

"All Nations Shall Serve Him"

Psalm 72

This psalm has the title of "for Solomon." Some speculate this was written "by Solomon" rather than for him (the preposition used in Hebrew could be either one) but the final verse of the psalm seems to indicate otherwise, although an argument can be made that the last verse is more an ending for the second book of Psalms rather than of this individual psalm. That said, I hold that it was written "for Solomon" by David, his father.

This is a Royal Psalm, and has much to do with Solomon, who ruled in wisdom, peace, and prosperity, and nations did come to hear him. As we read this psalm, however, it soon becomes clear that what is being prayed for goes far beyond what Solomon experienced, or could have experienced. Some of what is said – the king rules in perfect righteousness, his reign endures as long as the sun and moon, his dominion stretches to the ends of the earth, the poor are redeemed, the land flourishes, and all nations shall serve him – cannot be said of Solomon, and can only be said, according to Scripture, of the coming King who will reign as described: the King of kings, and Lord of lords.

This psalm shows us why all nations will serve Him – because He is:

I. THE RIGHTEOUS KING – vs. 1-4

A. The source of his authority – *God's righteousness*

His rule is by delegated authority from God, not man.

1 Kings 3:9-12

⁹ Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people? ¹⁰ And the speech pleased the Lord, that

Solomon had asked this thing. ¹¹ And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life; neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies; but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment; ¹² Behold, I have done according to thy words: lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee.

B. The standard of his rule – *judgment and equity*

The emphasis is on moral governing. Imagine our country, or any country, that would have this standard of rule.

1. "Judgment" (מִשְׁפָּט) – the civil and ecclesiastical code by which he is to govern the kingdom.
2. "Righteousness" (צִדְקָה) – rule with equity and fairness.

C. The concern of his heart – *the poor and afflicted*

1. The measure of the king is how he treats the helpless.

The same is true today, both for governments and for the church.

2. This goes beyond the kingship of Israel and begins to point toward something or Someone greater.

Isaiah 11:3-5

³ And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the LORD: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: ⁴ But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall

he slay the wicked. ⁵ And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.

Jeremiah 23:5-6

⁵ Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. ⁶ In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this *is* his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

II. THE ENDURING KING – vs. 5-7

A. His reign is timeless (vs. 5)

1. “As long as the sun and moon endure” – some think this to be hyperbole, and if it is speaking of Solomon only that might be the case, but it looks beyond Solomon to the King of kings whose reign will be timeless.

Isaiah 9:6-7

⁶ For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. ⁷ Of the increase of *his* government and peace *there shall be* no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

Daniel 7:14

¹⁴ And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion *is* an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom *that* which shall not be destroyed.

2. “Throughout all generations” – helps define

the first line.

B. His rule produces peace (vs. 6)

1. This is seen in the imagery of rain on mown grass – it's seen as an image of peace and tranquility as well as that of abundance.
2. Peace is the fruit of righteousness, not military dominance.
3. Solomon's reign was one of national peace but it only lasted while he was on the throne.

III. THE UNIVERSAL KING – vs. 8-11

A. The extent of His domain (vs. 8)

1. Solomon's (Israel's) was localized – “from sea to sea” (from the Dead Sea to the Mediterranean)

Genesis 15:18

¹⁸ In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates:

2. The Messiah's will be global – “from the river to the ends of the earth” (went beyond what was promised to Israel).

Zechariah 9:10

¹⁰ And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem, and the battle bow shall be cut off: and he shall speak peace unto the heathen: and his dominion *shall be* from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth.

Revelation 11:15

¹⁵ And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of

this world are become *the kingdoms* of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.

B. The submission of nations (vs. 9-10)

C. The recognition of His supremacy (vs. 11)

- No Davidic king, including Solomon, ever ruled "unto the ends of the earth." This can only reference the coming Messianic fulfillment.

IV. THE COMPASSIONATE KING – VS. 12-14

As stated earlier, the King's greatness is measured by His mercy toward the helpless. This is not only true of the King of kings, or the kings of Israel, but is a basic principle of leadership. If any country prioritizes wealth and power over the poor and needy, we are in direct conflict with God Almighty. This is also true of the church, in a lesser degree.

A. His readiness to hear (vs. 12)

He responds to cries ignored by others.

Psalm 146:7-9

⁷ Which executeth judgment for the oppressed: which giveth food to the hungry. The LORD looseth the prisoners: ⁸ The LORD openeth *the eyes of* the blind: the LORD raiseth them that are bowed down: the LORD loveth the righteous: ⁹ The LORD preserveth the strangers; he relieveth the fatherless and widow: but the way of the wicked he turneth upside down.

B. His power to redeem (vs. 13-14a)

C. His valuation of human life (vs. 14b)

- The wording here points to a King who doesn't just protect and care for life, but one that lays down His own life for others.

Matthew 20:28

²⁸ Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

V. THE ABUNDANT KING – vs. 15-16

A. Prayer and praise are His (vs. 15)

Ezra 6:10

¹⁰ That they may offer sacrifices of sweet savours unto the God of heaven, and pray for the life of the king, and of his sons.

Jeremiah 29:7

⁷ And seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray unto the LORD for it: for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace.

1 Timothy 2:1-2

¹ I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, *and* giving of thanks, be made for all men; ² For kings, and *for* all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.

B. Prosperity in unlikely places (vs. 16a)

Abundance where scarcity would be expected –
“upon the top of the mountains...”

C. Creation responds to His rule

Isaiah 35:1-2

¹ The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. ² It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the LORD, *and* the excellency of our God.

D. His blessing multiplies (“flourish” – vs. 16b)

VI. THE EVERLASTING KING – vs. 17

A. His name endures

“Name” refers to His character, authority, and identity.

B. His blessing is mediatorial – “blessed in him”

This seems to be a direct reference to the Abrahamic covenant.

Genesis 12:1-3

¹ Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: ² And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: ³ And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

Galatians 3:16

¹⁶ Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.

C. His praise is universal – “all nations shall call him blessed”

- This is where the psalm reaches its peak, where the kingship becomes redemptive, and Solomon fades completely from view.

Conclusion:

Verses 18-20 serve as a conclusion to this psalm as well as to the second book of Psalms. As pointed out when we began studying the book of Psalms, each of the five books of psalms ends with a doxology of praise (the entire 150th Psalm is about praise).

Psalm 41:13

¹³ Blessed *be* the LORD God of Israel from everlasting, and to everlasting. Amen, and Amen.

Psalm 89:52

⁵² Blessed *be* the LORD for evermore. Amen, and Amen.

Psalm 106:48

⁴⁸ Blessed *be* the LORD God of Israel from everlasting to everlasting: and let all the people say, Amen. Praise ye the LORD.

- Praise for the “wondrous things” that God alone can do for His creation (vs. 18)
- Praise extended to all the earth (vs. 19)

The final verse does not mean that David never prayed again or wrote another psalm (there are several more after this one that are ascribed to David as the human author). It means that the great prayer-theme of David’s life – his longing for a righteous King who would reign forever – has reached its conclusion. God has answered that prayer.