



Studying the Psalms

Psalm 114

When Israel went out from Egypt, the house of Jacob from a people of strange language, Judah became God's sanctuary, Israel his dominion. The sea looked and fled; Jordan turned back. The mountains skipped like rams, the hills like lambs. Why is it, O sea, that you flee? O Jordan, that you turn back? O mountains, that you skip like rams? O hills, like lambs? Tremble, O earth, at the presence of the LORD, at the presence of the God of Jacob, who turns the rock into a pool of water, the flint into a spring of water.

Today's Psalm is about *nature* celebrating God. When the Israelites fled Egypt (the story from Exodus) the Psalmist is telling us that nature became their new home and everywhere they went, everywhere they looked they saw nature celebrating God. Remember the Israelites had just met God, their relationship was new and they were just beginning to understand who God was and what God did.

As they traveled towards the Promised Land they began to see the new world around them, all of nature was responding and worshipping God.

For thousands of year we have known that God created Heaven and Earth. Trees, animals, oceans, and people, all of nature was created by God. The Psalmist tells us God is so amazing, all of nature responds.

First, let's list all the different examples of nature that we can find in our Psalm this week. Include them in the box below. *Note: Jordan refers to the River Jordan.*

The mountains are calling and I must go. -John Muir

Psalm 114 mentions so many different things in nature, but it doesn't list them all. It would take hundreds of pages, maybe thousands, maybe tens of thousands to list all of nature. We are even still discovering things in nature today!

We're going to attempt to enjoy as much of nature as we can in our study today. Let's think of different things we see in nature during different times of year. Fill in the boxes below the images.



Now let's go out into the world to experience nature and God's creation. Let's look for things we might see during this season. Let's look for the things the Psalmist mentions in Psalm 114. Let's find new and exciting things we've never seen before. Use the Nature Scavenger Hunt below and take a long walk. You might walk through your neighborhood or through a park nearby. You might even be able to find these things in your own backyard! You won't know until you get out there and look. Do you have a set of binoculars? Bring them along to help you see more things. Try to find everything in the scavenger hunt and then add more things you find.

Finally, the one thing we've been trying to do together these last few weeks is to rewrite the Psalms in our own words. Use the box below to rewrite Psalm 114 in your own words. Talk about how you and all people see nature and how nature celebrates God. You might say something like "The trees sing songs to God!" or "the flowers come in all different colors thanks to God!"

Closing prayer...

Dear God, thank for nature. Thank you for the _____, _____, and _____ we saw today. We hope to celebrate you and all you have created. We want to preserve and take care of your creation. Help us to remember your plants, animals, water, bugs, and flowers each and every day. Show us new ways to see you as we walk through the world. Amen.

