

## Lesson 12      19 October 2014

### Christ in the Psalms

**Lesson Scope:** [Psalms 2, 16, 22, 40, 72, 110, 118](#)

#### Lesson Focus

From the very first page to the last, the central theme of the Bible is Jesus Christ (Christ is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew name Messiah). The Book of Psalms, the hymnbook of the Old Testament saints, naturally contains psalms referring to their long-awaited Saviour. These psalms are known as the Messianic Psalms. Although these psalms referred to a person at the time they were written, they were ultimately and unmistakably fulfilled in the life and death of Jesus Christ.

The precise fulfillment in Christ of these Messianic Psalms is a testimony to the authenticity of the inspiration of the Scriptures. Written hundreds of years before their fulfillment, they tell the story of Jesus' experience here on earth. Not just once, but many times, exact words and expressions are quoted from these psalms in the New Testament accounts of Christ's suffering and death. In these psalms, God was not only stirring their anticipation for Israel's Messiah but also giving proofs whereby He could be recognized and authenticated.

No honest person can read through the Gospels and conclude that Jesus of Nazareth was a mere man, or even that He was a great teacher but still only a good man. The prophecies of the Old Testament (many of them found in the Messianic Psalms) coupled with their fulfillment in Christ cause a sincere seeker to conclude that He is the promised Messiah. With clarity and precision, these Messianic Psalms point to only one Person, Jesus Christ, the "only begotten Son of God."

Jesus Christ, the Messiah, is central to God's plan to redeem fallen humanity. He became the incarnate Son of God, died as the final sacrifice for sin, and rose again to live and reign forevermore.

**Lesson Aim:** To inspire faith in the person and work of Jesus Christ.

**Theme Verse:** [Acts 3:18](#). But those things, which God before had sheaved by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled.

## Lesson Text

### The Begotten Son

**Psalm 2:7-12** <sup>7</sup> I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou *art* my Son; this day have I begotten thee. <sup>8</sup> Ask of me, and I shall give *thee* the heathen *for* thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth *for* thy possession. <sup>9</sup> Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. <sup>10</sup> Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth. <sup>11</sup> Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling. <sup>12</sup> Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish *from* the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed *are* all they that put their trust in him.

**Psalm 40:6-9** <sup>6</sup> Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required. <sup>7</sup> Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book *it is* written of me, <sup>8</sup> I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law *is* within my heart. <sup>9</sup> I have preached righteousness in the great congregation: lo, I have not refrained my lips, O LORD, thou knowest.

### The Suffering Saviour

**Psalm 16:8-11** <sup>8</sup> I have set the LORD always before me: because *he is* at my right hand, I shall not be moved. <sup>9</sup> Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope. <sup>10</sup> For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. <sup>11</sup> Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence *is* fulness of joy; at thy right hand *there are* pleasures for evermore.

**Psalm 22:1** My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? *why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?*

**Psalm 22:7-8** <sup>7</sup> All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, *saying*, <sup>8</sup> He trusted on the LORD *that* he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him.

**Psalm 22:16-18** <sup>16</sup> For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet. <sup>17</sup> I may tell all my bones: they look *and* stare upon me. <sup>18</sup> They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.

### The Triumphant King

**Psalm 110:1-7** <sup>1</sup> The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. <sup>2</sup> The LORD shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. <sup>3</sup> Thy people *shall be* willing in the day of thy power, in the beau-

ties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth. <sup>4</sup> The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou *art* a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek. <sup>5</sup> The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath. <sup>6</sup> He shall judge among the heathen, he shall fill *the places* with the dead bodies; he shall wound the heads over many countries. <sup>7</sup> He shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall he lift up the head.

**Psalm 118:21-23** <sup>21</sup> I will praise thee: for thou hast heard me, and art become my salvation. <sup>22</sup> The stone *which* the builders refused is become the head *stone* of the corner. <sup>23</sup> This is the LORD'S doing; it *is* marvellous in our eyes.

## **Questions for Study**

### **The Begotten Son**

1. Explain what it means for Jesus Christ to be the only begotten Son of God.
2. What is the proper response to the King with all authority?
3. Explain the seeming paradox between Jesus' delighting to do His Father's will and His pleading for another way in Gethsemane.

### **The Suffering Saviour**

4. Why is the Messiah's power over death of such importance to the Christian faith?
5. What was the impetus behind Jesus' steadfast faithfulness in the face of extreme opposition? What is the lesson for us?
6. Why was it so difficult for the followers of the Messiah to understand and accept His suffering and death?

### **The Triumphant King**

7. How does Melchizedek typify the Messiah?
8. What is the significance of Jesus being the cornerstone of salvation, and what difference does this make for us?

## **Analyzing the Passage**

"This day have I begotten thee" (Psalm 2:7) may refer at least in part to God the Father's part in the conception of Jesus. Adam was created a son of God, and a Christian is an adopted son of God, but Jesus is the "only begotten Son" of God (John 3:16).

The Hebrew word translated hell in Psalm 16:10 refers to the condition of the dead in the grave, where soul and body are separated. Saint and

sinner alike experience this. Jesus resurrected before His body decomposed.

## **Principles and Applications**

### **The Begotten Son**

1. The Messiah would be the incarnation of God among men (Psalm 2:7). Immanuel, meaning "God with us," was one of Jesus' names. Nothing like this had ever taken place before—God in flesh and blood. This was the only way Jesus could experience death.

2. The Son of God would be given authority over all people (Psalm 2:8-9). As Creator and Sustainer of the universe, Jesus Christ has all authority over all things (Colossians 1:16-17). Yet because He has chosen to postpone Satan's judgment for a time and has placed man on probation, not all creation is presently submitted to Him (Hebrews 2:8). Ultimately, all will bend the knee to Him.

3. Men have a responsibility to recognize and respond to Christ's authority (Psalm 2:10-12). Apart from submission to the authority of the Son of God, man can have no freedom. Freedom from authority is an illusion. We are all slaves to an authority—either to self with all its passions, or to the gods of this world and their entanglements, or to Jesus Christ—the only one who can truly save us from ourselves.

4. Christ voluntarily humbled Himself to fulfill the eternal purpose of God (Psalm 40:6-7). God becoming man truly was a humbling experience. The Creator of the universe came as a dependent baby in a manger; served as a harmless, itinerant preacher of the poorer class of His time; and finally allowed wicked men to nail Him to a wooden cross between two thieves. Jesus humbled Himself to die in fulfillment of all the Old Testament sacrifices. In so doing, He accomplished a master plan conceived in eternity past.

### **The Suffering Saviour**

5. Christ would break the power of death, opening the way for man's eternal blessing (Psalm 16:10). The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the single, most convincing evidence that He really is who He said He is. All who had been healed or previously raised from the dead would eventually die. But Jesus rose, never to die again. Had He no power to do so, what hope would we have beyond this life?

6. Fortified by the presence and approval of the Father, the Son would accomplish His work and return to glory (Psalm 16:8, 11). Many times

as He felt the rejection of His people and as He considered His approaching crucifixion, Jesus experienced overwhelming grief. Spending a night in prayer alone with His Father brought spiritual refreshment.

7. The Promised One would endure suffering and death as a man (Psalm 22:1, 7-8, 16-18). In the minds of the majority of Jesus' contemporaries, the Messiah would be a great deliverer from Roman oppression. The prophetic descriptions of His coming suffering and death seemed foreign even to those nearest Him (Mark 9:31-32). Only afterward did they finally understand.

### **The Triumphant King**

8. The King's reign would be one of eternal righteousness and peace (Psalm 110:4). Melchizedek typified Jesus, as explained in Hebrews 7:3. Neither Melchizedek nor Jesus derived their priesthood from the tribe of Levi, and neither have beginning or ending. The child was born, the Son was given (Isaiah 9:6); but the Son always existed.

9. Though rejected by men, Christ would be the cornerstone of salvation (Psalm 118:22). Misunderstood, maligned, and mistreated, Jesus was rejected, and none of us can claim innocence in that rejection. "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). We all must believe that on Him and on Him alone hangs our only hope of salvation.

### **Important Teachings**

1. The Messiah would be the incarnation of God among men (Psalm 2:7).

2. The Son of God would be given authority over all people (Psalm 2:8-9).

3. Men have a responsibility to recognize and respond to Christ's authority (Psalm 2:10-12).

4. Christ voluntarily humbled Himself to fulfill the eternal purpose of God (Psalm 40:6-7).

5. Christ would break the power of death, opening the way for man's eternal blessing (Psalm 16:10).

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### **Answers to Questions**

1. Explain what it means for Jesus Christ to be the only begotten Son of God.

In a sense all humanity are sons and daughters of God by creation. In a greater sense, regenerated people become His sons and daughters. But none of us are sons of God in the sense that Jesus is the Son of God. Jesus came into the world without the sin nature that all others inherit from Adam. Conceived of the Holy Ghost and born of a virgin, Jesus had no biological, human father (Matthew 1:18-20; Luke 1:35). As the second person of the Trinity, Jesus Christ possesses the attributes of Deity, but He laid aside His glory, took on Him the limitations of human flesh, and lived in obedience to the will of His Father in heaven. Finite humanity cannot fully understand or explain this concept.

2. What is the proper response to the King with all authority?

"Kiss the Son." Make your peace with Him while you can. Jesus said, "And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder" (Matthew 21:44). Those who refuse to bow to Him will be broken and dashed to pieces. Anyone who really believes this will act upon that belief by submitting to Him.

3. Explain the seeming paradox between Jesus' delighting to do His Father's will and His pleading for another way in Gethsemane.

Jesus said, "I and my Father are one" (John 10:30). There is a sense in which the Father and the Son cannot be separated, so it follows that it was always a delight for the Son to do His Father's will. However, Jesus faced the prospect of Calvary as a man. Doing the Father's will at this point was profoundly difficult, yet He desired to do it.

4. Why is the Messiah's power over death of such importance to the Christian faith?

"The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death" (1 Corinthians 15:26). Without Jesus' bodily resurrection, we would have no hope beyond this life. All other founders of their religions are still in their graves, but not so with our Leader. He died, rose triumphant over death, and promises all those who believe on Him this same power over death. "Because I live, ye shall live also" (John 14:19).

5. What was the impetus behind Jesus' steadfast faithfulness in the face of extreme opposition? What is the lesson for us?

Jesus' close relationship with His Father in heaven, maintained by fervent and meaningful times of prayer, strengthened Him to endure the rejection and outright persecution of those He came to save.

Sensing the nearness of His Father while here on earth gave Him hope in the severest of circumstances. Evidently, in the darkness at noonday while on the cross, He did feel forsaken for a time. His words, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit," seem to indicate a sense of His Father's nearness again.

If Jesus, the Son of God, needed such a relationship to remain faithful to His calling, we do too. Time spent alone with God—reading His Word, praying, and meditating—is imperative to maintain spiritual vitality.

6. Why was it so difficult for the followers of the Messiah to understand and accept His suffering and death?

As we all tend to be, they were much too earthly-minded. Kings are not meant to serve and suffer. They were looking for an earthly king as their Messiah. Within days of Jesus' crucifixion, His close disciples were still looking for Him to set up an earthly kingdom that would bring deliverance from Roman oppression (Acts 1:6).

We too desire instant, painless deliverance from our present difficulties and become frustrated when they continue. Paul needed to accept his thorn in the flesh. If the Messiah needed to suffer to bring His work to completion (Hebrews 2:9-10, 18; 5:8; 13:12), must we not endure some suffering too?

7. How does Melchizedek typify the Messiah?

There is no record of Melchizedek's beginning or ending (Hebrews 7:3). Christ is eternal, having neither beginning nor ending. Neither Melchizedek nor Christ was from the tribe of Levi, the designated priestly tribe under the Law. Both of their kingdoms are characterized by righteousness and peace (Hebrews 7:2). Abraham offered to one greater than himself (Hebrews 7:4); Jesus was greater than Abraham (John 8:53-58).

8. What is the significance of Jesus being the cornerstone of salvation, and what difference does this make for us?

Just as there is only one cornerstone in a building, so Jesus is the only way to God (John 14:6) and the only foundation stone in the building of

God's spiritual temple (1 Corinthians 3:11; Ephesians 2:20-21; 1 Peter 2:6).

Christ must be the central focus of my life and yours. No other god, dogma, or ideology may dare usurp this place in our lives. Probably the god we struggle against most is the god of self with all its expressions—self-will, self-praise, self-degradation, and self-pity. All of these must bow to the King of kings and Lord of lords.

Our message to the world dare be no less exclusive than Jesus' word—He is the only way to God. Issues that He addressed must be taken seriously—divorce, purity of both thought and action, and love carried out in practical everyday action. "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15).

### **Summarizing the Lesson**

To any who want to see, the Messianic Psalms clearly point to Jesus Christ. The fulfillment of these prophetic Scriptures makes us who live on this side of Calvary a very responsible people. Our Messiah patiently knocks on our hearts' doors and waits for permission to enter. He forces Himself on no one. Where we will spend eternity depends upon whether we will let Him in or not.

### **Research Guide**

1. Read the Scriptures listed under the heading, "Jesus, the Christ—Messiah," in Nave's Topical Bible to understand the volume of text that Jesus Christ fulfilled.
2. Unger's Bible Dictionary defines the term Messiah, explains the Jewish understanding of who He will and will not be, and gives a short resume of the Messiah as seen in the New Testament.