

## Homegroup Notes - Psalm 44

### “Why do you hide your face?”

#### \*\*Context.

This is one of 11 Psalms attributed to “of the Sons of Korah” - Levites, set apart for full-time service in the tabernacle/Temple. Korah suffered an ignominious death following rebellion against Moses but his sons were spared (Numbers 26:10-11). There is record of Korohites serving as musicians (1 Chronicles 6:33) and gatekeepers (1 Chronicles 9:19). It is also one of 13 Psalms known as a Maschil. The Hebrew word means instruction, wisdom or contemplation although some people have suggested that, at the start of a Psalm, it is some sort of musical instruction.

1. Read Psalm 44:1-3. The Psalmist starts by recalling events in Israel’s history where the Lord had intervened on their behalf. Which events might he have been thinking about?
2. Why is remembrance important? Read Joshua 4:6-7 and 1 Samuel 7:11-12.
3. What New Testament events do we (the church) especially remember? How do we (the church) remember them?
4. Read Psalm 44:4-8. The Psalmist now remembers what the Lord has accomplished in his own lifetime (see also Psalm 103:2). Do you have your own remembrances of what God has accomplished in your life time? Any that you would like to share with the group?
5. If this Psalm had stopped at verse 8 it would have been a Psalm of Praise but now it changes direction. Read Psalm 44:9-16. How many complaints are listed in these verses?
6. Experts disagree about the precise historical context of Psalm 44 but verses 9-16 along with v 17 give the context of the situation. How would you describe this situation in just a few words?
7. Psalm 44 is a Psalm of Lament, part of a genre of psalms which express protest and despair to God. This class of Psalms is the the largest type of all psalms - (see [www.criovoice.org/psalm/types.html](http://www.criovoice.org/psalm/types.html)), outnumbering praise psalms. Does this surprise you? Do you often read Lament Psalms?
8. Read Psalm 13. This is also a Psalm of Lament but it is for a personal circumstance whereas Psalm 44 is prayed on behalf of the community. Do you find room in your prayers for both personal and community prayer?
9. Read Psalm 44:17-26. What is at the heart of the Psalmist’s perplexity (v17-21).

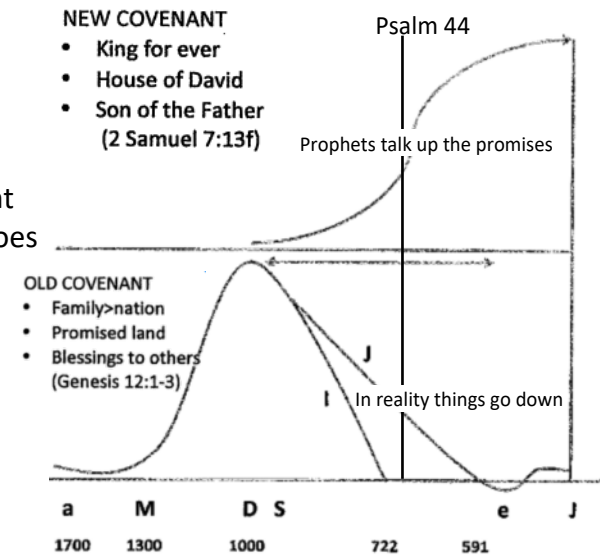
10. The psalmist is not claiming absolute sinlessness for his community but he is claiming covenant faithfulness. (See, for example, 2 Kings 18:1-3). Read Deuteronomy 28:1,7. In the light of this Old Covenant promise, does this justify the perplexity felt by the psalmist?

11. Read John 15:18-21. How do these words of Jesus in New Covenant times contrast with those which we read in Deuteronomy 28:1,7?

12. Although we do not know the exact moment in history when this psalm was written, the approximate time is shown by the vertical line in the diagram above. How might this explain the mismatch between the psalmist’s theology and his experience?

13. Read Romans 8:35-39. How does this cast new light on Psalm 44:22?

14. Jesus says, "Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted." (Matthew 5:4) meaning "Blessed are those who lament, for they will be comforted." Can you think situations where you might use Psalm 44 to help form your own prayers?



#### Prayer Points

- *Pray for persecuted Christians in various parts of the world.*
- *Pray for organisations such as Open Doors, Barnabas Fund and Christian Solidarity Worldwide who work to defend the persecuted church.*
- *Pray for Christians who are under pressure in their work to conform to the values of this world against their Christian beliefs.*
- *Pray for organisations such as Christian Institute, Christian Concern, CARE and ADF International who work to defend Christian freedom and values.*

*On the first Sunday of each month (6:30pm), Prayer First is held at St George’s when there is an opportunity to pray for the parish, the nation and the world. You are invited!*