

Bible Study on Psalms

Liturgical Psalms – God Unites His People in Worship

The liturgical psalms were used either at one of the three yearly Jewish festivals and/or at other times of worship in the temple.

A few psalms that fit into this category are Psalms 68, 113, 115, and 122.

Psalm 68

Read Psalm 68 and work through these questions.

1. Psalm 68 praises God for his saving power and strength. It may have been written for the procession when David brought the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem (2 Samuel 6). Verses 5-10 describe things both that God had done and was doing for his people as they traveled to Jerusalem for festivals. Describe these blessings.
 - a. Verse 5...
 - b. Verse 6...
 - c. Verse 7...
 - d. Verse 9...
 - e. Verse 10...
2. When the ark was placed in the temple, this action completed God's conquest of the Promised Land for his people (vv. 15-18). What conquest does Christ's ascension into heaven complete? See Hebrews 2:14-15
3. Verses 25-35 offer further praise to God's almighty power. What will God's power shown through Jesus' death and resurrection cause all kings to do?

Psalm 113

Read Psalm 113 and work through these questions.

1. In verses 4-9 the psalmist uses seven verbs that describe the actions of God. List them.
2. As human beings, we are poor and needy, mired in the dust and ash heap of our sins. How has God raised and lifted you out of this mess? See Colossians 1:21-22 & 2 Corinthians. 5:21
3. What insights does this give you as you think about your own personal reasons to praise and worship our Lord?

Psalm 115

Read Psalm 115 and work through these questions.

1. Who speaks in the following verses?
 - a. 1-8...
 - b. 9-11...
 - c. 12-13...
 - d. 14-15...
 - e. 16-18...
2. Verses 4-8 warn those who worship idols of a grave danger. What is the warning?
3. Verses 9-11 feature a triple repetition which calls upon all of God's people to trust in him as their help and shield. Triple repetition is a common feature in liturgical psalms. Why is this truth repeated?
4. How many times do you find the words "bless" or "blessed" in verses 12-15? What does this tell you about God's plan for you?

Psalm 122

Read Psalm 122 and work through these questions.

1. Psalm 122 was most likely sung by a pilgrim to Jerusalem who journeyed there for one of the yearly festivals. Its title notes it as a "song of ascents."
 - a. What words in verse 1-2 describe David's feelings as he arrived in Jerusalem?
 - b. Have you ever experienced a similar reaction as you came to church for worship? If so explain what brought about such joy and excitement in your heart.
2. Read verses 3-5 & 7. What does the name, "the house of the Lord" tell you about the temple?
3. People often call their place of worship, "God's house." Where else does God dwell? See 1 Corinthians 3:16.
4. Each week when we join in worship together with other believers, it can be said that we too have "journeyed to Jerusalem." What are 3 or 4 activities that take place in your worship service each week. Tell how each focuses on Jesus and gives you peace.

After reading and rereading a psalm, ask yourself these questions. What words or phrases stick out to you? How do these words or phrases reveal the poet's purpose for the psalm? What effect does this psalm have on you as you meditate on it?