

Song of Moses

The next thing Owen knew, he was “taking a text” as the old people used to say. It was mostly for his benefit, but also for his family’s.

“God has been good to us!” Owen said, straightening his back in the chair.

Owen, Raven and their three children—ages 5, 7, and 10—wanted a larger home. Currently they lived in a two-bedroom house. The family was ready to move now! Still, there was so much for which to give thanks.

“God gave us this house in a good neighborhood,” said Owen. “More importantly, He has blessed our family. I have a beautiful wife who loves God. I have three great children. And the Lord brought Laila through her surgery last year.”

“The Lord has kept Raven on her job despite attacks from the enemy,” he continued. “He is positioning me for a promotion. I can see it.”

“God even blessed us with a good, honest plumber who helped upgrade our bathrooms. When we do sell the house, it is going to be worth more,” Owen said, standing up and placing his coffee cup in the sink.

“So, who’s with me?” he said, turning around. “Are we going to thank God for all of His goodness and benefits?”

Raven smiled and the children jumped to their feet, clapping.

“Praise is what the Harris family does,” smiled Owen. “Praise is what we do!”

1. *What are your favorite Scriptures or songs celebrating God as our Creator?*

2. *In what ways have you seen God protect you?*

3. *Finish this sentence: Since God is my Creator and Protector, I will _____.*

LESSON FOCUS: Proclaiming God’s works guards you against abandoning your Creator and Protector.

A Proclamation of God's Greatness

Deuteronomy 32:3-6, KJV

3 Because I will publish the name of the LORD: ascribe ye greatness unto our God.

4 He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he.

5 They have corrupted themselves, their spot is not the spot of his children: they are a perverse and crooked generation.

6 Do ye thus requite the LORD, O foolish people and unwise? is not he thy father that hath bought thee? hath he not made thee, and established thee?

Deuteronomy 32:3-6, NIV

³I will proclaim the name of the LORD.

Oh, praise the greatness of our God!

⁴He is the Rock, his works are perfect, and all his ways are just.

A faithful God who does no wrong, upright and just is he.

⁵They are corrupt and not his children; to their shame they are a warped and crooked generation.

⁶Is this the way you repay the LORD, you foolish and unwise people? Is he not your Father, your Creator, who made you and formed you?

Moses opened God's song to the children of Israel about to enter the promised land by encouraging them to listen—to let God's words literally "soak in" to them "like rain and my words descend like dew, like showers on new grass, like abundant rain on tender plants" (Deut. 32:2). With verse 3, he began the song in earnest: "I will proclaim the name of the LORD. Oh, praise the greatness of our God!" Before anything else, God's greatness was proclaimed. Everything Israel was to do as God's chosen nation had to be held up to God's standard—and would be, soon enough.

Moses then proclaimed God's strength, perfection, and fairness: "He is the Rock, his works are perfect, and all

his ways are just” (vs. 4a). This was the first time that the metaphor of God as a rock was used in Scripture, and God would be referred to as a rock four more times in this song (vss. 15, 18, 30-31). God was unchanging, and had no need to change; therefore, everything else would be measured to His perfect standard (vs. 4). Everything God was, and everything God did, was and would always be perfect.

With that, the song turned abruptly to the people of Israel, whose hearts and behaviors stood in stark contrast to God’s attitudes: “They are corrupt and not his children . . . they are a warped and crooked generation” (vs. 5). God was saying this not about the generation that had already passed away for their sin, but about the people who were ready to enter the promised land. As such, God (and Moses) rebuked the people for their ingratitude: “Is this the way you repay the LORD, you foolish and unwise people? Is he not your Father, your Creator, who made you and formed you?” (vs. 6). “Foolish” was the only way to describe a people who refused to honor such a God.

4. *How did Moses begin God’s song?*

5. *How did Moses describe God in verse 4?*

6. *Who did God address, and what did He say about them?*

A Rebuke of Israel’s Unfaithfulness

Deuteronomy 32:10-14, 18, KJV

10 He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye.

11 As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh

Deuteronomy 32:10-14, 18, NIV

¹⁰In a desert land he found him,
in a barren and howling waste.
He shielded him and cared for him;
he guarded him as the apple of his eye,

¹¹like an eagle that stirs up its nest
and hovers over its young,

them, beareth them on her wings:

12 So the LORD alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him.

13 He made him ride on the high places of the earth, that he might eat the increase of the fields; and he made him to suck honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock;

14 Butter of kine, and milk of sheep, with fat of lambs, and rams of the breed of Bashan, and goats, with the fat of kidneys of wheat; and thou didst drink the pure blood of the grape. . . .

18 Of the Rock that begat thee thou art unmindful, and hast forgotten God that formed thee.

that spreads its wings to catch them

and carries them aloft.

¹²The LORD alone led him; no foreign god was with him.

¹³He made him ride on the heights of the land and fed him with the fruit of the fields.

He nourished him with honey from the rock,

and with oil from the flinty crag,
¹⁴with curds and milk from herd and flock

and with fattened lambs and goats,

with choice rams of Bashan and the finest kernels of wheat.

You drank the foaming blood of the grape. . . .

¹⁸You deserted the Rock, who fathered you;

you forgot the God who gave you birth.

God continued His rebuke of Israel and reminded them who they were before He had made them a great nation. Verse 10 not only referred to the current Israelites but more so to the days of the patriarchs, especially Jacob (see also vss. 7-9): "In a desert land he found him, in a barren and howling waste" (vs. 10a). Moses continued to describe God's care for both the man Israel (Jacob) and the nation that bore his and his sons' names: "He shielded him and cared for him; he guarded him as the apple of his eye, like an eagle that stirs up its nest and hovers over its young, that spreads its wings to catch them and carries them aloft" (vss. 10b-11). God had not only cared for and protected Israel but had lifted him/them up to their present

condition.

Moses' song then shifted from Israel's survival to its prosperity: God had given Israel "the fruit of the fields . . . honey from the rock . . . oil from the flinty crag (oil from olive trees) . . . curds and milk . . . fattened lambs and goats . . . choice rams . . . the finest kernels of wheat . . . the foaming blood of the grape" (vss. 13-14). And as Moses reminded them, everything Israel had and would receive had come only from the Lord, not from any foreign god (vs. 12).

And yet, Israel would embrace their prosperity instead of the God who had given it to them. As Israel enjoyed the fat of the land, they too "grew fat and kicked; filled with food, they became heavy and sleek" (vs. 15). Moses described Israel's turning to new and equally false gods in their pride—which had already occurred even as God had led them across the wilderness. Thus, verse 18 summarized their condition: "You deserted the Rock, who fathered you; you forgot the God who gave you birth." Israel's history would bear out this sad truth over and over.

7. What had God already done for Israel, according to verses 10-11?



8. How had God further blessed Israel, according to verses 12-14?

9. How had Israel responded to God's protection and blessing?

The rock formations called Solomon's Pillars in Israel remind us that God is "the Rock" (Deut. 32:4, 18) in our lives on whom we can depend.

Photo: Dr. Avishai Teicher/Israel free image collection

Running Back to You!

Grammy-award-winning gospel singer and songwriter Fred Hammond wrote a song early in his career entitled "Running Back to You." In this song, he expressed the sentiments of a child of God disappointed in how he had abandoned his relationship with his Creator and Protector:

How can you forgive me/ When I've often gone astray
How can You think of me/ When I do things my way
Turning my back from You/ The One who loved me
first

Having my own desires/ Renewing worldly thirst....
You tell me come back now/ But I keep wasting time
Feeling so very weak/ You say I can be strong
I feel I've gone too far/ You tell me to come home
You love me still/ And I know this is real....

And I am running back to You/ I see You're standing
there for me

Your arms are open wide/ And I don't have to cry no
more.

Many times we forget who takes care of us and protects us. Like the Israelites, we complain about what we don't have rather than praise God for what we do have. God's abundant blessings are forgotten when troubles come. Who else could ever give us what God has given us? He deserves daily praise, not daily grumbling.

Thankfully, He is a forgiving God who will take us back when we turn to Him. And when we turn to Him, we must proclaim His greatness for He is our Rock, our Shelter, our Redeemer, and our Protector.

10. *When have you complained more to God than praised Him?*

11. *When have you run back to God after deserting Him for a time?*

12. *How can praising God rather than complaining help you in the hard times?*

Publish the Name of the Lord

Wherever you publish, or make known, the goodness of the Lord, you don't bring attention to yourself—you let it be known that He is your great Creator and Protector. Let's speak of our great God's work all the time. We remind ourselves first of who He is and what He has done, and then share with those around us the marvelous deeds of a loving Father. When complaining ends, praise begins.

► *Decide to have a day when you only praise God. You can start today by listing here all the great things He has done for you, then focus on and pray about those things one day this coming week. Tell others that you are having a "No Complaints, Only Praise Day" and ask if they want to join you.*

KEY VERSE

Because I will publish the name of the LORD; ascribe ye greatness unto our God.
—Deuteronomy 32:3, KJV

I will proclaim the name of the LORD. Oh, praise the greatness of our God.
—Deuteronomy 32:3, NIV

DAILY BIBLE READINGS FOR NEXT WEEK'S LESSON

Week of October 10 through October 16

(See *The Quiet Hour* and *Cross* devotionals on these passages.)

Mon. Psalm 73:1-5, 16-17, 21-28—God Is My Portion Forever.

Tue. Judges 2:7-8, 11-19— Israel Grows Unfaithful.

Wed. 2 Corinthians 4:1-7—God's Power Is a Treasure.

Thu. 2 Corinthians 4:8-18—Afflicted but Renewed Daily.

Fri. 2 Corinthians 12:1-10—God's Grace Is Sufficient.

Sat. Judges 7:1-8, 16-22—Deliverance Comes from God's Hand.

Sun. Judges 6:1-2, 7-16a—God Calls Gideon.