

Psalms 42-49 - CANCELLED By GOD!

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[0 : 0 0] Oh, it's gone quiet, so I'm assuming that that's my cue.! So, this morning, we are going to continue our study in the book of Psalms.

And last week was a little bit of a challenge, wasn't it? So, I kind of want to pick up some things from last week and talk a little bit about the Psalms being a storyline.

And to illustrate that, I actually want to turn to Genesis. And I know that's kind of like, what are you doing? But it literally just dawned on me this morning that Genesis is a perfect example of what we mean by a storyline in the text, a storyline in the Bible that we would not normally go, here's a story.

Here's a storyline that is about Jesus. So, you remember last time we said that the Psalms is a book about Jesus, right? And so, you can do the same thing with Genesis.

We're not going to go there this morning because I do want to be out by 12 or something like that. 12 p.m. But you can do the same with Genesis. So, Genesis has sections.

[1 : 1 2] It has a section that is a poem followed by a summary statement. Another section that is a poem, summary statement, section summary statement, and so on and so forth.

And one of the most striking stories that you read is in Genesis chapter 5. Now, I haven't given you a duff verse or a duff chapter. I do mean Genesis chapter 5.

Because in Genesis chapter 5, the flow of Genesis chapter 5, and this is just an introduction to what I mean by a storyline. The flow of Genesis chapter 5 is really, really simple, isn't it?

You have a guy, he lives for this long and then he dies. And I don't want to be too morbid on a Sunday morning, but that's our life, isn't it?

Like literally, like we're born and we die. Right? We live for this kind of, they call it the dash, the dash in the middle, right? Your birth date and your end date and there's a dash and the dash is your life. Right?

[2 : 1 1] And the exhortation is, well, what are you doing with your dash? Right? And so, that's what Genesis 5 is. It's Adam lived and he died. Right?

Right? And he had this kid called Seth and Seth lived and he died. And Seth had this another kid, he lived and he died. Right? And all the way through until you get to Enoch and then Enoch is like, he lived.

And he loved God and God took him. And everybody's like, wait, wait, wait. That's a break in the pattern. But generally, you get this pattern of Adam to Seth, Seth to Enosh, Enoch to Canaan, and Canaan to Mahalalal and Mahalalal to someone else.

And you're like, well, great. And what we normally do is we get to chapter 4 in the story of Cain and Abel and we go, well, that's a terrifically terrible story. Right? And then we get to chapter 5 and by that time it's January the 5th.

And we're like, if you've got to Genesis 5, you're doing brilliantly. But we don't know what to make of it. So we go, oh, let's go to Genesis chapter 6. Am I right? Some people.

- [3 : 17] But look, there's a storyline. There's a storyline in Genesis chapter 5. And this is what I mean by storylines. So the name Adam means man.
- Right? And it only means man because it wasn't anyone else. Right? So Eve was literally like, hey, man. And he's like, who, me? He's like, well, there's no one else. Right?
- And so his name was Adam, Adam, man. Right? And so it starts with man. And remember, it's all in the context of someone who's lived and died.
- Someone who's lived and died. Someone who's lived and died. How are you going to ever break that pattern is the question. Because Genesis 3, just two chapters ago, it talks about the fall and how sin brought about death.
- Right? And so the question is, how are you ever going to break that pattern? How are you going to ever break out of that pattern of living and dying, living and dying, living and dying?
- [4 : 17] You get a sneaking insight into Enoch living. God took him. But the general pattern is living and dying, isn't it? And we all know that. And so the storyline is that the man began.
- And then Seth is appointed. That's what the word appointed, Seth means. It means appointed. Enoch means mortal frailty or mortality. You're going to die.
- We will go out rejoicing this morning. This is great, isn't it? You're going to die. Right? And then Canaan is sorrow. That's what it means. Okay, it's better. Hey. Right? And so you see a storyline right there in the first four names, the first four generations of Noah.
- Man is appointed to mortal sorrow. True or not? Absolutely. Right? Test it tomorrow morning when you have to go to work, unless you're a teacher.
- Right? It's that nine to five, that grind, that thing you've got to do every single day over and over and over again until you pop your clogs and off you go. Man is appointed to mortal sorrow.
- [5 : 28] And then carrying on through the generations, Malhalal just means the blessed God.
- Jared means will come down or coming down or descent. Enoch, the blessed God shall come down. Down teaching is Enoch is teaching or initiates.
- It's the words to, yeah, to teach. Right? And then Methuselah. Like, well, we know Methuselah, right?
- Because he's the oldest dude ever to have lived. Right? And it's literally, his parents said, not a fable, but Jewish understanding was that he was named because, and you can track this if you want to, if you've got time, that when he died, the flood came.
- And so it was prophetic. Right? And so his Methuselah means when he dies. Imagine being called that as a kid. Going for a register in class.
- [6 : 35] But, um, so Methuselah means when he dies. Lamech means despairing. Um, and Noah means comfort or rest. And so when you, when you take all those 10 names and you put them, a story, it makes a storyline.
- Right? Um, in, in the, the generations of Noah, you have man is appointed to mortal sorrow, but the blessed God shall come down, teaching that his death shall bring the, the despairing comfort.
- That's the gospel. Right? That's a storyline. So when we, when we're talking about storylines in Psalms, actually we're talking about the same thing.
- Last week we said that the Psalms, all 150 of them have an order. Right? Do you remember that? And, um, they, they, they've been placed, uh, next to each other purposefully to illustrate a story, a story, a story about Jesus.

The Psalms is a book about, good. Someone's been to Sunday school. Right? So the answer is always Jesus. Right? So, um, the Psalms is a book about, uh, Jesus. They, this is not a pack of cards that have been randomly shuffled and then just put together.

[7 : 54] This is not David's playlist on shuffle. Right? And, um, there is an order to them purposefully placed. And we looked at some of those examples last week, and you can go and check them out on YouTube if you want to.

they've been purposefully placed to help us to see this story. So again, Psalm 1 and 2 belong together because they are a unit and they talk about Jesus.

Psalm 7 to 9 belong together because they're a unit that talk about Jesus. Psalm 15 to 25 belong together. They're a unit because they talk about?

Good. Psalm 72 and 73 we looked at in detail is a unit. They belong together because they talk about? Good.

So we get storylines in units of text in the Psalms. Actually, throughout the Bible, we get these. But we also get quotes.

[8 : 57] And I just want to highlight some quotes to you just to re-emphasize that this is a book about Jesus. So we get quotes of the Psalms in the New Testament.

Either applied by the New Testament writers about Jesus or Jesus himself will say, this is me. Or he'll just randomly quote them. And sometimes you think, that doesn't work. How does that work?

All right. So Psalm 6 verse 3. The psalmist says, my soul also is greatly troubled. But you, O Lord, how long? Well, Jesus quotes this in John chapter 12.

And he says, now my soul is troubled. Jesus quotes the Psalms about himself. Probably the most famous that you probably can think of is Psalm 22.

We kind of looked at it briefly last week. Psalm 22 verse 1. Where the psalmist says, my God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Jesus on the cross cried this very same thing.

[9 : 59] Matthew 27. There he was, the ninth hour, cried out with a loud voice saying, my God, my God, why have you forsaken me? So Jesus takes the Psalms and applies those Psalms to himself.

And then he gets some really strange ones, right? So Acts chapter 2. Peter is preaching this sermon. And he's describing the gospel and the work of Jesus.

And he quotes Psalm 16. And he quotes Psalm 16 several times, actually. And if you're brave, you'll go back and look at Psalm 16. So in Psalm 31, Acts chapter 2, it says there he, and this is Peter, talking about David.

King David. He, David, foresaw and spoke about the resurrection of Christ. So David is more than we think he is.

He's a prophet. He saw, foresaw, spoke about the resurrection of Christ. That he was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption. And when you go back to read Psalm 16, the fascinating thing is it's all in the first person, which basically means that you have David writing as if he is Messiah.

[11 : 17] And you're like, wait a second. Right? So there's lots of different ways that Jesus is seen in the Psalms. And I don't want to get too caught up on that this morning because we've got eight chapters to get through this morning.

So just like we saw last week in Psalm 72 and 73, this morning I want to take you on a bit of a journey over several Psalms. And those Psalms have been placed together. All right?

And they've been purposefully placed together to tell a story. And the story is about...

Good. No one has been listening.

So, and we often miss this, don't we? Like we often miss this big sweeping story because we take like Psalm 42 and just turn there because that's where we're going to start. So we take Psalm 42 and we don't read it with Psalm 41 or Psalm 43.

Or worse yet, we sing it. Out of context, it's a lovely, lovely, lovely Psalm. Beautiful, like little melody.

[12 : 25] And we know it because it was written in the 80s. And we're all 80s. Well, some of us are 80s kids. And we're like, well, there you go. As the deer pants for the water, so my soul pants.

And we hear a sermon on it and we feel ashamed because actually I'm not like that. Right? I know I should be. But I'm not.

And that's pretty much as far as we go. Or we see, you know, a deer on a mug with as the deer pants for the water. And it's a mug or it's a fridge magnet.

Right? And we don't see them too much, but it's a car bumper sticker. Right? Or something like that. And the point is that we miss it because we're reading one Psalm at a time.

Right? And again, there's nothing necessarily wrong with that. But we just miss the story. So turn to Psalm 42. If you're making notes, the thing I really want you to see is this on the screen.

[13 : 26] It's the section that runs from 42 to 49. All right? And it is this. Humanity is in exile. And what I'm going to refer to humanity in exile is Eden lost.

Are we in the Garden of Eden anymore? Yes or no? Great. So we've lost Eden. Okay. But Jesus enters our exile so we can experience God's presence, Eden restored.

Make sense? Keep hold of that sentence. All right? So humanity is in exile, Eden lost. But Jesus enters our exile so we can experience God's presence, Eden restored.

That is Psalm 42 to 49. So in Psalm 42, which begins the second book of Psalms, we are first introduced to the fact that these are written by the sons of Korah.

Now, last week, I glibly kind of suggested that this was a punk rock band. And actually, since saying that, I've discovered they are a punk rock band or a folk band. And I listened to them and turned them off.

[14 : 37] They are not the sons of Korah. All right? So look at the inscription, Psalm 42, Now, it's easy for us to kind of go, well, that's an inscription.

You know, great. Like, who cares? Why should I care who the sons of Korah are? Let alone whatever a masculine is. And who's the choir master?

We don't even have choirs in our church. And we skip over it and we get to verse 1 without a thought. And if we do that, we'd be wrong to do that.

Because this is important. Because whoever placed these Psalms together, and again, it was probably Ezra, wants us to understand the context of them being written by the sons of Korah.

It's important that we understand that this Psalm and the subsequent Psalms are written by the sons of Korah. Okay, so who are they?

[15 : 41] Well, take a look at this family tree. And you'll soon see that Korah was the cousin of Aaron and Moses. Oh, that makes it interesting all of a sudden, doesn't it?

Right? He was also the great grandson of Levi, one of the children of Israel, like one of the original guys. Okay? So he's got some pedigree. He's just not some guy who rocked up who can play guitar badly.

Okay? Levi, you'll notice, had three sons. And one of them was Kohath. And Kohath's grandson was Korah, who, according to Numbers 16, led a rebellion against Aaron and Moses.

Okay? So all of a sudden, we're like, oh, okay. So the sons of Korah, their dad or granddad, whoever probably is more of a descendant than direct father, he was a baddie.

He was a rebel. Right? God judged him. And what we think is actually, because we see the sons of Korah later on, that his direct descendants were probably too young to be judged.

[16 : 52] And so they survived. But this is really important because we see the sons of Korah scattered.

What we see in the Old Testament, we don't have time to look at all of the Old Testament passages this morning, but what we see, the sons of Korah scattered amongst the tribes. Right? And eventually being carried away in the Assyrian captivity.

And both Ezra and Nehemiah, both reference groups of musicians, sons of Korah, returning to Jerusalem during the Babylonian captivity.

Now, here's why that is important. And you've got to get this. If you miss this, you miss four Psalms. Right? Chapters 42, well, three Psalms, chapters 42 to 44 are about the ache of Eden lost.

Keep going. Brilliant. They're about living in exile. These aren't written by David on a hill somewhere.

[18 : 11] Watching sheep in Israel. Wondering when the next bear is going to come along. This is not, you know, if you know anything about David's life, it's not about David being cancelled.

This is about being cancelled, but on a much bigger scale. This is about a group of people that are literally living geographically.

And because geographically they're living in exile, they're also spiritually living in exile. They're in a foreign land. They're in servitude to the Assyrians or slash and the Babylonians.

Now, that's really, really important. That's a lot of information to miss if you kind of go, well, I don't know who those sons of Korah are. There must be a punk rock band. Let's move on. And so, that puts a lot of context.

Now, read verse 1 of chapter 42. As the deer pants for flowing streams, so pants my soul for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.

[19 : 19] When shall I come and appear before God? Like, when am I going to get back to the tabernacle? When am I going to get back to the temple? When am I going to get back to Mount Zion? When am I going to get back to Jerusalem?

My tears have been my food day and night while they say to me all the day long, where is your God? Like, these aren't Israelites saying that, are they? Right? These are the Assyrians saying, where is your God?

My God's bigger than your God. Where is your God? It's the Babylonians saying, where is your God? My God is bigger than your God. And the sons of Korah are going, this is terrible.

Terrible. Like, the next time we sing this song, we'll probably sing it with a different meaning, right?

This is not David sitting down by a brook, like in the Kidron Valley, in the height of summer, chewing on some grass, singing a little song with his lyre.

[20 : 17] This is the sons of Korah in exile, being humiliated, he says, these things I remember as I pour out my soul, how I would go with the throng and lead them in procession.

That was their job, right? As musicians leading the temple worship or the tabernacle worship in the house of God with glad shouts and songs of praise and a multitude keeping festival.

And they said, I miss those days. So, look, look, quickly, this is not a picture of one person or even a group of people having a bad day. this is a song of people in exile.

And the psalmist thinks for, thirst for God because he feels as though he has been cut off from him. That God, in modern vernacular, that God has cancelled him.

What do you do? What do you do when you think that God has cancelled you? That God has abandoned you? He's left you? Look at what the psalmist says.

[21 : 20] He asks himself in verse 5, Why are you cast down on my soul? Why are you in turmoil within me? Look again at verse 11. Why are you cast down on my soul?

Why are you in turmoil within me? And look at verse 5 of the next psalm, Psalm 43, verse 5. Why are you cast down on my soul? And why are you in turmoil within me?

So, these two psalms are written by people who are longing for God's presence, which then was found only in the tabernacle and the temple. So, would you make a note of the word lament?

These are songs of lament. This isn't a campfire song. But they're not only songs of personal lament, they're songs of national lament.

Right? Look at verse 1 of chapter 44. Because these are a unit that go together.

[22 : 26] Right? Oh God, we have heard with our ears. So now we're a group of people. Our fathers have told us what deeds you performed in their days and the days of old.

You, with your own hand, drove out the nations. So the nations are now in view. you, but them you planted. You afflicted the peoples, but them you set free.

For not by their own sword did they win the land, nor did their own arm save them, but your right hand and arm and the light of your face, for you delighted in them.

And look at verse 11. you have made us like sheep for slaughter and have scattered us among the nations. You have sold your people for a trifle.

You're like, what? Like a strawberry trifle? Demanding no high price for them. He hasn't been to Tesco's.

[23 : 27] They're expensive in Tesco's. You have made us the taunt of our neighbors, the derision and scorn of those around us. You have made us a byword among the nations, a laughingstock among the peoples.

Verse 17. All of this has come upon us that we have not forgotten you and we have not been false to your covenant. So they're suggesting, notice, they're suggesting that God has forgotten them.

there is this apparent abandonment. They're living as slaves in either the Assyrian or Babylonian society whenever this was written and they have lost sight of God completely and think that God has lost sight of them.

Like this is a terrible situation. This is terrible news. And look at how they and they compare. This is what happens. Like, you know, as soon as you start turning inward on yourself and like examining your own life and getting despondent about what's going on with you and your eyes aren't fixed on Christ.

Here's what happens. Look how they compare their own righteousness and faithfulness with God's. Right? Verse 18. Our hearts have not turned back nor have our steps departed your way yet you have broken us in the places of jackals and covered us with the shadow of death.

[24 : 54] If we had forgotten the name of our God or spread out our hands to a foreign God would not God discover this? For he knows the secrets of the heart.

And he says in verse 23 Awake! Why are you sleeping O Lord? Arouse yourself! Do not reject us forever!

Why do you hide your face? Why do you forget our affliction and our oppression? For our soul is bowed down to the dust our belly clings to the ground rise up come and help redeem us for the sake of your steadfast love.

And so look the issue is that exile isn't just about geography right? It's about separation from God's presence. That's what they're praying for.

And so in chapters 42 to 44 are all about the ache of Eden lost exile.

[26 : 00] And they mirror so vividly you know the spiritual exile that all human beings face. Because this isn't just Israel's story this is humanity's story.

From the very beginning when Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden humanity was driven out from the presence of God. The first exile was not about losing geography necessarily being cast out of the Garden yes but what that meant.

It meant about losing intimacy with God who walked with them. And every cry of distance in the Psalms whether it's why have you forgotten me my God my God why have you forsaken me why do you hide your face echoes that moment when humanity was shut out of his presence because of the fall.

And so exile whether Assyria or Babylon or in the depths of a discouraged soul is ultimately the ache of Eden lost.

And and when you think about it like that we feel the weight of that don't we? Like just we talked last week about the high mountaintop of Psalm 72 and how our hearts longed for the king that David prayed for and we're like yes yes yes come on come on come on here we're not on a mountaintop we enter the valley and we get to feel the ache of Eden lost and this is the intention this is what Ezra is trying to do trying to tell a story and so that's where this section of Psalm begins and takes us and maybe you've been there maybe you are there like what do you do and this is maybe the question that will ask what do you do when God has seemed silent for a really long time when you feel almost no joy when you open your

[28 : 26] Bible and it's just words and you sometimes you know you walk away more discouraged than when you came and in your heart you're like God I'm just going give you one more chance you open your Bible you read you stay there for a while and you're like what do you do in those seasons of darkness and it's as if the Bible hears you ask that question because there is an answer in our section aren't you glad it's a story and so with that turn to Psalm 46 because the good news of this section of Psalms is that exile is not the end of the story do you get that exile is not the end of the story and what we see is then the joy of his presence

Psalm 46 to 49 the joy of his presence notice the shift in tone Psalm 46 to the choir master the sons of Korah according to Alamo a song God is our refuge and strength a very present help in trouble therefore we will not fear though the earth gives way though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea though its waters roar and foam though the mountains tremble and all its swelling it's like the psalmist is going give me your worst day just tell me about your worst day and the psalmist goes let me tell you about my worst day here it is the earth gives way can you beat that what about the mountains moving into the heart of the sea just falling over that's a pretty bad day yes right like though its waters roar and foam that the mountains tremble as well he's like that's a bad bad day and even in the worst of days God is our refuge help like there's a lot of detail there but can you see the shift from exile to the unshakable kingdom of

God's presence do you see that it's remarkable if you read it from 42 to 46 you're like wait a second what's happened here right because one minute is like woe is me woe is me we're being persecuted we're in exile God where are you how dare you it's your fault to Psalm 46 God you're good you're right here in everything my worst day the worst day I can trust you and I'm sure like me many times you've read this Psalm and this Psalm becomes a strong wise old friend a strong wise old friend who is unfazed by my trouble because God is our refuge think again to Psalm 2 that we looked at last week blessed is the man who takes refuge in him and here the sons of Korah write this song to testify the truth to that and notice that

Psalm 44 ends and with look how faithful I've been God look how unfaithful you've been God I have not turned my back I have not fallen asleep and this Psalm puts our attention on who God God is our refuge God is our shelter God is our strength and notice that this refuge and strength doesn't come to us in our best moments but in our most troublesome moments he is not a distant help he is not a remote help he himself is a help that can be found when you need it therefore they say I'm not going to be afraid isn't that cool there is a river he says in verse four whose streams make glad the city of God the holy habitation of the most high God is in the midst of her she should not be moved!

God will help her when morning! is a morning the nations rage notice that verse six the nations rage some two the nations rage the kingdoms totter he utters his voice the earth mounts the Lord of hosts is with us see Psalm 42 ended with God where are you Psalm 46 begins with oh he's with us and so there is a shift from knowing the ache of Eden lost exile to knowing the joy of Eden restored presence and this leads the the psalmist to then burst out in worship not a subdued as the deer pants for the water but look at the worship and praise of

[33 : 48] Psalm 47 clap your hands all peoples can I can I just say it's okay to clap your hands in church so long as that's in time amen right like if you're doing something weird kind of some triplet thing keep your hands in your pockets or in the air don't clap your hands but the church should be a place where people are praising God and are happy to do so joyous to do so and clap your hands all people and actually as I reflect on that I reflect on how I wish my own response to the presence of God was so exuberant and noisy shout to God with loud songs of joy for the Lord the most high is to be feared a great king over all the earth and they write in chapter 48 how the dwelling place of the great king becomes the joy of all of the earth he's like this isn't just just for you guys this is for everyone to share great is the

Lord verse one and greatly to be praised in the city of our God his holy mountain beautiful in elevation is the joy of all of the earth they say in verse 9 we have thought on your steadfast!

love notice this shift I'm not thinking about my steadfast love and how great that is he says in verse 9 we have thought on your steadfast love oh God in the midst of your temple notice we're still talking about presence we're finishing the chapter with that phrase he will guide us forever and then finally in chapter 49 the psalmist goes back to the previous chapters and asks in verse 5 okay so if all of that is true why should I fear in times of trouble the psalmist says you know I've been thinking I know the ache of Eden lost truly I do and I'm happy to admit and lament over it but I've also found the joy of Eden restored even though I'm yet to fully get there because they're not writing now back in Jerusalem they're still in exile got that they're able to praise

God in exile they haven't waited for their circumstances to shift and so you can see the shift in tone right as the psalmist goes from isolation exile suffering loneliness to presence joy hope and you've got to ask why the shift are you asking that have you asked that question already of the text why the shift how does how does the psalmist because we want to know that right because we all have those down days those dark days those troubling days those challenging days don't we please say yes good good right it's not just me right we all have those days so I want to get from exile to presence as quickly as I can so how does the psalmist go from exile to presence how does the psalmist see a time when the burden of Eden lost is turned into joy of Eden restored well of course the answer is in the chapter

I skipped did anybody notice that okay good it was a setup like he skipped a chapter so as the cries of chapter 42 to 44 give way to the arrival of the king in chapter 45 what's the difference between Eden lost and Eden restored simply the arrival of a king are we making some we joining some dots about the psalm is a book about who good good good and this king we're going to see is a king who enters our exile he's a king who identifies with the cry of abandonment he's a king who promises to be with us and he is a king who finally redeems us from death now like i've been around the church a little bit and i can tell you that sounds like someone who does that sound like good good good good good good good psalm 45 to the choir master according to lilies it's the name of a tune nobody knows what it sounds like but it sounds like lilies a masculine of the sons of

[38 : 50] Korah and notice it's a love song like i have no problem with love songs to Jesus like if they get too like a little bit too boy band ish you know when we have the boy band up here like but it's biblical love songs are biblical can we just put that out there and what i find incredible is that the first thing that the psalmist discovers about the king who leads us from exile to presence is not something to do with our faithfulness or our goodness as if we earn his presence no instead we see a psalmist who loves him there is something that has captured the psalmist heart that has turned him from crying and grief to discovering love and that may be a really good question for us this morning is that do you love

God love love love really means cut that out do you love God has he captured your heart love means sacrifice no one cares do you love God like when when you love someone what do you do anything right like everything is rose tinted isn't it some of you are like I can't think that far back but it's a really good question you love God has that love captured your heart in a way that that it means your whole view of reality has changed what's the first and great commandment you shall love the

Lord your God with all of your heart with all of your soul and all of your strength and so the way from Eden lost to Eden restored is not through our effort it is in Jesus who loves us and has captured our hearts by his love Zephaniah chapter 3 verse 17 says that the Lord your God is in your midst where is he we're not in exile we may not have arrived fully but the Lord your God is in your midst a mighty one who will save he will rejoice over you with gladness he will quiet you by his love some 44 needs being told to be quiet by his love right he will exalt you over you with loud singing the psalmist writes in verse one my heart this is psalm 45 my heart overflows!

with a pleasing theme I address my verses to the king my tongue is like the pen of a ready scribe you are the most handsome of the sons of men look there's at least one old Aramaic translation of that verse and it puts it like this verse 2 thy beauty oh king messiah isn't that great the psalms is a book about Jesus and here we are this is about Jesus look at verse 6 your throne of god is forever and ever the scepter so the symbol of your authority the scepter of your kingdom is a scepter of uprightness you have loved righteousness and hated wickedness and so the righteousness of his kingdom comes from the character of the king and it might be a stretch for us to conclude that these verses are speaking about

Jesus I get it you're like I'm not sure are these really about Jesus how do we know that they're about Jesus it's a little bit wishy washy and I get it I get what you're saying and in the absence of Hebrews I would agree but guess what we have Hebrews and guess what it says in Hebrews it quotes that verse and says guess what it's Jesus Hebrews chapter 1 verse 8 but of the son Psalm 2 kiss the son you see we were talking about last week for those who weren't here Psalm 1 and 2 are the overture are the abstract for the whole of the Psalms everything you want to read about the Psalms can be found in Psalm 1 and 2 but of the son he says your throne

[44 : 02] God is forever and ever the scepter of uprightness is the scepter of your kingdom you have loved righteousness and hated wickedness therefore God your God has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions and so the writer of Hebrews reading Psalm 45 says wait a minute wait a minute Psalm 45 is a love song to Jesus go back to verse 2 of Psalm 45 it says grace is poured!

John the apostle writes about Jesus in John chapter 1 that from his fullness we have all received grace upon grace and so look the simple answer to the question how does the psalmist go from Eden lost to Eden restored the answer is Jesus from the very beginning when Adam and Eve sinned in the garden and humanity was driven out from the presence of God again exile isn't necessarily about geography it's about losing intimacy with the God who has walked with us we weren't just shut out of paradise we were shut out of presence which means that our deepest problem isn't merely external enemies or hard circumstances it's the sin that has separated us from the presence of God that we were made to enjoy and so in steps into exile into our exile in steps the son and he was cast out and he was rejected and he was crucified bearing the exile of our sin on the cross he paid the full price for our rebellion so that we could be brought close to

God and so Paul is able to write to the church at Ephesus to say this he says so then because of all of that you are no longer strangers and he uses the word aliens don't think et think exiles it's the same word you are no longer strangers to God and you're not exiles from God but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God welcomed into the very presence of God not as beggars but as his bride so the Psalms is a story about Jesus now I guess the question is then well how do we respond because so far what we've done is look at a very kind of top level like the

Psalms is a story about Jesus and everybody's like oh yeah that's interesting and it may change the way that we read the Psalms but it has little impact on our own hearts how do we get this text from our head to our hearts well let me give you three ways to respond I'm actually going to ask the worship team to come up now and we're going to go straight into our next song and maybe I'll just give you the three ways we can respond here we go to lament honestly to love Jesus openly and to live in his presence daily now the first one is as scary as the next isn't it to lament honestly like maybe this morning you feel the ache of exile right maybe maybe your soul is downcast and you long for

God's presence maybe you've uttered those words even why are you cast down on my soul! the question is what do you do when you feel that way what do you do when it feels like you have been cancelled by God when your prayers feel unanswered when your soul is downcast how do we respond to that well I think the first way we respond is to be honest about your lament like when was the last time you told someone that you're struggling in that area when was the last time you told God that maybe you've given up on that but

[49 : 33] I think the first response as the response is from the psalmist is if you feel distant and downcast or abandoned listen the answer is to seek him to bring it to him in prayer to prayer and so a good response this morning would be like if you would like someone to pray with you and you know someone here who would do that during our time of worship why don't you just reach out to them and ask them to pray with you and if you don't know anyone then I'd love to pray with you this is about being honest in lament how honest can we be it's a really interesting gospel question when we talk about the person who is free they're free indeed we're free to be honest because we've got nothing to lose but everything to gain like

God already knows and God's not holding something against us when we perk up we go you know what I'm just struggling I'm asking God to do this or to do that maybe with my career maybe with my job maybe with my family maybe with myself and my prayers are just bouncing down off the ceiling right back to me and I've been praying like this for years and I just don't see any breakthrough or I read my Bible and it doesn't have the impact like it once did like when you are honest about that you know what you lose nothing but gain everything because the gospel isn't about us keeping face or putting on a performance or proving to God that we are better than we are so honesty isn't something to be scared of vulnerability isn't something to be scared of it's actually something we should embrace because we've got nothing to lose but everything to gain the second way to respond is to love

Jesus openly I think we probably shy away from this idea of loving Jesus Psalm 45 points to Jesus and of course it would be foolish to end our time together talking about us and so as we worship have a heart that overflows for the king and we'll give some space for that this morning and you might even want to recite as the psalmist does in Psalm 48 great is the Lord and greatly to be praised and then the third way is to respond by living in his presence daily and I know that that sounds like really kind of airy fairy kind of what does that even mean let me give you an indication of what it means as we read the lament of the psalmist there are times and I find this really fascinating because this is what happens in my own mind there are times when it seems like someone is interrupting what is going on did you read that like verse 5 it says why are you cast down on my soul why are you in turmoil within me and it seems someone comes to his immediate help by reminding him to hope in

God they're the next words right why are you cast down then hope in God where's that come from and I think living in his presence means to be that interruption in someone else's life and so this morning you might be just that person who brings that interruption and of course that takes a little bit of courage to do to go up to someone and interrupt their negative thoughts right and you might get it wrong well here's the good news you might get it right because you might not know what they're thinking so you've got to trust God and bring them courage when neither you nor they have any so you're both in the same boat to rely on God and so three ways to respond to the story found in Psalm 42 to 49 about the good king who has come to our rescue and has entered into our exile is number one is to lament honestly number two to love

Jesus openly and in three living is presence daily let's pray together and we're going to move straight into our final song father we come before you like the psalmist sometimes thirsty sometimes downcast sometimes feeling the ache of exile even in our own souls and some of us feel the exile of unanswered prayers some of the exile of shame others the exile of loneliness and we confess that too often we've tried to hide our brokenness instead of bringing it honestly before you so this morning we bring our exile we bring our loneliness our questions our tears and we lay them at your feet and Jesus we want to say thank you that you are the king who entered our exile the bridegroom whose beauty and grace has captured our hearts who took our sin who cried out our forsakenness so that we would never be abandoned capture our hearts again with your love turn our grief into worship and our fear into trust holy spirit pour the love of god into our hearts remind us that even in trouble god is our refuge and strength and our very present help father receive these prayers we pray lead us from exile into joy from despair into hope from eden lost to eden restored we pray in the strong and beautiful name of jesus amen to