



## BALM PSALMS: PSALM 95

### Community Group Study Guide - Week of August 1, 2021

#### Introduction

- Holistic worship of God doesn't just consist of taking in nature or honoring God in all that we do throughout the week, but also consists of living and worshipping together within the confines of covenantal church community. This is what Psalm 95 is about. See Hebrews 10:24-25.

#### 1. Worship God with Your Lips (1-5)

- This is a psalm of ascent, that was sung by covenant believers in Israel as they made their way to Jerusalem (three times a year) for worship at the temple.
- The focus of the text is God, mentioned explicitly in verses 1,3 and 6, and indirectly (with synonyms and pronouns) 26 times. God is the rock of salvation, who provides living water to those who are truly thirsty, worthy of our worship.
- V2: Arriving at the entrance of the temple is like coming before the face of God. This underlies the reality and importance of this meeting. The psalm shows the kind of anticipation that we should have when we think about coming to worship, to come into the presence of God, hear his word preached, and partake in communion.
- V3-5: These verses explain why we worship God. We worship a great God, who blesses us materially, but in our material blessing we must not forget how he blesses us spiritually. At Meribah and Massah, the people forgot what God had recently done to save them, as well as his present work for the, when they got thirsty and put God to the test.

#### 2. Worship God with Your Love (6-7a)

- The call for Christians is not to just worship with love, but with reverential love. We don't worship God as equals, but as sinners (saved by grace) before a holy God. We show acknowledgment of who God is as our creator, the creator of the universe, the supreme God and King, and savior, by willfully laying ourselves down before him. This involves physically bowing down. This humbles us. The prostrate position before God pays recognition to God's glory and provides for our greatest flourishing.
- V6: The word used for come means "to enter." We're to view worship as entering into God's presence.
- V7: This verse provides another reason for why we worship God after we called to worship in the above verse. We're to worship because God is "our God." He is like a shepherd to us and we are his sheep. When we obey, we will have the comforting and protective presence of our good shepherd.
- We worship with our lips and our love, not because we get something out of it. In corporate worship, we surrender. How do we know it's not lip service? Jesus shows us that we must look at our lives.

#### 3. Worship God with Your Life (7b-11)

- V7-9: To understand these verses, imagine the high priest at temple giving instructions as the pilgrims are kneeling in the temple court.
- Exodus 17:1-7 provides the context for Meribah and Massah.
- The "testing" mentioned in verse 9 is in reference to when the people questioned whether the Lord was with them at these difficult times. It was a self-centered demand for something that the people thought they needed most, one which revealed that they had forgotten God's previous work of salvation that they recently experienced and were only thinking about their comfort and needs.
- The people of the Old Testament typically (1) fell into sin, (2) received punishment from God, (3) gave lip service in repentance, (4) had the punishment taken away, and (5) continued sinning

## DISCUSSION GOALS

### Head

To understand why we worship and how we worship.

### Heart

To worship God, not to get something from it, but to do so out of love and thankfulness for who he is and his grace toward us.

### Hands

To literally bow before the Lord in prayer regularly and worship God with humility constantly in life and in the church.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next **Baptism Seminar** will be held on August 29 after the 11:15am service (~1PM). Meet Pastor Andy in the Temple basement.

### Mini Mo and Sunday Operations Teams still need volunteers!

These teams are always in need of new team members. Fill out an online connection card to submit interest in these teams.

We're desperate for volunteers who can **pick up coffee** starting August 22. Email [admin@mosaicboston.com](mailto:admin@mosaicboston.com).

again.

- We need to check that this is not the pattern of our own lives. To make sure we are not following the pattern we should ask, "Where am I putting God to the test because he's not giving me what I want?" The answers reveal where we are exhibiting hardness of heart.
- Jesus' Parable of the Sower (Matthew 13:1-23) can help us identify the condition of our heart before God.
- Do we have the faith exhibited by Augustin when we said, "Command what you will and grant what you command"?
- We need to understand that in the flesh, apart from God's power, we don't actually have the power to love God and want to do what he commands (Ephesians 4:30-31). All are born in sin and need peace with the father through Jesus Christ in order to have a changed heart to do God's work and have the Holy Spirit who enables us to do it.
- When it is difficult to love our neighbor, as commanded, we get the power to do so when we recollect that God has chosen and still chooses to love us despite our sin before him. If he's been gracious and merciful to us in our sin, we can be gracious and merciful to others in their sin.
- V10-11: When we reject God over and over, there comes a point when his presence/rest is no longer available to us.
- In life and in public worship we should heed the words of Jesus Christ in Matthew 11:28-30 when he calls us to "come" to him.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

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### **Read Psalm 95**

1. Can someone summarize the main sections of the sermon?
2. Scanning the text, what are the primary themes of this psalm?
3. Psalm 95 is called a Psalm of Ascent. What was special about traveling to Jerusalem to worship at the temple during the Old Testament period?
4. Do you do anything special to prepare your heart for Sunday morning worship?
5. What would you say to someone who identified as Christian and insisted that they didn't need to go to worship services or be a member of a church?
6. What are some of the reasons provided in the psalm for "why" we worship God?
7. This psalm tells us to "kneel before our maker." Why do Christians kneel when they pray (and sometimes worship)?
8. What was the sin of the people at Meribah and Massah (see Exodus 17:1-7)?
9. How do you tend to act like the people at Meribah and Massah? Are there parts of the Bible to which you simply pay lip service?
10. How do we get the power to follow God's command to love your neighbor when it is difficult?