

The Poetry Books

(God's True Story)

Pre-Session Warm Up

Teacher, tell your students that we're going on a hunt for someone special, and their job is to find that someone. Have them read the descriptions on the following list:

Who ...

- Makes plants grow
- Heals people
- Loves us all the time
- Gives mercy and grace
- Is more powerful than anything or anyone
- Performs miracles
- Provides food for all creatures
- Made the sea
- Made the sky
- Created people
- Lives in heaven
- Created the world
- Gave us his Son

Have one of the children read aloud the descriptions on the list. Discuss who might fit that description; then write that person's name beside the description. Give the students a few minutes to read and discuss the descriptions. Then ask:

1. Can a human being fit these descriptions? Why not?

2. Is God the only one who can do all these things?
3. How does it feel to know that only God can do all these things?
4. Why do you think God is the only one worthy of our praise and worship?
5. In what ways can we worship God?

Lead the children in naming ways they could worship God such as praying and singing worship songs to the Lord.

God is mightier than anything or anyone and is the only one worthy of worship and praise. Today's lesson is going to give us some ideas on how we can praise and worship God in ways that are pleasing to Him.

Opening Prayer

Father, we thank You for being all that You are. You are more powerful than anything and wiser than anyone. We give You thanks for Your wondrous acts and for Your love. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Memory Verse

For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword,... and is a discerner of [can understand] the thoughts and intents of the heart. (Hebrews 4:12)

Lesson

For the past 3 weeks we've been taking a bird's eye look at the Bible. We discovered that it's not just one book written by one author. Who remembers how many books are in the Bible? (66) How many men wrote the Bible? (40) And, we learned that the authors didn't all live at the same time, so they couldn't get together to plan what they were going to write. Who remembers how many years it took for the whole Bible to be finished? (1,600 years) Yet every story in the Bible perfectly agrees with all the others! How is that possible? [Teacher, let the children respond.] Even though God used men to write the Bible, the words they wrote were not simply their own. They were the

thoughts and ideas of God. The inspiration for this book was given to men from God.

So far, we've learned about the first 17 books of the Bible. We divided those books into two groups: The Law and History. This week we're going to look at the books of Poetry. [Teacher, use the Bible Book poster to point out the groups of books: Law, History, Poetry, Prophets, Gospels, Acts (the history of the church), letters, and finally, the Revelation of Jesus Christ — the story of what will happen when He comes back at the end of the world.]

It's important for you to see the whole Bible as one book. It tells a single story — the story of God's wonderful plan to rescue you and me from Satan's clutches.

Who remembers what sorts of things are in the Law, the first 5 books of the Bible? (The Ten Commandments and other instructions from God.) Who remembers what sorts of things are in the next 12 books of the Bible, the History books? (The history of God's Chosen People, the Israelites.)

Next, we have the books of Poetry — Job through Song of Solomon.

Job

The first book in the Poetry group is Job. It is a story about a man named Job who was a rich man that loved God. All of a sudden, he lost everything — property, wealth, children, and health. But as we read the story of Job, we learn that God is always in control. Job's suffering wasn't a punishment. It was to show him how much he needed God. God doesn't have to explain why He allows us to go through trials. But if we listen to Him during hard times, He will teach us about Himself. Then we will see that we must simply trust Him to do what is best. God lovingly took Job through his suffering and taught him many lessons. Then God blessed Job with more than he had before.

Psalms

Next is the book of Psalms. A psalm is a poem set to music, like a song. The Book of Psalms was like a hymn book for the people of Israel. They sang these songs during their worship times.

King David wrote 73 of the Psalms. As a shepherd boy, David spent many hours in the fields with his sheep. David wrote poems and sang them to God as he played his harp. In his psalms he cried out to God, telling God just how he felt. He told God how much he loved Him and thanked God for all He had done.

Solomon, and other men also wrote some of the psalms. All these men expressed their feelings to God about everything: anger, fear, loneliness, sadness, and gladness. There is nothing we can't tell God.

The Book of Psalms can help you and me to know how to talk to God. And, it can inspire you to worship God during your own quiet times alone with Him.

[Teacher, if you know the songs derived from the following verses, sing them with your class.]

Psalm 3:3

But you, O LORD, are a shield around me; you are my glory, the one who holds my head high.

Psalm 5:1-3

O LORD, hear me as I pray; pay attention to my groaning. (2) Listen to my cry for help, my King and my God, for I pray to no one but you. (3) Listen to my voice in the morning, LORD. Each morning I bring my requests to you and wait expectantly.

Psalm 118:24

This is the day the LORD has made. We will rejoice and be glad in it.

Psalm 42:1

As the deer longs for streams of water, so I long for you, O God..

Proverbs

The next book in the Poetry group is Proverbs. A proverb is a little saying with a lot of meaning. There are over 900 proverbs in this book. They are little lessons from God that help us be wise and brave.

Proverbs 3:5-6

Trust in the LORD with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. (6) Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take.

Ecclesiastes

Next is the book of Ecclesiastes, written by Solomon, David's son. He was one of the wisest and richest men in the Bible. But in spite of his riches, he asked the question, "*Why am I here?*" All people want to find the way to a happy, meaningful life.

Solomon explored all the possibilities; he tried to find happiness in wisdom and knowledge, in money and things, in accomplishments and power. His conclusion at the end of his life?

Ecclesiastes 1:2-3

"Everything is meaningless," says the Teacher, "completely meaningless!" (3) "Everything is meaningless," says the Teacher, "completely meaningless!"

Here Solomon is saying, "*In my opinion, nothing is worthwhile; everything is hopeless or pointless.* For what does a man get for all his hard work?"

At the end of the book, Solomon tells us what the one thing is that gives meaning to life.

Ecclesiastes 12:13-14

That's the whole story. Here now is my final conclusion: Fear God and obey his commands, for this is everyone's duty. (14) God will judge us for everything we do, including every secret thing, whether good or bad.

Nothing in this world lasts except God and the things we do for Him. Only knowing God and serving Him can give real meaning to life.

Song of Solomon

The last book in the Poetry group is the Song of Solomon. It is the story of a husband's love for his bride. But it is more than a human love story. It helps us understand how Jesus, God the Son, feels about those who belong to Him because they have received Him as Savior. The Lord loves His own very much.

To Review the books of Poetry:

- **Job** helps us to see that we can trust God completely.
- **Psalms** helps us express our feelings to Him.
- **Proverbs** teaches us how to live.
- **Ecclesiastes** shows us there is nothing on earth more valuable than our relationship to God.
- **Song of Solomon** helps us realize that God loves us and takes joy in us.

The books of the Law and the books of History told us about the nation of Israel. They told us God cares about people. But the books of Poetry are given to us as examples of ways to tell God we care about Him. He wants you to talk to Him, to tell Him how you feel and what you are thinking. He wants you to live wisely. You are His beloved. Next week we will learn about the books of the Major Prophets.

Closing Prayer

Father, we do care about You. You are an awesome God — full of grace and mercy and love towards us. We want to learn to come into a quiet place, alone with You, so that we can express our feelings to You. We want to learn to talk to you about everything — times when we're afraid or lonely or sad, as well as times when we're excited about life! We praise You and thank You for giving us the books of Poetry that we can learn from. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Learning Activities

Books of the Old Testament Song

(To the tune of “Did You Ever See a Lassie?”)

Let us sing the books of Moses, of Moses, of Moses,

Let us sing the books of Moses, for he wrote the law.

*First, **Genesis**; second, **Exodus**; third, **Leviticus**; fourth, **Numbers**;*

*And the fifth is **Deuteronomy**, the last of them all.*

Let us sing the books of history, of history, of history,

Let us sing the books of history, which tell of the Jews.

*There's **Joshua**, and **Judges**, and the story of **Ruth**.*

*First and second **Samuel**; and two books of **Kings**;*

*There's two books of **Chronicles**, which give us the records;*

*Then **Ezra**; **Nehemiah**; and **Esther**, the Queen.*

Let us sing the books of poetry, of poetry, of poetry,

Let us sing the books of poetry, the songs of the Jews.

***Job** the patient, **Psalms** of David, and **Proverbs** of wise men;*

*And then, **Ecclesiastes**, and **Solomon's Song**.*

Game Center

Bible Book Scramble

Print on separate index cards the names of the books of the Bible learned so far. Scramble the cards in a pile, face up, so children can see the book names. Encourage children to use their Table of Contents. Let them come one at a time and place the cards in order. The first child finds Genesis and positions it on the floor, tapes it to the wall, or tacks it on a bulletin board. The second child finds and places Exodus after Genesis, and so on. Do this several times using the Table of Contents; then put Bibles away, and try to order the books from memory. Encourage each child to tell a little about his book.

Or, Use the following review questions in a game of your choice:

1. How many books are in the Bible? (66)
2. How many men wrote the 66 books of the Bible? (40)
3. Over how many years did it take to write the Bible? (1,600)
4. Whose ideas are written in the Bible and how did the authors get them? (The thoughts and ideas are God's. The men were inspired by the Holy Spirit to write them down.)
5. Why can you trust that what is written in the Bible is true? (God inspired it and He never changes His mind.)
6. What is the main theme of the Bible? (God's message of salvation; His plan of redemption.)

7. What sort of information is in the Law, the first 5 books of the Bible? (The Ten Commandments and other instructions from God.)
8. What sort of information is in the next 12 books of the Bible, the History books? (The history of God's Chosen People, the Israelites.)
9. What is the main theme of the book of Job? (Job helps us to see that we can trust God completely.)
10. What is the main purpose of the book of Psalms? (It helps us express our feelings to God.)
11. What is the main purpose of the book of Proverbs? (It teaches us how to live.)
12. What is the main purpose of the book of Ecclesiastes? (It shows us there is nothing on earth more valuable than our relationship to God.)
13. What is the main purpose of the book of Song of Solomon? (It helps us realize that God loves us and takes joy in us.)

