

ST ARMANDS KEY LUTHERAN CHURCH  
SARASOTA, FLORIDA

COME, JOIN THE CONVERSATION!

ON

THE BOOK OF PSALMS

Lesson Plan for Thursday – December 12, 2013

Final Conversation #11 – “Christ, seen in context of the Psalms”

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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 understand what Christians see as an essential unity between the Old and New Testaments;
  - to be able to describe distinctive elements in the Psalms that Christians interpret as relating specifically to Jesus Christ;
  - to be able to define Messianic Psalms in both a ‘narrow’ and broader ‘general’ sense;
  - to review specific examples of Messianic Psalms;
  - to ‘wrap up’ and evaluate our entire series of Psalm CONVERSATIONS.
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**A MOMENT OF OPENING DEVOTION** – each participant is invited to choose and then share a brief passage from one of the Psalms, which she/he personally deems appropriate to the Season of Advent. In so doing we will together “build” an opening prayer.

**A) WORDS OF GENERAL INTRODUCTION:**

**“UNDERSTANDING THE PSALMS IN THE CONTEXT OF CHRIST”**

*(some thoughts shared by your facilitator)*

The story of Israel, starting with the earliest accounts of slavery and oppression in Egypt; then, reaching forward through centuries of conflict, when Israel was sometimes a sovereign power and sometimes forced to live under foreign oppression; and, continuing right up to the time of the birth of Jesus, is a truly passionate story. It is a tale in which the Jews experienced the reality of God sometimes in the midst of great suffering; a tale of how they waited in hope for the coming of God’s kingdom.

Consider the “word picture” that the prophet Isaiah paints: He sees Israel as the weary servant, called by God, for the purpose of sharing the good news of the coming of God’s kingdom with the other nations of the world:

**Isaiah 40:28-31 (NRSV)**

**28 Have you not known? Have you not heard?  
The LORD is the everlasting God,  
the Creator of the ends of the earth.  
He does not faint or grow weary;  
his understanding is unsearchable.**  
**29 He gives power to the faint,  
and strengthens the powerless.**  
**30 Even youths will faint and be weary,  
and the young will fall exhausted;**  
**31 but those who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength,  
they shall mount up with wings like eagles,  
they shall run and not be weary,  
they shall walk and not faint.**

As interpreted in the New Testament, the psalms not only anticipate the Advent of the King who would inaugurate God's kingdom, but they are believed to portray the passion and struggle that "King" would undergo in fulfilling his task as God's anointed one.

In our last session we saw how the apostles, functioning as messengers of Christ's resurrection, saw themselves standing in the great succession of witnesses to God's mighty deeds in history. Using the Scripture available to them at the time (*Torah, Prophets, and especially Psalms*) they began to see and proclaim that the time was fulfilled

Most Christians hold to the belief that Jesus and Israel belong "together" and that their respective histories cannot be understood apart from each other. Viewed from this perspective, the story of Jesus and the story of Israel constitute one story: (1) A story in which God is involved personally and redemptively in the historical experiences of the Jews. (2) A story that provides an opening - a way into the coming dimension of God - in which all peoples ultimately will find true unity and community in Jesus Christ

It is from this perspective that Christians pray the Psalms "in Christ," the anointed one, who stands in the line of David, but is far greater than David! Another prophetic writing from the pen of Isaiah, will hopefully undergird and support this viewpoint:

**Isaiah 2:2-4 (NRSV)**

**2 In days to come  
the mountain of the LORD's house  
shall be established as the highest of the mountains,  
and shall be raised above the hills;  
all the nations shall stream to it.**

**3 Many peoples shall come and say,  
 “Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD,  
 to the house of the God of Jacob;  
 that he may teach us his ways  
 and that we may walk in his paths.”  
 For out of Zion shall go forth instruction,  
 and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.  
 4 He shall judge between the nations,  
 and shall arbitrate for many peoples;  
 they shall beat their swords into plowshares,  
 and their spears into pruning hooks;  
 nation shall not lift up sword against nation,  
 neither shall they learn war any more.**

**B) MESSIANIC PSALMS: What are they?**

1. Narrow sense (*Fundamentalist groups*) – a writing that is totally prophetic and has no direct message of significance to the OT period in which it was written; it is only a predictor of the coming Messiah
2. General sense – Psalms that anticipate the Messiah but also have meaning in a contemporary context of the original writer.

*Comment: Your facilitator attempts to see validity in both definitions – It is possible that some psalms may only be prophetic of the Messiah Jesus. Given under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit they may sometimes speak about concepts and persons beyond the original author’s knowledge and/or understanding. But generally, I lean much more heavily to the 2<sup>nd</sup> alternative.*

*For the purpose of illustration consider Psalm 16:10 “**For you do not give me up to Sheol, or let your faithful one see the Pit.**” Some have interpreted this as a direct prophecy of Jesus spoken by David. Others believe that David may have been speaking of his confidence that God would deliver him, in a particularly desperate situation, rather than letting him be killed by his enemies; and, that later, the message of the psalm may have been reinterpreted to refer to Christ.*

**C) EXAMPLES OF THE MESSIANIC PSALMS**

*(These are thought to refer directly to the life of the Lord Jesus Christ. They do not stand alone in the Book of Psalms; all are mentioned in the New Testament as shown below.)*

**PSALM 2:7 “I will tell of the decree of the LORD: He said to me, “You are my son; today I have begotten you.”**

*compare to:*

**HEBREWS 1:5 For to which of the angels did God ever say, “You are my Son; today I have begotten you”?** *(Comment - The writer of Hebrews uses this precise wording*

*in speaking of the person of Jesus Christ. The Psalm was first intended to describe the ministry of the King, but it fits the ministry of Christ perfectly.)*

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***PSALM 8:2 - Out of the mouths of babes and infants you have founded a bulwark because of your foes, to silence the enemy and the avenger.***

*compare to:*

***MATTHEW 21:15-16 - But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the amazing things that he did, and heard the children crying out in the temple, “Hosanna to the Son of David,” they became angry <sup>16</sup> and said to him, “Do you hear what these are saying?” Jesus said to them, “Yes; have you never read, ‘Out of the mouths of infants and nursing babies you have prepared praise for yourself?’”***

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***PSALM 8:4-6 – “what are human beings that you are mindful of them, mortals that you care for them? <sup>5</sup> Yet you have made them a little lower than God, and crowned them with glory and honor. <sup>6</sup> You have given them dominion over the works of your hands; you have put all things under their feet”***

*compare to:*

***HEBREWS 2:6-11 But someone has testified somewhere, “What are human beings that you are mindful of them, or mortals, that you care for them? <sup>7</sup> You have made them for a little while lower than the angels; you have crowned them with glory and honor, <sup>8</sup>subjecting all things under their feet.”***

***Now in subjecting all things to them, God left nothing outside their control. As it is, we do not yet see everything in subjection to them, <sup>9</sup> but we do see Jesus, who for a little while was made lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.***

***<sup>10</sup> It was fitting that God, for whom and through whom all things exist, in bringing many children to glory, should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through sufferings. <sup>11</sup> For the one who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one Father. For this reason Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters,***

*(Comment -The verses above speak of Christ’s humanity and divinity. He represents the human race and will be given the authority over all creation. )*

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**PSALM 16:10 For you do not give me up to Sheol, or let your faithful one see the Pit.**

compare to:

**ACTS 2:25-31 - For David says concerning him, ‘I saw the Lord always before me, for he is at my right hand so that I will not be shaken; <sup>26</sup> therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced; moreover my flesh will live in hope. <sup>27</sup> For you will not abandon my soul to Hades, or let your Holy One experience corruption. <sup>28</sup> You have made known to me the ways of life; you will make me full of gladness with your presence.’**

**<sup>29</sup> “Fellow Israelites, I may say to you confidently of our ancestor David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. <sup>30</sup> Since he was a prophet, he knew that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would put one of his descendants on his throne. Foreseeing this, David spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, saying, ‘He was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh experience corruption.’**

(Comment – reference to this Psalm passage also seen in Acts 13:25, 15:12-17)

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**PSALM 22 - In its entirety, this psalm is seen as Messianic. This is due to content that describes many things regarding the death and resurrection of the Lord. Specific references follow below:**

**PSALM 22:1 My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from helping me, from the words of my groaning?**

compare to:

**MATTHEW 27:46 And about three o’clock Jesus cried with a loud voice, “Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?” that is, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”**

(Comment: A portrayal of Christ’s suffering as it appears his Father’s presence was being withdrawn.)

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**PSALM 22:7-8 All who see me mock at me; they make mouths at me, they shake their heads; <sup>8</sup> “Commit your cause to the LORD; let him deliver— let him rescue the one in whom he delights!”**

compare to:

**MATTHEW 27:39 Those who passed by derided him, shaking their heads**

(Comment – also found @ Luke 23:35)

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**PSALM 22:15 my mouth is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to my jaws; you lay me in the dust of death**

compare to:

**JOHN 19:28 After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfill the scripture), “I am thirsty.”**

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**PSALM 22:16 For dogs are all around me; a company of evildoers encircles me. My hands and feet have shriveled;**

compare to:

**JOHN 20:27 Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe.”**

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**PSALM 22:22 I will tell of your name to my brothers and sisters; in the midst of the congregation I will praise you:**

compare to:

**HEBREWS 2:12 “I will proclaim your name to my brothers and sisters, in the midst of the congregation I will praise you.”**

(Comment – Writer to the Hebrews is providing evidence that Jesus brings eternal life to all that believe, therefore making them children of God.)

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**PSALM 34:20 He keeps all their bones; not one of them will be broken**

compare to:

**JOHN 19: 31-37 Since it was the day of Preparation, the Jews did not want the bodies left on the cross during the sabbath, especially because that sabbath was a day of great solemnity. So they asked Pilate to have the legs of the crucified men broken and the bodies removed. <sup>32</sup> Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who had been crucified with him. <sup>33</sup> But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. <sup>34</sup> Instead, one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once blood and water came out. <sup>35</sup> (He who saw this has testified so that you also may believe. His testimony is true, and he knows that he tells the truth.) <sup>36</sup> These things occurred so that the scripture might be fulfilled, “None of his bones shall be broken.” <sup>37</sup> And again another passage of scripture says, “They will look on the one whom they have pierced.”**

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**PSALM 35:11 Malicious witnesses rise up; they ask me about things I do not know**

compare to:

**MARK 14:57 Some stood up and gave false testimony against him**

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**PSALM 40: 6-8 Sacrifice and offering you do not desire, but you have given me an open ear. Burnt offering and sin offering you have not required. <sup>7</sup> Then I said, “Here I am; in the scroll of the book it is written of me. <sup>8</sup> I delight to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart.”**

compare to:

**HEBREWS 10:5-7 Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, “Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body you have prepared for me; <sup>6</sup> in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure. <sup>7</sup> Then I said, ‘See, God, I have come to do your will, O God’ (in the scroll of the book it is written of me).”**

(Comment – a description of the obedience of Christ to the Father)

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**PSALM 41:9 Even my bosom friend in whom I trusted, who ate of my bread, has lifted the heel against me**

compare to:

**LUKE 22:48** *but Jesus said to him, “Judas, is it with a kiss that you are betraying the Son of Man?”*

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**PSALM 45:6-7** *Your throne, O God, endures forever and ever. Your royal scepter is a scepter of equity; you love righteousness and hate wickedness. Therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions;*

*compare to:*

**HEBREWS 1:8-9** *But of the Son he says, “Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, and the righteous scepter is the scepter of your kingdom. <sup>9</sup> You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions.”*

*(Comment – a reference to the divinity and eternal kingdom of Christ)*

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**PSALM 68:18** *You ascended the high mount, leading captives in your train and receiving gifts from people, even from those who rebel against the LORD God’s abiding there.*

*compare to:*

**EPHESIANS 4:8** *Therefore it is said, “When he ascended on high he made captivity itself a captive; he gave gifts to his people.”*

*(Comment – a reference to our Lord’s ascension into heaven)*

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**PSALM 69:4** *More in number than the hairs of my head are those who hate me without cause; many are those who would destroy me, my enemies who accuse me falsely. What I did not steal must I now restore?*

*compare to:*

**JOHN 15:25** *It was to fulfill the word that is written in their law, ‘They hated me without a cause.’*

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**PSALM 69:9 *It is zeal for your house that has consumed me; the insults of those who insult you have fallen on me***

*compare to:*

**JOHN 2:17 *His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for your house will consume me."***

*also, compare to:*

**ROMANS 15:3 *For Christ did not please himself; but, as it is written, "The insults of those who insult you have fallen on me."***

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**PSALM 69:21 *They gave me poison for food, and for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink***

*compare to:*

**MATTHEW 27:48 *At once one of them ran and got a sponge, filled it with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink.***

(Comment - PSALM 69, along with Psalm 22, is one of most frequently quoted in the New Testament)

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**PSALM 89:4 *'I will establish your descendants forever, and build your throne for all generations.'***

*compare to:*

**ACTS 13:23 *Of this man's posterity God has brought to Israel a Savior, Jesus, as he promised;***

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**PSALM 102:25-27 *Long ago you laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands. <sup>26</sup> They will perish, but you endure; they will all wear out like a garment. You change them like clothing, and they pass away; <sup>27</sup>but you are the same, and your years have no end.***

*compare to:*

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**HEBREWS 1:10-12 *In the beginning, Lord, you founded the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands; <sup>11</sup> they will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like clothing; <sup>12</sup> like a cloak you will roll them up, and like clothing they will be changed. But you are the same, and your years will never end.***

*(Comment – a reference to Christ’s eternal nature and his part in creation.)*

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**PSALM 109:8 *May his days be few; may another seize his position***

*compare to:*

**ACTS 1:20 *For it is written in the book of Psalms, ‘Let his homestead become desolate, and let there be no one to live in it’***

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**Psalm 110, like Psalms 22 & 69, speaks of the Lordship of the Messiah**

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**PSALM 110:1 *The LORD says to my lord, “Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool.”***

*compare to:*

**MATTHEW 22:44 *‘The Lord said to my Lord, “Sit at my right hand, until I put your enemies under your feet”’***

*(Comment – also cited in Acts 2:33-35, Hebrews 10:13)*

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**PSALM 110:4 *The LORD has sworn and will not change his mind, “You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.”***

*compare to:*

**HEBREWS 5:6 *as he says also in another place, “You are a priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek.”***

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**PSALM 118:22-23 *The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. <sup>23</sup> This is the LORD’s doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.***

*compare to:*

**MATTHEW 21:42** *Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the scriptures: ‘The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this was the Lord’s doing, and it is amazing in our eyes’?”*

*(Comment – same reference found @ Mark 12:10, Luke 20:17, Acts 4:11, Ephesians 2:20, ! Peter 2:7)*

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**PSALM 118:26** *Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the LORD. We bless you from the house of the LORD.*

*compare to:*

**MATTHEW 21:9** *The crowds that went ahead of him and that followed were shouting, “Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven!”*

*(Comment – remember from past sessions the etymology of the word: “Hosanna” {LORD SAVE})*

**D) BRIEF EVALUATION OF PSALMS’ STUDY -**

*(a single sheet will be distributed and answered anonymously)*

**CLOSING PASTORAL PRAYER** and adjournment

*(SAKLC\_PSALMS\_2013.12 per hjm)*

**Announcement** – The next regular **CONVERSATION** session will be held on **Thursday, January 9, 2014**. It will mark the start of a 4-week discussion on **The Book of Revelation**, facilitated by Vicar James Henricks.