

ST ARMANDS KEY LUTHERAN CHURCH  
SARASOTA, FLORIDA

**COME, JOIN THE CONVERSATION!**  
ON  
**THE BOOK OF PSALMS**

Lesson Plan for Thursday – December 5, 2013

**Conversation #10 – “Psalm References in the New Testament”**

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**Our objectives for this session:**

- to share personal ideas, attitudes, and experiences relating to The Psalms; and, in doing so, strengthen our SAKLC fellowship;
- to explore select psalms quoted in New Testament contexts;
- to view how the use of a ‘doxology’ in many Psalms was copied and regularly employed in a number of books included in the New Testament;
- to understand and appreciate how Psalms have been employed in Christian worship from earliest times to the present;
- to compare several favorite psalm-based hymns printed in the LUTHERAN BOOK OF WORSHIP with corresponding biblical texts.

*(At the end of session #9, prior to Thanksgiving, some will remember that we ‘sent’ to God a rousing closing prayer using the text of Psalm 150, which evoked many comments. Today’s session begins with use of the same psalm (MINUS INSTRUMENTS) using a modern translation by Richard S. Hanson, whose work we have previously sampled and appreciated.)*

**A JOINT OPENING PRAYER** – *(your participation is noted)*

**Cantor:**

***Praise The Lord!  
Praise God in his sanctuary!  
Praise him in his mighty sky!  
Praise him for his exploits!  
Praise him for his transcending greatness!***

**Men:**

***Praise him with a blast of a trumpet!***

**Women:**

***Praise him with sound of strings!***

**Men:**

***Praise him with rhythm and dancing!***

Women:

*Praise him with violins and flutes!*

Men:

*Praise him with ringing of bells!*

Women:

*Praise him with crashing of cymbals!*

All: (a non-biblical addition!)

*Praise him with our impending conversation!*

Cantor:

*Let all living things praise The Lord!*

All:

*Praise The Lord!*

**A GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO THIS SESSION:** The Book of Psalms had a huge influence on New Testament writers. The New Testament has many quotes from several Old Testament books, but none more so than from Psalms. Many modern-day Christians do not realize the important place that the psalms have played in the history of our faith. There are over 400 quotations from, or allusions to, the Book of Psalms in the New Testament. Thirty-five (35) of the Psalms, drawn from every category of psalm types, are directly quoted in the N.T. Most Psalms quoted in the New Testament come from the Septuagint (LXX) *{Greek text of the O.T.}*, rather than the original Hebrew texts. Evidence of this usage comes as early as a reporting of the post-resurrection appearance of Jesus, the events on Pentecost and other experiences following immediately thereafter:

A) **JESUS' POST-RESURRECTION APPEARANCE TO HIS ASSEMBLED DISCIPLES** Luke 24:36-44

*36 While they were talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." 37 They were startled and terrified, and thought that they were seeing a ghost. 38 He said to them, "Why are you frightened, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? 39 Look at my hands and my feet; see that it is I myself. Touch me and see; for a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have." 40 And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. 41 While in their joy they were disbelieving and still wondering, he said to them, "Have you anything here to eat?" 42 They gave him a piece of broiled fish, 43 and he took it and ate in their presence.*

**44 Then he said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, **and the psalms must be fulfilled.**”**

B) PETER'S MESSAGE ON PENTECOST: ACTS 2:14-36 {note - only select vss. printed below}

**14 Then Peter stood up with the other eleven apostles and in a loud voice began to speak to the crowd: “Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, listen to me and let me tell you what this means.**

**15 These people are not drunk, as you suppose; it is only nine o'clock in the morning. ...**

**29 “My friends, I must speak to you plainly about our famous ancestor King David. He died and was buried, and his grave is here with us to this very day. <sup>30</sup>He was a prophet, and he knew what God had promised him: God had made a vow that he would make one of David's descendants a king, just as David was. <sup>31</sup>David saw what God was going to do in the future, and so he spoke about the resurrection of the Messiah when he said, ‘He was not abandoned in the world of the dead; his body did not rot in the grave.’**

**32 God has raised this very Jesus from death, and we are all witnesses to this fact. <sup>33</sup>He has been raised to the right side of God, his Father, and has received from him the Holy Spirit, as he had promised. What you now see and hear is his gift that he has poured out on us.**

**34 For it was not David who went up into heaven; rather he said, **‘The Lord said to my Lord: {A DIRECT QUOTE FROM PSALM 110:1} Sit here at my right side****

**35 until I put your enemies as a footstool under your feet.’**

**36 “All the people of Israel, then, are to know for sure that this Jesus, whom you crucified, is the one that God has made Lord and Messiah!”**

C) PETER and JOHN @ TEMPLE IN JERUSALEM AFTER HEALING A LAME MAN (ACTS 4)

... an occurrence sometime after Pentecost

**Peter and John were still speaking to the people when some priests, the officer in charge of the Temple guards, and some Sadducees arrived. <sup>2</sup>They were annoyed because the two apostles were teaching the people that Jesus had risen from death, which proved that the dead will rise to life. <sup>3</sup>So they arrested them and put them in jail until the next day, since it was already late. <sup>4</sup>But**

*many who heard the message believed; and the number grew to about five thousand.*

*<sup>5</sup> The next day the Jewish leaders, the elders, and the teachers of the Law gathered in Jerusalem. <sup>6</sup> They met with the High Priest Annas and with Caiaphas, John, Alexander, and the others who belonged to the High Priest's family. <sup>7</sup> They made the apostles stand before them and asked them, "How did you do this? What power do you have or whose name did you use?"*

*<sup>8</sup> Peter, full of the Holy Spirit, answered them, "Leaders of the people and elders: <sup>9</sup> if we are being questioned today about the good deed done to the lame man and how he was healed, <sup>10</sup> then you should all know, and all the people of Israel should know, that this man stands here before you completely well through the power of the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth—whom you crucified and whom God raised from death. <sup>11</sup> <sup>(A)</sup> Jesus is the one of whom the scripture says,*

***'The stone that you the builders despised (PSALM 118:22) turned out to be the most important of all.'***

*<sup>12</sup> Salvation is to be found through him alone; in all the world there is no one else whom God has given who can save us." ...*

*<sup>23</sup> As soon as Peter and John were set free, they returned to their group and told them what the chief priests and the elders had said. <sup>24</sup> When the believers heard it, they all joined together in prayer to God: "Master and Creator of heaven, earth, and sea, and all that is in them! <sup>25</sup> By means of the Holy Spirit you spoke through our ancestor David, your servant, when he said,*

***'Why were the Gentiles furious; (PSALM 2:1-2) why did people make their useless plots?***

***<sup>26</sup> The kings of the earth prepared themselves, and the rulers met together against the Lord and his Messiah.'***

**D) OTHER REFERENCES TO PSALM 2 which speaks about the nations conspiring and the people plotting vain things, and about kings and rulers gathering together against the Lord and his anointed. The early church cried to God in (ACTS 4:27) :**

***“For in this city, in fact, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed”***

Those who had witnessed the life of Jesus and who had been convinced of his teachings saw that Psalm 2 applied to Jesus as the anointed, the Messiah. The word ‘Christ’ is a title meaning “anointed”; Jesus was the Christ, the ‘Anointed One.’ Viewing Psalm 2 in the light of Jesus’ life, the N.T. writers specifically understood verse 7 as a reference to Jesus as the Son of God. See related references below:

**Psalm 2:7** (NRSV)

***<sup>7</sup> I will tell of the decree of the LORD:  
He said to me, “You are my son;  
today I have begotten you.***

**Acts 13:33** (NRSV)

***<sup>33</sup> he has fulfilled for us, their children, by raising Jesus; as also it is written in the second psalm,  
‘You are my Son;  
today I have begotten you.’***

**Hebrews 5:5** (NRSV)

***<sup>5</sup> So also Christ did not glorify himself in becoming a high priest, but was appointed by the one who said to him,  
“You are my Son,  
today I have begotten you”;***

***(Note: next week’s final session in this Psalm Study will focus on many additional references to Christ in what have come to be known in Christianity as the “Messianic Psalms.”)***

## **E) Further use of Psalms in the New Testament**

Even when not directly quoting the Psalms, the apostles and evangelists were often influenced by them in the expressions they used. The Apostle Paul, not unlike the psalmists, frequently closed his letters with **doxologies**. (A *doxology* is an ascription of praise to God by the congregation.)

... .. ***For example, first consider this conclusion to Psalm 72.***

**Psalm 72:18-19** (NRSV)

***18 Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel,  
who alone does wondrous things.  
19 Blessed be his glorious name forever;  
may his glory fill the whole earth.  
Amen and Amen.***

.... .... Now consider these examples of doxologies in Paul's writings:

**1 Timothy 1:17** (NRSV)

***17 To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be  
honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.***

**Romans 11:36** (NRSV)

***36 For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him  
be the glory forever. Amen.***

... .. other New Testament writers also used this format, as shown below:

**2 Peter 3:18** (NRSV)

***18 But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior  
Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of  
eternity. Amen.***

**Jude 1:25** (NRSV)

***25 to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be  
glory, majesty, power, and authority, before all time and now and  
forever. Amen.***

**Revelation 5:13** (NRSV)

***13 Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under  
the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, singing,***

***“To the one seated on the throne and to the Lamb  
be blessing and honor and glory and might  
forever and ever!”***

## **F) Use of Psalms in Christian Worship:**

Traditionally, the Psalter has always been the hymnbook of 'Israel' and to this day it is recited and sung regularly in synagogue worship. A careful reading of the life story of Jesus indicates that his entire life was immersed in the psalms – a natural result of the regular singing of psalms in the temple and synagogue. That didn't end after he commissioned the apostles into the world.

... .. *St. Paul commands attention both to 'speak' and to sing the psalms together:*

### **Ephesians 5:18-19** (NRSV)

***<sup>18</sup> Do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; but be filled with the Spirit, <sup>19</sup> as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, singing and making melody to the Lord in your hearts,***

### **Colossians 3:16** (NRSV)

***<sup>16</sup> Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God.***

**The Apostolic Fathers** (2<sup>nd</sup> century Christian leaders who wrote extensively – who knew the earthly followers of Jesus of Nazareth – and, who historically serve as an important link between 1<sup>st</sup> generation and later Christians) indicate in their manuscripts the importance of Psalms in early worship practice of Christian believers.

**St Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria** (4<sup>th</sup> century AD a renowned theologian, Church Father, and chief defender of Trinitarianism against Arianism) in his treatise: "ON THE INCARNATION OF THE WORD OF GOD" makes this comment: ***"The Psalms have a unique place in the Bible because most of the Scripture speaks to us, while the Psalms speak for us."***

As the **Roman Catholic** and **Eastern Orthodox churches** developed, the entire Psalter was and is still sung weekly in many monasteries.

In **Reformation** times, **Martin Luther** (early 1500's) reintroduced use of Psalms in public worship and wrote several hymns using psalms as texts. In 1562, **John Calvin** printed the **GENEVAN PSALTER**, which included most of the psalms written in meter and set to music.

Christians should know that the use of the psalms in worship has had the longest influence in usage among Christians since the 1<sup>st</sup> century. It is only in the last few decades that this has fallen out of practice in many Protestant churches.

Several favorite Christian Hymns based on the Psalms in the LUTHERAN BOOK OF WORSHIP

**THE KING OF LOVE MY SHEPHERD IS – LBW #456** (Psalm 23)

**JESUS SHALL REIGN – LBW #530** (Psalm 72)

**O GOD, OUR HELP IN AGES PAST – LBW #320** (Psalm 90)

**ALL PEOPLE THAT ON EARTH DO DWELL – LBW #245** (Psalm 100)

**O WORSHIP THE KING – LBW #548** (Psalm 104)

**PRACTICUM:**

1. Using both the LUTHERAN BOOK OF WORSHIP and your copy of the HOLY BIBLE, compare the texts of both hymn, and Psalm (*on which it is based- as listed above*) to determine the full extent to which the Psalm is utilized.
  - a) Read through the complete text of the hymn.
  - b) Read the complete text of the Psalm (use of several translations is suggested!)
  - c) Side-by-side compare both texts and note your observations.
2. Research other entries in the LUTHERAN BOOK OF WORSHIP, what additional Psalm based hymns are you able to identify? On a separate sheet, list the name and number of hymn(s) and corresponding Psalm(s).

**CLOSING PASTORAL PRAYER**

NEXT WEEK: December 12, 2013 – Our final session for 2013

Topic: ***“In what sense do the Psalms speak to us of Jesus Christ?”*** A look at Messianic Psalms.

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