

**PLEASE DON'T READ THESE NOTES UNTIL YOU HAVE COMPLETED YOUR LESSON.
YOU WILL ROB YOURSELF OF THE JOY OF DISCOVERY!**

PREPARATION

1. Before you read **Psalms 16 & 46**, ask the Holy Spirit to teach you and guide you into all truth (John 16:13). We have been using the prayer, *Holy Spirit, think through me until your ideas become my ideas*, or King David's prayer, *Open my eyes to see the wonderful truths in your law*.
2. Read **both Psalms** slowly and thoughtfully in at least two translations. As you read and reread, mark any words or phrases that are meaningful to you and put a question mark by anything that you don't understand.

Psalm 16: Reader A: 1-3;
Reader B: 4-6
All : 9-11

Psalm 46: Reader A: 1-6
Leader: 7
Reader B: 8-10
All: 11

3. What common themes do you see in **Psalms 16 and 46**?

Protection; taking refuge in God; God is with us and near us; the greatness of God

4. How would you describe the mood of each of these psalms? What frame of mind does the psalmist seem to have at the time each psalm was written?

The mood seems to be one of CONFIDENCE in God's goodness and power to protect.

QUESTIONS

PSALM 16

5. From **16:1-4**, write a brief character description of a godly person who loves God.
This is a person who puts their confidence in God and his power to keep them safe. They are humble as they acknowledge that God is their Master and that everything good thing they experience comes from God. They take pleasure and delight in other God-lovers. They will not join the crowd of those who chase after other gods.
6. A *refuge* is a protected place from something threatening, harmful or unpleasant. How can God be our refuge? God can comfort us, guide us and shield us. He give us strength, power and wisdom during hard times. He gives us exactly what we need when we need it.

What specific things do you do to take refuge in God? Answers will vary; have several share.
We take refuge in God when we do anything that develops and deepens our relationship with God. We take refuge in God is we study and meditate on his Word, give him praise and worship and especially obey and live life His way. We take refuge in God when we run to him for comfort and guidance when life is hard.

- ♥ What are some things you want to be kept safe from? What is threatening you right now?
- ♥ What pictures come to mind when you think of a *refuge*?

7. In **16:2**, notice the difference in the words **LORD** and **Lord**. **LORD** is the proper name for God meaning *The Lord God Jehovah*; the title *Lord* means *Master or Ruler*. What kind of Master does David see God as?

God is a Master that gives good things to his subjects.

- ♥ In what areas of your life can you confidently say, "LORD, you are my Lord" and in what areas might you hesitate to say this?
- ♥ Is there anything in your life that you consider "good" that doesn't include God?
- ♥ What are some "bad" things in your life right now? How are they related to God?

Nothing touches us without going through God first. He experiences even the "bad" with us. (If you were at the April large group teaching, think of the circle diagram Mary Jean used to show that we are completely surrounded by God.)

8. Read **16:3** in the New Living Translation. What is David's reaction to other God lovers?
They are his heroes, glorious and excellent ones in whom David takes great delight!

Why do you think he feels this way about them?

There is a special bond between God-lovers. We are family and we live in community, encouraging and helping each other.

- ♥ Who are some godly people around you who are your true heroes? Why do you see them as heroes?
- ♥ How can you delight in or take pleasure in other God lovers?
- ♥ How can you be a pleasure or delight to other God lovers?

9. What happens to those who don't make God their Master? **16:4**
They will be filled with sorrow.

What sorrows might someone experience as a result of following after other gods?

Have several share. This could be a long list! Some may speak from experience.

- ♥ What are some false gods that are common in our culture?
- ♥ What "gods" are you tempted to pursue? What sorrows do they bring?
- ♥ Why do you think that David doesn't even want to "speak the names" of the false gods? What do you do to keep false gods at a distance? How does **1 John 2:15-17** relate to what David is saying?
David knew that false gods are "real" and he didn't want to be associated with them or open himself up to their influence. We can't love both God and the world. Jesus said we can't serve two masters. We will love the one and hate the other. God made humans so that we cannot have divided loyalties.

10. List the specific privileges that David says are his because he has made the LORD his Lord. **16:5-8**
Like an heir, we receive goodness and good things from God. God guards all that he gives us. God guides us, even at night while we sleep! God is always with us, guarding and protecting us. Nothing can shake us loose from God!

11. Read **16:5-6** in all four translations. How would you restate these benefits so that they are meaningful in our culture?
God gives me everything I need to live life and then he guards and protects what he gives me. All his gifts to me are good gifts. He makes me his child with all the benefits of an heir.

- ♥ Share with your group some specific ways God has done these things for you.
- ♥ What does the word "inheritance" indicate about our relationship to God? **16:6**

12. How does what the Apostle Paul said in **Acts 17:24-28** relate to **Psalms 16:5-6**?
God is the Lord of heaven and earth and he made everything that exists, including each one of us. He determined the exact time and place that every person would live. He did this because he wants a relationship with every person. We are God's offspring and in him we live and move and exist. We don't have anything that doesn't come from God.

13. What two specific things does David do in response to God's goodness? **16:7-8**
He praises and blesses God
He continually sets God before him

♥ How are some ways our hearts can instruct us in the night? **16:7**

Dreams, visions, and God talking to our subconscious while we sleep; we often wake up knowing the solution to a problem or knowing what action to take.

♥ What are some specific ways you can *set the Lord always before you?* (**16:8**) Why is this important? Setting the Lord always before us is "practicing his Presence." In other words, we live with the awareness that God is always with us. We talk to him and think about him and "see" him with us always. We try to keep him in our conscious thoughts.

14. In **16:9-11**, what reasons does David give for his heart being glad, his tongue rejoicing and his body resting secure?

Physical death will not be the end for us; there is life after physical death. God also shows us how to live life. We are not on our own and we don't have to figure it out by ourselves. God gives us JOY as we live in his presence and we know that there are eternal pleasures waiting for us after we physically die.

♥ King David died and was buried. What then, did David mean in **16:10** concerning himself?

♥ Unless Jesus returns in the next 75 years, we will all die and our bodies will decay. What hope does **16:10** hold for us? **John 11:20-27**. Those who believe in and follow Jesus will rise again and experience eternal life. Physical death is not the end.

♥ How were David's words in **16:10** prophetic? **Acts 2:25-28 (read 22-28)** David was prophetically speaking of Jesus death. God did not abandon him to the grave nor did his body see decay.

15. Which of the three blessings given us in **16:11** is most important or meaningful to you? Why?

Have several share their answers and reasons

♥ If **16:11** was the only scripture you had access to, what would you conclude from it about heaven?

Heaven is going to be fun!

PSALM 46

16. Read **46:1,7,11** in all four translations. Write down everything you learn about God from these verses. God is our refuge, our strength, always ready to help us when trouble comes and we need him; God is with us and he acts as a fortress for us. He is not a God the is far away, but near and ready to help.

17. Why did the psalmist decide not to be afraid? **46:2**

Because of WHO GOD IS (not because of any strength of his own)

♥ What images does the word fortress bring to mind? How has God been like a fortress to you?

♥ Is there a difference between God helping us when we are in trouble and God being with us in trouble? Why or why not? The idea of him being with us in trouble means that he is experiencing it with us. He doesn't give us help; he IS our help.

18. What are the devastating circumstances the psalmist mentions that can cause us great fear? **46:2-3, 6**

These verses seem to speak of natural disasters like earthquakes and floods and wars. The Bible foretells events like this before the Day of the Lord when God bring our age to an end.

♥ Could **46:2-3, 6** portray any crisis in **your** life right now? How are you responding to the crisis?

♥ What are some things in our world that truly make you fearful? How do you cope?

♥ Since God is with us in the midst of trouble, how should we respond differently than those who don't know God?

♥ What advice would you offer a friend that is overwhelmed by fear or anxiety?

19. How do the waters of **46:2-3** compare with the waters of verse **46:4**?

Verses 2-3 depict waters that are out of control and are doing great damage. They are dangerous waters. The river in verse 4 is calm, useful flow of water. The river is a metaphor of blessing and restoration. It is a reminder of the river watering the garden of Eden (Genesis 2:10) and the river of the water of life flowing from the Throne of God in Rev. 22:1.

♥ If roaring and foaming water is a metaphor for catastrophe, what might a river be a metaphor for? (Psalm 65:9; Isaiah 43:19-21) **Blessing and restoration and life**

20. The "city of God" (**46:4**) is a metaphor for the people of God or the community of God lovers. What do you learn about the relationship of God to his people in **46:4-6**?

God is WITH his people. The great King has identified himself with his subjects. God doesn't just come and help us in trouble, he is WITH us when we go through trouble. Because God is with his people, they will not fall and when he defends his people, enemies melt and kingdoms fall.

♥ What do you learn about *your* relationship to God in 46:4-6?

♥ How do you feel God's presence in your life?

♥ What connection do you see between **46:4-6** and **Revelation 21:1-4** and **22:1-5**? What do these passages have in common?

21. What invitation does the psalmist extend in **46:8**?

Come and see the works of the Lord

What do God's actions in **46:8-9** reveal about God's character?

He is all powerful, peaceful, just

♥ Describe how the facts of **46:6, 8-10** make you feel. How do these verses affect your worldview?

No matter what is happening in our world, God is in control. He knows it all and one day he will defeat all his enemies and bring a lasting peace.

22. According to **46:10a**, how does one accept the invitation extended in **46:8**?

Be still or silent and know (recognize and understand) that I am God; God is in control.

How would you explain to someone how to do this? How often should it be done?

We need times of being absolutely still and quiet before God, letting our heart recognize and understand who God is. We tend to be in such a hurry and busy with many distractions. Unless we stop everything and focus on God, we lose our perspective. God will not compete with our busy-ness and hurry. If we want to experience him and his peace and strength, we must stop and let our focus be completely on him. Being still and silent and focused on God is one way to worship God and to let his peace flow into our lives.

♥ Is **46:10** a command or a suggestion? Who is speaking in this verse? Does acknowledging the identity of the speaker of these words change their impact on you? **This is a command, not an option. God Himself is speaking. Be still and know that I am God are powerful words to meditate on.**

♥ Listen to what God says in 46:10b. How does your heart respond to these words?

RESPONSE:

Obey the command of **46:10a** for **5-10** minutes. Do not pray, but rather *still yourself completely* and meditate on *knowing* that God *is* God. In the space below, write a description of your experience and any insights you gained or anything you heard God say.

This is something we should do often! It honors God and blesses us. Have any share their experience and also talk about why this is so hard to do sometimes.

On the next page is all the "extra scripture" from this lesson in case you want to make copies for your group so that you can easily read together the verses referred to in the questions.

1John 2:15-17 Stop loving this evil world and all that it offers you, for when you love the world, you show that you do not have the love of the Father in you. **16** For the world offers only the lust for physical pleasure, the lust for everything we see, and pride in our possessions. These are not from the Father. They are from this evil world. **17** And this world is fading away, along with everything it craves. But if you do the will of God, you will live forever.

Acts 17:24-28 “He is the God who made the world and everything in it. Since he is Lord of heaven and earth, he doesn’t live in man-made temples, **25** and human hands can’t serve his needs—for he has no needs. He himself gives life and breath to everything, and he satisfies every need there is. **26** From one man he created all the nations throughout the whole earth. He decided beforehand which should rise and fall, and he determined their boundaries. **27** “His purpose in all of this was that the nations should seek after God and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him—though he is not far from any one of us. **28** For in him we live and move and exist. As one of your own poets says, ‘We are his offspring.’”

John 11:20-27 When Martha got word that Jesus was coming, she went to meet him. But Mary stayed at home. **21** Martha said to Jesus, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. **22** But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask.” **23** Jesus told her, “Your brother will rise again.” **24** “Yes,” Martha said, “when everyone else rises, on resurrection day.” **25** Jesus told her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die like everyone else, will live again. **26** They are given eternal life for believing in me and will never perish. Do you believe this, Martha?” **27** “Yes, Lord,” she told him. “I have always believed you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one who has come into the world from God.”

Acts 2:22-28 “People of Israel, listen! God publicly endorsed Jesus of Nazareth by doing wonderful miracles, wonders, and signs through him, as you well know. **23** But you followed God’s prearranged plan. With the help of lawless Gentiles, you nailed him to the cross and murdered him. **24** However, God released him from the horrors of death and raised him back to life again, for death could not keep him in its grip.

25 King David said this about him: ‘I know the Lord is always with me. I will not be shaken, for he is right beside me. **26** No wonder my heart is filled with joy, and my mouth shouts his praises! My body rests in hope. **27** For you will not leave my soul among the dead or allow your Holy One to rot in the grave. **28** You have shown me the way of life, and you will give me wonderful joy in your presence.’”

Psalms 65:9 You take care of the earth and water it, making it rich and fertile. The rivers of God will not run dry; they provide a bountiful harvest of grain, for you have ordered it so.

Isaiah 43:19-21 For I am about to do a brand-new thing. See, I have already begun! Do you not see it? I will make a pathway through the wilderness for my people to come home. I will create rivers for them in the desert! **20** The wild animals in the fields will thank me, the jackals and ostriches, too, for giving them water in the wilderness. Yes, I will make springs in the desert, so that my chosen people can be refreshed. **21** I have made Israel for myself, and they will someday honor me before the whole world.

Revelation 21:1-4 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the old heaven and the old earth had disappeared. And the sea was also gone. **2** And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven like a beautiful bride prepared for her husband. **3** I heard a loud shout from the throne, saying, “Look, the home of God is now among his people! He will live with them, and they will be his people. God himself will be with them. **4** He will remove all of their sorrows, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. For the old world and its evils are gone forever.”

Revelation 22:1-5 And the angel showed me a pure river with the water of life, clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb, **2** coursing down the center of the main street. On each side of the river grew a tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, with a fresh crop each month. The leaves were used for medicine to heal the nations. **3** No longer will anything be cursed. For the throne of God and of the Lamb will be there, and his servants will worship him. **4** And they will see his face, and his name will be written on their foreheads. **5** And there will be no night there—no need for lamps or sun—for the Lord God will shine on them. And they will reign forever and ever.