

Transformed By Praise

Week 11 Study Questions (pp. 147-157)

“The Book of Psalms said to the original readers and says to us: ‘He is coming. You cannot see him with the eyes of flesh, but with the eyes of faith you can see him on the horizon. Live with hope, because the promise is that the promise stands.’”

Group Questions

Discussion starter: Have you ever been “swept up” in another person’s vision or dream of a better world (or a better life for you)? Describe your experience of first hearing the message, whether or not you “bought into” the dream, and what became of it after the “dust settled.”

1. In the first part of chapter 6 the author argues that books 4-5 of the Psalms teach that the King is coming and he is the Lord. What else do books 4-5 of the Psalms teach about the coming king? How were these truths comforting to the original audience? How should they comfort Christians today?
2. Recall the overarching flow of thought in the Psalms from books 1-3. Describe the “note” on which Book 3 ends (Psalm 89). Read Psalm 132 (from Book 5) and explain how it answers the problem addressed in Psalm 89.
3. Psalm 132:11-18 contains several promises from the Lord regarding the coming Messianic king. What are these promises? How are they fulfilled in Christ? In what ways do the Lord’s people benefit from these promises?
4. Psalm 118 is a thanksgiving song for the Lord’s blessings of life and military victory. This psalm was also frequently quoted by NT writers because it was considered messianic. Explain why Psalm 118 could have led to misunderstandings in Jesus’ time about the person and role of the Messiah.

5. Read Matthew 21:23-46 (esp. v. 42), keeping in mind the chronological context of the scene. What does Jesus teach in this parable regarding the Messiah? By what means does the Messiah triumph?

6. Consider what it means to walk in the footsteps of Jesus. If we are to follow Christ and be united to him, what should we expect of our lives this side of the grave? What should we expect when the Messianic king returns (or calls us home in death)? See 1 Peter 4:12-19.

7. On page 156 the author writes, “when Jesus comes, the blessedness of Psalm 1 comes in all its fullness. So we live with faith that the Lord reigns in spite of all evidence to the contrary. And this faith is a faith that lives in keeping with the Lord’s instructions for an abundant life. And we live with hope—hope for more and more of this abundant life now and the fullness of this abundant life at the second coming...” How has this study of the Book of Psalms changed your view of God? Of the Bible’s promises? Of the Christian life?

Digging Deeper

With a discussion partner, prepare a rough outline using selected Psalms that you could use to counsel/instruct a Christian friend who might be questioning God’s promise to return as King.

Application

For the next 30-45 days, make it a priority to read the entire Book of Psalms. Keep a journal of your faith journey during the period. Once a week, discuss with a friend what you have learned and how God is changing your heart.

Note: One reading plan is to read 5 psalms per day (less when the psalms are longer, more when the psalms are shorter).