

Praise the Lord! Praise God in his sanctuary; praise him in his mighty heavens! (Psalm 150:1)

Amazing God, we worship and adore you. We lift up your holy name, which is delightful and precious to our ears. Thank you for all the many ways you have shown your love and grace among us. May our songs and prayers be pleasing to you, O Lord, and may our lives proclaim your greatness for all generations. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Introduction

The Book of Psalms served as the “hymn book” for the people of Israel. The songs and poetry it contains reflect a range of human emotions, from joy to sadness. Similar to the songs we sing in church today, many of the psalms were used in worship, accompanied by musicians, to give praise to the Lord!

Read: Psalm 95:1-7 and 150

On reading these verses, what are some of your initial impressions and questions? What stands out to you?

The Biblical Context

Throughout the Old Testament you can find instances of poetry, proverbs, and songs. But there are some books in the Bible written entirely in this style. In addition to the Law and the Prophets, the Jewish people referred to this third category in the Bible as “the Writings.”

The Bible is honest in reflecting the real-life experience of faith in our lives — both good times and bad. The people of Scripture were not so different from us; they experienced joy as well as pain, happiness as well as hardship. This is reflected in the Book of Psalms.

In the Psalms we find the thoughts and prayers of God’s people who were facing situations common to us all. God gives us these words to read and speak to express our own faith in the many different circumstances in which we may find ourselves.

Discussion Questions

1. The Book of Psalms is a collection of songs, poetry, and prayers directed to God that express many different emotions. How does having written words like this help us to pray together as people of faith?
2. In what way(s) do the Psalms remind us that we all share the same human experience? Why is that important to know?
3. When you read Psalm 95:1-7, what attitude do you feel expressed by the writer? In what way might reading this Psalm help *you* to have that same attitude? How does God’s Word change us?
4. Thankfulness and praise often go hand in hand. Write down some specific things you are thankful for. Then express your praise to God for the gifts he has given you.
5. What does Psalm 95:7 mean when it says “we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand”? What is God to us?
6. In Psalm 150:2, for what reasons are we told to praise God? What example can you give from the Bible that exemplifies this? What examples from your life also show that this is true?
7. In Psalm 150:3-5, what musical instruments are mentioned? In our lives of faith, why do you think we use music and song to praise and worship God?
8. Read Colossians 3:12-17. How do our everyday actions and the way we treat each other express our thanks and praise to God? How should our actions match our words?