Messianic Psalms

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Messianic Psalms – An Intro

"And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me."

Luke 24:44

"God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee."

Acts 13:33

Preparatory Reading: Psalm 2, 16, 22, 45, 110.

Introduction:

1. There is no greater subject to research in scripture than the Lord Jesus Christ (John 5:39; I Cor 2:2; Gal 6:14).
2. If you came looking for entertainment or even Proverbs wisdom, you will be disappointed with this topic.
3. This incontrovertibly great mystery – Jesus Christ the Lord –the world's princes missed (I Ti 3:16; I Co 2:8).
4. Let us be like Greeks that came to worship at the feast and told Philip, "We would see Jesus" (John 12:20-21).
5. If we ever let this subject matter slip, then no matter how much truth we might have, we are blind Pharisees!
6. As we approach the Lord's Table for communion, let us lift up heart and eyes to see the glory of God's Son!
7. The Psalms are for meditation and musing, and there is no finer or lovelier subject than Jesus Christ the Lord.
8. We ordinarily go to the N.T. to see Christ, but there is greater detail in Psalm 22 than in all gospel accounts.
9. Psalm 23 is fine and good, but it is a shame that most Christians know little more about the book of Psalms.
10. The LORD gave me pleasure in recent days by Psalm 21, which is one of the more obscure Messianic Psalms.
11. A Messianic Psalm is any from the collection of 150 in the book of Psalms speaking of the Lord Jesus Christ.

12. Messiah = the anointed Deliverer of Israel = the Christ. Compare Daniel 9:25-26 with John 1:41 and 4:25.
13. We distinguish among implied references, minor quotations of Him, and Psalms primarily or entirely of Him.
14. There are Psalms strictly referring to Jesus Christ and others referring to David/Solomon and Jesus Christ.
15. Some are clearly more Messianic than others depending on quotations and density of references in the Psalm.
16. There are approximately 15 that we will mark Messianic: 2,8,16,22,40,41,45,68,69,89,91,102,109,110,118.
17. There are others deserving honorable mention, and there are likely more beyond these: 21,23,24,34,61,72,75.
18. How many can you identify? How many can you explain why they are Messianic? What are your favorites?
19. David the king found his greatest joy in the coming King from his family tree, so the Psalms are full of Christ.
20. David as king knew royal authority and enemies; as prophet he knew intimately about a coming Son the King.
21. David was a great king and servant of God, but his Son would be far greater in these and all other respects.
22. The Psalms show Christ's coming, incarnation, death, sufferings, resurrection, ascension, gifts, judgment, etc.
23. Hebrews' theme is Jesus Christ's preeminence – Psalms are quoted six times in chapter one and half of all.
24. The N.T.'s quotations from the O.T. are about 40% out of the book of Psalms, though only one of 39 books!
25. The Psalms are quoted by Jesus Himself more than any other Old Testament book, even the book of Isaiah!
26. There are over 100 quotations or references in the N.T. about Jesus Christ taken from the book of Psalms.
27. These Psalms present the person and work of Jesus Christ with enough matter for a biography of His life.
28. The Son of David is used 16 times in the New Testament, and it is this relationship we should remember.
29. The best commentary on the book of Psalms is Charles Spurgeon's Treasury of David online here or here.

PSALM 2 (Messiah's Sonship and Kingship)

A. This Psalm is often quoted in the N.T. (Acts 4:23-26; 13:33; Heb 1:5; 5:5; Rev 2:27; 12:5; 19:15).
B. It was quoted in a prayer meeting that brought God's shaking power on the church (Acts 4:23-31).
C. No matter efforts by Jews, Pilate, Herod, God laughed at Christ's enemies and vexed them (2:1-6)!
D. The sonship of Christ here is dated at resurrection and ascension (2:7; Acts 13:33; Heb 1:5; Ro 1:4).
E. He was given a kingdom to reign over the earth with a rod of iron at His ascension (2:8-9; Rev 2:27).
F. The warning is very strict and severe, much like Paul's Anathema Marantha (2:10-12; I Cor 16:22).

G. But the God of heaven will bless those who trust in Jesus Christ (2:12; Acts 16:31; Rom 10:9-13).
H. For more about the true interpretation of 2:7.
I. For more about the coronation of Jesus.
J. For more about the Lord Jesus Christ as the King of kings.

PSALM 8 (Messiah's Dominion)

A. This Psalm is applied to Jesus in the N.T. (Heb 2:6-9). Jesus also quoted from it (8:2; Matt 21:16).
B. God gave man dominion over creatures in Eden (Gen 1:26), but there is much more intended here.
C. Jesus was made lower than the angels then promoted far above them (Heb 2:6-9; Eph 1:20-22).
D. It is Jesus Christ, Lord of the universe, that has had all things put under His feet (I Cor 15:24-28).
E. This dominant king, ruling over the universe, died for you. Do you appreciate it and His glory?
F. For reference for Psalms in Hebrews.

PSALM 16 (Messiah's Resurrection)

A. This Psalm was applied by Peter (Acts 2:25-28) and Paul (Acts 13:35-36) to Christ's resurrection.
B. Peter reasoned simply for unbelieving Jews that David did corrupt but spoke of Christ by prophecy.
C. Jesus is the firstfruits of them that die or sleep, so we will be gloriously resurrected (I Cor 15:20).
D. For the joy set before the Lord, He went to the cross and despised its shame – for you (Heb 12:1-3).
E. Do you have the same glad heart, rejoicing tongue, and peaceful hope of your coming resurrection?
F. For more about Peter's application in Acts 2:22-36 at Pentecost.
G. For more about Paul's application in Acts 13:26-37 at Antioch.

PSALM 22 (Messiah's Suffering and Death)

A. This Psalm details the agony and pain of Jesus with its opening words from the cross (Mk 15:34).
B. You can also read of His mocking, piercings of hands and feet, and garments parted (22:7-8,16,18).
C. It was written 1000 years before its fulfillment in exact words and deeds from the Lord's crucifixion.
D. Yet, consider, gospel writers do not record nearly the detail you have here of His thoughts in prayer.
E. If you want to reflect on what thoughts He had with sweat as it were great drops of blood, read here.
F. What does it mean to you that the Son of God endured so much in your place for your salvation?
G. Are you Jesus' "brethren"? Has He declared God's name to you? Do you believe and obey? (22:22).
H. Are you the "seed" to serve Him? Will you declare today His righteous work to others (22:30-31)?
I. Do you see the blood pooling, the eyes rolling up, the ashen gray face gasping? He died for you!
J. For much more about Psalm 22 and your Saviour's suffering.
K. For four categories of grief and suffering of the cross … Cross of Jesus Christ.
L. For many aspects and dimensions of the crucifixion … Glory of the Cross.

PSALM 40 (Messiah's Obedience)

A. This Psalm is quoted by Paul in Hebrews 10:5-9 and applied to Jesus our Messiah and Saviour.
B. The ceremonial and sacrificial system of Moses could never save and put away the elect's sins.
C. God gave Jesus a body and opened His ears to hear God's words, and He obeyed God perfectly.
D. It is God's redemptive will and Christ's obedience to it that sanctifies and perfects (Heb 10:10-14).
E. Jesus Christ was ready to die (Is 50:5-9; Luke 2:49; 9:51-53; 12:50; Matt 16:21-23; 26:39,53-54; Luke 22:14-16; John 4:34; 6:38-40; 8:28-29; 10:18; 12:27-28; 14:30-31; 18:11).
F. For more about our Lord Christ's readiness to die.
G. For reference for Psalms in Hebrews.

PSALM 41 (Messiah's Denial)

A. This Psalm was fulfilled when Judas Iscariot treacherously betrayed Jesus Christ (41:9; John 13:18).
B. David had such friends betray him e.g. Absalom, Adonijah, Joab, but the Spirit applied it to Jesus.
C. Are you troubled by losing friends or relatives? Then think on this "friend's" betrayal … for you!
D. Before condemning Judas, make sure you have not denied Jesus in works like a reprobate (Tit 1:16).
E. When we sing, Ah, Dearest Jesus, we say, "Who was the guilty? Who brought this upon thee? Alas, my treason, Jesus, hath undone thee. 'Twas I, Lord Jesus, I it was denied thee: I crucified thee."

PSALM 45 (Messiah's Divinity and Bride)

A. This Psalm is used by Paul in Hebrews 1:8-9 to prove the deity of the Son (45:6-7). It is Messianic.
B. This inspired "Song of Loves" (see the superscript) filled David's heart and mouth with good things.
C. How much do you adore and desire this Man fairer than all others with perfect graciousness (45:2)?
D. How much do you admire and serve this Prince more mighty and majestic than all others (45:3-5)?
E. Do you forget all others to love and serve only Him that greatly desires thy beauty (45:10-11)?
F. How thankful are you that God has made you perfectly righteous for marriage to Christ (45:13-15)?
G. Are you committed to make His name to be remembered and praised in all generations (45:17)?
H. For more about this glorious Psalm of love.

PSALM 68 (Messiah's Ascension)

A. This Psalm is quoted by Paul in Ephesians 4:8-9 when listing Christ's gifts to the church (68:18).
B. The stronger man rescued us from the strong man and threw him out (Luke 11:20-22; Rev 12:5-11)!
C. Jesus beat death and saved His people, so God gave Him spoils to distribute (Is 53:10-11; Ac 2:33).
D. For more about the glorious ascension of Jesus Christ .
E. For more about the coronation of Jesus.
F. For the great mystery of godliness of Jesus Christ.

PSALM 69 (Messiah's Zeal)

A. This Psalm is quoted several times (69:4,8,9,21,25; John 2:12-17; 7:5; 15:25; Mat 27:48; Acts 1:20).
B. The Innocent died for the rebel – Jesus was hated without a cause and without a charge (John 15:25).
C. Are you one of the few, unlike even His brethren, who believe on Him against the world (John 7:5)?
D. Yet, as we once did not believe, even so those unbelieving brothers soon followed Him (Acts 1:14).
E. Is your zeal for God's house comparable to Him Who loved you and died for you (John 2:12-17)?

PSALM 89 (Messiah's Reign)

A. This Psalm may not be quoted in the N.T., but certain verses are only Messiah (89:3-4,19-29,33-37).
B. It is the covenant Psalm, and though parts refer to David and Solomon, yet they only typify Messiah.
C. Jesus Christ was David and Son of David to save Israel (Is 9:6-7; 22:22; 55:3; Jer 23:5; 30:9; Ezek 34:23-24; 37:24-25; Hos 3:5; Am 9:11; Matt 1:1; Luke 1:32-33,69; II Tim 2:8; Rev 3:7; 5:5; 22:16).
D. For more about Jesus Christ as David and David's Son.

PSALM 91 (Messiah's Servants)

A. This Psalm was used by the devil to induce Jesus to tempt God (91:11-12; Matt 4:5-7; Luke 4:9-12).
B. The angel of the LORD encamps around those that fear Him, which was never truer than with Jesus.
C. The angels of God served Messiah throughout His life (Matt 4:11; Luke 22:43; Jn 1:51; I Tim 3:16).
D. For more about Psalm 91 and safety.
E. For more about angels serving Christ.

PSALM 102 (Messiah's Creation and Judgment)

A. This Psalm is quoted by Paul to further prove the deity of Jesus Christ (102:25-27; Heb 1:10-12).
B. There are other indirect references to the Messiah and His gospel kingdom of the N.T. (102:12-22).
C. The Lord Jesus Christ in His divine nature created all things (102:25; Heb 1:2; John 1:1-3; Eph 3:9).
D. The Lord Christ in His divine nature will restore all things (102:26; Rom 8:18-25; II Pet 3:10-14).
E. The Lord Jesus Christ in His divine nature does not change at all (102:26-27; Heb 13:8; Re 1:11-18)

PSALM 109 (Messiah's Enemy)

A. This Psalm is quoted by Peter shortly before Pentecost regarding Judas Iscariot (109:8; Acts 1:20).
B. If you read the context of what the Spirit applies to Judas, it is horrific judgment indeed (109:1-20).
C. Remember the warning from Psalm 2:11, "Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling."
D. Beware: "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha" (I Cor 16:22)!

PSALM 110 (Messiah's Exaltation)

A. This Psalm is used in the N.T. more than any other passage (Matt 22:41-46; Mark 12:35-37; Luke 20:39-44; Acts 2:34-36; Heb 1:13; 5:6; 7:17-22). There may be near 30 references to Psalm 110.

B. The combination of king and priest is exalted in this short psalm and used by the Spirit in the N.T.
C. The exalted position of this Man before God and His total dominance over His enemies is glorious.
D. Priests of Moses, Rome, Mormons, or any other are nothing! Our great high priest made us priests!
E. His priesthood does not depend on His pedigree, but the decree of God for a perpetual priesthood.
F. For more about Psalm 110 and Christ's royal priesthood.
G. For more about the royal priesthood of Jesus Christ.
H. For more about the Melchisedec priesthood.

PSALM 118 (Messiah's Headship)

A. This Psalm is referenced often in the New Testament (118:22-26; Matt 21:9,42-45; 23:39; Mark 11:9; 12:9-12; Luke 13:35; 20:16-19; Acts 4:10-12; I Pet 2:6-8).
B. The kingdom the Jews refused is now marvelously the property of us Gentiles. Is it first in your life?
C. The day and time of the gospel was a new era for the world calling for joy (II Cor 6:2; Heb 3:12-13).
D. For more of the gospel millennium.

For Further Study:

1. The best commentary on the book of Psalms is Charles Spurgeon's Treasury of David now online both here or here.
2. For more about Jesus Christ as the great mystery of godliness.
3. Exposition of Hebrews – the Preeminence of Christ.
4. The importance of focusing on the Person of Christ.
5. From Song of Solomon, He Is Altogether Lovely.
6. Website documents about the Lord Jesus Christ to help you grow.
7. More sermons about the Lord Jesus Christ to help you grow.