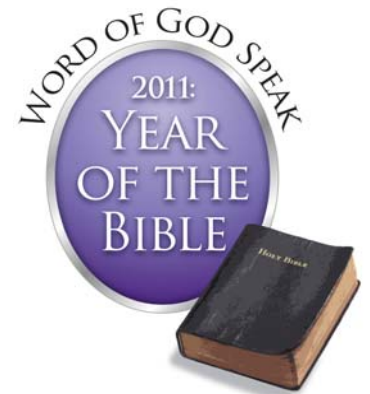


Week 30: Psalms 89-96

Study Guide for the week of July 25-31, 2011



Personal reflection / journaling exercise

This week, spend time with Psalm 89. Some classify this as a Kingship Psalm which details the role of the human king in God's rule over His people and also points ahead to the Messiah, who would inaugurate God's kingdom. Where do you see Psalm 89 pointing to Jesus, the Messiah? Do you think it is appropriate for Christians, including writers of the New Testament, to use this psalm to teach that Jesus is the Messiah, the King, the Son of David who has come to bring in God's Kingdom? How would you defend your answer? What is the sudden change that takes place at verse 38? Contrast what is being said before and after verse 38. Have you ever in one moment praised God for his faithfulness and then in the next moment lamented that God seemed to have forgotten you? What was that like for you? How would you describe this as characteristic of our journey of faith?

Discussion starters *If you are leading a small group, you may not have time for all of these questions. Pick the ones that will work best for your group.*

1. Ice Breaker Question: Share a story from a favorite summer trip you experienced.
2. Was there something that jumped out at you, surprised you, encouraged you, or disturbed you from the readings this last week (or two)? Why?
3. Psalm 90 What is the feeling that you get as you read this psalm? How would you sum up this psalm in one or two sentences? How does, or does not, this psalm inspire faith in you?
4. Psalm 91 I read this psalm often when visiting someone in the hospital, especially if the person's health seems to be failing. Where in this psalm are there words that make this an appropriate use of this psalm? Where do you find strength in this psalm?
5. Psalm 92:4 What does it take for us to come to the point where we have the feelings expressed in verse 4?
6. Psalm 94 You can outline this psalm into five sections: Verses 1-7; 8-11; 12-15; 16-19; 20-23. Summarize what each section is saying. How does this psalm give expression to any experiences you have had?
7. Psalm 95 The end of verse seven seems to divide this psalm in two. How do you see these two halves fitting together in the same psalm? See Exodus 17:1-16 for the historical reference in verse 8. Do you tend to respond to the message of God's reign with obedience or complaint?
8. Psalm 96 A wild idea would be to read this psalm loudly outside somewhere, maybe standing on a big hill, out in the woods, on an overpass, or even in your back yard. Proclaim it out loud to the neighborhood, the city, the world! Take a walk in the woods somewhere and loudly read this psalm. How did you feel when you did this? Did doing this encourage your faith? How?

Bible verse to memorize: Psalm 91:1-2

Caring Time

It is important to make time in your group to care for each other. Sometimes that happens during the discussion and sometimes it is best to end your time together praying for each other. One possibility this week would be to share a high and a low that you experienced since the last time you met. As you listen to each other, if there is a situation that calls for prayer, have a person volunteer to pray for that concern. After everyone has shared go into a time of prayer with people praying for the concerns that were expressed.

Also encourage people in the group to get together outside of the group time to foster deeper friendships with each other. Remember that being in a small group is primarily about sharing life together. It has been said that the most important time in small groups is the time people connect outside of the meeting time. Make plans now with your small group to enjoy an end of the summer event together.