

A Handle on Messiah pt 2: Messiah in the Psalms

We are continuing our series which is designed to help us get a handle on the Messiah – hopefully you will remember from last week that the Messiah or Christ was this special someone who was anointed by God to be the prophet, priest and King of Israel and there were many promises in the OT which they were hoping in, even though their world was under Roman occupation.

We saw how important this study was for us – to give us a way of confidently reading and understanding the Old Testament, to understand who Jesus is, but also to learn about God's faithfulness to his people and his promises so that we can learn to have hope and trust in him too.

This week we will look at what the Psalms tell us about this Messiah, next week we will look in the prophets – in this way we are taking Jesus' lead, because when he was instructing his disciples on the road to Emmaus he showed them everything in the scriptures, Moses and the prophets which were about himself.

The Psalms which the Jews understood as referring to the Messiah, are called 'Messianic Psalms'

There are two interesting facets to these in that some refer to him as God's anointed **King** entering into his glorious rule e.g. Psalm 2, and some foresee the **suffering** of this Messiah as in Psalm 22

So let's trace through some of these Messianic Psalms and discover some things about this Messiah.

- He is special because he is understood to be the Son of God
Psa 2:7 I will proclaim the decree of the LORD : He said to me, "You are my Son;
- But also God in himself;
Psa 45:6 Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever; a sceptre of justice will be the sceptre of your kingdom. 7 You love righteousness and hate wickedness; therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions by anointing you with the oil of joy.
- He is also described as Son of man (Psa 8:4-6) and Son of David (Psa 89)

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Jesus the Christ is also seen in His offices

(a) As **Prophet** declaring Gods truth and glory

Psa 22:22 I will declare your name to my brothers; in the congregation I will praise you.

Psa 40:9 I proclaim righteousness in the great assembly; I do not seal my lips, as you know, O LORD. 10 I do not hide your righteousness in my heart; I speak of your faithfulness and salvation. I do not conceal your love and your truth from the great assembly.

(b) As **Priest**

Psa 110:4 The LORD has sworn and will not change his mind: "You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek."

(c) As **King**

Psa 2:6 "I have installed my King on Zion, my holy hill."

- But we also get other details about his life which weed out the ‘competition’
 - Psalm 78 tells us he will teach in parables,
 - Psalm 72.10-11 tell us he will be adored by great persons – this was the visit of the wise men from the East
 - Psalm 8 tells us he would be adored by infants, the Pharisees got grumpy when the children were shouting ‘hosanna to the Son of David’ to Jesus, because they knew what it meant

When we get to the end of Jesus earthly ministry we have even more details:

- Psalm 41 tells us he would be betrayed by a close friend (we know that this was Judas, one of his closest ‘followers’)
- Psalm 22 tells us a lot about his death:
 - He would be pierced through his hands and his feet (16-17)
 - People would sneer and mock at him (7-8)
 - People would gamble for his clothing (17-18) and
 - He would be forsaken by God (1)
- Psalm 34.20 tells us that none of his bones would be broken

Now the interesting thing about this, as I may have told you before is that when David wrote these Psalms (approx 1000 BC) crucifixion hadn’t been invented – this was developed about 400 years later by the Phoenicians, who would put the dead bodies of their slain enemies on crosses after a battle, it wasn’t for another 500+ years when the

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Romans had the bright idea of crucifying people as a means of execution.

But all that way back in the Psalms these things were predicted, and came to fulfilment literally and specifically.

There are two other aspects we can learn from the Psalms:

Firstly

Psa 49:15 But God will release my life from the grave; he will surely take me to himself.

Psa 16:9 Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will rest secure, 10 because you will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay. 11 You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand.

Here we see the **resurrection** of Jesus from the dead, which Peter preaches about on the day of Pentecost in the NT, also

Psalm 68 describes the **ascension** of Jesus into Heaven and Psalm 110 talks about his enthronement at the right hand of God

Psa 110:1 The LORD says to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet."

It is this last Psalm which also flags up for us an important point – the prophecies of his suffering, death and resurrection relate to his first advent, the time we celebrate at Christmas and Easter. But the other promises about him **returning as conquering king**, when he will defeat his enemies, judge the nations and bring in a rule of peace, righteousness and joy – these will be fulfilled just as literally, and we are awaiting their fulfilment still.

We can learn from the past fulfilled promises that God is faithful, he can be trusted and that by looking back we can gain hope for the future, in fact what we are about to celebrate in the Lords Supper underlines it, because he said that we should remember him this way until he comes again.

Let's prepare ourselves now with confidence in the faithfulness of God and his word, as we sing together 'Hail to the Lords anointed'