

Spiritual Talk

Discussion and Understand the Context are adapted from EXPLORE THE BIBLE: PSALMS –INSPIRING TRUTHS
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Psalm 95

1 Come, let us shout joyfully to the Lord, shout triumphantly to the rock of our salvation! 2 Let us enter His presence with thanksgiving; let us shout triumphantly to Him in song. 3 For the Lord is a great God, a great King above all gods. 4 The depths of the earth are in His hand, and the mountain peaks are His. 5 The sea is His; He made it. His hands formed the dry land. 6 Come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the Lord our Maker. 7 For He is our God, and we are the people of His pasture, the sheep under His care. Today, if you hear His voice: 8 Do not harden your hearts as at Meribah, as on that day at Massah in the wilderness 9 where your fathers tested Me; they tried Me, though they had seen what I did. 10 For 40 years I was disgusted with that generation; I said, "They are a people whose hearts go astray; they do not know My ways." 11 So I swore in My anger, "They will not enter My rest."

Understand the Context

Psalm 95 may have been composed for the Festival of Booths. This week long feast celebrated the ingathering of the harvest and commemorated Israel's Exodus from Egyptian slavery. During this holiday the Israelites erected temporary living quarters to remind them of God's providential care during the years in the wilderness. The booths symbolized God's protection and preservation. Living in the Booths for a week reminded Israel of God's protection during this part of its history.

This is a Psalm of praise and warning from God. The Festival of Booths was a joyful time to celebrate God's protection and provision. However, instead of rejoicing, the Israelites complained. God answers their praises in verses 1–7a with a stern warning. He reminds them of the judgment against their faithless ancestors, the generation that perished during the 40 years in the wilderness. In the New Testament Hebrews 3:7-4:13 quotes verses 7b-11 and essentially states that faithlessness to the gospel will incur an even worse fate than the one the Israelites suffered.

Discussion

- In what ways does the earth point to the greatness of God as Creator? What parts of creation causes the greatest fear? How do these fearsome things point to God?
- How is the image of shepherd and his sheep a fitting metaphor for the relationship between God and His people?
- As a group, list ways to worship God as Creator.
- Examine your attitude towards worship. What actions can you take to foster humility and reverence in your worship practice and experiences?

