.*
- ◆ As one who said - or will say - "Depart from me, you evildoers," 115; *see Matthew 7:23.*
- ◆ As one who - though he did justice and righteousness - was oppressed by wicked and proud men, but who was not ultimately left in their hands, 121-22

## The People of God

Their identity: The "people of God" consists of all true believers.

### Their lives

- ◆ They seek daily light from his written word, 105.
- ◆ They are resolved to keep his commandments, 106.
- ◆ They suffer great affliction in this world, 107.
- ◆ They engage in constant meditation upon God's word, 109.
- ◆ They pursue consistent adherence to God's way, despite frequent falls, 110.
- ◆ They hope in his promises, not in this world, 111, 114.
- ◆ They hate all evil, 113.
- ◆ They have a holy fear and reverence for God, 120.
- ◆ Overall and by God's help, they do justice and righteousness, 121.
- ◆ They seek salvation constantly from God alone, 123.
- ◆ They love God's word more than anything on earth, 127.

## Sin

### It includes

- ◆ Trying to trap the followers of God, 110

- ◆ Double-mindedness toward God and his revelation, 113; *see James 1:7*.
- ◆ Deceit and falsehood, 118
- ◆ Pride, 122
- ◆ Considering God's written revelation and his commands as of no effect, 126
- ◆ Any false way of conduct, 128

## Salvation

### Its substance

- ◆ Guidance from God's written revelation, 105
- ◆ Revival, both spiritual and physical, 107
- ◆ Acceptance of our praise and thanks, 108
- ◆ A sure promise of future inheritance, 111
- ◆ Joy, 111
- ◆ Love for God's law, 113
- ◆ Protection from the snares of Satan and evil men, 114
- ◆ Realization of our hope in God's future grace, 116
- ◆ Strength in times of trouble, 117
- ◆ Deliverance—perhaps through death, as in Jesus' case—from wicked oppressors, 121
- ◆ Ultimate salvation from sin, Satan, death, and God's wrath, 123
- ◆ Mercy and forgiveness from God, 124
- ◆ Understanding of his written revelation, 125
- ◆ Discernment between truth and falsehood, 128

Its conveyance: As experienced by God's people, grace precedes and enables obedience, 105-6, 116-17, 124.

## The Last Things

### The final judgment

- ◆ At the return of Christ, all evildoers who have not repented will be fully and finally rejected, ejected from God's presence, and repaid for their evil deeds, 115, 118-19, 126.
- ◆ All God's faithful followers will be vindicated and saved.

# Life

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## Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Meditate constantly upon God's word.
- ◆ Ask God for understanding of his commandments and promises.
- ◆ Ask him for power to live by his written revelation.
- ◆ Expect to suffer great troubles and trials in this life.
- ◆ Look for salvation from God alone—not from man.
- ◆ Set our hope fully on the grace to be brought to us at the revelation of Jesus Christ—not upon earthly deliverance or prosperity.

# Psalm 119:129–52

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Special revelation

- ◆ God’s written words are wonderful, “far beyond merely human in their origin and excellence” (*ESVSB*), 129.
- ◆ When pondered and explained [unfolded], his revelation brings the light of wisdom and understanding to those who acknowledge their folly, 130.
- ◆ It is fully righteous and totally reliable, 138.
- ◆ It is pure, that is, free from error and falsehood, 140.
- ◆ It is completely true—indeed, it is truth itself, 142, 151.
- ◆ It is righteous in all its commands and descriptions (such as of God’s ways in history), 144.
- ◆ It is eternal in that it reflects God’s intrinsic and eternal nature and will; therefore, it—like God—is stable, unchanging, and unchangeable, 152.

### God

His greatness: He is eternal, as is his word and his character, 142, 144.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He comes near to his people, especially when trouble is near to them, 141.
- ◆ He is completely and always righteous, 142.
- ◆ He allows his people to suffer, yet without losing their faith in his goodness, 143.
- ◆ He is full of lovingkindness [Hebrew *chesed*, covenant-keeping love, steadfast love], 149.
- ◆ He hears the prayers of his people, 149.
- ◆ He is completely just in all his words and ways, 149.

## Christ

### His prefiguration

- ◆ As the only one who fully kept God's laws from the depths of his heart, 129
- ◆ As one who longed, even panted, for God's word, 131
- ◆ As the only one who was completely free from any sin, 133
- ◆ As one who was redeemed from the grave after suffering oppression from men, 134
- ◆ As God's fully-favored Servant, 135; *see Isaiah 42:1 and Matthew 3:17; 17:5.*
- ◆ As one who was consumed with zeal for God's law and proper worship, 139; *see John 2:17.*
- ◆ As one who was despised and small in the eyes of men, 141
- ◆ As one who was overcome by trouble and anguish of soul, 143; *see Matthew 26:38 and John 12:27.*
- ◆ As one who cried out to God with prayers and even tears, 145-46; *see Hebrews 5:7.*
- ◆ As one who rose early and stayed up all night to pray and ponder God's words and will, 147-48; *see Mark 1:35.*

## Sin

### It includes

- ◆ Not keeping God's law, 136—a sin of which all men are guilty; *see Romans 3:10-23.*
- ◆ Forgetting God's words, 139
- ◆ Being enemies of God's people, 139
- ◆ Despising "small" and "unimportant" people, 141
- ◆ Following and pursuing wickedness, 150

## Salvation

### Its substance

- ◆ Love for God's name, that is, for his character, conduct, and reputation among men, 132
- ◆ Being led by God into his ways according to his word, 133
- ◆ Freedom from the power of sin, 133

- ◆ A sense of God's presence and gracious favor, 135
- ◆ Instruction in his statutes and laws, 135
- ◆ Delight in his commandment, that is, an inner approval and enjoyment of God's revealed will, 143
- ◆ Understanding of truth that leads to everlasting life, 144
- ◆ The ability to keep God's commands (at least to a substantial degree), 145
- ◆ Revival by God's word, 149

Its conveyance: Grace always precedes works, that is, God's action in and upon us leads to our response of faith and obedience, 144, 146.

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Seek light and wisdom from an understanding of God's written revelation.
- ◆ Read, ponder, and meditate upon God's word daily.
- ◆ Pray for God to give us understanding of his word.
- ◆ Pray for God to deliver us from the power of any sin and to cause us to walk according to his written revelation.
- ◆ Be grieved when we see people not keeping God's laws.
- ◆ Be consumed with zeal for God's honor and for the salvation of lost souls.
- ◆ Believe that God is near to us even when trouble and danger press upon us.
- ◆ Cry out fervently for the spiritual revival that comes from God, ordinarily when his people love, long for, hope in, delight in, pray for obedience to, and ponder God's words in Scripture.

# Psalm 119:153–76

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Biblical revelation

- ◆ It is entirely and completely true, without error of any kind—scientific, historical, or ethical, 160.
- ◆ It is more valuable than the greatest earthly treasure, 162.
- ◆ It gives great peace to those who love it, 165.
- ◆ It is completely righteous, 172.

### God

His greatness: He and his judgments are eternal and endure forever, 160.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He is full of tender mercies, which are great in every way, 156.
- ◆ He gives new life to those who ask him, 156, 159.
- ◆ He is full of lovingkindness, 159.
- ◆ He is righteous and executes righteous judgments, 164.

### Christ

#### His prefiguration

- ◆ As the one who suffered affliction from ungodly persecutors, including princes and rulers, though he was innocent, 153, 161
- ◆ As the one who never forgot God's written revelation, 153, 157
- ◆ As the one who even now pleads our cause before God, 154; *see Romans 8:34.*
- ◆ As one who loved God's precepts and law, 159, 163
- ◆ As one who stood in awe of God's Word and rejoiced in it, 161–62
- ◆ As one who kept God's commands from his inmost being, 167
- ◆ As the one who took upon himself the sins of people who had wandered away from God like lost sheep, 176; *see Isaiah 53:6.*
- ◆ As the one who came as a Good Shepherd to seek and to save the lost, 176; *see Matthew 9:36; 18:11–14; and 1 Peter 2:25.*

## Sin

### It includes

- ◆ Not seeking to know, love, or obey God's written revelation, 155
- ◆ Persecution of God's people, 158
- ◆ Treachery, 158
- ◆ Not keeping God's law or trusting its promises (the wider meaning of "word"), 158

## Salvation

### Its substance

- ◆ Deliverance from affliction, 153, 170
- ◆ Redemption from sin by the blood of Christ, 154; *see Ephesians 1:7*.
- ◆ Revival according to God's word – that is, as we believe it and try to follow it, 154
- ◆ Inner peace that results from God-enabled obedience, 165
- ◆ Eventual salvation in every sense of the word, 166
- ◆ Understanding of God, 169
- ◆ Help from God for those who trust his word, 173
- ◆ Delight in God's written revelation, 174
- ◆ New life for the soul, 175
- ◆ Constant rescue from sin by God, 176

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Pray for deliverance, guidance, and help when we are in trouble.
- ◆ Expect to be persecuted wrongly by unjust rulers.
- ◆ Remember God's written revelation. (This assumes that we read it, meditate upon it, and memorize it daily.)
- ◆ Seek to know and follow God's word more than anything else, including great wealth.
- ◆ Praise God all day long for his written revelation and especially for the incarnate Word, Jesus Christ, 164, 171.

- ◆ Set our hope fully on the salvation that will come to us at the return of Christ and on nothing else, 166, and long for it with our whole being, 174. *See 1 Peter 1:8-9, 13.*
- ◆ Ask God for understanding as we read the Bible, 169.
- ◆ Speak of God and his word to our family, friends, and others around us, 172.
- ◆ Cry out constantly for revival, even as we ponder God's word, 175.
- ◆ Constantly admit our sin to God and ask him to seek us and bring us back to himself, 176.

# Psalm 120

## Truth

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### Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ This psalm provides several examples.
  - “In my distress I called to the LORD, and He heard me,” 1, quoting Jonah’s words; *see Jonah 2:2*.
  - “Sharp arrows” and “glowing coals” of fire, pointing to God’s judgment, 4; *see Psalms 7:12–13; 11:6; 140:10*.
  - Meshach, 5; *see Genesis 10:2; 1 Chronicles 1:5; and Ezekiel 27:13; 38:2–3; 39:1*.
  - Kedar, 5; *see Genesis 25:13; Isaiah 21:16; 60:7; Jeremiah 2:10; 49:28; and Ezekiel 27:21*.
- ◆ Psalms 120–34 are known as the “Songs of Ascent.”
  - This refers to the “ascent” to Jerusalem when Jews who lived elsewhere gather there to worship.
  - This also speaks to all believers as pilgrims on this earth, exiles from our true home, who will gather together at the New Jerusalem that will come down from heaven.
  - This theme is spoken of throughout the Bible. *See 1 Kings 12:28; Psalm 122:4; Zechariah 14:16; Hebrews 11:13–16; 1 Peter 1:1, 17; and Revelation 21:1–7*.

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is omniscient and all-knowing; thus, he “hears” the prayers of his people, 1.
- ◆ He is all-powerful and thus able to deliver them from distress, 2.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He hears the cries of his people in trouble and delivers them, 1–2.
- ◆ He hates lying and deceit, 3.

- ◆ He punishes unrepentant evildoers, 4.
- ◆ He hates war and loves peace, 7.

## Christ

### His prefiguration

- ◆ As one who cried out to God in his distress, 1; *see Hebrews 5:7*.
- ◆ As the only person who completely refrained from falsehood and from malice, 2-3, 6-7
- ◆ As one who felt frustrated that he had to live among people who were ungodly and unbelieving, 5; *see Luke 9:41, 55*.
- ◆ As one who was for peace and who, in fact, suffered for our falsehood and malice so that we could have peace with God and others; *see Romans 5:1 and Ephesians 2:14-18*.

## Sin

### It includes

- ◆ Lying and deceit of all kinds, 3
- ◆ Love of strife and conflict, 6-7

## The Last Things

The final judgment: God will deliver his pilgrim people and will judge all unrepentant evildoers, including all habitual liars, with “fire and brimstone” in everlasting hell, 4. *See Revelation 20:10; 21:8; 22:15*.

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Expect to have distress and sorrow of heart in this world, where we live among lying and conflict-prone people.
- ◆ Cry out to God for deliverance in times of trouble.
- ◆ Freely confess to God that we are deeply upset by the false and malicious conduct of those around us, even as we honestly confess that we, too, are sinners.

- ◆ Be peacemakers and strive for peace with all men. *See Matthew 5:9; Romans 12:18; and Hebrews 12:14.*
- ◆ Set our hope on the return of Christ, who will bring full and final peace to this earth.

# Psalm 121

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its cumulative fullness

- ◆ Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.
- ◆ This psalm either reflects or furnishes words for Isaiah 49:10 and Jonah 4:8, and it is quoted in Revelation 7:16.

#### Its literary forms

- ◆ Biblical revelation comes often through poetry, which in Hebrew is marked most by parallel structure, employing repetition and slight variation to emphasize major themes.
- ◆ In this psalm, “the LORD” [Yahweh] and “keep” [protect] are each mentioned five times.

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is all-wise, all-knowing, all-powerful, and the source of all information and life, energy and matter.
- ◆ He made heaven and earth, 2.
- ◆ He is “awake” all the time, needing no rest, 3-4.
- ◆ He is Yahweh, the faithful covenant God of Israel, 3, 5, 7-8.
- ◆ He attends to each individual among his covenant people, 3, 5-8.
- ◆ He chose Israel to be his special people, 4.
- ◆ He is immanent, close and present to each believer, 5.
- ◆ He can keep and protect his people from all harm, whether from heaven or earth, 5-8.
- ◆ He is eternal, 8.

His goodness: He protects his people from all sorts of harm, including harm to the soul, 5-8. *See John 17:11.*

## Christ

His prefiguration: He is the faithful, loving, and powerful Shepherd, who guides, provides for, and protects his people day and night. *See John 10:28-30; 17:12, 15.*

## The Last Things

Their prediction: Just as God protects his people from the sun and moon in this life, 5-6, so also in the next life, he will protect them by removing both sun and moon forever, himself being the light of his people. *See Revelation 7:16.*

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ See ourselves as fragile and frail, liable to many kinds of danger.
- ◆ See ourselves also as secure and safe, under the protection of God.
- ◆ See ourselves especially as being under the eternal care of the keeper of our souls, who will protect us from spiritual harm and take us to eternal life.
- ◆ Therefore, let us not fret or worry; rather, place our full confidence in God the Father and Jesus the Son, who by the Holy Spirit will guide us, provide for us, and keep close to us as long as we live and then take us to heaven.

# Psalm 122

## Truth

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### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is Yahweh, the covenant God of Israel and now also of all those who trust in Christ, 1, 4, 9.
- ◆ He chose to become immanent by dwelling among his people in a “house”—the Temple in which there was the ark of the covenant, 1, 4.
- ◆ He chose Israel to be his special people, 4.
- ◆ He rules the universe, judging with righteousness – primarily now through human rulers, especially the Davidic king during Old Testament times, 5.
- ◆ He chose David to be his anointed king, prophet, and type of Christ.

### Christ

#### His prefiguration

- ◆ As the dwelling-place of God, the Temple of God’s presence on earth, 1; *see John 2:19 and Ephesians 2:19-22.*
- ◆ As the anointed King of Israel, the son of God, who is now also King of all the earth, 5; *see Matthew 1:1; 26:64; 28:18; and Ephesians 1:20-21.*

### The People of God

Their identity: The “people of God” now—as the Church—consists of all those who belong to God’s chosen people, are the elect in Christ, have been forgiven of their sins, and have been born again by the Spirit of God. *See Ephesians 1:3-14.*

#### The Church

- ◆ As the “house of God,” it is no longer a building.
- ◆ Rather, it is the Body of Christ, where Jesus lives through his Spirit. *See Ephesians 2:19-22; 1 Timothy 3:4; and 1 Peter 2:5.*
- ◆ Like ancient Jerusalem, the Body of Christ is “built as a city compact together,” joined by every member into a living, harmonious, and growing whole, 3. *See Ephesians 4:16.*

## Salvation

### Its substance

- ◆ To Israel in Old Testament times
  - Membership in God's chosen people
  - The privilege of knowing and worshipping God in a house or place of the Lord's choosing and special blessing and in the city Jerusalem, especially chosen by God, 1-2
  - Joy in these privileges, 1
  - Righteous judgments by a king informed by God's law, 5
  - Peace and prosperity in the Promised Land, 6
  - Membership in a community of people who sought each other's good, 9
- ◆ To believers in Christ now
  - Membership in God's chosen people – now all those who trust in Christ alone for salvation and follow his ways
  - The privilege of knowing God as Father and of worshipping him individually and corporately with all other disciples of Christ; *see Matthew 6:9; John 4:24; and Romans 8:14-15.*
  - Life under the righteous judgments of Christ; *see Colossians 1:13.*

## The Last Things

Their prediction: They are foreseen here as the time when all God's people will "go up to the house of the Lord" in the New Jerusalem, where we shall live in perpetual peace and perfect prosperity with Christ. *See Hebrews 11:10 and Revelation 21:1, 9-27.*

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Seek regular fellowship with other believers.
- ◆ Urge others to join us in fellowship. This includes not just gathering in a "church" building but also fellowship in homes and other places.
- ◆ Constantly "give thanks to the name of the LORD," 4.
- ◆ Pray and work for peaceful relationships among all Christians. *See Colossians 3:12-15.*

- ◆ Seek the good of other believers, and do not place our own self-interest first, 9.  
*See Philippians 2:1-4, 20-21.*
- ◆ Look forward to the day when we join all other believers in the New Jerusalem and set our hopes fully on that blessed state.

# Psalm 123

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its content

- ◆ Most biblical revelation came out of and speaks to situations where God's people are suffering from persecution.
- ◆ This is especially true of the psalms, which thus reveal the heart of Jesus, who encountered constant hostility, 4.

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He dwells far "above" us in the heavens as a fully transcendent, self-sufficient, eternal being, 1.
- ◆ He is God, our master, 2.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He is Yahweh, the covenant God of Israel, 2.
- ◆ He is the gracious master of all those who serve him, 2.
- ◆ He is full of mercy, 2-3.
- ◆ He often allows his people to suffer persecution and the contempt of the proud so that they may look entirely to him for mercy and help.

### Christ

#### His prefiguration

- ◆ As the Servant of God the Father who said and did nothing except what the Father told and showed him, 2; *see Matthew 12:18 and John 5:19, 30.*
- ◆ As one whose soul was filled with the scorn and contempt of the proud, 3-4; *see Matthew 27:39-44.*

## Sin

### It includes

- ◆ Having a contemptuous attitude toward others, especially those who are weak and suffering, and especially toward Christians, 3-4
- ◆ Being “at ease,” that is, being complacent in one’s own situation, not being sympathetic to those who are in trouble, and not being aware of one’s own spiritual need and physical fragility, 4
- ◆ Pride, 4

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Look to God for direction in every aspect of life, seeing ourselves as his humble servants.
- ◆ Cry out to God for help and mercy when we are oppressed by proud and contemptuous people.
- ◆ Thank God that Jesus suffered such terrible treatment in our place, that we might be saved from God’s wrath.
- ◆ Do not expect that, as servants of Christ, we may escape the persecution and scorn that he had to endure on earth. “A servant is not greater than his master.”  
*See Matthew 10:24-25.*

# Psalm 124

## Truth

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### Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ This psalm refers to several themes and events seen elsewhere in the Bible.
  - Deliverance: Though possibly referring to any great deliverance, such as the Exodus, this psalm might point especially to the return from exile in Babylon.
  - Perilous waters: The image of waters, 4–5, could be a reference to the Red Sea or the overflowing Jordan River; later, the disciples were almost overwhelmed in a great storm on the Sea of Galilee. *See Matthew 8:23–27.*
  - Creation: The reference to God making “heaven and earth,” 8, points back to Genesis 1:1.
- ◆ This psalm is later quoted by Paul, saying that the Lord is “on our side,” 1–2. *See Romans 8:31.*

### Its literary forms

- ◆ Biblical revelation—notably the psalms and the words of the Old Testament prophets—often takes the form of poetry.
- ◆ Hebrew poetry uses various forms of expression.
  - Parallelism and repetition, as in these Songs of Ascent (Psalms 120–34)
  - Figures of speech, like comparing Israel’s enemies and her parlous plight with wild beasts about to swallow them whole, 3, 6, overflowing floods and waves, 4–5, and a bird who has barely escaped a trap, 7

### God

His greatness: He made heaven and earth, 8.

### His goodness

- ◆ He is “for” his people and “on [their] side” when enemies assail them, 1–2.

- ◆ He helps his people and delivers them from enemies and dangers that would otherwise destroy them, 6–8.

## Christ

### His prefiguration

- ◆ As the divine Lord who is “on our side,” 1–2; *see Romans 8:34, where he makes intercession for us before the Father, and 2 Timothy 4:17, where he strengthens and delivers us.*
- ◆ As the Lord who saved his people from danger on the waters, 4–5; *see Matthew 8:23–27, where he saves his disciples from the storm on the Sea of Galilee.*

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Expect to be persecuted by evil men and to be placed into situations of great danger, so that we feel overwhelmed. This is no indication that God does not love us, but only that we are his people, whom he has called to suffer in this life. *See 2 Timothy 3:12.*
- ◆ When everyone turns against us, do not think that God has abandoned us or that he is not with us; he is still “on our side” and “for” us, and he will never leave us nor forsake us. *See Psalm 118:6–7; Romans 8:38–39; and Hebrews 13:5.*
- ◆ Cry out to God in times of trouble and trial, trusting him to deliver us, either by escape from earthly danger for a while or by eventual death leading to everlasting life.
- ◆ Do not trust in men to help us when dangers and difficulties confront us; we should look to God alone. *See Psalm 118:8–9.*
- ◆ When God answers our prayers, give thanks, and remind others to give thanks also.

# Psalm 125

## Truth

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### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is everlasting, 1-2.
- ◆ He is omnipresent, surrounding the city of Jerusalem, 2.
- ◆ He has power to protect his people, 2-3, to reward the righteous, 4, and to punish the unrepentant wicked, 5.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He chose Israel to be his special people, and Jerusalem to be the city in which he would especially dwell, 2.
- ◆ He hates wickedness, 4-5.
- ◆ He loves righteousness, goodness, and uprightness.
- ◆ He rewards good and punishes evil, 4-5.

## Life

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#### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Trust in God and in his protection always.
- ◆ Put ourselves in the realm of his care by joining ourselves with his people.
- ◆ Ask God to make us good and upright.
- ◆ Avoid all that is crooked and evil.

# Psalm 126

## Truth

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### Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ “Our mouths were filled with laughter,” 2; *see Job 8:21.*
- ◆ “The LORD has done great things for them,” 3; *see Psalms 71:19; 106: 21; Deuteronomy 10:21; and Luke 1:49.*
- ◆ “And we are glad, 3; *see Psalm 16:11.*
- ◆ “Like the streams in the desert [Negev],” 4; *see Psalm 107:35; and Isaiah 43:19; 51:3.*
- ◆ “Those who sow in tears will reap in joy,” 5–6; *see Isaiah 35:10; and 1 Peter 1:6–7; 4:11–12.*

### Its literary forms and historical setting

- ◆ This is one of the songs of ascents, 120–134, perhaps used by pilgrims going up to Jerusalem for one of the great feasts.
- ◆ This psalm celebrates the return of captives from the exile in Babylon, 1; *see Psalm 85:1; Ezra 1:1–3; Jeremiah 19:14; and Hosea 6:11.*

## God

### His greatness

- ◆ He has the power to move kings to take action for the sake of his people, 1.
- ◆ He does great things for his people, 3; these include the mighty deliverance from Egypt, care in the wilderness, crossing the Jordan River, entrance into Canaan and possession of it, and many acts of deliverance. *See Psalm 136.*

### His goodness

- ◆ He allows his people to suffer for a while, sometimes as discipline for their sins, but with the promise that he will eventually end their trials and give lasting joy, 1–6. *See Matthew 5:1–12; and 1 Peter 1:6–7; 4:11–12.*

- ♦ He brought his people from bondage in Babylon back to the Promised Land, 1. *See Ezra 1:1–2:70.*
- ♦ He rewards patience, faithful labor, 3. *See Galatians 6:7–9; Ephesians 6:5–8; and Colossians 3:23–24.*
- ♦ He will one day wipe all our tears from our eyes, 6. *See Revelation 21:4.*

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ♦ Expect to encounter major difficulties in life, trusting that God will eventually deliver us, perhaps through death.
- ♦ Accept trials as, sometimes, evidence of his fatherly love that leads him to correct us for our sins.
- ♦ Continue to work patiently, doing what is right, trusting in God to reward us eventually.
- ♦ Praise God for all his acts of deliverance in the past.
- ♦ Praise God among the people around us; give him glory for the great things he has done for us, especially the salvation he has given us in Christ Jesus.

# Psalm 127

## Truth

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### Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ The LORD guards the city, 1; *see Psalm 125:1-2.*
- ◆ “Eat the bread of sorrows,” 2; *see Genesis 3:17, 19.*
- ◆ “Children are a heritage from the LORD, 3; *see Psalms 113:9; 128:3; Genesis 4:1; 33:5; and Joshua 24:3.*
- ◆ “The fruit of the womb,” 3; *see Deuteronomy 7:13; 28:4; and Isaiah 13:18.*
- ◆ “Happy is the man who has his quiver full of them [i.e., children],” 5; *see Psalm 128:3-4.*
- ◆ “They shall not be ashamed, but shall speak with their enemies in the gate,” 5; *see Job 5:4 and Proverbs 27:11.*

Its literary forms: This is one of the songs of ascents, 120–134, perhaps used by pilgrims going up to Jerusalem for one of the great feasts.

- ◆ It speaks of life in the Promised Land under the peaceful reign of King Solomon.
- ◆ It comes to us through God’s chosen messenger, King Solomon, author of Proverbs, Song of Solomon, and Ecclesiastes.
- ◆ All Solomon’s books speak of life on earth in the presence and fear of God.

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He has the power to prosper or frustrate our work, 1.
- ◆ He has the power to protect a city or to allow it to be destroyed, 1.
- ◆ He has the power to give children or withhold them, 3.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He gives sleep to those whom he loves, and who fear him, 2; *see Proverbs 3:24 and Mark 4:37-38.*

- ◆ He gives the gift of children, 3.

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Call upon God before undertaking any project, and all during its progress, that he may prosper what we do.
- ◆ Look to God alone for protection, even as we take steps to be prudent, 1.
- ◆ Do not overwork; do just what we can during the day, and then sleep.
- ◆ Ask God for children.
- ◆ See God alone as the one who can give or withhold children.
- ◆ Cherish the children whom God does give us, as worthy of our love in their own right and as an investment for the future.
- ◆ All these principles apply to the spiritual life also, including asking God for spiritual “children,” whom he will give according to his own will.

# Psalm 128

## Truth

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### Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ “Blessed is everyone who fears the LORD,” 1; *see Psalms 34:8–10; 119:1.*
- ◆ “Who walks in his ways,” 1; *see Psalms 1:1–3, 6; 25:4–5, 8–10; and Ephesians 4:1, 17; 5:2, 8, 15.*
- ◆ “When you eat the labor of your hands,” 2; *see Psalms 1–2; Genesis 3:10; and 1 Thessalonians 4:11.*
- ◆ “It shall be well with you,” 2; *see Deuteronomy 4:40 and Ephesians 6:3.*
- ◆ “Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine,” 3; *see Ezekiel 19:10.*
- ◆ “Your children,” 3; *see Psalm 127:3.*
- ◆ “Like olive plants, 3; *see Psalms 52:8; 144:12.*
- ◆ “The LORD bless you out of Zion,” 5; *see Psalm 144:3.*
- ◆ “May you see your children’s children!” 6; *see Psalm 103:17; Genesis 48:11; 50:23; and Job 42:16.*
- ◆ “Peace be upon Israel,” 6; *see Psalm 125:5 and Galatians 6:16.*

Its literary forms: This is one of the songs of ascents, 120–134, perhaps used by pilgrims going up to Jerusalem for one of the great feasts.

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is to be feared, because he is transcendent and holy, 1. *See Isaiah 6:1–5.*
- ◆ He has the power to prosper our work and to give children, 2. *See Psalm 127:3–5.*

#### His goodness

- ◆ He graciously revealed his will and his ways to his people through his chosen messengers, 1. *See Psalms 103:6–10; 147:19–20.*
- ◆ He rewards those who fear him and follow his ways as revealed in Scripture, 2–4. *See Psalm 1.*

*Note: This is a general principle; God allows his people to suffer in the common troubles of life as well as from persecution. See John 16:33; Romans 5:1–3; James 1:2–4, 12.*

- ◆ He chose Zion and the Temple there as his dwelling place, 5.
- ◆ He chose the descendants of Abraham, through Israel (Jacob), as his own special people, 6. *See Genesis 12:1–3.*

## Christ

### His prefiguration

- ◆ He fulfills many of God's Old Testament promises.
- ◆ Jesus is the only man who fully feared God and followed his will and ways.

## Salvation

Its substance: Because of Jesus, the only righteous man who fulfilled all God's will, the curse that was upon us for our sin has been taken away, and we can now enjoy God's blessing, though this is manifested mostly through spiritual blessings. *See Galatians 3:13–14 and Ephesians 1:3–14.*

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Fear God above all else, study his Word, and walk in his ways by the power of the Holy Spirit. *See Romans 8:1–3, 13; Galatians 5:16–26; Ephesians 5:1, 8, 15; and 1 Peter 1:17–18.*
- ◆ Rejoice in the work God has given us to do, 2. *See Ecclesiastes 2:24; 3:22; and Colossians 3:23.*
- ◆ Rejoice in the children God has given us, if he so chooses, 5.
- ◆ Seek to bless others as well, 5–6.
- ◆ Seek peace within the Body of Christ, the new Israel. *See Ephesians 4:3.*

*Note: Some people also apply this by saying we should pray for peace to reign in modern Jerusalem and Israel.*

# Psalm 129

## Truth

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### Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ “Many times they have persecuted me from my youth up, let Israel now say,” 1–2; *see Psalm 88:15; Exodus 1:11; Judges 3:8; and Ezekiel 23:29.*
- ◆ “From my youth,” 1–2; *see Jeremiah 2:2; 22:21; Ezekiel 16:22; Hosea 2:15; 11:1*
- ◆ “They have not prevailed against me,” 2; *see Jeremiah 1:19; 15:20; Matthew 16:18; and 2 Corinthians 4:8–9.*
- ◆ “He has cut in two the cords of the wicked,” 4; *see Psalms 119:61; 140:5.*
- ◆ “Those who hate Zion,” 5; *see Micah 4:11.*
- ◆ “Be ashamed and turned backward,” 5; *see Psalms 25:3; 37:2; 70:3; 71:13.*
- ◆ “Like grass upon the housetops,” 6; *see Psalm 37:2; 2 Kings 19:26; and Isaiah 37:27; 40:7–8,*
- ◆ The reaper, 7; *see Psalm 126:6.*
- ◆ “The blessing of the LORD be upon you,” 8; *see Psalm 118:26 and Ruth 2:4.*

### Its literary forms

- ◆ This is one of the songs of ascents, 120–134, perhaps used by pilgrims going up to Jerusalem for one of the great feasts.
- ◆ It is also an imprecatory psalm, calling down God’s righteous judgment upon his enemies and the persecutors of his people, 5–8; *see Psalm 137.*

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He has the power to preserve and protect his people, 1–2.
- ◆ He has the power to punish the unrepentant wicked, 6–7.

## His goodness

- ◆ He graciously chose Abraham and his descendants, through Isaac and Jacob (Israel) to be his special people, 1. *See Genesis 12:1–3.*
- ◆ He is righteous in all his ways, including his punishment of the unrepentant wicked and saving of those who trust in him, 4. *See Psalm 119:137; 145:17; Ezra 9:15; Jeremiah 12:1; Lamentations 1:18; 9:7, 14; and Romans 9:14.*
- ◆ He punishes and puts to shame all who hate his people, 5–6.
- ◆ He blesses those who trust in him, often using the benedictions pronounced by his people, 8. *See Psalm 118:26 and Numbers 6:23–27.*

## Christ

His prefiguration: He fulfills many of God's Old Testament promises and types.

- ◆ He is the one in and by whom God's blessing now comes upon those who do not deserve it, if they trust in him, 8; *see Galatians 3:9, 13–14.*

## The People of God

Their identity: The people of God include Abraham's descendants as well as people from all nations who are blessed if they have faith in Jesus Christ, 1. *See Genesis 12:3; 18:18; 26:4; Galatians 3:7–9, 14–18; and Revelation 5:9–10; 7:9–10.*

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Expect persecution in this life, 1–2. *See John 15:20; 1 Corinthians 4:12; 2 Corinthians 4:9; 2 Timothy 3:12; and 1 Peter 4:12.*
- ◆ Always trust that God is righteous and just, 4.
- ◆ Expect God to give strength to endure trials and to bring us through them, either by death or by deliverance, 2.
- ◆ Believe that God will, in his time and way, punish unrepentant sinners, including those who oppress his people, 4–8.
- ◆ Thank God for all the blessings he has bestowed on us in Christ, 8. *See Ephesians 1:3–14.*
- ◆ As followers of Jesus, bless those who persecute us. *See Matthew 5:43–48; Luke 6:48; Romans 12:14, 17–21; and 1 Peter 2:23.*

# Psalm 130

## Truth

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### God

#### His greatness

- ♦ He is omniscient and omnipresent, so he can hear prayers uttered from “the depths,” that is, from any place, no matter how far away, 1.
- ♦ He is sovereign ruler [Lord] of the universe, with authority to judge all men and consign them to eternal punishment for evil deeds, 2-3.
- ♦ He is awesome, majestic, powerful, and thus to be feared, 4.
- ♦ He is sovereign over the timing for when he will come to our aid, 6.
- ♦ He is Yahweh, the covenant God of Israel, the people whom he chose for himself, 1, 5, 7-8.
- ♦ He communicates himself to his people through his word, 5.

#### His goodness

- ♦ He hears the prayers of his people when they cry to him in distress, 2.
- ♦ He gives forgiveness to repentant sinners who trust in him, 4, 8.
- ♦ His promise of forgiveness is reliable and a sure foundation for our hope, 5.
- ♦ He is full of love for his people, 7.
- ♦ He provides redemption in abundance, that is, he himself pays the penalty for our sins, 7.
- ♦ He redeems his people from all their sins, no matter how heinous, if they trust in him, 8.

### Christ

#### His prefiguration

- ♦ As the one who cries out to God from the depths of extreme danger, 1
- ♦ As the one who hopes in God, 5-6
- ♦ As the only true representative of Israel, God’s elect people, 7-8
- ♦ As the embodiment of God’s faithful love, grace, and truth, 7; *see John 1:14.*
- ♦ As the one through whom redemption comes to God’s people by the shedding of his blood, 7-8; *see Ephesians 1:7.*

# Life

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## Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Call out to God for help when we are in trouble.
- ◆ Hope in God and in his word of promise always—not in any person or thing—even if we must wait a long time.
- ◆ When we are aware of our sins, look to him for forgiveness through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus.
- ◆ Urge other believers to hope in God and in his word alone, 7.

# Psalm 131

## Truth

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### Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ “My eyes are not haughty,” 1; *see Psalms 18:27; 101:5; Isaiah 5:15; Proverbs 30:13; and Romans 12:16.*
- ◆ “Things too wonderful for me,” 1; *see Psalm 139:6 and Job 42:3.*
- ◆ “My soul is like a weaned child,” 2; *see Matthew 18:3 and 1 Corinthians 14:20.*

Its literary forms: This is one of the songs of ascents, 120–134, perhaps used by pilgrims going up to Jerusalem for one of the great feasts.

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ His thoughts are far too wondrous for us, 1; *see Psalm 145:3; and Isaiah 40:13–14; 55:8–9.*
- ◆ He is eternal, 3.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He graciously revealed his personal name, Yahweh [Lord] to his people as his covenant name for them, 1, 3. *See Exodus 3:14; and Isaiah 42:6, 8; 43:3.*
- ◆ He chose Abraham and his descendants through Jacob [Israel] to be his chosen people, 3.
- ◆ He gives grace to the humble, 1–3. *See Psalm 51:17; Matthew 18:4; Luke 14:11; James 4:6, 7, 10; and 1 Peter 5:5–6.*
- ◆ He invited his people to trust in him for all that they need, 3. *See Psalm 130:7.*

### Christ

His prefiguration: He fulfills many of God’s Old Testament promises.

- ◆ He was meek and humble before God and men, 1. *See Matthew 11:29.*

# Life

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## Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Humble ourselves before God, listening to his Word and trusting him to do what is right.
- ◆ Refuse to try to understand all God's dealings with us, especially those that are difficult to endure; we don't know what he is doing, but he does, and he is good.
- ◆ Put our hope in God alone, not in other people or ourselves.
- ◆ Humble ourselves also before other people.

# Psalm 132

## Truth

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### Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ “Remember,” 1; *see Psalms 20:3; 115:12; and Hebrews 10:32–36.*
- ◆ David’s oath to build a temple, 2–5; *see 2 Samuel 7:1–2, 5–7; and 1 Chronicles 22:2–19.*
- ◆ David’s afflictions, 6–8; *see Psalms 2–4; 1 Samuel 19–30; and 2 Samuel 2–3; 15–21.*
- ◆ “Until I find a place for the Mighty One of Jacob,” 5; *see Acts 7:46.*
- ◆ “Give sleep to my eyes,” 4; *see Proverbs 6:4; Matthew 26:36–46; and Ephesians 6:18.*
- ◆ Ephrathah, 6; *see 1 Samuel 17:12. (Note: This is the region around Bethlehem, David’s home.)*
- ◆ “The fields of Jaar,” 6; probably Kiriath Jearim, where the ark was for 20 years (1 Samuel 7:1–2) until David brought it to Jerusalem (2 Sam. 6:1–19). *(ZNIVSB)*
- ◆ “Worship at His footstool,” that is, the Ark, 7; *see Psalm 99:5 and 1 Chronicles 28:2.*
- ◆ “Arise, O LORD,” 8; *see Psalm 3:7 and Numbers 10:35.*
- ◆ “Your resting place,” 8; *see Numbers 10:36 and 2 Samuel 7:6.*
- ◆ “The ark of Your strength,” 8; *see Psalm 78:61.*
- ◆ “Clothed in righteousness,” 9; *see Job 29:14; Exodus 28; 39:1–31; Zechariah 3:4; and Malachi 3:3.*
- ◆ “Saints sing for joy,” 9, 16; *see Psalms 96:1–2; 97:1; 98:1; 100:1–2; Isaiah 61:3; and Ephesians 5:19.*

*Note: “Since the corresponding word in v. 16 is ‘salvation,’ the same word used by the author of Chronicles when quoting this verse (2 Chronicles 6:4), and since ‘righteousness’ and ‘salvation’ are often paralleled (40:10; 51:14; 71:15; 98:2; Isaiah 45:8; 46:13; 51:5–6 . . . ), the reference clearly is to God’s righteousness that effects the salvation of his people.” (NIVSB)*

- ◆ The coming of the Ark to Jerusalem; *see 2 Samuel 6:1–23; and 1 Chronicles 13:1–14; 15:25–16:3.*
- ◆ “Your Anointed,” 10; *see Psalm 2:2; “Anointed” is the same word as “Messiah” or “Christ.”* Here it refers to the descendant of David, God’s anointed king.
- ◆ God’s promise to David and his descendants, 11–12; *see Psalms 89:3, 4, 33; 110:4; 2 Samuel 7:1–7, 11–16; and 1 Chronicles 17:1–15.*
- ◆ “The LORD has chosen Zion,” 13; *see Psalm 48:1, 2; and Deuteronomy 12:5–14.*
- ◆ Zion and the Davidic kingship, 11–14; *see Psalm 78:68–72.*
- ◆ “His dwelling place,” 7, 13–14; *see Psalms 43:3; 46:4; 68:16; 76:2; 84:1; Deuteronomy 12:11; 1 Kings 8:13; 2 Chronicles 36:15; Ezra 6:12; Joel 3:17; and Acts 7:46.*
- ◆ Abundant provision from God, 15; *see Psalm 147:14.*
- ◆ “I will make the horn of David grow,” 17; *see Psalm 92:10 and 1 Samuel 2:10; Lamentations 2:3; Ezekiel 29:21; Daniel 7:24; Luke 1:69 (Note: Here, “horn” refers to David the king); and Revelation 17:12.*
- ◆ “A lamp for my Anointed,” 17; *see 1 Kings 11:36; 15:4; 2 Kings 8:9; and 2 Chronicles 21:7.*

### Its literary forms

- ◆ This is one of the songs of ascents, 120–134, perhaps used by pilgrims going up to Jerusalem for one of the great feasts.
- ◆ This is a prayer to God to remember the descendant of David who was sitting on the throne at the time of writing.
- ◆ Parts of this psalm (8–10) are recorded as David’s words in 2 Chronicles 6:41–42.

## God

### His greatness

- ◆ He is the Mighty One of Jacob, that is, the same mighty God who took care of Jacob all his days, 1, 5.
- ◆ This implies also that he is eternal.
- ◆ He is transcendent, dwelling on high as a king who rules the universe, 7.
- ◆ He is strong, 8.

- ◆ He has the power to establish kings and dynasties; he rules as Universal King, 11–12.
- ◆ He has all resources and is able to dispense them to whom he wills, 15.
- ◆ He has the power to save his people from all danger, 16.

### His goodness

- ◆ He chose to reveal his personal name, Yahweh [LORD], to his people Israel, 1, 5, 8, 13.
- ◆ He condescended to dwell among his people in the Tabernacle and then the Temple in Jerusalem, 5, 7, 8, 13–14.
- ◆ He cares for the poor, 15; *see Psalms 72:12–14; 82:3–4; 146:7–9; Exodus 23:6; Leviticus 19:10; 23:22; Deuteronomy 15:7, 11; Proverbs 14:31; 28:27; 31:20; Isaiah 58:6–12; Matthew 25:34–36 (referring to poor Christians, the “brethren” of Jesus); and James 2:14–24.*
- ◆ He instituted a priesthood to offer sacrifices so that a sinful people could draw near to him, 9.
- ◆ He is righteous, and requires all his people to be righteous likewise, 9.
- ◆ He chose David and his descendants to be kings in Israel, pointing toward a final King who would fulfill all the promises about an eternal reign with universal scope, 10.
- ◆ He keeps his promises, 11.
- ◆ He graciously made a covenant with Israel, to be their God, 12.
- ◆ He revealed his will and his ways to them in the Law of Moses, 12.
- ◆ He chose Zion as his earthly dwelling place, 13–14.
- ◆ He provides for the material needs of his trusting people, 15.
- ◆ He gives righteousness to his priests, 16.
- ◆ He gives joy to those who seek to be holy, 16, 18.
- ◆ He promised to be present with his Anointed and to make him prosper, 17.
- ◆ He shames all the enemies of his people, who are his enemies also, 18.

## Christ

His prefiguration: He fulfills many of God’s Old Testament promises.

- ◆ He sometimes denied himself sleep in order to pray to God, 4–5. *See Luke 6:12 and Matthew 26:36–46.*

- ◆ After his resurrection, he “arose” to heaven, his true resting place and the ultimate dwelling of God, 8. *See Acts 1:9–11; Ephesians 1:20–22; and 1 Peter 3:22.*
- ◆ He is the Anointed one of God, the Messiah, the descendant of David who came to save his people from their sins, 10. *See Matthew 1:1; 16:16; 27:64; Mark 1:1; and Romans 1:3–4.*
- ◆ He is the true descendant, “Son,” of David who will sit on his throne “forevermore,” 12. *See Matthew 1:16; Luke 1:32–33; and Revelation 5:13.*

## Salvation

### Its benefits

- ◆ In the New Testament, salvation includes being clothed in the righteousness of Christ for all believers, 9. *See 1 Corinthians 5:21 and Philippians 3:9.*
- ◆ In the New Testament, all believers in Christ are priests who have constant access to God, 9. *See Hebrews 4:14–16 and 1 Peter 2:9.*
- ◆ In the New Testament, all believers in Christ are considered holy, and are therefore called “saints,” 9. *See Ephesians 1:1.*
- ◆ In the New Testament, all believers can have abundant joy in the Lord, 9, 16. *See Galatians 5:22; Philippians 4:4; 1 Thessalonians 5:16; and 1 Peter 1:6–7.*

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ “Remind” God in prayer of the work of Jesus, the “son” of David, on our behalf, 1.
- ◆ Put God’s kingdom first in our lives, 4–5. *See Matthew 6:33.*
- ◆ Thank God for the blessings of salvation described above.
- ◆ Thank God for dwelling now among those who trust in Christ.
- ◆ Rejoice in the Lord always.
- ◆ Trust God to provide abundantly for all our needs.
- ◆ Believe that God will someday destroy all his enemies and that the reign of Christ will be manifest on earth.
- ◆ Preach this gospel to all peoples, near and far.

# Psalm 133

## Truth

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### Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ The importance of God's people to dwell together in harmony, 1–3; *see Genesis 13:8; John 17:20–23; Ephesians 4:1–6; Philippians 2:1–9; 4:2–3; Colossians 2:5; 3:12–15; and 1 Peter 3:8–9.*
- ◆ “Precious oil upon the head . . . Aaron,” 2; *see Exodus 30:22–33; 29:7.*
- ◆ “The dew of [Mount] Hermon,” 3; *see Psalm 42:6.*
- ◆ Mount Zion, 3; *see Psalm 133:13–14.*
- ◆ “The LORD commanded [bestows] His blessing,” 3; *see Psalms 128:5; 132:13–16; 134:3; Numbers 6:22–27; and 1 Peter 3:8–9.*
- ◆ “Life forevermore,” 3; that is, eternal life; *see John 3:16; 7:3.*

### Its literary forms

- ◆ This is one of the songs of ascents, 120–134, perhaps used by pilgrims going up to Jerusalem for one of the great feasts.
- ◆ “As God's people fill Jerusalem to celebrate the great festivals, this [psalm] reminds them that unity is good and pleasant. Their pilgrimage is not simply and individualistic act of piety but expresses solidarity with the larger body of God's people.” (*ZNIVSB*)

### God

His greatness: He is eternal, possessing eternal life, 3. *See John 5:26; 17:3; and 1 Timothy 6:16.*

### His goodness

- ◆ He chose Abraham and his descendants to be his special family, 1. *See Genesis 12:1–3.*

- ◆ He instituted a system of sacrifices and a priesthood – Aaron and his descendants – so that his people, though sinful, could draw near to him, 2. *See Exodus 28–29 and Leviticus 11.*
- ◆ He blesses his people in many ways; in the New Testament, these blessings are primarily spiritual; 3. *See Ephesians 1:3–14.*

## Christ

His prefiguration: He fulfills many of God's Old Testament promises.

- ◆ He is typified by Aaron the high priest, though he is not descended from Aaron, 2 *See Hebrews 4:14–5:11; 7:1–8:6.*
- ◆ As our new and Great High Priest, he earnestly prayed for unity among his followers. *See John 17:20–23.*
- ◆ As our risen Lord and brother, he unites all his followers into a new family of spiritual brothers and sisters. *See John 17:20–24; 10:17; and Ephesians 2:13–16.*

## Salvation

Its benefits

- ◆ True believers in Christ are united with other believers in an eternal family of God, 1–3. *See Scriptures cited above.*
- ◆ Believers in Christ are richly blessed in every way by God, 3. *See Ephesians 1:3–14.*

## Life

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Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Do all we can to maintain the unity given by the Spirit by the bond of love.
- ◆ Seek communion with our Risen Head, Jesus Christ, who unites us with other believers. *See Ephesians 2:21–22; 4:15–16; and Colossians 2:19.*
- ◆ Thank God for giving us a Great High Priest, who has gained access to God's presence for us and who prays constantly for us.

# Psalm 134

## Truth

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### Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ “Bless the LORD,” 1; *see Psalms 34:1; 103:1–2, 20–22.*
- ◆ “Servants of the LORD,” 1; *see Psalms 34:22; 90:16; 113:1; Leviticus 25:42, 55; Deuteronomy 9:27; 32:36; Nehemiah 1:6, 10, 11; and 2 Corinthians 6:4.*
- ◆ “Lift up your hands in the sanctuary,” 2; *see 1 Timothy 2:8.*
- ◆ “The house of the LORD, . . . the sanctuary,” 1–2; *see Psalms 23:6; 27:4–6; 61:4; 84:1–10; 135:2, 21.*

Its literary forms: This is the last of the songs of ascents, 120–134, perhaps used by pilgrims going up to Jerusalem for one of the great feasts.

### God

His greatness: He “made heaven and earth,” 3; he is eternal and omnipotent. *See Genesis 1:1.*

His goodness

- ◆ He condescended to dwell among his people Israel, 1–2. *See Psalms 43:3; 46:4; 68:16; 76:2; 84:1; Deuteronomy 12:11; 1 Kings 8:13; 2 Chronicles 36:15; Ezra 6:12; Joel 3:17; and Acts 7:46.*
- ◆ He blesses his people in many ways, 5; in the New Testament, these blessings are mainly spiritual. *See Psalms 3:8; 5:12; 133:3; and Ephesians 1:3–14.*

### Christ

His prefiguration: He fulfills many of God’s Old Testament promises.

- ◆ He is the true and final temple, the dwelling place of God, 1–2. *See John 2:21; and Colossians 1:19; 2:9.*

### Salvation

Its benefits

- ◆ The right and ability to worship God, 1–2; *see John 4:23–24*.
- ◆ The right to draw near to God with other believers in Christ, 1; *see Ephesians 2:18 and Hebrews 10:22*.

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Bless and praise God at all times, 1–2. *See Psalm 34:1; Ephesians 5:19–20; and 1 Thessalonians 5:18*.
- ◆ See ourselves as servants of God, 1. *See Colossians 3:23–24*.
- ◆ Seek God for opportunities to worship him along with other believers, 1–2. *See Acts 2:42, 46–47; and Hebrews 10:25*.

# Psalm 135

## Truth

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### Revelation

General revelation: The created order manifests God's greatness, 6–7.

Special revelation

- ◆ It was given to chosen recipients to allow them to understand God's dealings with his people, demonstrating his greatness and goodness, 8–12.
- ◆ As revealed to his people, the revelation of God's name and his fame will endure forever, 13.
- ◆ All other religions are worthless, since they construct man-made "gods" who are utterly incapable of doing anything, 15–18.

### God

His greatness

- ◆ He is fundamentally and completely "great" in every way, 5.
- ◆ He is above all so-called "gods"—all idols, 5.
- ◆ He is absolutely and totally sovereign, able to do whatever he wills in heaven and on earth, 6.
- ◆ He manifests his powers in the weather, 7, and in the affairs of men and nations, 8–12.
- ◆ He destroys mighty kings and empires, 9–10.
- ◆ He owns the earth and can give lands to whomever he pleases, 12.
- ◆ He is eternal, 13.
- ◆ He has authority and power to judge and to vindicate, 14.
- ◆ He is personal and has a name, Yahweh, 13.

His goodness

- ◆ Although he is transcendent, he chose to dwell among his people Israel, especially in his house in Jerusalem, 2, 21.
- ◆ He is fundamentally and fully good, 3.
- ◆ He is pleasant and lovely, 3.
- ◆ He chose Israel to be his special people, 4.

- ◆ He delivered Israel from bondage to slavery in Egypt, 8.
- ◆ He gave the land of Canaan to Israel, 12.
- ◆ He kept his promise to Abraham that he would give the land to his descendants, 12.
- ◆ He is filled with compassion toward those who serve him, 14.
- ◆ He will eventually vindicate his people and punish his enemies, 14.

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Praise the Lord always for his greatness and his goodness toward us.
- ◆ See ourselves as servants of God, 1.
- ◆ Assemble with other believers to worship God, 2.
- ◆ Avoid all idolatry, that is, the belief in, reliance upon, and service of man-made “gods,” whether these are physical idols or idols of the heart.
- ◆ Urge others to praise God, 19–21.
- ◆ Fear him, 20.

# Psalm 136

## Truth

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### Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ This psalm provides several examples.
  - Multiple references to Creation; *see Genesis 1-2*.
  - References to God's actions on behalf of his people that have been recorded in earlier narratives, especially the Pentateuch, 1-22, and other historical books, 23-25

Its roots in history: Biblical revelation is rooted in historical events, from God's creation of the world, 5-9, to his acts in history on behalf of his people, 10-22.

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is God of "gods" and Lord of lords, utterly unique and sovereign over all other real or imagined authorities in the world, 2-3.
- ◆ He is eternal (as stated in every verse of this psalm), all-powerful, all-wise, omnipresent, the author of life and of all information, and a doer of "great things" – as Creator of the universe, 4-9, and as Redeemer of his people and providential ruler of the world of men, 10-25.
- ◆ He is unique, the only one who can do great things, 4.
- ◆ He is a God of order, who rules time with regularity, 8-9.
- ◆ He exercises total sovereignty over pagan nations and their history, 11, 15, 17-20.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He provides for his people, even in the wilderness, 16, and even for "all flesh," 25.
- ◆ He allows his people to suffer all sorts of trials and troubles, such as the ones Israel suffered in Egypt and in the wilderness, 10, 16, and to encounter huge obstacles and enemies, like powerful pagan kings, 19-20.

- ◆ However, he is full of lovingkindness [mercy, covenant love], as every verse in this psalm states.
- ◆ He keeps his covenant promises, like his promise to Abraham to deliver his descendants from Egypt and to give them the Promised Land, 10-15, 21.
- ◆ He will punish the oppressors and enemies of his people, 10, 15, 17-19, 24.

## Christ

His prefiguration: He is seen here in the title “Lord of lords,” applied to Christ in Revelation 17:14 and 19:16.

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Praise God constantly for his greatness.
- ◆ Give thanks to him always for his goodness to his people in history and to us.
- ◆ Read the entire Bible to see how God has dealt with his people in previous times so that we can trust him in our own time.
- ◆ Expect to meet with trials and troubles in this world. *See John 16:33; 2 Timothy 3:12; and 1 Peter 4:12.*
- ◆ Trust God to care for us, no matter how many hardships he allows us to endure.
- ◆ Urge other believers to praise and thank God also.

# Psalm 137

## Truth

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### Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ Rivers of Babylon, 1; *see Jeremiah 51:13 and Ezekiel 1:2, 3.*  
*Note: The Euphrates River ran through the ancient city of Babylon.*
- ◆ “Sat down and wept,” 1; *see Judges 20:6; 2 Samuel 12:21; and Jonah 3:6.*
- ◆ “We remembered Zion,” because Babylon had captured and razed it, 1; *see Jeremiah 39:1–10; 52:4–16; and Lamentations 1:1, 4, 7, 20.*
- ◆ Poplars [willows], 2; *see Job 40:22 and Isaiah 44:4.*
- ◆ “They have plundered us,” 3; *see Psalm 79:1.*
- ◆ “Songs of Zion,” 3; that previously celebrated its inviolability and joy; *see Psalms 46; 48:12–14; 76:2–3; 87:1–7.*
- ◆ “In a foreign land,” 4; in contrast to the Songs of ascent, which were sung by happy pilgrims on the way to Jerusalem.
- ◆ “Let my tongue cling to the roof of my mouth,” 6; *see Psalm 22:15.*
- ◆ “Forget,” 5; this is a covenantal term; *see Psalm 115:12.*
- ◆ The mockery of Edomites when Jerusalem was taken, 7; God promised to repay the Edomites for this; *see Jeremiah 49:7–22; Ezekiel 35:15; and Obadiah 10–14.*
- ◆ “Babylon, who are to be destroyed,” 8; *see Isaiah 13:1–14:23; 21:1–9; 46:1–2; 47:1–15; and Jeremiah 50:1–51:64.*
- ◆ Malediction upon the enemies of God and of his people, 7–9; *see Psalms 5:9–10; 41:10; 169:22–28; 109:6–20; 139:19–22.*
- ◆ “Dashes your little ones,” 9; *see 2 Kings 8:12; Isaiah 13:16; and Hosea 13:16.*

### Its literary forms

- ◆ This is a psalm of lament, dedication to God, and malediction towards Edom and Babylon.
- ◆ It is the last in a group that starts with Psalm 120.

## God

### His greatness

- ◆ He sees everything and remembers everything, 7.
- ◆ Implicit in 7–9: he has the power to destroy nations.

### His goodness

- ◆ He chose Zion, that is, Jerusalem, as his special dwelling place on earth, 3, 5, 7; he condescended to dwell among his people Israel, 1–2. *See Psalms 43:3; 46:4; 68:16; 76:2; 84:1; Deuteronomy 12:11; 1 Kings 8:13; 2 Chronicles 36:15; Ezra 6:12; Joel 3:17; and Acts 7:46.*
- ◆ He gives songs of joy to his people, 4. *See Psalms 40:3; 147:1, 7; Ephesians 5:18; and Colossians 3:16.*
- ◆ He will punish all the unrepentant wicked who oppress his people; see notes above.

## Christ

His prefiguration: He fulfills many of God's Old Testament promises and types.

- ◆ He pronounced woes upon the religious leaders of Jerusalem and upon the city itself for its rejection of his messengers. *See Matthew 23:1–39.*
- ◆ He himself took God's righteous wrath and his curse upon himself, so that we might be blessed. *See 2 Corinthians 5:21 and Galatians 3:13.*

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Make God's people and his kingdom our chief joy, 6. *See Matthew 6:33.*
- ◆ Sing songs of joy when we are happy, and songs of lament when we are sad. *See this psalm and others like it, as well as Ephesians 5:18; Colossians 3:16; and James 5:15.*
- ◆ Rejoice in the coming destruction of the great Babylon, the whole world system that exalts itself against God. *See Revelation 17:1–19:10.*
- ◆ Thank God for sending Jesus to take our sins upon himself so that we would not be cursed and punished by God.
- ◆ Bless those who curse us and do good to those who persecute us, as Jesus commanded. *See Matthew 5:43–48.*

# Psalm 138

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Biblical revelation

- ◆ God magnifies his word—his spoken and revealed word—above the heavens, that is, his word surpasses all creation, for it inheres in and proceeds from the Creator, 2. *See John 1:1–3.*
- ◆ His verbal revelation creates faith and worship in people of all nations, 4.

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He dwells above the heavens and is ruler of all “gods” – that is, angels, human rulers, or the so-called “gods” of the heathen, 1.
- ◆ He is holy and dwelt in a “holy” temple in Jerusalem, 2.
- ◆ He is glorious, uniquely majestic, “heavy,” and beautiful, and his glory is “great,” that is, magnificent beyond all description, 5.
- ◆ He is transcendent, dwelling “on high,” 6.
- ◆ He is omnipresent, 6.
- ◆ He is omniscient, knowing the hearts of men, 6.
- ◆ He can save from enemies, 7.
- ◆ He is eternal, 8.
- ◆ He created all things, including mankind, 8.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He is full of lovingkindness [mercy] and truth [faithfulness], 2.
- ◆ He is personal, speaking words and having a name, 2.
- ◆ He condescends to live among his people, 2, 6. *See Psalms 43:3; 46:4; 68:16; 76:2; 84:1; Deuteronomy 12:11; 1 Kings 8:13; 2 Chronicles 36:15; Ezra 6:12; Joel 3:17; and Acts 7:46.*
- ◆ He hears and answers prayer, 3.
- ◆ He honors humility and rejects the proud, 6.

- ◆ He gives new life and protection to his people, even though he allows them to walk into trouble, 7.
- ◆ He completes all that concerns us, 8.

## Christ

### His prefiguration

- ◆ As the one who praised God among the angels, 1
- ◆ As the great God who dwelt among the lowly, becoming the man Jesus, 2, 6; *see John 1:14.*
- ◆ As the innocent man who walked amidst vicious and proud enemies, and who was saved by God's power, 7

## Salvation

### Its substance

- ◆ A re-orientation toward God, expressed in praise, 1-2
- ◆ Answered prayer, 3
- ◆ Acceptance by God, 7
- ◆ Deliverance from danger and spiritual enemies, 7
- ◆ Completion of God's purposes in our life, 8

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Constantly praise God for his character—including his grace and truth—and his perfections.
- ◆ Call out to God when we encounter trouble.
- ◆ Take the gospel to the ends of the earth so that all peoples and their rulers might know and worship God.
- ◆ Thank God for answering prayer.
- ◆ Ask God to give us humility before him and others.

# Psalm 139

## Truth

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### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He knows everything, including our inner thoughts and our outer actions, 1-4, 15-16.
- ◆ He is omnipresent – present everywhere – by his Spirit, 7-12.
- ◆ He is light – light that overcomes the darkness, 12.
- ◆ He is almighty, the Creator of everything, including each individual person, 13-14.
- ◆ He is the ruler of all time and events, including the days of our lives, 16.
- ◆ He is unfathomably wise and intelligent, 17-18.
- ◆ He is eternal, the leader and possessor of the everlasting way, 24.
- ◆ He exists as Triune God – Father, Son, and Spirit, 7.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He attends carefully and minutely to each individual, 1-4.
- ◆ He takes care of his people, 5.
- ◆ He is with us wherever and whenever we are, 7-12, 18.
- ◆ He made each person as a marvelous creature, 13-15.
- ◆ He plans out our lives, down to each day, 16.
- ◆ His thoughts toward us are good, 17-18.
- ◆ He will lead us in the way everlasting, that is, he will give us eternal life, 24.
- ◆ He is holy and righteous; therefore, he is utterly opposed to all evil, 19-22.
- ◆ He will expose and purge our inner faults, 23.

### Christ

#### His prefiguration

- ◆ As the one who is present with us, even to the ends of the earth, 7-10; *see Matthew 28:18, 20.*
- ◆ As the one who ascended into heaven, 8; *see Acts 1:9-11.*
- ◆ As the one who went down into the depths of hell for us, 8

- ◆ As the light, 12; *see John 8:12.*
- ◆ As the Way to eternal life, 24; *see John 14:6.*

## Mankind

Our fallen state: We flee from the all-knowing examination of our hearts by God, and from God himself, even preferring the darkness in order to hide from him, 7-11. *See John 3:19-20.*

## Sin

### It includes

- ◆ Fleeing from God in order to escape his searching gaze, 7-12
- ◆ Love of violence and murder, 19
- ◆ Speaking against God, 20
- ◆ Taking God's name in vain, 20
- ◆ Hating God, 21
- ◆ Rising up in rebellion against God, 21

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Realize that God knows us and cares for us, no matter where we are or what we do, say, or think.
- ◆ Realize that God made us and has planned out our days for us and praise him for this.
- ◆ Realize that human life begins at conception, and do not take the life of an unborn child unless the life of the mother is at stake.
- ◆ Praise and thank God for his meticulous knowledge and care for us.
- ◆ Realize that God is always with us and take comfort in that reality.
- ◆ Hate wickedness as fully as God does.
- ◆ Invite God's examination of our inmost heart and his purging of our sins.
- ◆ Ask God to lead us in the way that leads to everlasting life, that is, to lead us in the footsteps of Jesus, who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

# Psalm 140

## Truth

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### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He rules over the actions even of wicked men and angels, 1, 4, 8.
- ◆ He can hear prayer, 6.
- ◆ He is God, 6.
- ◆ He is strong and mighty to save, 7.
- ◆ He dwells in a place far “above” this world, 13.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He is Yahweh, the covenant God of Israel, 1, 4, 6, 8, 12.
- ◆ He will hear our prayers, 6.
- ◆ He is the ever-present God of his people, even of individuals, 6.
- ◆ He is the Savior, 7.
- ◆ He protects his people amid battles, both physical and spiritual, 7. *See Ephesians 6:14-17.*
- ◆ He maintains, that is, justifies and vindicates, the cause of the afflicted and needy poor, 12.
- ◆ He frustrates the plans of the wicked, 8.
- ◆ He will reward the consistently righteous with eternal dwelling in his presence, 13.

### Christ

#### His prefiguration

- ◆ He is seen as the innocent sufferer.
- ◆ He was assailed by wicked men who plotted his destruction, by the Evil One [*ho poneros*], that is, the devil, and by proud Pharisees who considered themselves morally superior to him and prepared traps against him, 1-5.
- ◆ He alone – as the only righteous man and as the Son of God – had the right to pronounce judgment on evil men, 9-11.
- ◆ Throughout his career and especially at his trial, he was slandered by evil men and by the devil (whose name means “slanderer”), 11.

- ◆ As righteous, he was vindicated by the resurrection, 13.
- ◆ He dwells forever in the presence – and at the right hand – of the Father, 13.

## Sin

### It includes

- ◆ Fundamental evil in the heart, 1
- ◆ Violence toward the innocent, 2, 4
- ◆ Plotting evil things, singly and together with others, 2, 4
- ◆ Using the tongue to poison the reputation of others and to slander them, 3
- ◆ Pride, 5
- ◆ Setting traps for others, 5

## The Last Things

### The final judgment

- ◆ Satan and all the unrepentant wicked will be cast into hell, where they will be tormented forever with fire and brimstone, 10. *See Matthew 3:10, 12; 5:22, 29–30; 10:28; 13:40, 42, 50; 18:8–9; 25:41; 2 Peter 2:4; and Revelation 14:10; 19:20; 20:10, 14–15; 21:8.*
- ◆ The righteous by faith, who have followed Christ through persecution, will rise from the dead and dwell in God's presence forever, 13. *See Revelation 7:9–17; 22:1–5.*

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Expect trouble in this life, for Satan, the evil one, constantly seeks to harm us.
- ◆ Expect opposition and even murderous slander, plotting, and persecution from wicked men and women.
- ◆ Cry out to God for help when we are in distress.
- ◆ Remember the sufferings of Jesus, who endured terrible things in order to save us from our sins.
- ◆ Take comfort in the fact that the unrepentant wicked will be punished in hell by God.

- ◆ Be comforted by the knowledge that the righteous by faith who follow in the footsteps of Jesus will be raised from the dead and dwell in God's presence forever.
- ◆ Give thanks to God constantly for his greatness and his goodness toward us, both now and forever.

# Psalm 141

## Truth

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### Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ This psalm provides several examples.
  - David's comparison of his prayers to the incense and offerings presented to God morning and evening in the tabernacle, 2; *see Exodus 30:1, 7-8 and Revelation 8:3-4.*
  - His welcome of friendly rebuke, comparing it to refreshing oil upon the head, 5; *see Psalm 23:5. See also Solomon's advice, Proverbs 27:5-6, and often elsewhere in Proverbs.*
  - The plots of wicked men being likened to snares, 9; *see Psalm 140:5.*
  - The wicked who fall into their own nets, 10; *see Psalm 35:8.*

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is omnipresent, omniscient, and omnipotent, so he can hear his people's prayers, know their hearts, and protect and deliver them, 1-4, 8-9.
- ◆ He has power to overthrow evil rulers and magistrates, 6, 10.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He is Yahweh, the covenant God of his people, and therefore hears the prayers of his godly people and hastens to help them, 1-2.
- ◆ He keeps them from evil when they ask for his help, 3-4, 6.
- ◆ He is the saving refuge of his people, 8.
- ◆ He punishes the wicked in his own time and manner, 6-7, 10.

### Christ

His prefiguration: He is the innocent person who is persecuted by wicked men plotting his destruction, but who cries out to God for help and is heard. Such passages give us insight into the emotional life of Jesus Christ on earth.

## Sin

### It includes

- ◆ Unrighteous and untrue words, 3
- ◆ Evil inclinations and deeds, 4
- ◆ Enjoying the fruits of sin, 4
- ◆ Misusing authority, 6
- ◆ Setting traps for innocent people, 9

## The Last Things

The final judgment: When Christ returns, the unrepentant evil will be cast into the pit of hell, and the believing righteous will be saved, 10.

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Expect trouble in this world.
- ◆ Expect to be treated badly by bad people.
- ◆ Beware of temptations to sin, especially when they come from friends.
- ◆ Ask God to guard our hearts, lips, and hands from evil.
- ◆ Welcome friendly rebuke, as it is God's way of helping us to avoid sin and to become more like Christ.
- ◆ Pray against the deeds of the wicked and against the plots of Satan.
- ◆ Focus our attention on God when we are in trouble, 8.

# Psalm 142

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its roots in history

- ◆ Biblical revelation is rooted in historical events.
- ◆ This psalm was written by David when he was in a cave, trying to escape King Saul, who was pursuing him and seeking to kill him. *See 1 Samuel 22:1.*

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is omnipresent, so he can “hear” David’s prayer from the cave, 1.
- ◆ He is omniscient and knows the way David should go to escape danger, 3.
- ◆ He is alive and dwells in the land of the living, 5.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He is Yahweh, the covenant God of Israel, 1.
- ◆ He, unlike everyone else, cares for David, 4–5.
- ◆ He is David’s refuge in a time of danger, 5.
- ◆ He is David’s portion, that is, David’s inheritance—all that he “possesses” as a wanderer and fugitive, 5.
- ◆ He attends to the prayers of his people, 6.
- ◆ Though he allows his chosen ones to suffer persecution, he will deliver them, 6.
- ◆ He deals bountifully with those who trust in him, 7.

### Christ

His prefiguration: He is seen here, and often in the psalms, as the descendant of David, who suffered innocently while on earth but whom God delivered by raising him from the dead.

- ◆ Christ’s “spirit was overwhelmed” within him, 3.
- ◆ Others secretly set traps for him, 3.
- ◆ In the Garden of Gethsemane, no one acknowledged him, for they all fled. Even Peter later denied him, 4.
- ◆ He was “brought very low,” 6.

- ◆ He is now surrounded by the souls of the righteous who believed in him and have died, 7.
- ◆ He will later be surrounded by millions of resurrected people who were counted righteous by faith, for God did indeed deal bountifully with him, 7.

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Expect to encounter great suffering in this life and to be brought “very low” in spirit.
- ◆ Expect to be persecuted for the sake of righteousness and for Christ’s sake.
- ◆ Cry out to God at any time, knowing that he will hear us.
- ◆ Make God our refuge and our “portion,” that is, our most precious “possession.”
- ◆ Look to him to be our only true friend when others don’t understand or care about us.
- ◆ Praise him when he does deliver us from trouble.
- ◆ Expect him to “deal bountifully” with us, whether he allows us to suffer or to prosper in this life.
- ◆ Expect him to give us an overwhelming abundance of happiness in the life to come.

# Psalm 143

## Truth

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### Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ Here, David uses words, phrases, and themes that he had employed in earlier psalms.
  - No one is righteous before God, 2. *See Psalm 130:3.*
  - “My spirit is overwhelmed,” 4. *See Psalm 77:3.*
  - “I remember the days of old,” 5. *See Psalm 77:5.*
  - “My soul longs for you like a thirsty land,” 6. *See Psalm 63:1.*
  - Help comes at dawn, 8. *See Psalm 46:5.*
  - “Cause me to know the way in which I should walk,” 8. *See Psalm 25:4, 8–9.*
  - Compare verse 10 with Psalm 25:4–5.

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is omniscient and omnipresent, so he can hear the prayers of his people, 1–12.
- ◆ He does great works, 5.
- ◆ He can deliver, 9.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He is Yahweh, the covenant God of Israel, 1.
- ◆ He is faithful, 1.
- ◆ He is righteous, 1, 11.
- ◆ He is a Judge who will forgive his penitent people, 2.
- ◆ He is full of lovingkindness, 8.
- ◆ He is the one who guides us, 8.
- ◆ He delivers us from our enemies, 9.
- ◆ He is good, 10.
- ◆ He is concerned for his reputation and therefore willing to save his people, 11.

- ◆ He is full of mercy, 12.
- ◆ He is a righteous judge who will destroy those who harm his people, 12.

## Christ

His prefiguration: He is seen here again as the Son of David who suffered innocently at the hands of wicked men so much that his soul was “troubled,” 4. *See John 12:27, where the same word is used as the one used here in the Greek Old Testament.*

## The Holy Spirit

His person: He is referred to by name and is good, 10.

## Mankind

Our fallen state: Not one of us is righteous in the eyes of God. (This includes Mary and the “saints.”)

## Salvation

Its substance

- ◆ Answered prayer, 1 (and throughout)
- ◆ Not being condemned for our sins when we repent, 2; *see Romans 8:1.*
- ◆ “Hearing” and sensing God’s love toward us amid trouble, 8
- ◆ Guidance in right conduct, 8, 10
- ◆ Deliverance from spiritual enemies and sometimes also from physical danger and enemies, 9
- ◆ Renewal of spiritual vitality and sometimes of physical life, and, in the end, resurrection from the dead, 11
- ◆ Destruction of unrepentant enemies, including Satan and persecutors, 12

## The Last Things

Christ’s return: God will deliver his people from death and destroy all the unrepentant wicked when Christ returns, 2, 7, 9, 11–12.

# Life

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Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Expect great trouble in this life, even to the point of deep spiritual and emotional distress.
- ◆ Cry out to God when we are in trouble.
- ◆ Acknowledge our sinfulness before God.
- ◆ Ask for forgiveness of sins.
- ◆ Remember the great works of salvation which God has done in the past, as recorded in the Bible and church history and as seen in our own lives.
- ◆ Look forward to the return of Christ, when he will vindicate the righteous by faith who have followed him faithfully, and when he will destroy all the unrepentant wicked.

# Psalm 144

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its cumulative fullness

- ◆ Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.
- ◆ This psalm, one of eight by David in this part of the Psalter (138–45), draws heavily upon two other psalms.
  - Compare verses 1–2 with Psalm 18:2, 39.
  - Compare verses 3–4 with Psalm 8:4. *See also Hebrews 2:6, where the description from verse 3 is applied to Christ.*
  - Compare verses 5–7 with Psalm 18:7–17.

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is strong and immovable, 1, 2.
- ◆ He is wise and skillful in warfare, 1.
- ◆ He can deliver his people from powerful foes, protect them from danger, and subdue their enemies, 2.
- ◆ He causes mountains to smoke with fire, that is, he creates volcanoes, 5.
- ◆ He is transcendent, dwelling above the heavens, 5.
- ◆ He sends lightning, 6.
- ◆ He rules over the tumultuous seas and all on earth that causes chaos, 7.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He chose Israel, and now all who are in Christ, to be his blessed people, 15.
- ◆ He serves as a refuge for his people, 1–2.
- ◆ He trains his servants for physical (in the Old Testament) and spiritual (in the New Testament) warfare, 1. *See Ephesians 6:10–18.*
- ◆ He is full of faithful covenant love, 2.
- ◆ He delivers his people, 2, 10.
- ◆ He enables them to overcome their foes, 2, 10.
- ◆ He cares for humans, though we are small and transient, 3–4.

- ◆ He delivers his people, 7.
- ◆ He brings peace and prosperity, 12-14.

## Christ

### His prefiguration

- ◆ As the descendant of David, the chosen King of Israel, whom God delivered from foreign foes (King Herod and Pontius Pilate) by raising him from the dead; *see Acts 2:22-24; 3:14-15; 4:10, 27-29.*
- ◆ As the “Son of man,” who, after defeating Satan by undergoing the death we deserve, exercises dominion over all things, 3; *see Hebrews 2:5-9.*

## Mankind

Our created nature: We are created in the image of God and designed for dominion over the earth, 3.

Our fallen state: We are weak, frail, transitory, and destined for death, 4.

## Sin

It includes: It includes lying and deceitfulness, especially swearing an oath with intent to deceive, 7-8.

## Salvation

### Its substance

- ◆ In the Old Testament
  - Deliverance from Israel’s enemies, 1-11
  - Peace and prosperity, 12-14
- ◆ In New Testament times and beyond
  - Spiritual victory now over sin and Satan
  - Final victory one day over death for all followers of Christ
  - Eternal life on a renewed earth, where peace and prosperity will dwell with righteousness

# Life

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## Ethical imperatives

- ◆ In this life, expect to wage spiritual warfare against our sins, the temptations of Satan, and the lies and persecution of “foreigners” – that is, those alienated from God’s Kingdom.
- ◆ Call upon God to help us wage spiritual warfare. *See Ephesians 6:10-20.*
- ◆ Call upon God to deliver us from all who would harm us in any way, physically or spiritually.
- ◆ Trust not only his ability, but also his will, to save us.
- ◆ Praise God constantly.
- ◆ Look to God alone for peace and prosperity.
- ◆ Do not expect full peace and prosperity in this life but look to the coming of the new heaven and new earth.

# Psalm 145

## Truth

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### Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ Here, the most outstanding instance is the repetition of the self-description which Yahweh had given to Moses on Mt. Sinai: “The LORD is gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger and great in mercy [Hebrew *chesed*, steadfast love],” 8. *See variations of affirmation by David in Psalms 86:15; 103:8. See also Exodus 34:6; Nehemiah 9:17; and Joel 2:13.*
- ◆ The psalm also refers to themes that appear often throughout the Bible.
  - God as King, 1
  - Praising God, 1–2 (and often)
  - God’s mighty acts (especially in Creation and Salvation, and particularly at the Exodus), 4–5
  - God’s glory and splendor, 5
  - God’s moral attributes; *see “God,” below.*
  - God’s creation of the world, 9
  - God’s promises, 13

Its literary form: This psalm is an acrostic poem, with each line in Hebrew beginning with the successive letter of the alphabet. Between a two-line introduction and a one-line conclusion, there are four stanzas, each developing a theme (*NIVSB*).

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is God, Elohim, 1.
- ◆ All the universe is a kingdom, and he is the King, 1, 11–12.
- ◆ He is eternal and receives eternal praise, 1, 2, 13, 21.
- ◆ He is great in general, 3.
- ◆ He is infinitely great, 3.
- ◆ He is a worker of mighty acts, especially Creation and Redemption, 4–6, 12.
- ◆ He is splendid and majestic in his awesome glory and beauty, 5, 11.

- ◆ He is powerful—indeed, omnipotent, 11.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He is greatly good, 7–8.
- ◆ He is righteous, 7, 17.
- ◆ He is gracious, 8, 17.
- ◆ He is compassionate and tenderly merciful, 8–9.
- ◆ He is slow to anger, 8.
- ◆ He is abounding in steadfast love and mercy, 8.
- ◆ He upholds all who fall and raises up all who are bowed down, 14.
- ◆ He provides for the needs of those who look to him in faith, 15–16.
- ◆ He hears prayer, 18.
- ◆ He is near to all who call upon him, 19.
- ◆ He saves his believing people, 19.
- ◆ He preserves and protects those who love him, 20.
- ◆ He destroys the unrepentant wicked, 20.

### Christ

His prefiguration: Christ is implicitly present in every statement about God in this psalm, including those that refer to him as King, for the New Testament reveals him as such. *See Matthew 2:2; 21:5; 27:37; Luke 19:38; John 1:49; 12:15; 18:36–37; and Hebrews 7:2.*

### Salvation

#### Its substance

- ◆ Freedom to praise God, 1 (and often)
- ◆ Eternal life, 1, 21
- ◆ Knowledge of God in all his greatness and goodness, 8–9
- ◆ God’s compassion, forgiveness of our sins, and tender care, 8–9
- ◆ God’s constant upholding and preserving, 14, 20
- ◆ God’s provision for all our needs, both spiritual and physical, 15
- ◆ True satisfaction, 16, 19
- ◆ The nearness of God when we call upon him, 18

# Life

---

## Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Praise God always for his greatness and goodness.
- ◆ Tell the next generation about God and his marvelous deeds of Creation, preservation, and Salvation.
- ◆ Call upon God in times of trouble and do so in sincerity and truth.
- ◆ Fear God – that is, hold him in holy awe and reverence.
- ◆ Love God.

# Psalm 146

## Truth

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### Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ This psalm draws together many strands and themes of biblical history.
  - The Gospel narratives of the life of Christ; *see "Christ," below.*
  - The need to praise God as long as we live, 2; *see Psalm 104:33.*
  - The warning not to trust in princes, 3; *see Psalms 62:9; 118:8-9.*
  - The brevity of human life, 4; *see Ecclesiastes 12:7.*
  - The happiness of the one who trusts [hopes] in God, 5; *see Jeremiah 17:7.*
  - God's creation of the heavens and the earth, 6; *see Genesis 1:1 and many other passages in the Old Testament.*
  - God's unending faithfulness to his promises, 6; *see Psalm 100:5.*
  - God's care for the oppressed and the needy, 7-9; *see the entire Old Testament.*
  - The coming punishment of the unrepentant wicked, 9; *see Psalms 1:4; 147:6.*

### Its structure

- ◆ Biblical revelation is marked by careful organization and literary structure.
- ◆ This psalm is the first of five "Hallelujah!" – that is, "Praise Yahweh!" – psalms that conclude the Psalter in a concentration of praise.
  - They follow Psalm 145, also a song of praise.
  - They place God at the center of our thoughts.
  - They emphasize that praising God is the chief duty and end of mankind.

### God

### His greatness

- ◆ He is omnipotent, and he made heaven and earth, 6.
- ◆ He rules over the affairs of men, 6-9.
- ◆ He is eternal and reigns forever as King, 10.

- ◆ He is Yahweh, the God of Israel, who dwelt in Zion, 10.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He helps his people, 5.
- ◆ He supplies our material needs, 7.
- ◆ He sets prisoners free, 7.
- ◆ He brings healing, 8.
- ◆ He cares for the marginalized and powerless, 9.
- ◆ He executes justice, 7, 9.
- ◆ He punishes the unrepentant wicked, 9.

### Christ

#### His prefiguration

- ◆ As a helpless, innocent, needy, and oppressed person who put his trust in God for help, since men could not help him, 5–8
- ◆ As the Messiah
  - He is the one who came to feed the hungry in the wilderness. *See Matthew 14:13–21; 15:32–39.*
  - He is the one who sets free those who are in bondage to demons and to sin, 7. *See Matthew 8:16, 33; Luke 4:18–19; and John 8.*
  - He is the one who opened the eyes of the blind, 8. *See Matthew 20:29–34 and John 9:1–12.*
  - He is the one who raised up those who were bowed down, 8. *See Luke 13:10–13.*
  - He is the one who relieved the sorrow of the widow, 9. *See Luke 7:11–17.*

### Salvation

#### Its substance

- ◆ Freedom to praise God, 1–2, 10
- ◆ Help in times of need, 5
- ◆ Vindication, 7
- ◆ Provision of our daily needs, 7
- ◆ Freedom to serve God, 7; *see Galatians 5:1.*
- ◆ Healing (sometimes), 8
- ◆ Spiritual insight, 8

- ◆ A sense of God's love for those who are justified by faith, 8
- ◆ God's presence when no one can help us, and we are lonely, 9

## The Last Things

### Christ's return

- ◆ He will bring full vindication for those who have trusted in him, 7.
- ◆ He will remove all oppression, 7.
- ◆ He will raise us from the dead, 8.
- ◆ He will punish the unrepentant wicked, 9.

## Life

---

### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Praise God always for his goodness and greatness.
- ◆ Do not trust in people to help us in times of need or to satisfy our desires.
- ◆ Put our hope in God alone for help in this life and for full happiness in the life to come.
- ◆ Trust God's promises, which he keeps forever, 6.
- ◆ Thank God for sending Jesus to be the promised Messiah.
- ◆ Read the Gospels with constant praise on our lips and in our hearts.
- ◆ Imitate Jesus by giving help to the needy and helpless.
- ◆ Do not fret when we see oppression, for God will one day eliminate all injustice from the earth and bring punishment to the oppressors.

# Psalm 147

## Truth

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### Revelation

General revelation: God reveals his greatness and his goodness to all in the created order, 4-5, 8-9, 15-18.

Special revelation: Biblical revelation is God's unique, authoritative, and final revelation to mankind of his ways and his will; no other nation has received the special revelation from God that came to Israel, 19-20.

### Its structure

- ◆ Biblical revelation is almost always couched in a careful literary structure.
- ◆ This psalm is divided into three stanzas: 1-6, 7-11, and 12-20.
- ◆ Verses 2-3 and 19-20 call special attention to God's unique care for his chosen people Israel (*NIVSB*).

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He rules the universe, including the stars, whom he knows and names, and the weather, which obeys his commands, 4, 8, 15-18.
- ◆ He is essentially great and mighty in power, 5.
- ◆ His understanding is infinite, 5.

#### His goodness

- ◆ Though he punished his people with exile in Babylon and dispersion among the nations, he enabled the Jews to build up Jerusalem after the Exile, gathering his scattered people back to their homeland and binding up the broken hearts of those who had been living in foreign lands, 2-3.
- ◆ He lifts up the humble and casts the wicked to the ground, 6.
- ◆ He provides for the material needs of man and beast, 8-9, 14.
- ◆ He cares for those who fear him and trust in his mercy, 11.

- ◆ He strengthened Israel and Jerusalem after the Exile, and he strengthens his people today, 13. *See also 2 Corinthians 12:9; Ephesians 6:10; and Colossians 1:11.*
- ◆ He blesses the children of his people and gives them peace, 13–14. *See also Philippians 4:6–7 and Colossians 3:15.*
- ◆ He declared his word, his will, and his ways to Israel, and through them to the rest of the world, 19–20.

## Christ

### His prefiguration

- ◆ He is indirectly foreshadowed in this psalm.
  - As the one who healed the brokenhearted, 3; *see Luke 4:18.*
  - As the one who was (and is) mighty in power, working many miracles, 5
  - As the one whose understanding of God and men was and is infinite, 5
  - As the one who exalted the humble and abased the proud, 6; *see also Luke 1:52; 18:14; and Ephesians 4:2.*
  - As the one who commanded the winds and the waves; *see Matthew 14:24–33.*
  - As the one who, with unique authority, declared God’s word to his people; *see Matthew 5–7.*
- ◆ He is also prefigured as the one who humbled himself and was then exalted by God. *See Philippians 2:1–10.*

## Life

---

### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Praise God always for his manifold greatness and goodness.
- ◆ Trust in God to help us, and do not trust in anything else (such as horse or human strength).
- ◆ Look to God to provide for all we need.
- ◆ Accept God’s discipline of us as coming from love and wait for him to restore us to his favor and blessing.
- ◆ Thank him for giving us access to his written revelation in the Bible.
- ◆ Proclaim his glory among the nations who do not yet know him.

# Psalm 148

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### General revelation

- ◆ God reveals himself through the created order, including through the hierarchy of being at all its levels.
  - Angels and heavenly bodies
  - Living creatures in the seas and on land
  - Weather
  - Topography of the land
  - Kings and their people
  - Men and women
- ◆ A created order does not mean that the people are of less value than the king, or that women are of less value than men; it means only that a hierarchy exists both in heaven and on earth.
- ◆ These were all created by the same Word of God that inspired the prophets and apostles, 5-6. *See Psalm 147:15, 19.*

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He rules above the heavens and over the earth, both of which are summoned to praise their King and Creator, 1-13.
- ◆ He created the world and all that is in it, merely by speaking a word of command, 5-6.
- ◆ He is uniquely exalted, 13.
- ◆ He is glorious, and his glory is greater than that of the earth or heavens.

#### His goodness

- ◆ He has revealed his name to Israel as Yahweh, 1, 7, 13.
- ◆ He created this world out of his own free will and super-abounding goodness, so that it might reflect his glory, 5-6.
- ◆ He established order in the world, so that people might live in peace, 11-12.
- ◆ He chose Israel as his special people and allowed them to draw near to him, 14.

- ◆ He exalted David and his successors as kings, 14.

## Christ

### His prefiguration

- ◆ As the creative Word through whom God brought into being the entire universe, 5-6; *see John 1:1-3 and Colossians 1:16.*
- ◆ As the “horn of his people” – that is, their ruler and strength, whom God exalted to heaven after raising him from the dead, and to whom God gave the name that alone is exalted above all other names, 14; *see Philippians 2:9-11.*

## Mankind

### Our created nature

- ◆ We are created in the image of God as man and woman, 12.
- ◆ We are the apex of creation, as seen in Genesis 1-2, for man and woman are created last, and of their making alone God says, “It was very good.”

## The People of God

### Their identity

- ◆ First Israel and now all believers in Christ are his people.
- ◆ As such, they are his saints – that is, those who have been consecrated and set apart for his possession, use, and glory – and his children, 14. *See Ephesians 1:1; 5:1; and 1 Peter 1:1-2, 17; 2:9-10.*
- ◆ In Christ, he has brought them eternally near to himself, 14. *See Ephesians 2:17.*

## Life

---

### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Praise God constantly for his greatness and goodness.
- ◆ Admire the created order, and see God’s beauty, wisdom, power, life, and love in it.
- ◆ Summon others to praise God always.
- ◆ Live for the glory of God and of his Christ more than for anything else, including our own names and fame.

# Psalm 149

## Truth

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### Revelation

#### Its cumulative fullness

- ◆ Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.
- ◆ This psalm alludes to various themes and ideas seen elsewhere in the Bible.
  - A call to praise, 1, 6; *see Psalms 145–50*.
  - The people rejoicing in God, who takes pleasure in them, 2, 4; *see Psalm 35:27*.
  - The notion that God is King, 2; *see Judges 8:23; Psalm 146:10; Zechariah 9:9; and often in the Old Testament*.
  - Singing, 5, which was instituted in the Temple by David and spoken of often in the psalms; *see Ephesians 5:18*.
  - The punishment of the wicked, 6–9
  - God’s people referred to as “saints,” 9; *see Psalms 16:3; 34:9; and Daniel 7:18, 21–22, 25, 27*.

#### Its piercing truths

- ◆ Biblical revelation is a two-edged sword in that it discerns the hearts and minds of men, 6. *See Ephesians 6:17 and Hebrews 4:12*.
- ◆ It is written down for all posterity to read, 9.
- ◆ It includes clear judgment upon the unrepentant wicked, 9.

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is the almighty and sovereign Creator and King of the world, 2.
- ◆ As Maker and King, he is also Judge of the world, 9.
- ◆ He is Yahweh, the faithful covenant God of his people, 1.
- ◆ He “made” Israel when he chose Abraham and his descendants to be his special people, especially when he brought them out of Egypt, 2.
- ◆ He is the special King of Israel, his people, and of all who now trust in Christ.

#### His goodness

- ◆ As King, he rules them with his Word and his Spirit, graciously guiding and guarding them and giving them all they need, 2.
- ◆ He takes pleasure in his people, even though they are sinners and totally unworthy to stand before him, 4.
- ◆ He saves them from physical and spiritual dangers, including Satan, sin, the lure of the world, death, and eternal condemnation, 4.
- ◆ In that process of salvation, which will culminate in the new heaven and new earth, he also beautifies his people, both physically and morally, 4.
- ◆ Through his people, especially through his Son Jesus, with whom his people are identified, he judges the unrepentant wicked, 6–9.

## Christ

### His prefiguration

- ◆ As the one in whom God supremely takes pleasure, 4; *see Matthew 3:17; 17:5.*
- ◆ As the one through whom God will judge the world with his word, which is like a two-edged sword, 6–9; *see Revelation 1:16; 2:12.*

## The People of God

### Their identity

- ◆ As “saints”
  - They have been set apart and consecrated for God’s use.
  - They are now, in Christ, considered positionally “holy” by God, who is in the process of making them practically holy, 1, 5. *See Acts 9:13, 21, 41; 26:10; Romans 1:7; 8:27; Ephesians 1:1; and often in the New Testament.*
  - They are those created and then recreated by him, 2. *See 2 Corinthians 5:17 and Ephesians 2:10.*
  - They are servants of the great King, 2.
  - They are humble, 4.
  - They have been saved and are being saved, 4.
- ◆ In the Old Testament: God’s people were limited to the Hebrews, especially those who trusted and followed God, and also to a few Gentiles who attached themselves to God’s people.
- ◆ In the New Testament: They now include all those who trust and follow Jesus Christ as Savior.

## Salvation

### Its substance

- ◆ In the Old Testament it came to the Jews as these benefits.
  - Freedom to worship God in the assembly of his people, 1
  - Being constituted as God's special creation and people and having him as their King, 2
  - An awareness of God's pleasure in them, 4
  - Salvation from physical enemies, 4
  - Great joy, 5
  - Victory in battle against the enemies of God, 6-9
- ◆ In the New Testament and beyond, faithful followers of Christ receive all these benefits in the spiritual realm.
  - Awareness of God's favor and love, 4
  - Salvation, 4
  - Gradual "beautification" as they are transformed into the image of Christ, who is the glory of God, 4; *see 2 Corinthians 3:18 and 1 John 3:2.*
  - Joy in worship, 5

## The Last Things

### The final judgment

- ◆ At the end of the age, God's people will join Christ in judging the world.
- ◆ This will conclude with the final and eternal punishment of the unrepentant wicked, 6-9. *See 1 Corinthians 6:2 and often in the New Testament.*

## Life

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### Ethical imperatives

- ◆ Rejoice in the Lord always.
- ◆ Join with God's people in worship with song.
- ◆ Seek humility, so that we might be saved.
- ◆ Read, mark, learn, inwardly digest, and employ the written Word of God in spiritual warfare against Satan, the world, and our own flesh.
- ◆ Find peace and comfort in the knowledge that one day God will judge the world, and that his people will be vindicated.

# Psalm 150

## Truth

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### Revelation

Its cumulative fullness: Biblical revelation is a consecutive, cumulative, and coherent whole, with later passages referring to and incorporating earlier ones.

- ◆ In this psalm, concepts like “sanctuary” and “mighty acts,” 1-2, must be understood in light of the revelation given to Moses in Exodus – first about the Tabernacle and later concerning the Temple – and of the entire Old Testament story of God’s mighty acts.

### God

#### His greatness

- ◆ He is transcendent, dwelling “above” us in the heavens, 1.
- ◆ He is outstandingly and beautifully great, and thus able to do “mighty acts,” 2.
  - Creation
  - The redemption of his people from Egypt
  - The acts of Jesus Christ
  - The resurrection of Jesus; *see Ephesians 1:19-22.*

#### His goodness

- ◆ He is Yahweh, the loving and faithful covenant God of his people, 1, 6.
- ◆ He dwells among his people, 1.
  - In the Old Testament, he dwelt in the Tabernacle and then in the Temple in Jerusalem.
  - In the New Testament, he dwelt in the incarnate Word of God, Jesus. *See John 1:14.*
  - Now, he dwells in the hearts of believers and in the Church; *see John 15:4-5, 7; 1 Corinthians 3:16; 6:19-20; and Ephesians 2:19-22.*

### Christ

His greatness: He, too, is great in every way, and did mighty acts while on earth.

- ◆ Healing

- ◆ Casting out demons
- ◆ Feeding large crowds
- ◆ Walking on water
- ◆ Stilling the storm
- ◆ Raising people from the dead
- ◆ Obeying God by going to the Cross for our salvation
- ◆ Rising victoriously from the grave
- ◆ Ascending to heaven
- ◆ Pouring out the Holy Spirit on those who trust in him

## Life

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Ethical imperatives: Let our entire lives and our entire beings resound with the praises of God, his goodness, and his greatness. *See Ephesians 1:6, 12, 14; 5:18-21.*