

Psalm 72-73 – The King We Long for, the God who is Enough

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- [0 : 0 0] So, this morning and next week, we're going to do something a little bit different. I'm not too sure how far we'll get through today. My goal is to get to Psalm 72 before 3 o'clock.
- So, we'll see, right? So, my goal this morning is to introduce you, and for some of you it won't be an introduction, it'll just be a recap, of a way of reading the Psalms that perhaps you haven't thought about before.
- And I'll just confess to start with, this is a little bit of a struggle to get our heads around, mainly because everything about us, and everything about our culture, and everything about society is about, we come to the Bible, we look at the Bible, we go, where am I?
- Like, where can I find myself? Right? And I want us to try and think about just parking that attitude for the next 45 minutes.
- All right? That the Bible isn't primarily about me. Right? And I know that's like, how dare you? But that's the thesis, right?
- [1 : 1 2] That's the idea that the Psalms is not about us, it's about Jesus. And I know the way you're going. Now you're going, okay, well, I know prophetically Psalm 22, and those, I know it's about Jesus.
- Yes, I'm getting carried away. Let's, look, the normal way of reading a Psalm is that we take one of the 150 Psalms, and we choose it for our daily devotion, right?
- And some of those are great. And, or, you know, we hear one being preached, or we see part of a Psalm on a mug or a fridge magnet, and we go, well, there's the Psalms. And there can be some great blessing from those, and I don't want to diminish those, because actually, essentially, there's nothing wrong with reading the Psalms like that.
- But the question is, is that the way the Psalms are designed to be read? And so let me ask you this question, and I've got some slides peppered if you can see them.
- Some of them are a little bit smaller than I would like to. So let me ask you this question. Psalm 110, Psalm 118 are the two most quoted Psalms in the New Testament, because they're about Jesus, right?
- [2 : 2 0] You've got Paul, and you've got Peter, and Jesus himself referring to Psalm 110, Psalm 118, all the time to justify Jesus as Messiah.
- And then Psalm 111 to 117 are all about worship and praise of Messiah. Question, is that a coincidence? So look, before I get us all lost, let me illustrate by asking you to picture a deck of 52 playing cards.
- You will know what they're like, right? I'm assuming. If you saw this deck of playing cards, and it had been shuffled well, and you laid those cards out, you'd probably not see any particular order, would you?
- If they'd been shuffled well, right? As opposed to not in my house, where I'm trying to stack the deck in my favor, right? But if they'd been shuffled well, and you laid them all out on the table, you'd probably not see any particular order.

You'd have the five of spades next to the ten of clubs, and think nothing of it. And that's how, for the most part, we approach the Psalms, right? We have 150 Psalms. We laid them out on the table.

[3 : 26] We go, well, I like that one. I like that one. I have no idea what that one's about. I'm going to leave that one, park that one. And that would be it. But if we looked a little bit closer, as we've just seen on the screen, we would see a pattern.

So let me just give you an illustration really quickly. And I'm just going to give you a whole bunch of illustrations. And actually, next week, we'll probably get into the nitty-gritty of why this is important, right? So if we look at Psalm 7, for example.

Psalm 7 comes before, because we can count, right? Psalm 7 comes before Psalm 8. And Psalm 8 comes before Psalm 9.

You're all with me so far. I'm hoping I'm not leaving anyone behind, right? But we don't think of any other order, apart from the fact that they're numbered that way. That's just how they've been shuffled, right?

That's what we think. And, you know, someone has come along and put numbers on them, because otherwise we'd all be lost, right? If I go, oh, turn to Psalm 23, we'd be like, uh, right?

[4 : 38] So, but what if, in laying out those cards this time, they aren't shuffled, seemingly shuffled, but now they're grouped by set, or they're grouped by suit.

So all the clubs were together. Like, if that happened, we would probably conclude, like, if all the diamonds are together, all the hearts are together, all the space, we'd probably conclude that someone has purposely ordered them that way, right?

Or stacked a deck. So instead of seeing Psalm 7 as preceding Psalm 8 and preceding Psalm 9, perhaps we would notice that at the end of Psalm 7 is the phrase about giving thanks to the Lord and singing praise to the name of the Lord Most High.

We would read that. And you would read that in your daily devotions on the 7th of January. Because that's Psalm 7, right? And then we may notice, two days later, that Psalm 9 starts exactly the same way as Psalm 7 is finished.

So Psalm 9 begins, I will give thanks to the Lord in my whole heart. I will recount all of his wonderful deeds. I will be glad to exalt you. I will sing praise to your name of the Most High. And then we might remember from the day before, Psalm 8, that stitches them together by beginning and ending with the same phrase about his name.

[6 : 05] Oh Lord, oh Lord, how majestic is your name. And if we switched on, we might go, oh, Psalm 7, Psalm 8, Psalm 9 probably belong together. And we might use the analogy of the playing cards and we might say, it seems like someone's stacked a deck.

Because they put these Psalms together. They're not just Psalm 7, 8, 9. They're this Psalm and this Psalm and this Psalm. And so the question is, is that a random shuffle of the cards?

Or did someone put them there like that? Well, what happens if you go down another level? And you are able to see that they were not only in suits, but they were also ordered alphabetically as well.

So clubs come first because that's C. I know this is primary school, but like that's C. And then in the clubs you had Ace, because that begins with A.

And then you'd have 8, then you'd have 5, then you'd have 4. They're ordered alphabetically. You got it? If you saw them arranged like that, again, you'd probably conclude that someone had purposely ordered them that way.

[7 : 21] You wouldn't come away after 52 cards going, hmm, that's a coincidence. Like we'd stop playing cards, wouldn't we? And we'd go shuffle them. Okay?

Because if you played cards with me, you know, right? They've probably been stacked. Well, look, can I suggest to you that the book of Psalms, all 150 of them have an order and have been purposefully placed there to illustrate a story.

And the story is simply this, and if you don't take anything away from what I'm about to say, the story is simply this, that the Psalms are a book of the Bible about Jesus.

They're not a random collection of prayers, worship songs, hopes, struggles, challenges. They are a story, and they are a story about Jesus.

So, let me give you some examples. And then next week, we'll look into the prophetic about Jesus in the Psalms.

[8 : 31] Today, we're not going to do that. You're like, is there something else? And there is. All right? But my hope and prayer is that tomorrow morning when you open the Psalms, you go, hmm, there might be something else here.

There might be something different here. And maybe to not open the Psalms and go, where am I? But where is Jesus? And then respond accordingly. And so, let me give you some examples, then we'll jump into something.

So, there's 150 Psalms, if you didn't know that. There are. There's lots of them. And they were written in all of Israel's history from Moses through to the return after exile.

So, this idea that they are essentially David's Psalms is actually not true. They go all the way from Moses all the way through to the return, which is several hundred years.

About half of them were written by King David. But others were written by Moses. So, Psalm 90, for example. The Psalm of Moses. Some were written by a guy called Asaph, who I'll introduce you to in a moment.

[9 : 41] Others were written by seemingly like a punk rock band called the Sons of Korah. Like Old Testament number one. Others were written by even King Solomon wrote some of the Psalms.

And then others were written by musicians who are just completely unnamed and we don't know who they were written by. What is clear, and this is absolutely super clear, is that someone or a group of people, and more likely a someone leading a group of people, collected those Psalms up and put them in a book that we have today.

Now, I say that's super clear because we have them today. All right? So, like, they didn't just materialize. Most of the evidence points to the person collecting those was Ezra, the same Ezra that we read about in the Bible.

Unfortunately, Ezra, the book of Ezra, appears in the middle of our Old Testament. It should come at the end of our Old Testament if you're looking chronologically. He's the guy who's credited for leading a group of scribes to collect the Psalms and then put them in some kind of order.

By the Second Temple period, which is around 5th to the 3rd century BC, the book was complete. As you begin to read the book, you, well, you know, maybe January 41st.

[11 : 23] That's not a date. At some point in February, you're reading Psalm 41, right? And you'll notice that when you get to Psalm 41, verse 13, I'm not sure it's on the screen, but you can thumb there.

You'll notice at the end, verse 13, blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting, amen and amen. That's known as a doxology. And if you read a bit further, get to Psalm 72, you'll read this in verse 19, blessed be his glorious name forever.

May the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen. And amen, another doxology. And you might go, huh? And you might go off on a tangent. You might get lost a little bit and try and find all of the other doxologies.

And quite helpfully, the translators of our Bible have grouped our Psalms into where those doxologies beginning and end and call them books.

And actually the books actually were probably placed there by Ezra and just repeated for our help, right? So we have five books. We have Psalms 3 to 41. That's contentious.

[12 : 30] Most people go Psalm 1 to 41. Psalm 42 to 72. Psalm 73 and so on. And you can read from the screen, right? So the Psalms are divided up into five books, five books of Psalms.

The content of those books deliberately mirror the first five books of the Bible or the Torah. And we'll see some nods to this as we go, right?

So book one mirrors what... It's called a thematic parallel. You're welcome. So book one follows the same themes as the book of Genesis.

So Psalm 1 to 41 or Psalm 3 to 41. So we have various states of mankind from creation and fall to the eventual recovery through the perfect man who is seen in the promise to Judah in Genesis 49.

And then book two mirrors the book of Exodus, explores the themes of deliverance from various oppressive situations. Book three covers the book of Leviticus. Book four mirrors numbers.

[13 : 40] And finally, book five, which mirrors... where it highlights... This is the section about the word of God and the covenant faithfulness of God mirrors the book of Deuteronomy.

And so what we see is that we have some order there. Right? That's not just someone just throwing up a pack of cards and going, well, wherever they land, they land. Let's call this Psalm number three and put it next to that Psalm number four.

There's some order there. Someone's read these through and thought thematically. They belong here. They belong together. This isn't David's playlist on shuffle.

Right? I'm reminded the very great pastime in the 80s and 90s was making mixtapes. Do you remember those? Some of you are nodding.

Some of you are like, mix what now? And I'll just leave it there for you to go and figure out what a mixtape is. But the question would be then in my mind, are the Psalms more like a mixtape or are they more like the now albums that are just a random collection of terrible music?

[14 : 52] Right? So look, you'll notice that I've actually skipped over chapters one and two and then 146 to 150 and I've done that on purpose.

What about them? Well, Psalms 151, 146 to 150. The most striking thing to say about them is that they are the Hallelujah Psalms.

Now, they're the Hallelujah Psalms simply because of their theme and they all come at the end. Coincidence. If this book is about Jesus, isn't the most fitting thing to finish the book with praise of Jesus?

Yes, is the answer. And so we have these Psalms at the end of the book seemingly drawing attention to a conclusion of worship. And then Psalm 1 and Psalm 2, which are the most fascinating Psalms, I think, in all of Psalms.

They are my favorite two Psalms. And you'll know, you know, when we talk through Matthew, the Sermon on the Mount, the Sermon on the Mount, you can't understand without understanding Psalm 1 and 2.

[16 : 06] All right? But that's a different sermon for a different time. Psalm 1 and 2, they provide probably the most important key to unlocking the meaning of the Psalms.

They don't really belong to a book, even though they are included in book 1. If you are an academic, you will recognize that Psalm 1 and Psalm 2 are an abstract to the book.

If you are a musician, like myself, you will recognize these are an overture to the book. Now, what that means is, both in academia and in music, like an overture comes at the beginning of a ballet or the beginning of an opera or the beginning of a musical even sometimes.

And in that overture, that instrumental piece of music, it covers all of the themes musically of what else is coming in that ballet or that opera. It's a self-contained unit of work.

book. And this is true of Psalm 1 and 2. It's an overture to the book of Psalms. It's way more than an introduction.

[17 : 22] As soon as you open them and just turn to Psalm 1. I know what you're thinking. He said we're going to get to Psalm 72. We are. We may have to bump some of that to next week.

But Psalm 1, as soon as you open it, what do you notice? Well, you notice that the language seems to make them stand apart because actually they're more like proverbs than they are Psalms, right?

And notice the Psalm 1 begins, Blessed is a man who walks in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scorners. And we go, what is me? Now, I've got a huge amount of problems with opening Psalm 1 and going, well, that's me.

I'm the blessed man. I am a blessed man. But this is a macarism. This is an observation of how the blessed live.

It's not a formula to get a blessed life, right? Really important that we understand that, that the gospel is about what Jesus has done for us, not what we do to get him to bless us.

[18 : 27] And so, the Psalmist says, look at this man. Look at his way of life. Here we have a man who has gone out of his way to live a completely different kind of life to those around him live.

Psalm 2, his delight, we're told, is in the law of the Lord. On his law, he meditates day and night. And in verse 3, we're given a picture of what his life looks like. He's like a tree planted by streams of water that yields his fruit and its season.

His leaf does not wither. In all he does, he prospers. That's what we observe of this man. And then we conclude that the type of life that he has is a good one. Like how many of us wouldn't like that kind of life, right?

It's a blessed one. And so he's a blessed man. And look, the purpose of writing is to invite us in to join that way of life. And no point is the psalmist suggesting that we go out on our own strength and try and find that life.

That's how a lot of the time Psalm 1 is preached. You want to be a blessed person? You need to do this, this, this, this, this, this. The purpose of the psalm is to invite us to join that way of life.

[19 : 43] The psalmist is saying, would you look at this guy's life? Don't he want it? Don't he want that kind of life? And some of the teachers are like, oh, that's like, no, that's a summer holiday life.

That is. But it's way more than that, isn't it? Wouldn't he love to live that kind of good life? And then he compares it in verse 4 to those who are around him.

He said, the wicked aren't like that. They're like chaff that the wind drives away. Therefore, the wicked will not stand in the judgment nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For the Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.

And so the psalmist sets up, and it's important that we see it, to set up for the rest, for 148 psalms that are to come. He's setting up two groups of people, righteous and wicked.

The righteous live this way, the wicked live that way. The outcome for the righteous is that they prosper. The outcome for the wicked is that they perish. But notice that verse 1 begins with the blessed man.

[20 : 46] And chapter 2 ends with the blessed man. Do you see that? So Psalm 2, verse 12, Kiss the son, lest he be angry, you perish in the way, and his wrath is quickly kindled.

Blessed are those who take refuge in him. And so we understand that chapter 1 and chapter 2, there are two ways to live. There is a blessed man of Psalm 1, and the question was, don't you want to live like him?

Well, who is he? Is the question. Right? Well, he's the same blessed man in chapter 2 who has kissed the son and taken refuge in him. This isn't a man who's gone, you know what, I want the good life.

And I'm going to do X, Y, Z to get the good life. He's the blessed man in chapter 2 who has kissed the son, who has embraced the son, and has taken refuge in him.

And then the second way of life is described as chasing the wind, raging and plotting against God. And those who do not, and those who live that way do not prosper, but in the end will perish.

[21 : 59] And those two themes are the themes of the entire book of Psalms. And the crucial thing for us to see is that the son, who is there in verse 12 of chapter 2, the son appears not always as the son.

He appears as sometimes the king, sometimes the shepherd, sometimes the Messiah, sometimes as the servant. And we either see a person or a group of people, the righteous, who have kissed the son and fallen down to worship, or we see the one or a group of people who have rebelled and have turned against him.

And when we read the rest of the Psalms, we encounter the righteous, and we encounter the wicked, and we're supposed to go back to Psalm 1 and see who the righteous are because they're the same.

And we're supposed to see who the wicked are because they're the same. We encounter the wicked nations. The psalmist talks about them a lot. Well, they're the same wicked man and wicked nations in Psalm 1 and 2.

They're not a different group of people. But the key again is that all the way through the Psalms, and this is important, we have hope, not in our righteousness, not in our X, Y, Z of doing.

[23 : 40] We don't have hope in our righteousness, but in the one who makes us righteous. We've embraced the son, and by embracing the son and taking refuge in him, he has made us righteous and given us a blessed life.

That's gospel reading, not law reading. Law reading is, I want to bless life.

I must do these things. Gospel reading is, I still want to bless life, but I'm going to embrace the one who gives me that blessed life. And by embracing and taking refuge, we get a blessed life.

That's different. It's a completely different way of reading the Bible. which means that the Psalms isn't primarily, and listen carefully, the Psalms isn't primarily about the righteous and the wicked.

The Psalms are about Jesus and how we take refuge in him and his righteousness. So let me give you another example before we get into something deeper.

[24 : 52] Turn to Psalm 14. I'm not sure I've got this on the screen. Okay. You're just going to have to follow along.

Go to old school when we didn't have screens to fall asleep at, you know? It's like... So Psalm 14, right? This is January 14th, okay?

So Psalm 14. We'll see in a minute that Psalm 15 through to Psalm 24 is one unit that tells a story.

So much like Psalm 7 through to 9 is one unit that tells a story, yeah? Psalm 15 to Psalm 24 is one unit that tells a story. So you know when we go to Psalm 22, we see that picture of Jesus.

That's in a unit. We shouldn't be reading Psalm 22 on its own. The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. We shouldn't be reading that on its own. It's a lovely psalm.

[25 : 57] It's a wonderful psalm and all of them are wonderful psalms on their own. But if you really want to understand what a psalmist is saying and what Ezra is trying to hint at, we read them as a unit, as one story.

Now I know that gets challenging because you're like, well you're telling me to read 20 psalms rather than one. Yes. I am. And I make no apology for that.

Okay? So look, Psalm 14 comes before Psalm... You guys are great. You guys are good.

Psalm 15, right? And we've already just said that Psalm 15 and Psalm 24 is one unit that tells a story. And we're not going to read it all so don't worry. But what I do want to highlight with you is that Psalm 14 makes this claim in verse 2 and 3 that Paul quotes in Romans.

The Lord looks down from heaven on the children of man to see if there's anyone who understands and seeks after God. They've all turned aside. Together they have become corrupt.

[27 : 03] There is none who does good, not even one. Keep that in your mind. So then chapter 15, Ezra is like, hmm, what do I follow chapter 14 with?

I know, chapter 15. And he puts this Psalm in. Chapter 15, beginning at verse 1. Oh Lord, who shall sojourn in your tent? Who shall dwell in your holy hill?

Do you get the link? Like, so, who then? Is there anyone who can dwell in God's presence? If they're, if everyone is turned aside, if together they have become corrupt, there is none who does good, not even one, chapter 15, well, who can dwell on his holy hill?

You see, it mirrors Genesis, right? Adam being cast out of the garden. Who is worthy? If that is the case, then, who can even fellowship with God?

And look, the answer is found in verse 2, of course, thankfully. Because if they left us on that cliffhanger, we'd all be in trouble, right? So, verse 2, well, here's the answer. He who walks blamelessly and does what is right and speaks truth in his heart.

[28 : 31] Now, you're wishing I hadn't quoted verse 2, right? So, so the psalmist is like, there isn't anyone. Verse 2, oh, there still isn't anyone.

And it's in that tension that we carry on reading the story in verse 16 or chapter 16, verse 1, then preserve me. Do you get that?

He's like, if there isn't anyone, then no one could go into your presence. Here's what you need to do with me, Lord. You need to preserve me. He says, preserve me.

And it's almost preserve me then, God. My only hope is to take refuge in you. Psalm 2. I say to the Lord, you are my Lord.

I have no good apart from you. And then, and then this in you and apart from you, right? Do you notice that? In you and apart from you carry forward to chapter 18 where the psalmist says, I love you.

[29 : 32] Why? Because you're my strength. You're, the Lord is my rock. He's my fortress. He's my deliverer. He's my what? He's my refuge. I take refuge in him.

My shield, the horn of my salvation, my stronghold. I call upon the Lord who alone is worthy to be praised. Who is able to go into the house of God where the only person is verse 2.

Actually, the only person is the blessed person from Psalm 1, the person who has kissed the sun and taken refuge in him. I will call upon the Lord, he says in chapter 18 verse 3.

Who alone is worthy to be praised and I am saved from my enemies. So who will ascend your holy hill? The one who is worthy. Well, who is that?

And then we get, we get the outcome of taking refuge in him. Remember Psalm 2. Blessed are those who take refuge. Verse 4, chapter 18. The cause of death encompass me. The torrent of destruction assailed me.

[30 : 37] The cords of Sheol entangled me. The snares of death confronted me. In my distress I called upon the Lord. To my God I cried for help.

Notice, from his temple. Where is he in Psalm 2? He's on the holy hill. Where is the holy hill? What is on the holy hill?

His temple. Zion, place of the temple. from his temple. Wait a second. We just said that no one can enter his temple. No one can go into where he lives.

He heard my voice and my cry to him reached his ears. And so we're seeing that, that, look, that Jesus, this is about Jesus, that Jesus is the true blameless man of verse 2 who can dwell with God.

The one in chapter 16 who did not see decay but was resurrected. The one in chapter 17 who is perfectly innocent. The one in chapter 18 who has victory.

[31 : 45] A psalm that Paul quotes in Romans chapter 15 verse 9 as Jesus having victory. It's not a coincidence that Paul is quoting from Psalm 18.

And in Psalm 19, as if this wasn't enough, we get to Psalm 19 and we see that there is a centerpiece of God's revelation is seen in two things, creation and the word.

That's Psalm 19. We love to quote Psalm 19, right? Us Bible people, we love 19. The heavens declare the glory of God and the sky above proclaims his handiwork.

And then look at verse 7. The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul. The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. So we have the perfect word foreshadowing, not the written word because the written word isn't perfect in terms of there's some translation errors and so on and so forth.

Not the written word but the logos word. What do you mean? Well, who is the radiance of God's glory? John chapter 1. Jesus.

[33 : 07] Who's described as what? The word. In the beginning was the word. The word was with God. The word was God. In the beginning, he was in the beginning with God and listen, the pinnacle of God's revelation, creation and the word combined in verse 3 of John chapter 1.

All things were made, made, creation, all things were made through him, Jesus, and without him was not anything made that was made.

And look at the end of chapter 19. Should be our prayer, right? Verse 14, let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight.

O Lord, my rock and my redeemer. And we can keep going where we see chapters 15 to 19 going up the mountain, ascending, literally, if you like.

And then chapters 20 to 24 coming back down. It's called a chiasm, right? So the pinnacle is chapter 19. The mountaintop is chapter 19.

[34 : 18] And then we start going back down. And even we see this picture of chapter, I think it was 18, where we see death being stared in its face.

And Psalm 23, yeah, but even if I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, you're with me. Right? It's a chiasm. It's a mirror. And at the end of the unit in chapter 24, in the same way, or it ends the same way as it began.

It's a mirror. In coincidence? So chapter 15 began in the same way as chapter, well, 24 begins, who will ascend the hill?

Didn't we ask that question? Chapter 15 asks that question. Chapter 24 asks that question. It's a unit. And who shall stand in the holy place?

He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to what is false and does not swear deceitfully. Coincidence? Random shuffle of the cards?

[35 : 28] Probably not. So let's look at one more in the time that we've got left. And with this one, we'll follow along a little bit closer and try and draw out some firmer application.

So all I've said at this point is to suggest to you that the Psalms are about Jesus. Not just explicitly, but in the way that we read it.

And we really should read them differently than probably how we do often approach them. So turn to Psalm 72. I know some of you are like, yeah, but what about the other Psalms?

Well, we'll get to Psalm 42 next week, which is super interesting. But anyway, I won't even think about that today. Psalm 72. Psalm 72, and maybe this is a heading if you want to just write these down.

Psalm 72, we have a description of the king we all long for. And in Psalm 73, we have a description of the God who is enough.

[36 : 46] So Psalm 72, the king we all long for, and it starts with this inscription that this psalm is a psalm of Solomon. And interestingly, it's probably not written by Solomon.

This is a psalm of David about Solomon. It's a prayer for Solomon. It's a prayer if you want to read the history of 1 Kings 2 where David is being pursued by Saul or he's been pursued by the enemies and he has to come to this place where he goes, you know what, I can't be king anymore.

But you know what, Solomon couldn't be king. So they kind of rushed this coronation of Solomon in chapter 2 of 1 Kings and this is the prayer for David for his son.

And so in a very real way, David is asking God for a king that we all long for. And we do long for a king.

We do long for a good king. Otherwise, our news outlets would be empty every night. They would have nothing to say because there's something in us that are longing for a king, a good king.

[38 : 03] And before we get into the psalm itself, and we're not going to go verse by verse through the two psalms simply because we don't have time, I want to draw your attention to the last verse of Psalm 72 in verse 20.

It says that the prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended. And then right below that, if you have a Bible like mine, like it's laid out like mine, it says book three.

Do you notice that? Okay. So, Psalm 72 is the end of book two. And it's a prayer for Solomon to be a king that Israel wanted and Israel needed.

As Solomon is crowned king, but the prayer prayer is for God to do what he has promised to do. Right? That's what the prayer, we'll get into it in a minute.

It's, God, you said you're going to do this. You said you're going to raise up a king like this. I admit that that wasn't me.

[39 : 21] So, God, would you bring a king to do what you said you're going to do? Like, my heart is racing right now because like, I feel, we want a king to bring in everything that God has said he's going to do.

Right? Amen? Amen? And this is what David is praying for. And, um, he's gonna, he's gonna reference Psalm 1.

Right? So, in verse 17, just look down there. He says, may his name endure forever, his fame continue as long as the sun.

May people be blessed in him and all nations call him blessed. Well, that's Psalm 1. Which means that the future king who David is praying for, perhaps, is going to bring in all that God had promised.

He is the blessed man of Psalm 1. The king who is to come is the blessed man of Psalm 1.

[40 : 32] And all who kiss him and take refuge in him are blessed in him because of him. Psalm 1 isn't about you.

Psalm 1 is about Jesus. And the nations that are raging in Psalm 2 are gonna be brought under his lordship.

That's Psalm 72. So, David prays, verse 1, give the king your justice, O God, and your righteousness to your royal son.

May he judge your people with righteousness and your poor with justice. Let the mountains bear prosperity for the people and their hills in righteousness.

May he defend the cause of the poor of the people, give deliverance to the children of the needy, and crush the oppressor. And everybody goes, Amen, that's what we need. Right?

[41 : 32] Like, this cry for justice is a longing for a better king than even David. It's a prayer for Solomon.

But ultimately, it's a prayer for the coming of Messiah. A prayer to deliver the needy, to rescue the children of the poor, and to break the oppressor.

Is that exactly what we need today? Like, you just turn on the TV and your heart just goes, there's no justice in the world.

Like, even, I don't know whether you've been following the Epstein case. Like, and now, apparently, there's no mystery, secret list. of sex offenders.

And my heart just goes, number one, I just don't believe it. Number two, are you telling me these people are going to receive no justice? It makes you long for justice. You see, people who are poorer than poor being taken advantage of in a massive way.

[42 : 55] There's no justice. There's no justice. What we need, what the world needs, is not another David, not even another Solomon, but the king of justice and compassion, Jesus himself, who read from the scroll of Isaiah and said of himself in Luke chapter 4, the spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor.

Not just good news. Good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind and to set liberty to those who are oppressed to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.

In answer to the question, are you Messiah? Jesus said in Matthew chapter 11 that the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear and the dead are raised up and the poor have good news preached to them.

What is he saying? He's saying the one who was longed for, the one the King David prayed for is here.

And the main idea is of course that God's plan has always been to bless the world through his righteous King. Always. Luke chapter 1 verse 32 says this, he will be great.

[44 : 23] This is talking about Jesus if there's any doubt. Right? He will be great. Which I think is just an understatement. He will be great.

He will be called the Son of the Most High. Psalm chapter 8. How majestic is your name the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David.

Psalm 72. Because his father who's David's who's the father of David? Solomon. What's this psalm about?

Solomon. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever. And of his kingdom there'll be no end just as David prayed.

And in Revelation chapter 11 you get this culmination which of course we don't have to go into time to go into this morning or even this month. Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet and there were loud voices in heaven saying the kingdom of this world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ and he shall reign.

[45 : 44] longer than the son exists in David's words. And in the rest of chapter 72 we just get this further description of this king who's going to come and rule and reign with justice and righteousness.

And then in verse 17 again may his name endure forever his fame continue as long as the son may people be blessed in him all nations call him blessed.

This is the promise that God made to who? Abraham. Genesis chapter 12 verse 3 I will bless those who bless you or putting into the words of David or into the psalmist I will save those who take refuge in you.

I will bless those who bless you and him who dishonors you I will curse and in you all the families of the earth will be blessed.

verse 18 says blessed be the Lord God of Israel who alone does wondrous things blessed be his righteous or glorious name forever may the whole earth be filled with his glory amen and amen and that's the end of Psalm 72 and we finish on a high and we go out singing and dancing and rejoicing right and it even goes this is these are the prayers of David this is the king that we long for isn't it can you feel it in your heart this is the king that we long for if Psalm 72 were the last page of the story the world would be perfect but we get to the end of the book the second book we get to the end of the second book and the end of the psalm we're left with this question aren't we maybe you're not

[47 : 55] I am I'm left with this question what do we do when life doesn't look like this because I'm sure you as well as me in the way that I look at the world is not I haven't concluded that Psalm 72 has arrived have you so what do we do then when the world doesn't look like that because for us that is the reality isn't it the reality for so many still today is a world that doesn't look like that it seems on the face of it that David's prayer has gone unanswered like if we're honest most of our prayers they seem to hit the ceiling and fall back to us and King David it seems was exactly the same

Psalm 72 is David's prayer for the ideal king who brings justice peace and blessings to the nation Psalm 73 is Asaph's struggle with why the wicked still prosper and the righteous still suffer oh are we stitching something together is that a coincidence is that a random shuffle of the cards 72 closes book 2 on a high note of messianic hope we felt it in ourselves 73 opens book 3 with a crisis of faith when reality doesn't seem to match that hope so what do we do when reality shatters our expectations this Psalm 73 followed by the next 10 Psalms are written by Asaph not David

Asaph was the grandson of the prophet Samuel he has good pedigree he was one of the most spiritual men in all of Israel Asaph he was in charge get this he was in charge of moving the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem right imagine that imagine the pastor called you one afternoon and hey let's have coffee I've got a job for you like we need to move the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem from wherever it was Bethsheba or somewhere like that right we need to move it you're my guy and in those days you couldn't say no he was this guy he was also in charge of the ceremony to dedicate Solomon's temple so when we read this is a psalm of

Asaph this isn't the guy down the road making mixed tracks in his garage this is Asaph grandson of Samuel worship leader of all of Israel and he had seen so many wonderful things can you imagine being there on that day this is the day we're not going to have to lug the ark of the covenant around everywhere we go God himself is going to be in Jerusalem and that's where he's going to live forever that's their thinking can you imagine just being in charge seeing him pull that thing walking past and yet we learn in psalm 73 that even a man like this can have a crisis of faith!

we're not going to read the whole thing so don't worry too much verse 1 truly God is good to Israel to those who are pure in heart and we all agree God is good amen then he says verse 2 but uh oh you can sense it 72 this high messianic hope this is the king that we long for this is king David's prayer God is good Asaph says and I know that God is good but how do I square up with that pain and injustice that I see all around me he says in verse 3 that the shalom peace I expected Messiah to bring in and give to those who are blessed has instead gone to the wicked what he's saying is psalm 1 and psalm 2 cannot be true

[53 : 32] I know them to be true but I just don't see them to be true everything is turned upside down the blessed man doesn't seem so blessed the wicked don't seem to be perishing they seem to be prospering what's the deal ever prayed!

like why that's his prayer he's like what it shouldn't be like I know that God is good like don't question my theology but I'm questioning myself how that works out in practice and so this shalom piece that he talks about is important in the mind of the Jew because nearly two thirds of the times that phrase appears in the Old Testament it is reserved exclusively for God's people people who aren't gods in the Old Testament certainly don't experience that shalom peace they shouldn't experience that shalom peace it's for the righteous for the blessed man you remember in Numbers chapter 6 the priest proclaimed it over Israel right the Lord bless you and keep you the Lord make his face shine upon you be gracious to you the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace belongs to you

Israel surely God is good to Israel he says but peace the sign of covenant blessing of God are now being poured out on the wicked while divine discipline was now the lot of the righteous you see this is designed to feel like a slap in the face after Psalm 72 feels it doesn't it you're like yeah you've got a good point Asaph but where are we going!

Ezra wants us to wrestle with this deep deep disappointment and if you're not wrestling with this deep deep disappointment that the king that we long for hasn't come we probably need to check our hearts but he also wants to see us to see that this reality is shared that this reality is shared by the king of Psalm!

72 because while Asaph laments that the wicked flourish while he despite keeping his heart pure suffers this mirrors of course Jesus' own experience and if you know your Bibles in Isaiah 53 we get this picture of the suffering servant who was what crowned who was bringing in righteousness no no Isaiah 53 is about the suffering servant Messiah the same Messiah of Psalm 72 but this one is despised rejected and afflicted even though he was innocent Asaph is almost mirroring the Isaiah 53 messianic experience

[57 : 12] Ezra wants to see that the Messiah the true righteous one who suffers unjustly for his people is this same one in Psalm 73 notice this in verse 16 as something happens in Asaph's thinking he says but when I thought how to understand this it seemed like a wearisome task he was like that's just too hard I'm done someone bring some more coffee help me out until verse 17 and I love the untils of the Bible don't you I thought it was too much until I went into the sanctuary of God and then I discerned their end the sanctuary visit reframes reality and he's reminded in verse 25 whom have

I in heaven but you there is nothing on earth that I desire beside you my flesh and my heart may fail but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever you see he is the king that we long for but he's also the God who is enough the solution is not an immediate fix to circumstance we'd love that wouldn't we God could you fix this boom fixed could you bring in justice boom brought in but there's a shift in focus there's a shift in his heart from the king's reign in Psalm 72 to God's presence in Psalm 73 answer how do you come to terms with the fact that

Psalm 72 hasn't come about and the reality is disappointing you run into the house of God and you be with God that's the answer he doesn't offer any other he doesn't say well try and bring it in yourself he says you know what the place that you need to be the place where reality is reframed is in the sanctuary of God in the presence of God and Psalm 72 vision is still true it will still come true but our security and listen our security is not in the visible state of the nation our security but in God himself why because he is the refuge that we run to Psalm 2 our ultimate hope is not just in the reign of the king but in the presence of the king's

God he is our portion now Jesus said in Matthew I tell you something greater than the temple is here and so look in summary because time has gone Psalm 73 finds its fulfillment in Jesus he is the righteous sufferer he is the sanctuary as refuge he is the righteous judge and he is the source of our eternal life and joy in other words Psalm 73 points forward to the cross to the resurrection and the reign of Jesus where the problem of apparent injustice is finally and fully answered so the Psalms are a book of the Bible about Jesus and my encouragement to you this week is to start reading them or continue reading them I should say not with eyes that try and find yourself but eyes that find

Jesus next week we will look at some of the prophetic about Jesus in the Psalms but we're going to focus on Psalm 42 to 49 and I'm not going to give you a spoiler let's pray Father thank you that your word is still true despite what we see in the world around us Lord we want to take hope in the king that we long for that he's going to come but also while we wait and while we might find disappointment in the wait Lord we want to find presence in the king's God and so we look for that Lord we look to be in your presence Lord we thank you for that that you are the one who incarnated you came to us and when you ascended you left the Holy

[62 : 41] Spirit with us God and so Lord while we wrestle with all of the injustices and all of the problems and all of the challenges of this world sometimes our hearts can be discouraged and sometimes our fists can even shake Lord what are you doing why just like Asaph Lord we want to come into your sanctuary into the place that you promised to be into the place that you promised to meet us and find refuge help us to do that we pray help us to see your word not through individualistic and consumeristic minds and eyes Lord help us to see your word as you've designed them to be seen that give us courage and hope for today and for tomorrow Lord we ask this in Jesus name Amen as

Thank you.