

“THE REIGN OF THE RIGHTEOUS KING”

PSALM 72

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INTRODUCTION

The NT nowhere directly quotes the psalm as messianic, but there are some fairly close parallels with Is. 11:1-5 and chapters 60-62. Some of the language of this psalm would be mere “courtly extravagance” without reference to the Messiah, but when applied to Him the words make “sober sense” (K. 254). Of course the psalm must not be taken as purely messianic, for it is a royal psalm concerning Solomon and points to his high calling. However, his reign was not endless as spoken of in this psalm. Even the Jewish Targum in verse 1 adds “Messiah” to “the king” at the end of line one, and some of the rabbinic comments are to the same effect. Israel had always known of the David covenant promises of II Samuel. But still standing in the forefront of the psalm is the literal application to the king himself; the Messiah stands in the background and some statements best apply to Him. Both are here **by divine design**, just as the same kind of blend is found in the original covenant promises of II Sam. 7. On the literal level the first application is to Solomon, and then later of course to his descendants. As so frequently in Hebrew prophecy, it often begins with present circumstances and then more on to the future—first the type and then the Antitype. God was clear, and even his inspired writers understood at least in part—as Solomon did here in this psalm—that the ultimate fulfillment went far beyond the Davidic dynasty. OT writers and believers did not humanly turn to Messianic truth out of desperation due to disappointment with the reality of their rulers! Moreover, it is true that the full reality of the blending of the coming Ruler and the coming Redeemer awaited the NT revelation in Jesus Christ.

The theme of this psalm is the reign of the Davidic/Messianic King. Here we see 1) The Foundation of His Reign (1-4); 2) The Duration of His Reign (5-7); 3) The Extent of His Reign (8-11); 4) The Character of His Reign (12-14); The Prosperity of His Reign (15-17); and The Blessedness of His Reign (18-19).

JESUS WILL REIGN, AND HIS REIGN WILL BE GLORIOUS!

- I. THE FOUNDATION OF HIS REIGN (1-4)
 - A. The request for the Divine Judgments and Righteousness (1)
 - B. The Manifestation of the Divine gifts (2)
 - C. The results of divine righteousness
 1. Peace/security/prosperity
 - From the mountains and hills to the people
 - In Righteousness
 2. Practicing justice (4)
 - Vindicating/judging the humble/afflicted ones
 - Saving the children of the needy—the needy children
 - Crushing the oppressors
- II. THE DURATION OF HIS REIGN (5-7)
 - A. Fearing God while the sun endures—with/during the time of the sun (5)
 - Only God is directly addressed in the psalm
 - While the moon endures—before the face of the moon
 - Throughout all generations
 - B. Fertilizing the land and the people (6)
 - Like rain on the mown grass
 - Like showers that are “a dripping on the earth
 - C. Flourishing of the land (7)

- Righteous men—with the character of the Ruler himself—flourish
- Abundance of peace/security/prosperity flourishes.

Until the moon is no more—permanent situation. Permanence provides the bookends for the entire section.

III. THE EXTENT OF HIS REIGN (8-11)

A. Extension of original boundaries (8)

- From one sea to another—around the world, not merely from Mediterranean to the Dead Sea
- From the River/Euphrates to the ends of the earth, not merely from the desert to the Euphrates.

B. All bow in submission before the Ruler (9-11)

1. Desert dwellers and enemies (9)
2. The kings of Tarshish—those to the far west—bring tribute/presents/offerings (10a)
3. The islands of the Mediterranean and elsewhere (10b)
4. The kings of Sheba and Seba—to the SE and SW (10c)
5. All kings (11)
 - Bow down before in total submission
 - Serve him dutifully

IV. THE CHARACTER OF HIS REIGN (12-14)

- A. Action on behalf of the Helpless—the needy and humble/afflicted who have no helper (12)
- B. Compassion and salvation for those who are weak and abused (13)
- C. Acts as kinsman-redeemer for those suffering oppression and violence (14)
- D. Their blood is precious in his sight (14b; see Ps. 116:15)

V. THE PROSPERITY OF HIS REIGN (15-17)

- A. The poor and needy live, give gold gifts, pray for him continually, and bless him all day (15)
- B. The land prospers with abundance of grain in the earth, even on top of the mountains, its fruit waving like the cedars of Lebanon, and its citizens flourishing like vegetation of the earth (16).
- C. The name/reputation of the king endures forever and increases/sprouts forth as long as the sun shines (17a).
- D. Men bless themselves by the king, and all nations call Him blessed (17b)

VI. THE BLESSEDNESS OF HIS REIGN (18-19)

- A. Blessed be Yahweh, God (18)
 1. He is the God of Israel.
 2. He alone works wonders.
- B. Blessed be His glorious name forever (19a)
- C. May the whole earth be filled with His glory (19b)

THE PRAYERS OF DAVID, SON OF JESSE, ARE ENDED (20)

CONCLUSION

The foundation of His throne is righteousness and justice.

The duration of His reign is forever.

The extent of His reign is over the whole earth.

The character of His reign is help and deliverance for the helpless and needy, compassion for the weak and abused, redemption for those oppressed, and regarding the blood of the righteous as precious.

The prosperity of His reign will be unparalleled.

God is blessed, who alone does wonders, and blessed is His glorious name, and the whole earth is filled with His glory.

GOD'S PEOPLE SAY "**AMEN AND AMEN.**"

JESUS WILL REIGN, AND HIS REIGN WILL BE GLORIOUS!