



INVESTIGATE

Read Exodus 17:1-7 for background on this warning against failure to trust God.

V10: how does the time spent by the Children of Israel wandering in the desert illustrate God's attitude to obedience?



THINK IT THROUGH

"Todaydo not harden your hearts...." The Israelites were resisting and disobeying God: we too can do the same. How easy is it for Christians to harden their hearts today? How can we avoid this happening to us?

Read these verses: Acts 5:39; 7:51; Romans 9:20

Are we as concerned as much about hardened hearts (towards God) as we are about the danger of hardened arteries? Which is more serious?

Read Hebrews 3: 7-19 for a New Testament perspective on this.



TAKE ACTION

Let's bring joyful worship to Him, responding in thanksgiving to God for all that he has done for us.



PRAY IT THROUGH

- Bring your worship to God for being our Saviour, Rock, Shepherd, & Lawgiver.
- Bring to our sovereign God one situation which you can entrust to Him.
- Give thanks that he is our God.
- Pray for soft hearts that listen to God's voice and obey it.

Dipping into the Psalms

SMALL GROUPS SHEET
WEEK BEGINNING 19 AUGUST 2012

Study 2 "Singing for Joy"
Psalm 95

Oakhall
CHURCH WELCOMES YOU



FOR STARTERS

Have you ever felt so happy that you have sung for joy? Perhaps you have some good news after school or college exam results have been published? Or the offer of a job after a long period after work? The safe delivery of a long-awaited baby? Or just the sense that it is good to be alive when you wake up to a sunny morning and the prospect of the day ahead? Singing, humming and whistling are often the way we react to good news or our sense of well-being.



BACKGROUND

Psalms 95 is likely to have been used by a priest to call the pilgrim people coming to the temple to get ready for worship of God. It may have been used at the Feast of Tabernacles when the people of Israel remembered their time in the wilderness, when they were forced to live in temporary shelters or “tabernacles”. It seems that the Psalmist is referring to worship that is collective (not individual) and vocal (not silent) in nature.



INVESTIGATE

Read Psalm 95 v1-7: A call to praise

V1: Where does the Psalmist encourage us to direct our singing and thanksgiving? How are God’s characteristics described in this verse? Why would a rock be a powerful reminder to Israel of God’s saving power (read Exodus 17:1-7)?

V3-5: these words explain God’s character and are mirrored elsewhere in the Psalms. What is their purpose? What are we encouraged to do, and why?



THINK IT THROUGH

Some churches include a “call to worship” as part of their service. Do we need to prepare ourselves more thoroughly as we come to worship God? Do we enter times of worship in a rush or in a more thoughtful and prepared attitude? Is our worship truly God-centred?



INVESTIGATE

V6: In response to God’s greatness and his acts, what should be our approach as we come to God in worship? Why should our approach be this way?

V7a-c: what picture is painted of God in this verse? What privileges do we receive?



THINK IT THROUGH

He is our God, with two sides to his nature:
a. Far above us: holy, pure and wise b. God with us, “Immanuel”
How should this affect our worship?



INVESTIGATE

Read Psalm 95 v7d-11: A call for softened hearts

V8-11: The mood changes dramatically; a solemn warning is to follow. The Psalmist reminds them of past judgements at Massah and Meribah and the implications of them.