



International Bible Lessons Commentary

Uniform Sunday School Lessons Series

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Psalms 33:1-9 [& 10-12]

New Revised Standard Version

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The [International Bible Lesson](#) (*Uniform Sunday School Lessons Series*) for **Sunday, January 1, 2017**, is from **Psalms 33:1-9 (& includes 10-12)**. **Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further** follow the verse-by-verse *International Bible Lesson Commentary*. **Study Hints for Discussion and Thinking Further** will help with class preparation and in conducting class discussion: these hints are available on the [International Bible Lessons Commentary](#) website along with the *International Bible Lesson* that you may want to read to your class as part of your Bible study. You can discuss each week's commentary and lesson at the [International Bible Lesson Forum](#).

(Psalms 33:1) Rejoice in the LORD, O you righteous. Praise befits the upright.

The Holy Spirit inspired David to address this Psalm to the righteous: to those who believe in God, believe what God has revealed in the Scriptures, and obey God – they live by faith in God. Praise involves the expression of holiness in thought and spirit, thankfulness, joy, love toward God, and includes expressing thoughts and/or words about God's character and nature, what God has done in creation and history, what God has done in your life, and what God promises to do in the Scriptures. Only the upright can offer true and sincere praise to God. Music with or without words can express true praise to God.

(Psalms 33:2) Praise the LORD with the lyre; make melody to him with the harp of ten strings.

David was known for his ability to write and sing Psalms as well as play the harp. His playing and singing brought peace and joy to the troubled King Saul before he resolved to kill David – but God's plans prevailed and David was made king after King Saul's death. Despite the Psalms that King Saul heard David sing and the truths they conveyed about God, he never let his heart and thoughts follow God in faith and obedience.

(Psalms 33:3) Sing to him a new song; play skillfully on the strings, with loud shouts.

For almost 2000 years, Christians have been writing and singing new songs of praise to God. Following the singing of the Psalms only in worship for generations, today we remember such songwriters as Isaac Watts, Fanny Crosby, and Steven Curtis Chapman who wrote new songs of praise. While many Christians love to sing the old hymns that teach much about God and God's faithfulness and love, David encouraged believers to also sing new songs of praise that thank God for His many blessings in their own lives and culture. When God saves His people from their sins, sickness, and other troubles, and when God gives them assurance of eternal life and helps them overcome daily challenges and threats, they sing and shout for joy. New mercies demand new songs.

(Psalms 33:4) For the word of the LORD is upright, and all his work is done in faithfulness.

We should joyfully praise and thank God for His holy law, His words of mercy and grace, the Holy Scriptures that truthfully reveal God and God's ways as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God's Word is right, accurate, infallible, unfailing, just, and true. God's Word reveals reality, what truly is, and God's Word became flesh and dwelt among us in Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. What God promises God will do: God is always faithful.

(Psalms 33:5) He loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of the steadfast love of the LORD.

We praise and thank God first for the Bible, because if God had not spoken to us and revealed His nature, character, will, and acts in history, we would be left with the hopeless speculations that many unbelievers learn and experience. Because God loves righteousness (right living defined by God's Word) and justice, God revealed His law and intentions in the Bible and through His Son. Throughout the earth, believers see God's unfailing love expressed day-by-day in many ways, and supremely in Jesus Christ who came to make believers right with God by dying and rising again from the dead.

(Psalms 33:6) By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, and all their host by the breath of his mouth.

We know how and why God made the heavens and the earth only because of God's Word in the Bible. John reveals that through the Word of God, the Son of God, God made the world, the heavens and the earth (John 1). The breath of God's mouth is the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit was involved in creation when God created through the spoken Word (Genesis 1). God breathed life into Adam. We praise and thank God and sing songs of praise because God created the world and us, and God has spoken to the world and us in the Bible, in nature, and supremely in His Son, Jesus Christ.

(Psalms 33:7) He gathered the waters of the sea as in a bottle; he put the deeps in storehouses.

David used descriptive language that would speak to his listeners. They gathered water from their wells in jars and carried their water jars into their homes or to water their animals. God is so great that He controls the sea easier than a woman draws water from a well. God uses the deep sea to accomplish His will easier than a farmer stores grain in a barn. In the days of Noah, God used water to cleanse the earth and then put it back into a deep storehouse.

(Psalms 33:8) Let all the earth fear the LORD; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him.

Because God has spoken and created all things, because God has power over all, all people on earth have reason to fear the Lord. No one can oppose God very long, because they exist only because God wills that they exist moment-by-moment. Fear of God can lead to wisdom and reverence for God. Many people come to the Lord with faith and a desire to obey God because they were first motivated by fear of God and the knowledge that they had not honored God with their thoughts and lives. God sent Jesus Christ into the world to make repentance, faith, salvation, and eternal life possible.

(Psalms 33:9) For he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood firm.

The Book of Genesis reveals that God spoke and created the world. David would not have known this fact if God had not spoken to him in the Scriptures. Likewise, David would not have known the law of God and how to rule as a righteous King if God had not spoken to him in the Law of Moses. Believers (along with all people) “came to be” because of the will of God. The world stands firm because of the will of God. As we obey God’s Word and praise Him, God helps us exist and stand firm no matter what troubles we may face. No matter what happens or may happen, believers can praise and thank God for creating them and caring for them each day.

Psalms 33:10-12

(Psalms 33:10) The LORD brings the counsel of the nations to nothing; he frustrates the plans of the peoples.

The righteous and upright will praise the Lord because God has spoken right and true and is faithful in all He does; furthermore, God created all that is and has power over all of creation, the creation that He rules with justice and unfailing love. But God also has

enemies and we live in a fallen world because of sin. All the nations of the earth combined, no matter how evil their leaders, cannot foil or disrupt the plans of God, but God can foil and totally change the plans of all who oppose Him and His people.

(Psalms 33:11) The counsel of the LORD stands forever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations.

God rules over or governs all creation and God has plans for believers and unbelievers alike. Whatever God plans, God will accomplish. Both the Old and New Testaments reveal that God has planned an inheritance for His children, and they will receive all the blessings God has planned for them according to His perfect timing. God has the heart (will or desire) and the power to bless those who believe in Him through all generations.

(Psalms 33:12) Happy is the nation whose God is the LORD, the people whom he has chosen as his heritage.

God can choose a people or a nation to serve Him and do His will. God can bless any nation so people can witness for Him to all the nations of the earth. God has chosen and used various nations throughout history, but God chose Israel to bless all peoples when He planned for Jesus the Messiah to be born as a descendant of David in the tribe of Judah. God can bless any nation, any people group, any person that accepts Jesus the Messiah as their Lord and Savior, and they will inherit what God has prepared for them.

Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further

1. What does it mean to you to praise God?
2. What type of people should praise God?
3. What facts does the Psalm reveal about the word of God?
4. What facts does the Psalm reveal about God's character?
5. What does the Psalm say about God's love and what God loves?

Begin or close your class by reading the short weekly *International Bible Lesson*.

Visit the [International Bible Lessons Forum](#) for Teachers and Students.

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