

Belmont Exeter House Group Notes
w/c 19th November 2023
Psalms of Christmas – Psalm 103:6-14 – Peace

Christmas reminds of God's initiative in history and in our lives. He made the steps towards us to invite us into His kingdom. His arrival gives us hope of fulfilment when we are thirsty for something more. His coming brings us peace when we were enemies because of sin. When we recognize the Lord Almighty who comes in flesh to save us, we respond with joyful celebration, and in love towards Him and others.

As we prepare to celebrate the arrival in history of God in a body, we look at the themes of hope, peace, joy, love as we welcome the Lord Jesus into our lives and communities. His presence with us, Immanuel, is the work of God for which generations had been waiting. As they waited, they prayed, sung the stories of God's work in history, and looked for His coming salvation.

We've chosen these psalms as a soundtrack to help us share in the long preparation for Jesus' first coming, and to turn our eyes and voices towards praise of Immanuel, God with us.

Resources

Signposts – A devotional map for the Psalms, Derek Tidball, IVP
Psalms for Everyone (Psalm 73 – 150) – John Goldingay, SPCK
The Message of the Psalms (73 – 150) – Michael Wilcock, IVP

The following songs are based on Psalm 103 and could be used in a time of prayer, reflection, praise.
(Click on the title to visit the webpage)

[Bless the Lord O my soul.](#) Sovereign Grace

[My soul will sing with all the strength I have in me](#) - Stuart Townend

[Praise to the Lord, the Almighty](#)

BIG IDEA: Jesus, the prince of peace, brings reconciliation between God and people. And from this comes reconciliation between people.

WAY IN: Tell us about when something unexpected and good happened to you in recent weeks.

Read the whole of Psalm 103. Our focus tonight is on v 6 – 14

DIG IN

1. Working through v 6 – 8, what characteristics of God are highlighted? Expand on what you understand by these characteristics. Are there other parts of the bible which help understand these characteristics in more depth?
Some examples could be – you 'll have others
Justice (v6) - Psalm 9:7 -8 / Proverbs 21:15
Revelation (v7) - Hebrews 1:1-3 / Exodus 3:1-6 / John 1:1-12
Mercy (v8) – Jonah 3:6-10 / 1 Peter 1:3 - 5
2. In vv 9 – 14 we see how God acts. How does the psalmist communicate his surprise at God's actions?
Note the contrasts / extremes – this is amazing news, not simply 'slightly improved'

LIVE IT OUT

3. Read Ephesians 2:4-5; 14 – 18. In these verses we see how God has done what was described in Psalm 103. List the actions God has taken and their effect on us and our society.
God has taken our sins from us, not treated us as we deserved, shown us compassion, given us peace with himself.
4. Are there friendships / relationships to which we can bring peace? What steps could we take to be people of peace, not treating others based upon past offence / hurt but rather with love and compassion?
5. It may feel that world issues are beyond our influence or understanding but God calls us to be people who work for reconciliation and peace. How could become involved in the ministry of reconciliation and peace amongst people / nations?

PRAY together, praise Together

Use the songs suggested, read Psalm 103 again give thanks for the peace