



Mid-week Bible Study - week commencing 28/02/21

Psalm 95 "Flock under his care" - House group Notes

Prepared by Mervyn

Following on from the service on Sunday, this psalm continues the theme of sheep and the shepherd. As I read it through, it took me on an unexpected journey challenging me to be sensitive to God's voice, and examining my heart for hard hearted attitudes.

Psalm 95

1Come, let us sing for joy to the LORD; let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation.

2Let us come before him with thanksgiving and extol him with music and song.

3For the LORD is the great God, the great King above all gods.

4In his hand are the depths of the earth, and the mountain peaks belong to him.

5The sea is his, for he made it, and his hands formed the dry land.

6Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the LORD our Maker;

7for he is our God and we are the people of his pasture, the flock under his care.
Today, if you hear his voice,

8"Do not harden your hearts as you did at Meribah, as you did that day at Massah in the wilderness,

9where your ancestors tested me; they tried me, though they had seen what I did.

10For forty years I was angry with that generation; I said, 'They are a people whose hearts go astray, and they have not known my ways.'

11So I declared on oath in my anger, 'They shall never enter my rest.' "



The first part of the psalm calls us to worship with song, and wonders at the great themes of creation and salvation. Then the majesty of God who is the great king above all other god's is displayed along side his care for us, his flock.

How do you imagine or visualise verse 3 - The Lord is the great God, the great King above all gods.

How does being part of his flock and under his care pan out in your everyday life?

During the service we established that Jesus isn't a shepherd that exploits us, but elevates us.

In this world people are exploited in all different ways. Are there any small changes (or big) that we could make in the way we live that would reduce the exploitation of others?

Have you ever been exploited? How did you feel?





The second part of the psalm changes tone from half way through verse 7, and challenges us to be sensitive, and listen out for God's voice right now (today). It warns us not to harden our hearts to God, and shows that if we persist with a hard heart we will miss out on God's rest.

Meribah and Massah are mentioned as places where the people grumbled against God because they needed water. They doubted his care and provision, making the accusation that God had led them into the desert to die of thirst. You can read about the Israelites journey out of Egypt in Exodus 17 .

Psalm 95 reflects on this wilderness journey, as God waits for a whole generation of Israelites to die, because they consistently doubted his goodness, grumbling against him. God waited for a new generation with a different attitude, and heart condition that he could lead into the promised land.

Israel can be a metaphor for us as individual believers. Are there hard places in our hearts that are keeping us from being fully at rest in God's promises.

Similarly, Egypt can be a metaphor for worldliness and unbelief. I find the following often quoted phrase helpful and challenging "It took God one night to get Israel out of Egypt, but 40 years to get Egypt out of Israel."



The term 'hard hearted' makes me think of stubborn attitudes, a cold and unloving manner, unforgiveness and keeping grudges against people. [Today, are there any 'hard hearted' attitudes in our lives that are stopping us from enjoying God's promises and his presence?](#)



[Are we conscious of God's voice in any area of our lives today?](#)

Here are some lyrics to a song that make a good prayer...

Soften my heart, Lord
Soften my heart
From all indifference
Set me apart
To feel Your compassion
To weep with Your tears
Come soften my heart, O Lord
Soften my heart.

