Shalom AZ Ministries

In Pursuit of Israel's Redemption

"Soften Your Heart"

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Devotion and Discussion Questions

Key Texts (TLV): Psalm 95; *Exodus 17:1-7; Num. 20:1-13; Heb. 3:6-4:16; Is. 66:1*

It's possible to know what God has done and still struggle to trust Him with what comes next. We remember answered prayers and the ways He carried us through impossible situations. Yet a new challenge makes us ask, "Is ADONAI really with us? Will He provide this time?" Have we allowed His faithfulness to soften our hearts? That's the challenge of Psalm 95. It begins with an invitation to worship, but it ends with a warning about unbelief. And those two things belong together.

Psalm 95 takes us on a journey into the presence of the great God, the King over all, the Maker of the earth and the Shepherd of His people. We begin with joyful shouting, move toward surrender, and hear: "Today, if you hear His voice"(Ps. 95:7). What will we do when He speaks? Will we follow, or let fear and complaint harden our hearts? Worship must lead to trust.

1. GET GOING AND PRAISE THE ROCK OF YOUR SALVATION (PS. 95:1–5)

Psalm 95 opens with "O come, let us sing for joy to ADONAI" (Ps. 95:1). But that word "come" carries the force of an imperative: walk! Move it! Let's get going! This is the beginning of a journey toward His presence, toward encountering His face. And as we go, we're told to raise our voices. The Hebrew words behind "sing for joy" and "shout" are powerful. *Ranan* calls for a loud cry, and *ruah* can describe a war cry or cry of alarm. Get walking, and get loud! Shout to the Rock of our salvation, the fortress of our deliverance and victory.

Then we come into His Presence, (lit. "before His face") with thanksgiving, and our attention turns to who He is. ADONAI is not merely one great power among others. He is THE great God and THE great King above all "gods". The depths of the earth that we cannot explore are in His hand. The mountain peaks that we cannot reach are His too. The sea is His because He made it, and His hands formed the dry land. The One who holds those depths and heights invites us near. When circumstances seem enormous, remember that none compare to Him. There is none like Him.

2. BOW BEFORE YOUR MAKER AND TRUST YOUR SHEPHERD (PS. 95:6–7)

As the worshipers draw near, the invitation changes. "Come, let us worship and bow down. Let us kneel before ADONAI our Maker" (Ps. 95:6). Notice the threefold focus on our posture: worship, bow down, kneel. We move from shouting with all our strength to humbling ourselves before His face. This is reverence. The great God, the King over all, the One who made the seas and shaped the land, is our Maker. He is the One before whom

we lay ourselves down. We don't demand that He follow our plans. We bow because He alone is worthy.

And here is the incredible part: this great God is ***OUR*** God, and we are the people of His pasture, the flock of His hand (Ps. 95:7)! He holds the depths of the earth, but He also holds **US!** We aren't approaching a God who is waiting to crush or humiliate us. He is the Rock of our deliverance and the Shepherd who feeds, leads, and cares for His flock. He knows us. We belong to Him. We can humble ourselves and let Him lift our heads. When we know the greatness of the One who shepherds us, obedience becomes more than a frightening leap into the unknown. It becomes our trusting response to the Shepherd's voice.

3. TODAY, HEAR HIS VOICE AND DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEART (PS. 95:7–11)

Then comes the turning point: "Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your heart" (Ps. 95:7–8). Today. Not someday, when everything makes sense or when every question has been answered. Today. Psalm 95 warns us not to repeat what happened at Meribah and Massah in the wilderness. Meribah speaks of contention and strife, of treating God almost as an adversary. Massah recalls testing Him, demanding that He prove Himself. The people asked, "Is ADONAI among us, or not?" (Ex. 17:7). They had been rescued from slavery, crossed the sea, and experienced His provision. Yet when another need arose, they responded with complaint and doubt instead of trust. They had seen His works, but their hearts still wandered.

We are prone do the same. We say that we trust the Lord, yet when the Spirit prompts us to take another step beyond what we understand, we hesitate: "Well, I don't know. Prove it." We question tomorrow despite what He did yesterday. Psalm 95 says that generation did not know His ways, and they did not enter His rest. The writer of Hebrews takes this warning seriously: "*Take care, brothers and sisters, that none of you has an* ***evil heart of unbelief*** *that falls away from the living God*" (Heb. 3:12). We need encouragement so fear does not harden us. When His Word exposes something in our hearts, will it soften us, or will we become like bricks under the heat? Do not let His voice become another occasion for argument. Listen. Trust. Follow.

CONCLUSION — THE REST GOD STILL OFFERS

The warning in Psalm 95 is serious, but it is also an invitation filled with hope. Hebrews reminds us that God's promise of rest remains open (Heb. 4:8-9). He invites us to settle into the care of the One who made us. And we are not left to find that rest in our own strength. Hebrews points us to Yeshua, our great *Kohen Gadol* (High Priest), who understands our weaknesses and invites us to draw near to the throne of grace for mercy and help in our time of need (Heb. 4:14–16). That brings us right back to the beginning of Psalm 95: Come! Get going! Draw near to His face. Shout with thanksgiving, bow in reverence, and listen with a willing heart. ADONAI has shown Himself faithful. What will we do when He speaks today? Don't walk in fear. Walk in trust. Walk in faith.

Take a moment and consider where you may have begun to contend with ADONAI instead of trusting Him. Perhaps there is a decision you've been avoiding, a step of obedience you've been resisting, or a fear that keeps whispering, “Is He really with me?” Maybe you've seen His wonders but grown guarded or stubborn. Don't hide it. He knows your heart. Bring those places before Him. Ask Him to show you where you've been demanding another sign when He's already called you to follow.

Today, if you hear His voice, respond. Turn away from unbelief, surrender your need to control the outcome, and place your trust in Yeshua. If you've drifted away, come back to the living God. Our great Kohen Gadol understands our weakness. Ask for mercy, receive His help, and choose the next step of obedience He is placing before you. Let His voice melt what fear has hardened. He is your Maker, your Shepherd, and the Rock of your salvation. Come near, and trust Him.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How does the movement from joyful shouting to bowing and kneeling in Psalm 95 change the way you understand worship?
2. What does it mean personally to know that the Creator of the depths, mountains, and seas also calls you one of the sheep of His pasture?
3. Where in your life right now are you tempted to say, “Prove it,” rather than trust what ADONAI has already shown you?
4. What might a softened heart look like in a difficult decision, strained relationship, or uncertain season this week?
5. According to Hebrews 3–4, how do trust, obedience, encouragement, and God's promised rest belong together?

CLOSING PRAYER

ADONAI, You are the great God and King above all. The deepest depths and highest mountains are in Your hand, and still You know me, feed me, and hold me as the sheep of Your pasture. Thank You for Your wonders and faithfulness. Forgive me for the times I've responded to Your leading with complaint, fear, and unbelief. Forgive me for demanding more proof. Search my heart and reveal where I've grown hard or wandered from Your ways.

By Your Spirit, soften my heart today. Give me ears to hear Your voice and the courage to shema—to listen and obey. Teach me to bow before You in reverence and walk with You in trust. Thank You for Yeshua, our great Kohen Gadol, through whom we may draw near to Your throne of grace. Help us receive Your mercy, hold firmly to our hope, encourage one another, and enter the rest You have promised. I choose to follow you – to trust you with my whole heart, and not to lean on my own understanding.

B’Shem Yeshua, In the name of Yeshua, amen.