

Study and Discussion Guide for *Psalm 33*

The Structure of *Psalm 33*

Psalm 33 is a hymn to the God of Nature, Man, and History.

- 1-3 Introductory Call to Praise
- 4-11 Eight Verses Praise God for Creating and Controlling Nature, Man, and History
 - 4-5 Word
 - 6-7 Nature
 - 8-9 Mankind
 - 10-11 History
- 12-19 Eight Verses Praise God for Blessing and Saving His People
- 20-22 Concluding Affirmation of Faith

Some Questions for Understanding, Meditating, and Listening

1. Why do you think the Psalmist asks us *to sing* rather than *to say*?
2. List all the commands (verbs in the imperative mood) in the introductory verses 1 to 3. Do any words or ideas occur more than once?
3. Are these verses expressions of praise? or are they just expressions asking other people to praise?
4. What idea from verse 3 is repeated in Psalm 40:3, 96:1; 98:1, 149:1; Rev 5:9; 14:3 ? Why do you think God tells us seven times to do this? How do we find such songs? Must we all be songwriters? What do you think about the practice of permitting only Psalms to be sung in public worship?
5. What actions are associated with the Word of God in Psalm 104:7; 107:20; 147:15, 18; Job 38:11; and Heb. 11:3? We often think of the Word of God as a *book*. In what other senses is the phrase *Word of God* used? How is the Word of God different from our words?
6. If you were illustrating a children's book of Psalms, what pictures would you imagine for verses five, six, and seven? You may find help in using other translations and paraphrases here and in question 7.
7. If you were paraphrasing Psalms for children, how would you translate the word *fear* in verses 8 and 18?
8. Verses 13, 14, 15, and 18 all talk about the *eyes* of God that *see* and *watch* and *consider*. How do you feel about that? Scared? Safe? Exposed? Cozy? Challenged? Energized? Pleased to be noticed?
9. In verse 17, think of a better word than *horse* as an example of "a vain hope" in the USA today?
10. What does it mean to "hope in God"? We often think of hope as a last resort, as not facing reality.
11. List all the verbs in the concluding verses 20 to 22. What word occurs twice? Now compare this three-verse conclusion to the three-verse introduction. How are they alike or different?
12. Is it easy or hard for you to pray verse 22?
13. What verse in this Psalm is your favorite? Speaks to your heart? Do you want to memorize?