

Our Savior's Lutheran

Songs for the Soul Bible Study



Week Six ~ Psalms & Songs of Justice

Bible Study Participant Guide

Welcome and Framing

Where do you see unfairness or inequality in the world right now?

Notes:

Large Group Teaching

God's reign always moves toward restoration, reconciliation, and abundant life.

Key Ideas:

- When we pray for our leaders in church, you will always hear a call for

_____.

- The writers of the Psalms understood justice as part of God's very character.
- To worship the God of Israel was to worship the One who defends _____, confronts _____, and continually works to _____.
- Justice appears in every kind of other Psalm:
 - Psalms of _____ celebrate God's just reign.
 - _____ cry out because justice has been violated.
 - _____ Psalms rejoice when God restores what has been broken.
 - _____ Psalms carry the quiet confidence that God's faithful care will ultimately overcome the injustice we cannot yet change.
 - _____ Psalms teach the kind of life that reflects God's justice.
- **Mishpat** is usually translated as _____ and describes restoring what has become wrong.
- **Tzedakah** is usually translated as _____, which is primarily relational in the Old Testament.
- Justice (mishpat) and righteousness (tzedakah) frequently appear together because together they describe _____.
- The Psalms never separate _____ from justice.
- The Psalms do not allow us to separate loving God from _____.
- God's reign always moves toward restoration, reconciliation, and abundant life.

Notes:

Reading: Psalm 72

What did you notice?

Table Conversation 1

Discuss one or two of the following questions:

1. How are justice (mishpat) and righteousness (tzedakah) described in this Psalm?
2. How is the movement of God's reign toward restoration, reconciliation, and abundant life reflected in this Psalm?
3. How do these themes of justice and righteousness make you feel? Why?
4. How do the justice Psalms encourage faith communities to respond to injustice?

Notes:

Song Listening 1: “Redemption Song” by Bob Marley

What did you notice?

Lyrics

Old pirates, yes, they rob I
Sold I to the merchant ships
Minutes after they took I
From the bottomless pit
But my hand was made strong
By the hand of the Almighty
We forward in this generation
Triumphantly

Won't you help to sing
Another song of freedom?
'Cause all I ever have
Redemption songs
Redemption songs

Emancipate yourselves from mental slavery
None but ourselves can free our minds
Have no fear for atomic energy
'Cause none of them can stop the time
How long shall they kill our prophets
While we stand aside and look?
Some say it's just a part to fit
We've got to fulfill the book

Won't you help to sing
Another song of freedom?
'Cause all I ever have
Redemption songs
Redemption songs

Emancipate yourselves from mental slavery
None but ourselves can free our minds
Have no fear for atomic energy
'Cause none of them can stop the time
How long shall they kill our prophets
While we stand aside and look?
Some say it's just a part to fit
We've got to fulfill the book

Won't you help to sing
Another song of freedom?
'Cause all I ever have
Redemption songs
Redemption songs
Woah-oh-oh-oh

Table Conversation 2

Discuss one or two of the following questions:

1. How do you hear God's call for justice in this song? What responsibilities come with this call individually and in community?
2. How is the movement of God's reign toward restoration, reconciliation, and abundant life reflected in this song?
3. How does this song connect with the scripture and Psalms of justice?
4. How does this song connect ancient justice themes with more modern movements towards justice?
5. What topics and emotions are named in this Psalm and song? How are these topics and emotions expressed in church life - or your life outside of the church?

Notes:

Song Listening 2: “A Change is Gonna Come” by Sam Cooke

What did you notice?

Lyrics

I was born by the river
In a little tent
Oh, and just like the river, I've been running
Ever since

It's been a long
A long time coming, but I know
A change gon' come
Oh yes, it will

It's been too hard living
But I'm afraid to die
'Cause I don't know what's up there
Beyond the sky

It's been a long
A long time coming, but I know
A change gon' come
Oh yes, it will

I go to the movie
And I go downtown
And somebody keep telling me
"Don't hang around"

It's been a long
A long time coming, but I know
A change gon' come
Oh yes, it will

Then, I go to my brother
And I say, "Brother, help me, please"
But he winds up knockin' me
Back down on my knees, oh

There been times that I thought
I couldn't last for long
But now, I think I'm able
To carry on

It's been a long
A long time coming, but I know
A change gon' come
Oh yes, it will

Table Conversation 3

Discuss one or two of the following questions:

1. What longing or hope do you hear? What responsibilities come with this hope?
2. How is the movement of God's reign toward restoration, reconciliation, and abundant life reflected in this song?
3. Why do songs become important during times of social change?
4. How does music play a role in the movement towards justice?
5. How does this song connect with the scripture and Psalms of justice?
6. How does this song connect ancient justice themes with more modern movements towards justice?
7. What topics and emotions are named in this Psalm and song? How are these topics and emotions expressed in church life - or your life outside of the church?
8. What other songs could we have chosen to connect with Psalms of justice?

Notes:

Wrap Up

When we read the Psalms, we begin noticing people we once overlooked. We become less comfortable with systems that harm others. We become more willing to participate in God's work of restoration. Prayer becomes formation.

As we pray these ancient songs, we discover that God is teaching us to love what God loves, grieve what God grieves, celebrate what God celebrates, and seek the kind of world God has always intended. These songs shaped a people...and they continue to shape us.

Notes:

Check out all of our “Songs for the Soul” Bible studies at

<https://oslchurch.com/whats-happening/bible-studies/>