

Songs of the Messiah

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Songs of the Messiah

Welcome to this 5-part study on Psalms that speak of the Messiah.

Messiah is a Hebrew word meaning Anointed One. Originally the title applied to King David, the king that Yahweh, the God of Israel, set over his people. After David died, the title passed on to his descendents as they inherited God's people and God's promises (especially those of 2 Samuel 7).

As successive kings failed to honour God and led the people into idolatry, the prophets brought messages of judgement. However they also spoke of a day when God would anoint a true king in the line of David to rule his people properly. They looked forward to a true Messiah.

When Jesus came, he accepted this title for himself, fulfilling the Old Testament expectations in unforeseen ways. The apostolic teaching and writings explain how Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah (or Christ) of God.

Each study is structured in four sections:

The Psalm helps us understand the psalm in and of itself,

The Prophets shows us how the prophets elaborate on the themes,

The Messiah shows how the psalm applies to Jesus,

The Messiah's Return helps us see how to apply the psalm and its truths about Jesus to ourselves as we await his return.

In this series we study five psalms that speak in different ways of the Messiah. As we read these songs from Ancient Israel it is my hope we will find a richness and depth in them that leads to greater appreciation and love of our King Jesus. May God bless his Word to us as we read, discuss and pray it together.

Study 1: I have installed my King

Read Psalm 2

The Psalm

1. What is described in verses 1-3?
2. What connection do the kings of the earth see between the LORD and the king of Israel?
3. In verses 4-6, what is God's 3-fold response to the challenge?
4. In verses 7-9 the king speaks. What is the nature of his relationship with God?
5. What is the scope of his authority?
6. What are the two possible responses detailed in verses 10-12? What are the rebellious kings urged to do?
7. Summarise what this psalm says about the LORD's Messiah.

The Prophets

8. **Read Isaiah 11:1-10.** [Note that Jesse was David's father.] How does this prophecy assure Israel that the triumphant challenge of Psalm 2 is not forgotten by God?

The Messiah

9. **Read Luke 3:21-22.** How is Jesus being identified here at his baptism? [Optional extra: What does it mean for God the Son to be publically identified as the Son of God?]

The Messiah's return

10. **Read Acts 4:23-31.** How did the apostles see Psalm 2 being fulfilled in Jesus? What did this lead them to pray for themselves?
11. **Read Revelation 2:26-27.** Who is speaking here (v18)? What promise is given? Who is it given to?
12. Knowing that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, how are we to live?

Study 2: He gives his King great victories

Read Psalm 18

The Psalm

1. What is the overall tone and feeling of the psalm?
2. How does David describe the circumstances he found himself in?
3. In his distress and helplessness what did David do?
4. What is God's response?
5. Look again at verses 19-27. What reason does David give for God's intervention on his behalf? In what sense can David say these things about himself?
6. To what does David attribute his victories?
7. Summarise what this psalm says about the LORD and his Messiah.

The Prophets

8. **Read Jeremiah 17:12-18.** How does Jeremiah's cry to God echo the themes of Psalm 18?

9. **Read Isaiah 50:6-9 and Isaiah 53:7-12.** What hope does the Servant have in the face of defeat?

The Messiah

10. **Read Luke 4:28-30, 33-36, Luke 20:20, 26, 39-40; Luke 24:1-7 and John 8:28-29, 58-59.** Discuss Jesus' experiences of protection and victory over his enemies.

The Messiah's return

11. **Read Hebrews 5:7-10 and Philippians 2: 5-11.** What victory is granted to Jesus due to his perfect righteousness?

12. **Read Romans 8:31-39.** What assurance do we have of victory when we are in Christ?

13. **Knowing that Jesus is the Messiah, the victorious King, how are we to live?**

Study 3: May people ever pray for him

Read Psalm 72

The Psalm

1. In verses 1 & 2 what is being asked for the king? Why?
2. In verses 3-7, what is being asked for the king? Why?
3. In verses 8-11, what is being asked for the king? Why?
4. From verses 12-14, what is the attitude of the king to the needy?
5. In verses 15-17 what would it be like to live under the rule of this king if these prayers are answered?
6. What is the connection between the LORD and the king?
7. From the heading and verse 20 it seems this psalm was first prayed for Solomon, David's son. To what degree was it answered for and in him?

The Prophets

8. **Read Jeremiah 22:11-17.** What is the consequence for Israel when their kings go astray?

9. **Read Isaiah 9:6-7 and 11:1-5.** What kind of King does God promise his people?

The Messiah

10. **Read Luke 1:68-79.** What is God doing with the birth of John and Jesus?

11. What does Jesus mean when he teaches us to pray “your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” (Matthew 6:10)?

The Messiah’s return

12. **Read Revelation 21:1-5, 22-27; 22:1-5.** How does the coming new creation finally answer the prayer of Psalm 72?

13. Knowing that Jesus is the Messiah, the king who reigns with perfect justice, righteousness and peace, how are we to live?

Study 4: But you have rejected

Read Psalm 89

The Psalm

1. Verses 1-4 are an introduction. What characteristic of God is highlighted?
2. In verses 5-18 God is praised for his rule over creation. What aspects of that are emphasized?
3. In verses 19-37 we see God the covenant-maker. Describe the relationship between God and King David as it is presented here.
4. Which verses emphasise the 'forever' aspect of the covenant?
5. What is the shock in verse 38?
6. What is the observation of the psalmist in verse 39-45?
7. As the psalm ends (v46-52), what is the psalmist's plea?
8. The psalm's crisis is unresolved. How does that make you feel?

The Prophets

9. **Read Isaiah 66:1-4.** Why did God reject the kings of Judah? Does this mean God has broken his covenant?

10. **Read Isaiah 53:1-9.** What perspective does this add to the rejection of God's chosen one?

The Messiah

11. **Read Matthew 1:1; 20:17-19; 26:38-39; 27:45-46; Luke 23:46; 24:44-47.** How do Jesus' birth and death resolve the crisis of Psalm 89?

The Messiah's return

12. **Read Acts 13:16-38.** Why is the message of the rejected Son of David such good news?

13. The shortest summary of the Gospel is in **2 Timothy 2:8**. Reflecting on Psalm 89, how is this adequate?

14. Knowing that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of David whose death reconciles us to God, how are we to live?

Study 5: Here I will sit enthroned

Read Psalm 132

The Songs of Ascents are a collection of psalms sung by pilgrims on their way to the temple in Jerusalem.

The Psalm

1. What is the basis of the psalmist's approach to God (v1, 10)?
2. What call does the psalmist make to his fellow Israelites?
3. What petition do they make of God?
4. What does this psalm recall God doing? Why is this good for Israel?
5. **Read 1 Kings 9:1-9.** What is the relationship between God, King and Temple/Jerusalem?
6. What is the mood of this psalm?

The Prophets

7. **Read Jeremiah 9:11-14, 12:7-13.** What happened to Jerusalem? Why?
8. **Read Isaiah 33:20-22, 35:8-10, 40:1-11.** What does God promise for Jerusalem?

The Messiah

9. **Read Luke 2:41-49, 13:34-35, 19:37-44.** What relationship does Jesus have with the city of Jerusalem?

The Messiah's return

10. **Read Hebrews 12:22-29.** What are we taught here about Jesus and Jerusalem? On what basis do we approach God?
11. **Read Revelation 21.** How are God's promises regarding himself, his King and Jerusalem ultimately fulfilled?
12. Knowing that Jesus is the Messiah, the King of the heavenly Jerusalem, how are we to live?