

God's plans for the nations in the Psalms

CMS Prayer Focus Bible studies

Introduction

The following five studies were prepared for CMS Prayer Focus 2022, as part of a set of resources to help churches and individual supporters engage more prayerfully and deeply in global cross-cultural mission, and can be used at any time through the year.

These Bible Studies focus on five Psalms, one from each book of the Psalter. These Psalms were selected because of their broad scope and for the way they speak of God's plans for the nations.

We pray these studies will help lift your eyes afresh to God's glory, and that through them he will equip you all the more to pray in line with his grand purposes for the world.

Read Psalm 8

1. What significance is there for the “LORD” to be “our Lord” (v.1,9)? In what ways does Psalm 8 suggest his name is majestic in all the earth?
2. What contrasts are made in verse 2? What point is the Psalmist trying to make?
3. How do verses 3-8 put us in our place? What implications does this have for our role in making the Lord known?
4. How does Jesus’ great commission in Matthew 28:18-20 influence the way we understand Psalm 8?
5. How can Psalm 8 inform the way we pray for God’s majesty to be known in all the earth?

Read Psalm 63

1. What does David long for? Why?
2. What does David vow to do? Why?
3. What influence does knowledge of God's love have on David's behaviour? How does Jesus model this same principle?
4. How does our understanding of God's righteous judgement impact our prayerfulness for the nations?

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Read Psalm 73

1. What is the key principle outlined in verse 1? How would you put this in your own words?
2. Verses 2-16 describe the internal struggle Asaph has with what he sees around him. What are the things that are troubling him? How have you experienced something similar?
3. How is verse 17 a turning point for Asaph? What does he begin to realise about God and about himself as he ponders more in verses 18-28?
4. In light of Psalm 73, what might you pray:
 - a) for the wicked and those who are far from God?
 - b) for your own heart and desires?

Read Psalm 96

1. What are all the things Psalm 96 exhorts people to do? What reasons does the Psalm give for doing these things?
2. Why is it so appropriate for people to worship God? What implications does this have for the way we think about mission?
3. The Psalm opens with a celebration of salvation and ends with a call to rejoice in God's judgement. How are the two connected?
4. How does this Psalm anticipate and find its fulfilment in Jesus?
5. Spend some time writing out a prayer in line with the thoughts of Psalm 96.

Read Psalm 145

1. Psalm 145 was meant to be recited daily by God's people. What aspects of God's majesty and character are worthy of praise here?
2. Highlight all the references to the way we use our words in this Psalm. What things are meant to be told or spoken of to others? What might this mean for mission generally and for what you do in your own life?
3. In light of the fact that all God's promises find their yes in Christ (2 Corinthians 1:20), how does this Psalm impact the way we speak of Jesus to others?
4. Is there a particular facet of God's character (a work that he has done, an aspect of his goodness) or just a specific verse from this Psalm that you want to "meditate" (v.5) on more? How could you form that into a prayer—for yourself and for the world—as a way of praising the LORD daily?

Next steps

We pray that as you have read these passages, studied them and prayed, God has brought you closer to him.

It is our hope that you may enjoy a rich and fervent prayer life, constantly bringing all your concerns, requests and joys to the Lord. Thank you especially for praying for CMS, God's global mission and our missionaries. Your prayers are precious and, under God, powerful!

More ways to pray

Here are some ways you can keep partnering with mission through CMS!

Receive our publications

Our monthly email update is packed full of stories from CMS missionaries, upcoming events, and helpful resources. Plus, you'll find links to digital versions of our monthly prayer points and CMS Today publications. Sign up at cms.org.au/subscribe.

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