

Psalms Instruct Christians about the Christ

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake)

Introduction:

A. Luke 24:44-47

1. "The Order of the Divine Mind, embodied in the Divine Law and Psalmody, is beautiful. What should a man do but try to reproduce it, so far as possible, in his daily life?" (CS Lewis, Reflections on the Psalms)
2. "There are many themes found in the Book of Psalms that are generally not found in modern music. These include the fear of God, the righteousness and justice of God, the sovereignty of God, the judgement of God, the evil of sin, spiritual and physical warfare, the arch enemies of the Christian, the destruction of the wicked, the reality of hell, the blessedness of the church, the vicious attacks upon the church, the commandments of God, the dominion of David's son the Christ, and so on. Without the backdrop of these truths, the themes of love, mercy, faith, and salvation become largely meaningless. The loss of Psalmody in the churches is one of the early indicators of the loss of faith." (Kevin Swanson)

B. The Psalms are filled with teaching about the Christ Who would come to this world as God in the flesh, Who would be the embodiment of God's Word, Who would save humankind from sin, and return to the Father in Heaven.

1. Shortly before His ascension, Jesus taught His apostles that the Psalms were filled with Messianic prophecies He fulfilled.
2. God intends that the Psalms be used:
 - a. As a book of evidences, confirming our faith in Jesus as the Christ, the promised Messiah. However, do not stop with such a self-limiting, intellectual approach to the faith
 - b. As an additional source of insight into our Lord's suffering and glorious triumph
 - c. As a guide to His godly life, faithful teaching, and patient suffering, designed by God to be a model for our own lives, teaching, and suffering - 1Peter 2:21-25
 - 1) Peter quoted four times from Isaiah 53 in this passage.
 - 2) What must be understood is that Isaiah quoted four times from the Psalms when he wrote Isaiah 53

C. What can Christians learn about the Christ from the Psalms?

1. Rom. 10:17 - When Paul wrote that "faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God," the New Testament had not been written and distributed. The only scriptures written and universally available were the Laws, prophets, and Psalms. When Paul wrote Romans, the building of Christians' faith depended on the Old Testament books and the oral teaching of the apostles.
2. But after all, Jesus did say that the Law, prophets, and Psalms teach: "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."

D. Psalm 110:1-6ff - The Savior is all over the Book of Psalms

E. Salvation from our sins in Christ is all over the Psalms - Psalm 103:8-14

Invitation: Forgiveness of our sins in Christ is prophesied in the Psalms. Did you know that the farthest point east and the farthest point west in the United States are both in Alaska? It's a geographical trick, actually. Pochnoi Point in the Aleutian Islands is as far west as you can go and still be in the US. But if you travel a few miles farther west, you'll end up at Alaska's Amatignak Island. Because that spot is west of the 180th meridian separating the Eastern and Western Hemispheres, it is technically east of the rest of the US.

But you'll never find a spot where east and west are actually next to each other. In going west, you never find east. East goes on forever on a sphere. West goes on forever on a sphere. They never meet. You can't get farther from something than that.

What difference does this make? Just this: When you read in Scripture that your forgiven sins are separated from you "as far as the east is from the west" (Psalm 103:12), you are assured that they are an infinite distance away—gone forever; you will never again be in contact with the sins that have been forgiven you. Worried about your past sins? Through Jesus' death on the cross and our obedience to the Gospel, God is able to say, "What sins? Your sins are covered. The Messiah of the Psalms made it so."

I. PSALMIC PROPHECIES FULFILLED IN JESUS

A. Many of the Psalmic prophecies address His Passion

1. Rejection by both Jews and Gentiles

a. Leaders - Psalm 2:1-3 - Acts 4:23-28

b. Family - Psalm 69:8 - John 7:5

c. Friends - Psalm 41:9 - Matt. 26:20-25

2. Silence and suffering

a. Did not answer false charges

1) Psalm 38:11-14 - Matt. 26:56, 58-63, 27:11-14

b. Did not respond to mockery - Psalm 35:15-16 - Matt. 27:26-31

3. Crucifixion and death

a. Forsaken in suffering - Psalm 22:1, 14-16 - Matt. 27:46

b. Abuse on the cross - Psalm 22:6-8, 12-13 - Matt. 27:39-44

c. His clothing became spoils - Psalm 22:17-18 - Matt. 27:35-36

d. Given gall and vinegar - Psalm 69:21 - Matt. 27:34

e. Not a bone was broken - Psalm 34:20 - John 19:31-37

f. Prayer for His enemies - Psalm 109:4 - Luke 23:34

g. Final cry - Psalm 31:5 - Luke 23:46

h. Voluntary death in the prime of life

1) Psalm 89:45, 40:6-8 - Matt. 26:36-46

B. The Psalmic prophecies also address His Power

1. Resurrection - Psalm 16:8-10 - Acts 2:24-31

2. Ascension - Psalm 68:18 - Eph. 4:8-10

3. Coronation - Psalm 110:1-2 - Acts 2:33

1) 1Cor. 15:25-26; Eph. 1:20-23; 1Peter 3:22; Rev. 2:26-27, 3:21

4. Priesthood - Psalm 110:4 - Heb. 6:19-20, 7:20-28

5. Judgeship - Psalm 110:5-6 - Rev. 1:5; 2:26-28, 19:11-16

II. BENEFITING FROM THE PSALMIC PROPHECIES OF CHRIST

A. The purpose of prophecy

1. God used it to confirm His existence - Isa. 46:9-11
2. God used it to confirm His spokesmen - Deut. 18:18-22; 2Peter 1:21

B. The purpose of Messianic prophecy

1. It helps to identify the Messiah. The Old Testament has approximately 330 prophecies that identify the Messiah. Jesus fulfilled all of them
2. The mathematical probability of it being a coincidence is astonishing
 - a. The probability of any man who has ever lived fulfilling just eight of the prophecies has been calculated as 1 in 100,000,000,000,000,000
 - b. The probability of fulfilling just 48 is one in ten to the 157th power. It would take 7 followed by 21 zeros years just to count that high.
 - c. Jesus did not fulfill 8 or 48, but 330 prophecies. The numbers necessary to calculate those odds are incomprehensible
3. It is easy to see why the apostles used the prophecies to prove Jesus as the Christ.
4. Apostle Paul used the prophecies of the Scriptures to demonstrate that Jesus is the Christ - Acts 17:2-3
 - a. Peter did as well - Acts 3:18

C. The Messianic prophecies can

1. Convince believers in God that Jesus is the Messiah and Savior
2. Convince unbelievers that God is, that God has spoken, and that God sent His Son, Jesus Christ
3. Increase our own faith in, understanding of, and relationship with the Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ