

Resource: Familiarization, Internalization, Articulation (Fia)

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Familiarization, Internalization, Articulation (Fia)

PSA

Psalms 1:1–6

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Psalm 1:1–6 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Psalm 1:1–6 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Psalm 1:1–6 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Pause this audio here.

NOTE: The Psalms are Hebrew poetry. We recommend that your team complete the "Introduction to Poetry Module 1" before continuing with "Step 2: Setting the Stage." Stop here, if needed, and review the translation decisions your team has made regarding the translation of poetry. Pause this audio here.

Scholars believe that Psalm 1 and Psalm 2 are an introduction to the Book of Psalms. Psalm 1 is a teaching or wisdom poem-song, or a poem that people sing. The poet gives spiritual teaching or practical advice through this psalm. There are themes in this psalm that poets will repeat in other psalms.

The poet wants people to know that people have a choice to make. They can follow Yahweh and his instructions, or they can ignore Yahweh and follow wicked people. The poet does this by contrasting the righteous person who follows Yahweh with people who are evil or wicked. Poets who create wisdom poems often use this topic. They show the differences between wisdom and foolishness and between doing things God's way and doing evil things.

The poet begins by saying "Blessed or happy is the man" or "Blessed is the one." Poets of wisdom-poems often use this phrase. In this context, the poet is saying that the person is fortunate and people should admire him. The poet says the reason for this person's happiness is that he does not behave like evil people, but he finds joy

when he follows the law or instructions of Yahweh. Later in the poem, the poet says that this happy person is righteous or in a good relationship with Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss: What do people in your culture think makes a person happy? What characteristics do people in your culture admire? Pause this audio here.

The poet uses three ways to describe why this righteous person is not like wicked people. Many people believe that the poet is describing a wicked person who moves deeper and deeper into sinful behavior. Other people believe that the poet is just saying the same thing but in slightly different ways. The poet uses words connected with going on a journey: walk, stand or stop, and sit or settle. First, he says the righteous person does not walk along with or follow the advice of wicked people. In this context, a wicked person is someone who is not in a relationship with God. Next, the poet says that the righteous person does not stand or stop along the journey to take the same path as sinners, who are people who disobey Yahweh. This righteous person does not imitate their example. Lastly, the righteous person does not sit or join in with those who speak badly about Yahweh's way and mock those who follow Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss: How do people in your culture describe a good person? What kinds of things does a good person do? How do they describe an evil person? What kinds of things does an evil person do? Pause this audio here.

The poet then describes what the righteous person does that makes other people admire or praise him. The righteous person is joyful when he studies and obeys Yahweh's law. In this context, the poet uses the word "law" in a general way. He is referring to all of Yahweh's instructions or teaching, not just Yahweh's commands or the law of Moses. The righteous person meditates on these teachings day and night, or continually. You will remember that Yahweh commanded Joshua to meditate on the law day and night. Also, Moses told the Israelites that their kings must read the law of Yahweh all the days of their lives.

When a person meditates, they speak or read softly in a low voice, as if they are speaking to themselves. It was common practice in this culture for a person to read out loud, quietly to himself. This person was reading or repeating from memory and hearing the teaching of Yahweh at the same time. This is not necessarily a special time set aside to study the Word of God, but the person is reflecting on the Word of God as he goes about his daily activities.

Stop here and discuss: How do people in your culture reflect on or think deeply about important ideas? Where do they go, and what do they do? What do people in your culture think when they see or hear someone talking quietly to themselves? Pause this audio here.

The poet uses special language and compares the righteous person to a tree that someone has planted by streams of water. This is not a tree that is growing naturally beside a river. A gardener has purposefully planted or transplanted this tree next to a good source of water. It is possible that the poet is thinking about trees planted next to irrigation canals. A gardener digs canals or ditches for the purpose of providing a constant water source for his plants and trees. The trees in this garden never have to worry about water. The trees produce fruit at the right time. The leaves of the tree never wither or become unhealthy. The righteous person, like the tree, is successful in all areas of his life.

Stop here and look at a picture of a tree planted by an irrigation canal. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss: How do gardeners in your culture provide water for their crops? Pause this audio here.

Stop here and do this activity: The poet compares the righteous person to a good tree because people in his culture would like to have this kind of tree. What are some valuable or desired things in your culture that you could compare with a righteous person? Pause this audio here.

The poet says that wicked people are not like the tree next to the water. He compares wicked people to chaff, the outer husk or straw from grain that the wind easily blows away. When a farmer harvests his grain, he must separate the kernel of grain from the husk and straw that are useless. When a farmer has harvested the grain from his fields, he has to beat the grains so that the outer skin of the grains comes off. Next, the farmer uses a tool called a winnowing fork. This was a long stick like a fork, and the farmer would shake up the grain and throw it in the air. The wind would then blow the chaff away, but the seeds would fall back on the ground. The poet is showing that wicked people are useless, and how God will easily get rid of them.

Stop here and look at a picture of grain, chaff, & winnowing fork as a group. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss: What do gardeners or farmers in your culture do when they harvest their grain crops? How do they get rid of the useless parts of the plants? If your community does not grow grain, discuss how you harvest one of your main crops. Pause this audio here.

The poet finishes his poem by explaining the final outcome of the wicked and the righteous. The wicked and sinful people will not stand or survive Yahweh's judgment. You will remember that Yahweh is a God of justice. He will judge people based on whether they have followed Yahweh's instructions or not. Most people believe that the judgment refers to Yahweh's final judgment at the end of time. Yahweh will condemn the wicked people. He will not allow the wicked to join with Yahweh's righteous people. Yahweh will guard or watch over the path of his righteous people, but wicked people follow a path that leads them to their destruction.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Psalm 1:1–6 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Pause this audio here.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This poet has organized this Psalm into three stanzas or sections. Each section has its own theme.

In the first section: The poet says that the righteous person is happy because he does not follow the path or way of wicked people. He will be successful like a tree that is planted by a good water source.

In the second section: The poet compares wicked people to useless chaff that the wind blows away. They will not survive Yahweh's judgment. They cannot join the gathering of righteous people.

In the third section: Yahweh watches over the righteous person. Wicked people follow a path that will lead to their destruction.

The characters in this passage are:

- The person who delights in Yahweh
- Yahweh
- Righteous people
- Wicked people

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

Stop here and review as a group: We recommend that your team complete the "Introduction to Poetry Modules 2 & 3" before continuing with "Step 3: Defining the Scenes." If your team has completed the introduction to poetry, remind one another of the special ways that poets use language. What are the most common ways that poets use language in Hebrew poems? Pause this audio here.

The poet uses language creatively in this poem. For example, in the original language, the poet starts this poem with a word that uses the first letter of the alphabet. The word also sounds like the word for "footsteps" to remind the listener of the sound of feet on a path. The poet probably uses this word to emphasize the theme of following a path. The poet also plays with the sounds of words in other ways. For example, in the original language, the sounds in the word for "blessed" or happy are the reverse of the sounds for the word for "wicked."

Stop here and discuss. What are some ways that poets and other people in your culture use the sounds of words in creative ways? As you make decisions about words for this poem, talk about ways that you might be able to use those same ideas in your translation of this poem. Pause this audio here.

The poet begins the first stanza with the phrase, "Blessed is the man." In the Hebrew culture, a blessed person is fortunate or happy and deserves that people congratulate him. In this context, it does not necessarily mean that God blesses or rewards this person but that this person is happy and deserves to receive praise. Blessed refers to the person's total well-being. The blessed people are truly happy and have all that they need. The poet is speaking about all people in general and not just males.

Stop here and discuss how you will translate the idea of a fortunate and happy person into your language. Some possible ways to translate this phrase are "Happy is the one;" or "Fortunate is the person;" or "Congratulations to the person who..." Pause this audio here.

The poet describes the blessed person with three parallel or companion phrases that complete the idea and deepen the meaning. He explains things that the blessed or righteous person does not do. The poet describes this person's life using special language that compares the person's life to going on a journey: walk, stand or stop, and sit or settle. The blessed person does not walk or go in the direction that wicked or evil people tell him to go in. He does not follow their directions or advice. Next, the blessed person does not stand in the way of sinful people. Here the poet is saying that this person does not stop following God's way to follow the habits of sinful people. Finally, the blessed person does not sit or settle down and join in with those who oppose Yahweh.

Stop here and tell a story of going on a long journey. Listen carefully to the words the storyteller uses to describe the various stages of the trip. Pause this audio here.

The poet uses three different words to describe the people who do not follow God's way. He calls these people wicked, sinners, and mockers. The wicked are people who are not in a right relationship with Yahweh. Sinners refer to people who willfully or deliberately disobey Yahweh. Mockers are people who speak badly about Yahweh's way and the person who follows Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss how you will translate the words wicked, sinners, and mockers in your language. Pause this audio here.

The poet uses two companion phrases to contrast the negative actions of the evil people with the positive actions of the blessed person that other people admire.

Stop here and discuss how you will show that these next ideas are contrasting to or the opposite of what the poet just presented. How are opposite ideas presented in your language? Try this activity as a group: Have one person give a one-phrase description of some person or object. The next person must then describe something that is opposite of what the first person described. Repeat this until each team member has had an opportunity to give an opposite description. Pause this audio here.

The blessed person "delights in" and "meditates on" the law or instructions of Yahweh. This person finds joy and pleasure in studying and obeying the instructions and teachings of Yahweh. When a person meditates, they speak or read softly in a low voice, as if they are speaking to themselves. It was common practice in this culture for a person to read out loud, quietly to himself. This person was reading or repeating from memory and hearing the teaching of Yahweh at the same time. The person is thinking and considering Yahweh's instructions very intently.

Stop here and discuss how you will translate the word "meditate" in your language. Pause this audio here.

The poet uses special language and compares the righteous person to a tree that someone has planted by streams of water. The poet is saying that someone planted the tree in a place where it would always have plenty of water, unlike trees that grow in the wilderness. These streams of water come from some permanent water source that does not go dry. It is possible that the gardener has dug a water channel to make sure that the tree always has water.

The poet then further explains the good condition of the tree by using three companion phrases that deepen the meaning. This tree has fruit at the right season or time. The leaves on this tree never wither, die, or fall off because of the heat or lack of water. Like the tree, the person who meditates on Yahweh's instructions will be successful.

Stop here and discuss how you will describe the tree so that people in your culture will understand the good condition of the tree. How will you describe the comparison to the blessed or righteous person? Pause this audio here.

In the second section, the poet begins with "not so the wicked." He is saying that the wicked are not at all like the blessed person. In the original language, the poet uses words that make a very strong contrast to all that he had previously said. Some other ways to say this are "The wicked people are very different-so, so different!" or "Evil people are not like this at all."

Stop here and try this activity: Think about two very different things. Now, try to strongly say that these two things are very different. Listen to the words and phrases you use to show this difference. Pause this audio here.

Stop and discuss how you will make the contrast in your language so that people understand that wicked people are nothing like the blessed person. Pause this audio here.

The poet uses a different example from farming to compare wicked people. The poet compares wicked people to worthless chaff that the wind easily blows away. Remember that chaff is the outer husk and straw that the farmer removes from grain so that he can use the grain for food. The poet shows that wicked people are useless and that God will easily get rid of them.

Stop here and look at a picture of grain, chaff, & winnowing fork as a group, if needed. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss what word or phrase that you will use for chaff. If your culture does not grow and harvest grain, you may want to use another example of something very light and of no value that the wind can easily blow away, such as dry leaves or dry grass. Pause this audio here.

The poet uses two companion phrases that have the same meaning: wicked people will disappear or be destroyed. The poet states that it is because of all of these things he had mentioned that wicked people will not stand or will not survive judgment. He uses a word in the original language that tells the listener that what he is about to say is the result or consequence of wicked people's behavior.

Stop here and discuss how people who speak your language show that what they are about to say is the result of the situation they have just described. How will you translate this idea? Some possible examples are "therefore," "for this reason," or "on account of this." Pause this audio here.

In the first phrase, the poet says, "The wicked will not survive the judgment;" Yahweh will condemn them. Judgment is when a person of authority decides whether a person is guilty or innocent of breaking the law or doing wrong. The poet could be talking about judgment in a local court. However, most people believe that this judgment refers to Yahweh's final judgment at the end of time. Prophets of Yahweh have used the special picture language of chaff when describing Yahweh's final judgment.

In the companion phrase, the poet states that sinners will not be with Yahweh's righteous people.

In the third section, the poet summarizes the poem with two contrasting companion phrases. The poet reminds us that the pathways that righteous people follow lead to a different place than the pathways of the wicked people. Yahweh will guard or watch over the path of his righteous people. Righteous people are those who obey Yahweh and therefore have a right relationship with Yahweh.

The opposite is true for wicked or sinful people. Wicked people follow a path that leads them to their destruction or their end. In the original language, the poet uses a word that shows that an event or process has ended, and the result is not good. The poet also uses this word in a creative way. This word begins with the last letter of the alphabet. Just like the poet started the poem with a word that begins with the first letter of the alphabet, the poet now ends the poem with a word that begins with the last letter of the alphabet.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Psalm 1:1–6 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Pause this audio here.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This Psalm has three sections.

The characters in this passage are:

- The person who delights in Yahweh
- Yahweh
- Righteous people
- Wicked people

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage. Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama. Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

How fortunate is the one

who does not follow the advice of wicked people,
or stop and join the path that sinners take,
or sit and join in with those who mock Yahweh and others;
but he finds pleasure in the instructions of Yahweh,
and he meditates on Yahweh's instructions day and night.

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing wicked people, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- I am frustrated. This person never listens to my advice. I don't know why he refuses to follow it; or
- Why doesn't he join us? Does he think he is better than we are? or
- That person is really foolish. He keeps following God's law and missing out on all the fun we are having."

Ask the person playing the one who delights in Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- I am so happy. Yahweh has such wise teaching that points me in the right direction; or
- I am so fortunate to have Yahweh's instructions. I enjoy thinking about them all day long. They keep me from straying down the wrong path;

Continue the drama.

That person is strong like a tree planted by streams of water,
which produces fruit at the right time
and whose leaves do not dry up or fall off.

They succeed in everything they do.

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing the one who delights in Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- Yahweh's instructions make me strong. They are a constant source of nourishment; or
- Joyful. Following Yahweh's way gives me success in my life. My life is producing good results that honor Yahweh; or
- Even when things are hard around me, Yahweh's instructions supply me with the strength to endure and keep me from falling.

Continue the drama.

The wicked are not at all like this!

They are like worthless chaff that the wind blows away.

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing the wicked people, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- Fearful. There are so many troubles in life, and I cannot survive the pressure; or
- Confused. Why is my life so hard, and that person seems unaffected by life's hardships? or
- Curious. What makes that follower of Yahweh so special?

Continue the drama.

For this reason, the wicked will not survive the judgment,

And sinful people will not be with the gathering of Yahweh's righteous people.

Because Yahweh watches over the path of the righteous,

But the pathway of the wicked ends in destruction.

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing the righteous people, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- We are so fortunate that Yahweh watches over us; or
- I am so encouraged to be part of Yahweh's people; or
- I am concerned for my neighbors. If they keep going down the wrong path, they will not survive.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Psalm 1:1–6 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Pause this audio here.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

The poet says **blessed** or happy is the **man**. In the Hebrew culture, a blessed person is fortunate or happy and deserves that people congratulate him. In this context, it does not necessarily mean that God blesses or rewards this person but that this person is happy and deserves to be praised. This word refers to the person's total well-being. The blessed people are truly happy and have all that they need.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for blessed. Remember the things you discussed about this word in Step 3: "Defining the Scenes." Look up bless in the Master Glossary for more

information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

The poet uses the word man in a general way. He is speaking about any person, not just males. Make sure that the word you use here can refer to either a male or female person.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for man. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

The blessed person does not walk with or follow the advice of the **wicked**. The wicked are people who are not in a right relationship with Yahweh. When people stop obeying Yahweh, they begin to do wicked or **evil** things. They willingly do things that hurt other people.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for wicked. Look up wickedness and evil in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

The blessed person does not stand in the pathway with **sinners**. A sinner is one who willfully disobeys Yahweh. They do not trust Yahweh and want to decide for themselves what is good for them. They do not accept Yahweh's authority and rebel against Yahweh's instructions.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for sinner. Look up sin in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

The blessed person does not sit or join in with **mockers** or scoffers. Mockers are people who speak badly about Yahweh's way. They ridicule or make fun of the person who follows Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for mockers. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

The blessed person finds joy in the **law of Yahweh**. Yahweh is the personal name of God. Use the same word for Yahweh that you have used in previous passages.

Stop here and review the word you have used for **Yahweh** in previous books of the Bible. Remember that Yahweh is in the master glossary. Pause this audio here.

In this context, the poet uses the law of Yahweh in a general way. He is referring to all of Yahweh's instructions, not just the commands or the Law of Moses.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for law of Yahweh. Look up law in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

The blessed person will **meditate** on the instructions of Yahweh day and night. This person is reflecting on the Word of God as he goes about his daily activities. When a person meditates, they speak or read softly in a low voice, as if they are speaking to themselves. It was common practice in this culture for a person to read out loud, quietly to himself. This person was reading or repeating from memory and hearing the teaching of Yahweh at the same time.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for meditate. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

Wicked people will not stand or not survive the **judgment**. Judgment is when a person of authority decides whether a person is guilty or innocent of breaking the law or doing wrong. The poet could be talking about judgment in a local court. However, most people believe that this judgment refers to Yahweh's final judgment at the end of time. At the end of time, the wicked people will be condemned and not allowed to join with Yahweh's righteous people.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for judgment. Look up judge in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

Sinners will not be allowed to stand in the **congregation** or assembly of the **righteous**. A congregation or assembly is a group of people who gather for a purpose. The righteous are people who obey Yahweh and therefore have a right relationship with Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for congregation or assembly. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for righteous. Look up righteousness in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Pause this audio here.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Psalms 1:1–6

Audio Content

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Psalms 3:1–8

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Psalm 3:1–8 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Psalm 3:1–8 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Psalm 3:1–8 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Pause this audio here.

NOTE: The Psalms are Hebrew poetry. We recommend that your team complete the "Introduction to Poetry Module 1" before continuing with "Step 2: Setting the Stage." Stop here, if needed, and review the translation decisions your team has made regarding the translation of poetry. Pause this audio here.

This Psalm is a poem-song of lament and a prayer for protection. A lament is a way for a person to show grief or mourning. In many cultures, people sing laments after the death of a dearly loved person. However, in the culture of the Bible, people also sing or pray laments during times of trouble and disaster. The poet uses a structure similar to other laments we find in the Bible. He addresses his lament to God. During a lament, the person gives his complaints and makes requests to God about the situation the person is facing. Often, the person will request God to judge and punish his enemies because they are wrong. Even though the poet is experiencing hard times, he affirms his trust and hope in God.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How do people in your culture express grief? How are the expressions different based on the circumstances? For example, how do you grieve differently when you lose a loved one than when you have times of trouble? How are they the same? Pause this audio here.

We do not know for certain who created this Psalm or when they created it. Some people believe that David created this Psalm while fleeing from his son, Absalom. The poet does not mention this event, but he mentions many things similar to David's experience. You will remember from the stories of King David that Yahweh made a covenant or solemn promise with King David. Yahweh promised to rescue David from his enemies. Yahweh also promised to discipline or punish David and his descendants when they disobeyed Yahweh. Yahweh said that he will always love and be faithful to David.

Because of David's sin with Bathsheba, Yahweh told David through the prophet Nathan that David's family would have many troubles. You will remember that David's son Absalom rebelled against David and turned many in the kingdom against David. David and his supporters had to escape Jerusalem and camp on the eastern side of the Jordan River. It was during this time that some people believe that David created this Psalm of lament.

Stop here and discuss as a group: Review the story of David and Bathsheba and the story of Absalom's revolt against David. If you have translated the book of 2 Samuel into your language, you may want to listen to the following passages:

- 2 Samuel 11:1-27
- 2 Samuel 12:1-15
- 2 Samuel 15:1-17

Pause this audio here.

Other people think that a scribe who was copying this Psalm onto a scroll noticed the similarities with David's story. This scribe wrote this additional information on the scroll as a comment about this Psalm. Regardless of who created this Psalm, followers of Yahweh began using this poem-song in their private and public worship. Since the poet does not mention specific events, places, or people, any worshiper of Yahweh can sing and pray this poem as they worship Yahweh.

The poet-psalmist begins by crying out to Yahweh. He gives his complaint, explaining the bad things happening to him. Many people have started to oppose or come against him. These people say God will not come to save or deliver the psalmist. The Hebrew people think that a person can only have victory over their enemies if Yahweh helps them. The poet's enemies are saying that God has abandoned the poet.

At this point in the poem, we find the word 'Selah' in the original language. Some audio versions of the Bible include this word, and some do not. Scholars are uncertain of the meaning of this word. Poets use this word in 38 of the Psalms. The prophet Habakkuk uses the word 3 times in his poem. Poets usually use this word after they make a very important statement, which is a good place to pause. Many believe this word is a musical instruction since poets use it in poems that people sing along with musical instruments. Though the meaning is unclear, people have suggested that "Selah" could refer to a silent pause, a musical interlude with no voices, or instructions to play and sing louder.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: In your culture, how do song composers give instructions for how to perform their songs? What kinds of directions do the poet-singers give? When singing or playing music in your culture, how do the participants know when to pause the music or to change the volume? Pause this audio here.

The poet responds to his mocking enemies by refusing to listen to them. The poet tells Yahweh that he does not believe what his enemies are saying. The poet remembers how Yahweh has always protected him. He tells Yahweh that Yahweh is the poet's glory and the one who lifts the poet when he is in trouble. The poet compares Yahweh to a shield that is different from a normal shield. A shield is a barrier that soldiers hold and use in battle to protect themselves from the arrows and spears of enemies. A shield craftsman made a wooden frame, which he covered with leather and metal. A soldier could protect himself with the shield only in the one direction in which he placed the shield. The poet said that Yahweh is a shield all around him, protecting him in every direction.

Stop here and look at a picture of a shield. Pause this audio here.

The poet cries out to Yahweh because he knows that Yahweh hears him. Yahweh has been faithful in the past and will continue to be faithful. The poet says that Yahweh hears from his holy hill, referring to Mount Zion in Jerusalem, where the Temple with the Ark of the Covenant was located. Zion was the name of one of the mountains in the city of Jerusalem, where the people called the Jebusites lived before King David conquered the city. After King David conquered the city, people sometimes used Zion as a name for the whole city of Jerusalem. In the Bible, many people use the name Zion especially when they are talking about Jerusalem as a holy place where God lives with his people.

The poet shows that he trusts Yahweh by lying down to sleep in peace in spite of what has been going on. He is rested when he awakens because Yahweh has sustained or helped him survive through the night. The poet awakes with confidence in Yahweh and is not afraid of the many people who are against him. Some have suggested that people prayed or sang this poem as part of morning worship because the poet praises Yahweh because Yahweh had protected him through the night.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Tell a story of a time when you had difficulty sleeping through the night. Why couldn't you get to sleep? How did you feel in the morning? What was your attitude like the next day? Pause this audio here.

The poet closes his lament by asking Yahweh to "Arise" or "Rise Up." This is a call to action. You will remember that this is similar to the song the Israelites sang each time they moved their camp in the wilderness wanderings: "Arise, Yahweh, let your enemies be scattered." The poet then asks Yahweh to strike his enemies on the cheek and to break their teeth. In the Ancient Near East culture, when one person strikes another on the cheek, it is a big insult. The poet asked Yahweh to humiliate and silence the poet's enemies. He wants Yahweh to remove their teeth and make them harmless.

The poet declares that salvation or victory and deliverance come from Yahweh. He asks Yahweh to bless or show favor on Yahweh's people.

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Psalm 3:1–8 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Pause this audio here.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then, the group will visualize this passage.

This poet has organized this Psalm into four stanzas or sections. Each section has its own theme.

In the first section: The poet cries out to Yahweh because he has many enemies.

In the second section: The poet remembers Yahweh's faithfulness to him. He declares his confidence that Yahweh hears him.

In the third section: The poet declares that Yahweh gives him peaceful sleep. Because Yahweh is with him, he will not be afraid of his enemies.

In the fourth section: The poet asks Yahweh to save him from his enemies. He declares that only Yahweh can save. He asks Yahweh to bless Yahweh's people.

The characters in this passage are:

- The psalmist-poet
- Yahweh
- The psalmist's enemies
- Yahweh's people

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

Stop here and review as a group: We recommend that your team complete the "Introduction to Poetry Modules 2 & 3" before continuing with "Step 3: Defining the Scenes." If your team has completed the introduction to poetry, remind one another of the special ways that poets use language. What are the most common ways that poets use language in Hebrew poems? Pause this audio here.

The poet organizes this psalm of lament into four sections according to the theme. He then arranges these parallel or companion sections in a reverse or X structure. In the first and fourth sections, the poet cries out to Yahweh. In the first section, he cries out his complaint about his enemies. In the fourth section, the poet cries out his request for Yahweh to rise up and punish his enemies. In the second and third sections, the poet shows his trust or confidence in Yahweh.

Throughout this lament, we see how the poet uses the words in this lament in a creative way. He reverses words from one section and uses them in another section. He turns around a negative idea and uses that same idea to contrast his confidence in Yahweh. Though troubles surround the poet, Yahweh is a shield that surrounds and protects the poet. Though the poet has many people who come against him, Yahweh removes any reason to fear the many enemies. Though many people rise up against the poet, the poet has the confidence to ask Yahweh to rise up against the enemies.

The poet begins his lament by crying out Yahweh, the personal name of God. He does this not just as a way to start his prayer but as he cries out in the pain he is experiencing. Some translations include the expression "O" with Yahweh's name, but the poet does not say "O Yahweh" in the original language. He simply says "Yahweh!" Some translators have added the "O" as a way to show the poet's emotion. You may include something like this if it helps your people understand this prayer better. The poet will address Yahweh like this three times in this lament.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Think of a situation that has troubled you now or in the past. Now, tell someone on your team about your problem and address that person by their name. Pay close attention to the words, tone of voice, and actions when the complainer speaks to the listener by name. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss: Based on the discussion of the last activity, how will you translate how the poet begins this lament? Pause this audio here.

In the first section, the poet uses three companion phrases that describe his enemies. These phrases are connected by the word "many." In the first phrase, the poet says that he has many foes or enemies. Then, in the following phrases, the poet deepens the meaning and gives a more complete picture of how the enemies are treating him. In the second phrase, the many enemies are rising up against him. The poet is saying that people oppose, attack, or rebel against him.

In the third companion phrase, the many enemies are speaking badly about the poet. In the original language, the poet says, "They are talking about my soul." In this context, the soul refers to the entire person, not just his inner being. The poet is telling Yahweh what people are saying about him. They are saying that God will not save or deliver the poet from his trouble. His enemies believe that God will not help him.

The word Selah appears at the end of this section and again at the end of section two and section four. We do not know if the poet placed this word in the original poem or if other people added this later. Many poetry scholars believe that poets used this word to give either musical or worship instructions. Poets often placed the word "Selah" at the end of an important section. Though the meaning is unclear, people have suggested that "Selah" could refer to a silent pause, a musical interlude with no voices, or instructions to play and sing louder.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How will you treat the word 'Selah' in your translation? Will you include this word or not? Unless your translation team is confident with the meaning of 'Selah,' we recommend that you omit this word. Pause this audio here.

In the second section, the poet changes from complaint to expressing confidence in Yahweh. He begins this with "But, you." In the original language, the poet uses a word to emphasize that he is about to give a strong contrast.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Have a group member describe two things that are very different. Listen carefully to the words the speaker uses to let you know that the second thing they are going to describe is very different from the first. Pause this audio here.

The poet uses three titles to describe who Yahweh is to him. He uses these titles to contrast the three phrases that describe the many enemies. First, Yahweh is a shield of protection that surrounds him. Though many enemies have surrounded the poet, the one and only Yahweh has surrounded the poet as a protector. Next, the poet describes Yahweh as "my glory." The poet is saying that Yahweh is the one who gives him honor and victory. Finally, the poet calls Yahweh "the lifter of my head." The poet uses special language that shows that Yahweh will move the poet from despair to hope. When a person has a bowed head, he has been humbled or lacks confidence. When a person's head is lifted, it shows that his confidence, honor, and courage have been restored.

Stop here and discuss this as a group: How you will talk about the three titles that the poet gives to Yahweh? Pause this audio here.

The poet said, "I cried out" or "I called out" to Yahweh. The poet is not weeping but crying out like someone who cries or calls out for help when they are in trouble. Yahweh answered the poet from his holy hill or mountain. The holy hill or mountain refers to Mount Zion in Jerusalem, where the Temple with the Ark of the Covenant was located. The hill is holy, or set apart by Yahweh for special purposes. The Temple was where Yahweh revealed himself to his people.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How will you translate "holy hill" so that people in your culture understand that this refers to the Temple in Jerusalem? One possible way to translate this is, "He answers me from the Temple on Mount Zion, his holy hill." Pause this audio here.

In the third section, the poet speaks of his confidence that Yahweh always protects him. When the poet talks about lying down to sleep and waking up again, he is referring to his regular sleeping pattern over the years. Once again, he slept through the night and awakened. Once again, Yahweh sustained, or supported and protected him through the night.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Have each person tell the team about an activity you have done only once and then another activity you do regularly. Listen closely to the words each person uses to describe the activities. Pause this audio here.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Using the things you discovered, how will you translate this section of the poem so that people understand that the poet is talking about his regular habits? Pause this audio here.

Because of Yahweh's help, the poet is not afraid of the many thousands of people who are against him. Here, the poet uses special language to emphasize his confidence in Yahweh. He speaks about many thousands or tens of thousands of people. In the original language, this number is not an exact number but simply means a very large number of people. He is saying that he will not be afraid regardless of how many people oppose him.

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: How does your culture talk about very large numbers or things that are so many that it would take too long to count? How will you translate the idea that many thousands of people are against the poet? Pause this audio here.

In the fourth section, the poet uses companion phrases that mean the same thing. In the first pair of phrases, the poet calls Yahweh to action. In the first phrase, the poet reverses the actions of his enemies rising against him by calling on Yahweh to rise up against the poet's enemies. In the second phrase, the poet calls on God to save or deliver him, the very thing that the enemies said God will not do. He then starts the next phrase with a connecting word in the original language, which tells the listener that he is going to give the reason that he can call on Yahweh for help. With the word, the poet is saying "I ask you this because" or "I know you will do this because."

Stop here and discuss this question as a group: Have one person make a request of someone in the group and give the reason for the request. Listen carefully to how the person asking connects the request to the reason for the request. Pause this audio here.

The poet uses two companion phrases that explain why he is sure that Yahweh will deliver him. His confidence comes from how Yahweh has punished the poet's enemies in the past. The poet uses special language when he says that Yahweh "strikes the cheeks" and "breaks the teeth" of all the poet's enemies. With these images, the poet says that Yahweh is insulting the enemies and shuts their mouths. The enemies can no longer speak.

Because their teeth are broken, the poet's enemies are like wild animals whose teeth have been removed and are now harmless.

The poet ends his lament by declaring that Yahweh is the one who saves or brings deliverance and victory. He asks Yahweh to bless or show favor on Yahweh's people.

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

Embodying the Text

Embodying the Text

Listen to an audio version of Psalm 3:1–8 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Pause this audio here.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This passage has four sections.

The characters in this passage are:

- The psalmist-poet
- Yahweh
- The psalmist's enemies
- Yahweh's people

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage. Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama. Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

O Yahweh, I have so many enemies,

Many people are opposing me,

Many are talking about me, saying, "God will not help him!"

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing the enemies, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- We don't like this person. We need to keep gathering others to come against him; or
- He has so many problems. God won't help him. I think God has abandoned him.

Ask the person playing the psalmist, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- I am overwhelmed, Yahweh. I must complain to someone. I know you already know all of this, but it helps me to share this with you; or
- I am so discouraged. Why are so many people against me? or
- They are saying such bad things about me. They are telling everyone that God has abandoned me!

Continue the drama.

But you, Yahweh, are like a shield that surrounds me,

You give me great honor,

You are the one who restores my confidence and holds my head high.

I call out to Yahweh for help.

He answers me from his holy hill, Mount Zion.

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- You have no reason to fear. I will protect you regardless of what direction your enemies come from; or
- Be encouraged, my child. Hold your head high because I will restore you and give you honor; or
- Keep calling out to me. I always hear my children when they call. I always answer them.

Continue the drama.

When I lie down, I sleep all night long and wake again,

Because Yahweh supports and protects me.

I will not be afraid of the thousands and thousands of my enemies

Who surround me on every side.

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing the psalmist, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- I am at peace. I can sleep soundly all night knowing that Yahweh protects me; or
- I feel rested. A good night's sleep always helps me see things more clearly; or
- I am not afraid, even when my enemies are more than I can count. Yahweh gives me the strength I need to keep going. He supports and protects me.

Continue the drama.

Arise, O Yahweh, take action!

Deliver me, O my God!

You have slapped all my enemies in the face;

You have broken the teeth of these wicked people.

Yahweh saves his people and gives victory.

You do good things for your people!

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing the enemies, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- We are humiliated. God did come to help him; or
- We are powerless against him because Yahweh gives him victory; or
- We must repent of our wicked ways or Yahweh will always be against us.

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Psalm 3:1–8 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Pause this audio here.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

The poet begins his prayer-song with "O **Yahweh**." Yahweh is the personal name of God. Use the same word for Yahweh that you have used in previous passages. For more information, refer to Yahweh in the Master Glossary.

The poet says that his many enemies are talking about his **soul**. Often, the soul refers to the invisible parts of a person, such as their thoughts, feelings, and desires. However, in this context, the soul refers to the entire person, not just his inner being. The poet is telling Yahweh what people are saying about him.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for soul. Look up soul in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

The poet's enemies say that "there is no **salvation** for him in **God**" or "God will not save or deliver him." Whenever the Israelites were in a desperate situation, like when some enemies attacked them, they called out to God to save them. They wanted God to help them and to protect them. If God did not save the people, they would die.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for save. Look up salvation in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

The poet's enemies use the general word for God. In the Bible, God refers to God who created everything. God is the most powerful spiritual being. This is the God who made a covenant, a special promise, to Abraham and his descendants, the Israelites.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for God. Look up God in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

The poet calls Yahweh a **shield** who surrounds or protects him on every side. A shield is a barrier that soldiers hold and use in battle to defend themselves from the arrows and spears of enemies. A shield craftsman made a wooden frame, which he covered with leather and metal. A soldier could protect himself with the shield only in the one direction in which he placed the shield. The poet said that Yahweh is a shield all around him, protecting him in every direction.

Stop here and look at a picture of a shield, if needed. Discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for shield. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

The poet says that Yahweh answered him from his **holy hill**. The holy hill or mountain refers to Mount Zion in Jerusalem, where the Temple is located. The hill is holy or set apart by Yahweh for special purposes. The Temple was where Yahweh revealed himself to his people. One possible way to translate this is, "Yahweh answers me from the Temple on Mount Zion, his holy hill."

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for holy hill. Look up holy, Zion, Jerusalem, and Temple in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

The poet calls Yahweh "my **glory**." Glory is the fame and admiration that you gain by doing something impressive. The poet is saying that Yahweh is the one who gives him honor and victory.

Stop here and discuss as a group what word or phrase you will use for glory. Look up glory in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated this word in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

The poet says that Yahweh breaks the teeth of the wicked. A person who is wicked, or evil, willingly does bad things that hurt other people. When people stop obeying God, they begin to do evil actions. Use the same word for wicked as you used in previous passages. For more information on wickedness, refer to the Master Glossary.

The poet ends by asking Yahweh to **bless** Yahweh's people. When God blesses a person, God is doing, or promising to do, something good for that person. The poet is asking Yahweh to do good things for the people who follow Yahweh. Use the same word for blessing as you used in previous passages. For more information on bless, refer to the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Pause this audio here.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Psalms 3:1–8

Audio Content

[webm zip](#) (16720027 KB)

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Psalms 117:1–2

Hear and Heart

Hear and Heart

In this step, hear Psalm 117:1–2 and put it in your hearts.

Listen to an audio version of Psalm 117:1–2 three times, in three different translations, if possible.

Pause this audio here.

Now, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1. What do you like in this passage? Pause this audio here.
2. What do you not like or not understand in this passage? Pause this audio here.
3. What does this passage tell us about God? Pause this audio here.
4. What does this passage tell us about people? Pause this audio here.
5. How does this passage affect our daily lives? Pause this audio here.
6. Who do you know who needs to hear this passage?

Setting the Stage

Setting the Stage

Listen to an audio version of Psalm 117:1–2 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Pause this audio here.

NOTE: The Psalms are Hebrew poetry. We recommend that your team complete the "Introduction to Poetry Module 1" before continuing with "Step 2: Setting the Stage." Stop here, if needed, and review the translation decisions your team has made regarding the translation of poetry. Pause this audio here.

This psalm is a praise poem-song. It is the shortest of all the Psalms in the Bible. Because this psalm is short, some people believe that worshipers sang or recited it like a refrain, or repeated response. You may remember from the "Introduction to Poetry Module 3" that a refrain is a short section of a poem that the poet repeats at different points within the larger poem. In this instance, worshipers would sing or recite the entire psalm after various acts of worship in the longer worship celebration.

We do not know who the psalmist is who wrote this poem-song. Even though this psalm is short, the psalmist-poet created this psalm just like other worship songs that praise Yahweh. Some scholars have identified several psalms that they call the Hallel Psalms or Hallelujah Psalms because the poets start or end the poem with "Praise Yahweh," which in the original language is "Hallelujah." People would sing these psalms during joyful feasts. People have called Psalms 113 to Psalm 118 the Egyptian Hallel because people sing them during the Passover festival, which celebrates when Yahweh rescued the Israelites from being slaves in Egypt. Israelites would recite or sing Psalms 113 and 114 before the Passover meal. Then, after the meal, people will sing or recite Psalms 115 to 118 while they drink the special celebration cup of wine.

Stop here and discuss this as a group: What songs do people in your community sing at special celebrations? At what point in the celebration do people sing these songs? Pause this audio here.

The psalmist-poet calls everyone to praise Yahweh. When the poet tells all people to praise Yahweh, the poet declares that Yahweh is the highest God over all the people in the world. The poet reminds us of Yahweh's promise to Abraham that Abraham's descendants will be a source of blessing to all of the nations.

Then, the poet gives two reasons why people should praise Yahweh—Yahweh loves people with a love that is steadfast or constant and Yahweh is faithful. You will remember that when Moses was on Mount Sinai to receive the tablets of the Covenant, Moses asked Yahweh to show Moses the glory of Yahweh. Yahweh told Moses to hide himself next to a large rock for protection as Yahweh passed by. As Yahweh passed by Moses, Yahweh said that he was a God full of steadfast love and faithfulness.

Stop here and discuss this as a group: If you have translated the book of Exodus in your language, listen to Exodus 33:18 — 34:8. Pause this audio here.

The psalmist-poet finishes this song by making a strong declaration of "Praise the Lord." In the original language this is the phrase "Hallelujah." Hallelujah is a combination of the Hebrew words *hallel*, meaning praise, and *yah*, a shortened form of Yahweh, God's personal name.

Stop here and discuss this as a group: What words or phrases do you have in your culture that express joy and praise during celebrations?

Defining the Scenes

Defining the Scenes

Listen to an audio version of Psalm 117:1–2 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Pause this audio here.

In this step, the group will define the scenes, characters, and setting of this passage. Then the group will visualize this passage.

This passage has two sections.

In the first section: The poet calls all people to praise Yahweh.

In the second section: The poet says why people must praise Yahweh.

The characters in this passage are:

- The psalmist
- Yahweh
- People from all nations

As a group, pay attention to these parts of the passage's setting:

Stop here and review as a group: We recommend that your team complete the "Introduction to Poetry Modules 2 & 3" before continuing with "Step 3: Defining the Scenes." If your team has completed the introduction to poetry, remind one another of the special ways that poets use language. What are the most common ways that poets use language in Hebrew poems? Pause this audio here.

Even though this is a very short psalm, the poet organizes this psalm in the typical structure of a Hebrew song of praise. The poet first calls people to join in praise. Then the poet gives the reasons to praise. Finally, the poet has some final words of praise.

The poet begins by calling people to praise. He uses two parallel or companion phrases that have a similar meaning. The poet calls out to "all nations" and "all peoples." The poet is speaking to Gentiles, people who are not Israelites. Nations refer to people from the same geographical area. "Peoples" refers to those who have the same ancestors.

The poet uses two different words in the original language that can express "praise." In the first phrase, the poet commands the nations to praise Yahweh. The poet uses the most common word for praise or celebrate, the Hebrew word *Hallel*. In the second phrase, the poet encourages the people to extol or glorify Yahweh. Here, the poet uses a less common word for praise. He is saying that all people should glorify Yahweh by praising or admiring him and saying good things about Yahweh. Stop here and discuss this as a group: In some languages, there are more than one word for the same thing. Discuss as a team, what words or phrases you have in your language for "praise." How will you translate the two different words for praise that the psalmist uses in your language? Pause this audio here.

In the second section, the poet gives two reasons why everyone should praise Yahweh. The poet states two characteristics of Yahweh that are often mentioned together: steadfast or unfailing love and faithfulness. In the first phrase, the poet says that Yahweh's steadfast love is great or strong and that Yahweh loves us with this kind of love. In the original language, this word describes a person who has a devoted love and faithfully keeps his covenant or strong promise to another. This love describes Yahweh's special feeling for his people. Yahweh will be their God, faithfully keeping his promise and caring for them.

Stop here and discuss this as a group: Describe someone that you know who loves people in this way. How will you translate "steadfast love" in your language so that it includes the idea of devotion and faithfulness? Pause this audio here.

The poet describes Yahweh's love as being great. The poet uses a word for great that describes something that is strong or mighty. The poet says that Yahweh's unfailing love is strong and mighty or powerful. In the next phrase, the psalmist-poet says people should praise Yahweh because Yahweh's faithfulness endures forever; it never stops. A faithful person is someone whom other people trust. The poet is saying that people can always trust Yahweh because the faithfulness of Yahweh will never end.

Stop here and discuss this as a group: How will you translate "faithfulness that never ends?" Pause this audio here.

The poet ends with a final declaration or strong statement of "Praise Yahweh" which in the original language is the word "hallelujah!" Some communities have borrowed the word "hallelujah" and regularly use this word as a way to show praise.

Stop here and discuss this as a group: What word or phrase will you use in your translation for "Praise Yahweh?" If your community already uses the borrowed word "hallelujah," you might consider using both the word and its meaning together. For example, Praise Yahweh! Hallelujah!

Now, the group should storyboard, draw, or use objects to visualize the passage and the action in it.

*Embodying the Text**Embodying the Text*

Listen to an audio version of Psalm 117:1–2 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Pause this audio here.

In this step, the group will dramatize the passage.

This Psalm has two sections.

The characters in this passage are:

- The psalmist
- Yahweh
- People from all nations

As a group, act out the passage twice. You should act out the passage in your own language.

First, act out the passage without stopping. Pay attention to the dialogue, flow, plotline, and chronology of the passage. Make sure you do not skip acting out the difficult or important parts of the passage. Help each other remember every part of the passage. Pause this audio here and act out the passage.

The group should act out this passage a second time. At certain points in the drama, pause the drama and ask the person playing the character, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person playing the character should answer what they would be feeling or thinking if they were that character. Then continue the drama. Pause this audio here and act out the passage a second time.

The following is an example of the drama and possible responses.

The psalmist-poet sings:

Praise Yahweh, all nations!

Glorify him, all people!

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing the psalmist, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- Excited! Everyone, everywhere needs to join in praising Yahweh; or
- I love it when many people sing praises to Yahweh together; or
- Come on Everyone! This is so important and obvious. I shouldn't have to persuade you. Praising Yahweh is so natural.

Ask the people playing the people of all nations, "What are you feeling or thinking?" They might answer things like:

- Happy to join in the celebration. Yahweh is good to everyone; or
- Confused. Your people don't normally invite us to join in your worship celebrations; or
- Sure, why not? Yahweh desires lots of praise.

Continue the drama.

Because Yahweh's love for us is unfailing and strong

And Yahweh's faithfulness never ends.

Pause the drama. Ask the person playing Yahweh, "What are you feeling or thinking?" The person might answer things like:

- I am happy that you recognize how much I love and care for you; or
- This is how I described myself to Moses. I'm pleased that you have remembered the stories that you have been taught about me; or
- I am so pleased. It has always been my plan that all the nations know and worship me.

Continue the drama.

Praise Yahweh! Hallelujah!

Filling the Gaps

Filling the Gaps

Listen to an audio version of Psalm 117:1–2 in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Pause this audio here.

In this step, the group will discuss key terms and words in this passage.

The psalmist sings, "Praise Yahweh, all nations! Glorify or praise him, all peoples."

The poet uses two different words in the original language that can express the idea of "praise." The first word the poet uses is the most common word for praise or celebrate, the Hebrew word *Hallel*. The second word the poet uses is a less common word for praise. He is saying that all people should glorify Yahweh by praising or admiring him and saying good things about Yahweh.

Stop here and discuss as a group how you will translate these two words. What words or phrases will you use for praise and glorify? Look up praise and glorify in the Master Glossary for more information. If you have already translated these words in another book of the Bible, use the same word that you have used there. Pause this audio here.

Yahweh is the personal name of God. Use the same word for Yahweh that you have used in previous passages. For more information, refer to Yahweh in the Master Glossary.

When the psalmist calls the **nations** and **peoples** to praise Yahweh, he is speaking to the same group. The poet is speaking to Gentiles, those who are not Israelites. Nations refer to people from the same geographical area. Peoples refers to those people who have the same ancestors and often live in the same area. Use the same word or phrase for nations and peoples that you have used in previous passages. For more information, look up nation and Gentile in the Master Glossary.

The psalmist says that we should praise Yahweh because his **steadfast love** toward us is great. In the original language, the word for this love describes a person who has a devoted love and will faithfully keep his covenant or strong promise to another. This love describes Yahweh's special feeling for his people. Use the same word or phrase for steadfast love that you have used in previous passages. Look up steadfast love in the Master Glossary for more information.

The psalmist also says that Yahweh's **faithfulness** never ends. A faithful person is someone whom other people can trust. The poet is saying that people can always trust Yahweh because the faithfulness of Yahweh will never end. Use the same word or phrase for faithfulness that you have used in previous passages. For more information, refer to faith in the Master Glossary.

Speaking the Word

Speaking the Word

Listen to an audio version of the passage in the easiest-to-understand translation.

Pause this audio here.

In this session, retell the passage, as a group, in your own language.

First, the whole group should practice telling the passage in your own language. Remember to include the things you decided in previous steps, like chronology, words, phrases, emotions, or anything else you discussed.

One group member should tell a few sentences of the passage and pause. Another group member should tell the next part of the passage and pause. Do this until the group has retold the whole passage. The group members can correct each other in this step. Pause this audio here.

Next, each member of the group should tell the whole passage without interruption at least one time. A group member can use random objects, motions, or their storyboard to help them remember the passage. Pause this audio here.

Next, the group can decide whose version of the passage you like the most. You may decide that you liked the way one group member told one scene but you liked the way a different group member told another scene. Pause this audio here.

Finally, the group can put together a final version of the passage that everyone agrees on. Each group member should practice telling this final version of the passage.

Psalms 117:1-2

Audio Content

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