

LIFE GROUP GUIDE: STYL#11: PSALM 44

CONNECT IN with one another

If you could ask God one question and be guaranteed an answer, what would it be?

[This is a good conversation starter, but it's also more than that. It helps people to open up about their deepest confusions as believers or nonbelievers. It prepares them for the Bible study that follows.]

CONNECT UP with God

- Explain to the group: *Today we move on from Book I of Psalms to Book II. It's known as 'the Elohist Psalter' because instead of referring to God intimately as 'Yahweh' (the Lord) it refers to him more distantly as 'Elohim' (God). These are psalms written by people who feel far from God, and they were gathered into Book II of Psalms to teach us how to respond whenever we feel far from God ourselves.*
- Read **Psalm 44**.
- When the Sons of Korah say *"We have heard it with our ears, O God, our ancestors have told us what you did in their days,"* they are looking back to the days of Joshua when their ancestors conquered the Promised Land. What do you mean when you pray nostalgic prayers like this one, aggrieved that God isn't acting enough, right here right now? [Help for leaders: This is an opportunity for you to help the group to see Christianity for what it is meant to be. Help them to dream of what life would be like if God acted among us as he did in the book of Acts or in past revivals or in the greatest days of Church history. Don't let them settle for things as they are.]
- Why is it comforting and why is it frustrating that *"It was not by their sword that they won the land ... It was your right hand, your arm ... for you loved them"?* [Help for leaders: It is encouraging because it means that what they experienced wasn't due to their own brilliance - in other words, we can expect God to do the same things in our own days (Acts 3:12 & 4:13). It is frustrating because this tempts us to feel God must care less about us and be less eager to help us. Stoke up people's frustration about this all around the room. Such feelings precede passionate prayer!]
- In v9 the Sons of Korah say *"But now"* and launch into a long list of complaints about their own day. What do you feel most frustrated about God not doing around you today?
- The Sons of Korah are convinced in v17-22 that this isn't due to any fault on their part. How convinced of this are you? [Help for leaders: you may need to lead into repentance here]
- All of this leads the Sons of Korah to pray: *"Awake, Lord! Why do you sleep? Rouse yourself! Do not reject us forever."* How often do you pray boldly like this for things to change?

CONNECT OUT with the non-church people around you

Lead the group into a time of worship, being really honest with God about how you feel - your spiritual hopes and dreams, your frustration that they aren't coming to pass at present, and the role that your own sin plays in this.

Now pray bold prayers like the Sons of Korah at the end of Psalm 44: *"Let your Kingdom come!"*