

Reign and Rain of Peace

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[0:00] So tonight, as you can see from the handout, we're going to be looking at Psalm 72.

And as we get into Psalm 72, we'll read it first in its entirety, and then we'll go ahead and dive into the verses. So let's go ahead and read it now. It says, A Psalm of Solomon.

Give the king your judgments, O God, and your righteousness to the king's son. He will judge your people with righteousness and your poor with justice. The mountains will bring peace to the people and the little hills by righteousness.

He will bring justice to the poor of the people. He will save the children of the needy and will break in pieces the oppressor. They shall fear you as long as the sun and moon endure throughout all generations.

He shall come down like rain upon the grass before mowing, like showers that water the earth. In his days the righteous shall flourish an abundance of peace until the moon is no more.

[1:07] He shall have dominion also from sea to sea and from the river to the ends of the earth. Those who dwell in the wilderness will bow before him, and his enemies will lick the dust. The kings of Tarshish and of the isles will bring presents.

The kings of Sheba and Seba will offer gifts. Yes, all kings shall fall down before him. All nations shall serve him, for he will deliver the needy when he cries. The poor also, and him who has no helper.

He will spare the poor and needy, and will save the souls of the needy. He will redeem their life from oppression and violence, and precious shall be their blood in his sight. And he shall live, and the gold of Sheba will be given to him.

Prayer also will be made for him continually, and daily he shall be praised. There will be an abundance of grain in the earth on the top of the mountains. Its fruit shall wave like Lebanon, and those of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth.

His name shall endure forever, his name shall continue as long as the sun, and men shall be blessed in him. All nations shall call him blessed. Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only does wondrous things.

[2:16] And blessed be his glorious name forever, and let the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen and amen. The prayers of David, the son of Jesse, are ended. So the inscription in the New King James says, A Psalm of Solomon.

And this is actually a coronation psalm. So coronation is what goes into your first blank there. And it was dedicated to the prosperity of Solomon at the beginning of his reign.

And the inscription is unclear about whether the psalm was also written by Solomon, or whether it was written for Solomon by his father David. But based upon what verse 20 says, many commentators believe that Solomon simply put a prayer of his father down in writing.

And the promise of a Davidic dynasty goes back to 2 Samuel 7, 12 through 16, where God said these words. So if you look at 2 Samuel 12 through 16, it says, When your days are fulfilled, and you rest with your fathers, I will set up your seed after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom.

And of course, these verses are spoken to David. And as we continue on with verse 13, it says, He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son.

[3:38] If he commits iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the blows of the sons of men. But my mercy shall not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I removed from before you.

And your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. Your throne shall be established forever. So as we begin looking at Psalm 72 tonight, we have Solomon ready to assume the kingship.

And the psalm looks forward to his rule. But as we'll see at the end of the study, the psalm also looks forward to the rule of another king. So we're going to break the psalm into six sections tonight, and the first of which covers just verse 1.

And in verse 1, we're going to see a prayer for a king. So the psalmist records the prayer like this. The verse says, Give the king your judgments, O God, and your righteousness to the king's son. So the psalm opens with the prayer that God would give the king divine ability to judge righteously. And the prayer also looks back to the words of Deuteronomy chapter 17, where Moses talked about how a king should rule.

[4 : 47] So if we look at Deuteronomy 17, 18 through 20, that's where it says, Also it shall be, when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write for himself a copy of this law in a book from the one before the priest, the Levites.

And it shall be with him, and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, and be careful to observe all the words of this law and these statutes, that his heart may not be lifted above his brethren, that he may not turn aside from the commandment to the right hand or to the left, and that he may prolong his days in the kingdom, he and his children, in the midst of Israel.

So John Calvin described verse 1 this way. He said, From these words we learn that no government in the world can be rightly managed but under the conduct of God and by the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

If kings possessed in themselves resources sufficiently ample, it would have been unnecessary to have sought by prayer that which they were already of themselves provided. But in requesting that the righteousness and judgment of God may be given to kings, the psalmist reminds them that none are fit for occupying that exalted station, except in so far as they are formed for it by the hand of God.

So Calvin's words are also consistent with the New Testament because Paul wrote these words in 1 Timothy 2, 1-3. He said, Then if we move to the second section of the psalm, it talks about the peace that is going to happen under the king.

[6 : 39] So we'll read about that peace in verses 2-7. And we'll take the verses in sections and read through verse 4 first because verses 2-4 include a prophecy of what the king is going to accomplish in his rule.

It says, So this section, and actually all the rest of the psalm, make the assumption that the prayer request that was made in verse 1 gets answered.

So notice that verses 2 and 3 both have a word in common with verse 1. Verse 1 requested that the king receive God's righteousness.

Verse 2 predicts that the king will judge with righteousness. And verse 3 predicts that peace will come because of that righteousness. So you can see that righteousness is very important.

And we'll see it more as we go through the psalm as well. But verse 2 actually uses a different word for righteousness than the one in verses 1 and 3. So I thought there must be really something significant about that.

[7 : 53] I spent a while looking at it and I came to the conclusion when I finally found it online that they both met the same thing. And just one was masculine and one was feminine on how they wrote it.

It is an important word in there and an important concept in the psalm. So their meanings actually include the state of doing what is required according to a standard or the state or condition of fairly deciding what is right in a legal case without any prejudice.

And the word for peace that's translated peace there in verse 3 is a very familiar word for us. It's the word shalom. But shalom really means more than just the absence of war.

It carries a sense of total well-being, of prosperity, and security associated with God's presence among his people. So when you hear somebody talking about shalom, then it is a much broader concept than what you might have first thought.

If we look at verse 3, verse 3 talks about the mountains and hills bringing forth that peace. And really what the psalmist is saying there is that he wants to have such peace such that no corner would be found in the country where peace doesn't prevail.

[9:06] So not even in the most unpromising parts indicated by the mountains, which are usually barren, will peace be avoided. So that's what he's saying when he's talking about the mountains producing peace is that everywhere in the country you will have that peace.

Then if we look at verse 4, it talks about the peace being extended to the poor and the needy. And the king obviously would have had more than enough power to oppress the less fortunate. And how many times have we seen throughout history where the less fortunate have been victimized by the governments?

That's something that still happens regularly today. But the psalmist makes a point that Solomon under his rule will be the defender of those who can only be safe under his protection.

And the king will be their avenger when they're made the victim of injustice or wrong. And in that time especially, that was a much different concept for the kings that were ruling.

And then in verse 5, the writer pauses briefly to talk about how the people will view God because of the peace that the king brings. So look at verse 5 again. It says, They shall fear you as long as the sun and moon endure throughout all generations.

[10:18] And fear you there is an expression of wonder, awe, reverence, worship, and obedience. So let's think about the verse for a second. If the king is the one bringing about the peace, why would the people have wonder, awe, reverence, and worship to God?

Well, as we mentioned earlier, God is the one who enables the king to rule righteously. And so that's why if you have a righteous king, you should give thanks to God for that king.

And then as we look at verses 6 and 7, they return to describing how the king will bring about that peace. So let's look about at verse 6 and 7 now. It says, He shall come down like rain upon the grass before mowing, like showers that water the earth.

In his days, the righteous shall flourish in abundance of peace until the moon is no more. And so verse 6 is how we get the two different rains that are in the title of this lesson.

It's talking about the rain of king and the rain, R-A-I-N, of peace that the king will bring. And the great king here then is pictured as that gentle rain of God's blessing on the earth.

[11:30] And his kingly rain, R-A-I-G-N, is going to lead to that true peace that we talked about. He's going to bring in the state of things that they really ought to be. So then if we move to the next section of the psalm, that covers verses 8 through 11, and we're going to see the power of the king.

And the power of the king then is evident in the breadth of his domain and also in the way that others treat him. So here are those verses again. Verses 8 through 11 say, He shall have dominion also from sea to sea and from the river to the ends of the earth.

Those who dwell in the wilderness will bow before him and his enemies will lick the dust. The kings of Tarshish and of the isles will bring presents. The kings of Sheba and Seba will offer gifts.

Yes, all kings shall fall down before him. All nations shall serve him. So remember the promises that God made to Abraham and those promises included a promise that his descendants would have dominion over all of the land of Canaan.

And we see that in Genesis 15, 18. And that verse says, On the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, To your descendants I have given this land from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates.

[12:51] So actually the verses we just read in the Psalms expand on this even more and they include the geographical dimensions of the entire earth. So you see it expanding out from what promise Abraham had.

And then verses 9 through 11 also tell us that the people who live in the wilderness will bow before the king and his enemies would be humiliated into subjection. That's where the lick the dust comment comes in there.

And it even says that kings on distant shores will bring tribute to the king and bow down before him. And those kings of course would come from far away places including Tarshish and Sheba.

And Sheba is present day Yemen in southwestern Arabia. And also Seba which is in upper Egypt. So let's take a quick detour then to see that this projection about what would happen under Solomon actually did come to pass.

If you go over to 1 Kings and look at 1 Kings 4:21 you'll find this verse. 1 Kings 4:21 says So Solomon reigned over all kingdoms from the river to the land of the Philistines as far as the border of Egypt.

[14:00] They brought tribute and served Solomon all the days of his life. And if you go to chapter 10 of 1 Kings verses 1 and 2 get a little more specific. They say Now when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the Lord she came to test him with hard questions.

She came to Jerusalem with a very great retinue with camels that bore spices very much gold and precious stones. And when she came to Solomon she spoke with him about all that was in her heart.

And then finally 1 Kings 10.24 and 25 summarize the tributes to Solomon like this. It says Now all the earth sought the presence of Solomon to hear his wisdom which God had put in his heart. Each man brought his present articles of silver and gold garments armor spices horses and mules at a set rate year by year. So you can see that that prediction did come true that people would bow down before Solomon and bring him presents.

So so far we've seen the prayer for a king we've seen the peace under a king and we've seen the power of that king. In verses 12 through 14 of Psalm 72 we're going to see preservation by a king. [15:13] So let's go ahead and read about that preservation. It says For he will deliver the needy when he cries the poor also and him who has no helper he will spare the poor and needy and will save the souls of the needy he will redeem their life from oppression and violence and precious shall be their blood in his sight.

Because they focus on the poor and needy these verses are similar to verse 4 that we've already covered. However these verses have a little bit different focus because they tie the king's focus on the poor and needy to his scope and power that we just read about in verses 8 through 11.

So in other words what the psalmist is saying is that the king is going to be worthy of such dominion that we saw back in verse 8 and the honor that was given him in verses 9 through 11 because he was the savior for the oppressed.

So he's going to deliver the needy and if you notice in most translations needy actually occurs three times in verses 12 and 13. So he'll deliver the needy and the destitute or the poor who cry out to him and he will take pity on the weak and he's going to rescue them and he'll consider their blood which really is just another way to say their lives as precious.

So especially back in those days having a king that would actively rescue people who were unable to save themselves was a rarity and so because of the example he set the psalmist is saying that the king deserves the riches and honor that he received.

[16:43] So then with verses 15 through 17 we come to the next section of the psalm and in these verses we're going to learn about the permanence of the king. So the permanence of the king is the next one.

So verses 15 through 17 say and he shall live and the gold of Sheba will be given to him. Prayer also will be made for him continually and daily he shall be praised.

There will be an abundance of grain in the earth on the top of the mountains its fruit shall wave like Lebanon and those of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth. His name shall endure forever his name shall continue as long as the sun and men shall call him blessed and men shall be blessed in him and all nations should call him blessed.

So verse 15 then begins with the statement about the king's life and then repeats a couple of things that we've already seen because it talks about this king being rewarded with long life which of course can be a blessing from God and then he talks about people continually bringing tribute to Solomon and continually praying for him as well and then it mentions that under his government there's going to be both a wonderful increase of produce and of people who inhabit the cities and that's really what the verses are talking about it's talking about people sowing grain on top of the mountains and the grain is going to be so thick that it's going to come up like wood and it'll be so strong and tall it'll be like the cedars of Lebanon so it's actually a picture of just how abundant the grain is going to grow so that's an expression of great plenty then and because of that the people in the city are going to flourish like grass so conditions are going to be very good under that king and let's consider how verse 17 then applies to Solomon's reign because the blessings of such a king's rule are reciprocal then he blesses the nations perhaps through trade and other powerful alliances and then they in turn will speak well of him so with such a king then Israel would see its crops and people continue to flourish and the rest of the world then would come to know the true God of Israel because of that so that brings us to the last section of the psalm and in that last section we're going to see praise because of the king so praise is what goes into your blank there so let's read verses

18 through 20 again to see that praise it says blessed be the Lord God the God of Israel who only does wondrous things and blessed be his glorious name forever and let the whole earth be filled with his glory amen and amen the prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended and because psalm 72 is the last psalm in the second book of psalms some commentators actually believe that verses 18 through 20 here don't belong with just psalm 72 they believe that they apply to all the psalms from psalm 41 through 72 but if you look at it though the prayer let the whole earth be filled with his glory is still appropriate to just psalm 72 as well because to be filled with God's glory is to be a holy side of worship where God makes his presence known and the prayer then is that the earth will be his sanctuary so why does God deserve the praise when a nation's ruler behaves in a godly manner it goes back to what we talked about before when we read 1st Timothy 2 1 through 3 because all governments are established by God and if you remember Romans 13 1

[20 : 25] Romans 13 1 says this it says let every soul be subject to the governing authorities for there is no authority except from God and the authorities that exist are appointed by God so whenever we have a king that's ruling well then God deserves the praise since that's a king that God appointed so so far we've looked at how the psalm applies to Solomon's reign but the psalm also looks forward to the reign of the Messiah so let's look now at how we see several aspects of the coming Messiah in this psalm first of all we see a Davidic Messiah so Davidic Messiah is what goes next to number 1 there in Psalm 72 verse 1 refers to a son of King David who will sit on the throne and if we remember the Christmas story in Luke 1 verses 30 through 32 we see this about the ultimate son of David it says then the angel said to her do not be afraid Mary for you have found favor with

God and behold you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a son and shall call his name Jesus he will be great and will be called the son of the highest and the Lord God will give him the throne of his father David and another thing we see about the coming Messiah is that he'll be a righteous Messiah so righteous Messiah is the second point there and we see that in Psalm 72 2 for one example remember Psalm 72 2 it says he will judge your people with righteousness and your poor with justice and notice how similar this verse is to Jeremiah 23 5 so Jeremiah 23 verse 5 has this prophecy about the Messiah it says behold the days are coming says the Lord that I will raise to David a branch of righteousness a king shall reign and prosper and execute judgment and righteousness in the earth so that's why you can see that 72 2 applied to

Solomon but it also applies to the coming Messiah and then the third thing that we see related to the Messiah is that we see a peacefully ruling Messiah peacefully ruling Messiah and that comes from verses 3 through 7 of Psalm 72 they talk about the peace that the king will bring and if we look at Isaiah's prophecies Isaiah 2 4 tells us about the true peace that will result from the government of Christ Isaiah 2 4 says this says he will judge between the nations and rebuke many people they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks nations shall not lift up sword against nation neither shall they learn war anymore that's why you can see he will be a peacefully ruling Messiah and the fourth thing that applies to the

Messiah is that he'll be a worldwide Messiah so worldwide Messiah is what goes next to number four and that comes in part from Psalm 72 8 Psalm 72 8 is the verse that says he shall have dominion also from sea to sea and from the river to the ends of the earth so the global dominion then for the Davidic king is fulfilled in the universal reign of Christ and perhaps the well known prophecy about the Messiah's universal reign is Isaiah 9 6 and 7 and those are the verses that say for unto us a child is born unto us a son is given and the government will be upon his shoulder and his name will be called wonderful counselor mighty god everlasting father prince of peace of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end upon the throne of David and over his kingdom to order it and establish it with judgment and justice from that time forward even forever the zeal of the

Lord of hosts will perform this and just a side note on Isaiah 9 6 and 7 notice it says for unto us a child is born and that's kind of interesting too because you know a child is born to his parents he's not normally born to us but we see God being born to us and a son given to us so it shows that he is coming for us as well and that's also consistent with what the angels told the shepherds if you think of it because what did the angel say to the shepherd said for unto you is born this day you know the shepherds weren't expecting to have a son born to them that night then if we go to the fifth thing about the Messiah we see that he is a worshipped Messiah so worshipped Messiah goes into

number five and psalm 72 10 talks about other kings bringing presents to the Davidic king and of course as we're studying on

[25:42] Sunday mornings for last week and this week Matthew 2 records the visit of the wise men to Jesus and Matthew 2 11 says this it says and when they had come into the house they saw the young child with Mary his mother and fell down and worshipped him and when they had opened their treasures they presented gifts to him gold frankincense and myrrh also remember what psalm 72 11 said about the king said all kings said yes all kings shall fall down before him all nations shall serve him and if we look at the new testament talking about what will happen when Jesus returns we see this in philippians 2 9 and 10 says therefore God has highly exalted him talking about Jesus and given him the name which is above every name and at the name of Jesus every knee should bow of those in heaven and of those on earth and of those under the earth and every tongue should confess that Jesus

Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father so we can see there that this psalm predicts what's going to happen in the future when Christ returns as well and then if we look at the sixth thing about the Messiah in this psalm verses 12 through 14 referred to the Davidic king as a deliverer a savior and the redeemer and of course we know that those things are fulfilled in Jesus too and Matthew 1 verses 20 and 21 record what happened as Joseph was contemplating what to do after he realized that Mary was pregnant and Matthew 1 20 and 21 say this says but while he thought about these things behold an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream saying Joseph son of David do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit and she will bring forth a son and you shall call his name Jesus for he will save his people from their sins and then

Galatians 4 4 and 5 say this says but when the fullness of time had come God sent forth his son born of a woman born under the law to redeem those who were under the law that we might receive adoption as sons so we see just two examples here where Christ is the savior and redeemer and we could spend hours if we want to look at the other cross references for that tonight then the seventh thing we see about the Messiah that's predicted in this psalm is that he's an everlasting Messiah so everlasting Messiah goes in those blanks there and we see that in psalm 72 17 that's the verse that says his name shall endure forever his name shall continue as long as the sun and men should be blessed in him all nations shall call him blessed so when we looked at the verse earlier we discussed how it applied to Solomon but of course it more fully applies to Jesus and just as an example of that revelation 11 15 tells us what will happen at the end of the age revelation 11 15 says this says then the seventh angel sounded and there were loud voices in heaven saying the kingdom of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ and he shall reign for how long forever and ever so again we see him as the everlasting Messiah there so through psalm 72 tonight we've reviewed prophecies that have already been fulfilled in Christ and we've also seen some prophecies that will be fulfilled in the future because of Christ and when Christ returns so what should our response be to these things then you know perhaps we should echo what the psalms said in psalm 72 18 and 19 blessed be the Lord God and the God of Israel who only does wondrous things and blessed be his glorious name forever and let the whole earth be filled with his glory amen and amen

Thank you.