

Summer Psalms 2024: Psalm 88 & 8

Sunday 7th July 2024

Welcome to Psalm 88

- When you're feeling fed up or struggling with your mental health, what strategies do you use to make you feel better?

Word

Read Psalm 88

1. What do you think is the structure of this Psalm?
2. As you read this Psalm what is missing?
3. In verses 3-5, what is the Psalmist's situation? Can you identify uses of hyperbole (exaggeration) to articulate his situation?
4. In verses 6-14, what is the Psalmist saying about God?
5. In verse 7 and verse 16 the Psalmist laments about God's wrath. What are the similarities between these verses? What picture does it give of God's wrath?
6. With what does the Psalm end? How do you feel about where the Psalm ends?

Challenging us:

7. Why include such a Psalm as this in the Bible?
8. Depression and anxiety are real for many people. What things in this Psalm indicate that this may be the case for Psalmist? How does he deal with it?
9. "We can worship God in our despair." What do you think about this statement in the light of Psalm 88?
10. In what ways does Jesus lift us from such despair?

Worship & Witness

- Continue to pray for those people who are on your frontline

- Pray for anyone you know who is struggling with their mental health just now
- Thank God that he is there to help us in any situation

A Prayer to read

Lord, I praise you that you are a God who understands what it is like to be human! That you understand what it is to be hopeless in the dark. That you have been tried and tempted in every way, as we have. So, when I struggle, I can go to you, my wonderful counsellor, in my need. Amen.

Welcome to Psalm 8

- If you could put any human (alive or dead) in charge of the world, who would you choose and why?

Word

Read Psalm 8

This is an important Psalm when thinking about what it is to be human. This is the first praise psalm. The lament run is broken by a reminder of our created place in God's Cosmos. This psalm reorientates us after the confronting impact of Ps 3 – 7. As such we are reminded (contrary to the words of the enemies in Ps 2:1) that we are not a mistake, God has given us a particular place in his created order and he is mindful of us!

1. What do you think is the structure of this Psalm?
2. What do we learn about God in this Psalm?
3. Given the majesty of God evidenced in the heavens and all of creation how do we know that we matter to God?
4. What is the role of human beings within creation? How have we done?
5. In what ways does this Psalm help us to view other human beings?
6. How does this Psalm make a distinction between human beings and the rest of creation?

Challenging us:

7. What does it mean that God is majestic?
8. The Psalmist is astonished that God could create the heavens and the earth and everything in them. Why do think it is that God seems to care for us (Verse 4)?
9. In what ways does this Psalm help us to view other human beings? What distinctions does this Psalm make between humans? What distinctions do we make? Are the distinctions we make helpful?
10. In what ways can we better care for/rule over God's creation? What vulnerable people in our area are there and how can we care for them?

Worship and Witness

- Continue to pray for those people who are on your frontline
- Thank God for his beautiful creation and for the place that we have in it
- Ask God to show you how you can better care for his creation
- Ask God to show you how you can show more respect and care for other people

A Prayer to read:

Majestic God, how is it possible that we fill your mind? You love and care for us so much you were willing to become a weak infant and vulnerable child, in order to save us. Now help me, in all my daily interactions, to treat every person I meet as being infinitely precious in your sight.

11. Amen