

Messianic Psalms Study

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Background

The Hebrew title is *tehillim* which means “the book of praises.” The Septuagint (Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures) used the title *psalmos* which means “a song sung to the accompaniment of a stringed instrument.” When Jerome made a Latin translation of the Scriptures, he didn’t use the Septuagint but started from the Hebrew works of his time. For this book he used the Latin word *psalmorum* which is from the Latin word *psalterium* which means “a stringed instrument.” When King James had his translation made, the translators used *Psalms* as the title. The individual psalms are called *Mizmor* (which means melody of praise) and add a letter of the Hebrew alphabet in succession to identify a psalm as in *Mizmor Aleph* (Psalm 1) and *Mizmor Bet* (Psalm 2). The Psalms are part of the wisdom literature called *Ketuvim* in Hebrew which means “writings.”

Writers

While we know God is the author of all the Psalms just as he is the author of all the inspired works that he has preserved for us, he used human to write what he wanted to communicate. Among the writers of the Psalms we find the following:

David (shepherd and King)

The sons of Korah (musicians of the temple)

Asaph (one of David’s singers who was skilled in music)

Heman the Ezraite

Ethan the Ezraite (thought to be a cymbal player in David’s court – also theorized by Spurgeon as being the same person as Jeduthun who was a master of music appointed by David)

Solomon (David’s son and King)

Moses

Organization

Psalms has been subdivided by some scholars into five sections and are presumed to have been written in different time periods.

The first subdivision consists of the first 41 Psalms, of which David wrote 37. These psalms end with a double “amen.”

The second subdivision consists of psalms 42 – 72 and these also end with a double “amen.”

The third subdivision consists of psalms 73 – 89 and these also end with a double “amen.” Both the second and third subdivisions are thought to have been collected by the “men of Hezekiah” who copied and preserved Old Testament manuscripts.

The fourth subdivision consists of psalms 90 – 106. These end with one “amen” and a “hallelujah” (“praise the Lord”).

The fifth subdivision consists of the remaining psalms (107 – 150). These end with just a “hallelujah.”

Type of Literature

The psalms are Hebrew poetry which is based on thought lines rather than rhymes. They use the following six types of parallelism to present their thoughts:

Synonymous parallelism where the second line repeats the thought of the first but in different words.

Antithetic parallelism where the second line contrasts with the thought of the first line.

Synthetic parallelism where the second line explains and expands on the thought of the first line.

Climatic parallelism where the second line completes the thought of the first line.

Iterative parallelism where the second line repeats the thought of the first line.

Alternate parallelism where alternate lines carry the same thought.

This is technical stuff and we will not be focusing on this during this study.

Types of Psalms

The psalms are primarily about God and his relationship to his creation, the nations of the world, Israel, and his believing people and through them God is seen as: a powerful God, a tenderhearted father, a God who keeps his promises, and a God who lovingly cares for his people. They also reveal: the hearts of those who follow him, the faith and doubts of his followers, the victories and failures of his followers, and the hopes of his followers for a glorious future.

The psalms are quoted or at least alluded to in the New Testament over 400 times which Jesus regularly quoting from them. The early church used them in their worship and they gave the early believers encouragement during times of persecution. They provide biblical history from the writer's point of view. They teach us to seek God with our whole heart, to tell him the truth and tell him everything, to worship him because of who he is not just because of what he gives to us. They show us how to accept trials and turn them into triumph and how to repent and receive God's gracious forgiveness.

There are four basic types of psalms: Contemplative (C), Refuge (R), Majesty (M), and Exhortation (E). Some of the psalms were written during dire circumstances. Some are penitential, acknowledging sins. Some are psalms of praise and thanksgiving. Some present wisdom while others are about affirmation and trust. Some are imprecatory, calling for God's wrath on an enemy. Some are royal about the work of the King. Some are pilgrim songs of worshippers going up to Jerusalem (also called psalms of ascension or ascent). Some are messianic, pointing forward to the Messiah and his work.

In this particular study we will focus on the psalms that are either entirely Messianic in focus or present some information about the Messiah and his work. There are two types of Messianic psalms. One type is prophetic, predicting the coming of the Messiah (either first or second time) and has no direct message of significance to the Old Testament period of time. The second type has information that anticipates the Messiah or some of his actions but also has meaning in the contemporary context of the writer. Prophetic writers don't necessarily understand everything they are saying or writing because the message is God's through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Thus what they are given to say or write may be entirely foreign to what they know or can even comprehend, but they communicate what God has given them in the best way they can using the concepts and images that can be comprehended in their time and culture. The fulfillment and interpretation of what has been revealed to them is usually far beyond them. If what is revealed has a partial fulfillment in their time, then that may seem to them to be the complete message while the real fulfillment is only seen in later times when additional events have happened that reveal additional understanding of what was revealed.

Psalm 1

It is appropriate that this psalm introduces the Book of Psalms and our look at the Messianic psalms. It is a contemplative psalm. This psalm is like the Book of Proverbs, which is written by Solomon, because it contrasts the righteous life that is guided by the Word of God with the unrighteous life which proves to be worthless and temporary. Because its focus is so much like Solomon's Proverbs, it is often thought to have been written by Solomon. It is also thought that Solomon collected his father David's psalms which are the most of the first 41 psalms so it is appropriate that he puts his psalm about the righteous life before all the others.

Psalm 2

It is appropriate that this is the second psalm. It is a Messianic psalm proclaiming the coronation of the Son. David, as the writer of the psalm according to Peter and John (Acts 4:25-26), is writing about his offspring which God has promised (2 Samuel) would reign and rule after him.

The Lord declares to you that the Lord himself will establish a house for you. When your days are over and you rest with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, who will come from your own body, and I will establish his kingdom. He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his father, and he will be my son. When he does wrong, I will punish him with the rod of men, with floggings inflicted by men. But my love will never be taken away from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you. Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever. (2 Samuel 7:11b-16)

Obviously this promise has a partial fulfillment in Solomon, David's son, becoming king after him. But it has a greater fulfillment in Jesus because it proclaims he will build a house for God's name and his throne will be established forever. Solomon did build a house (temple) for God and God did show his approval of it by filling it with his glory (1 Kings 8:10-11). But Jesus built a house for God's name which is the Church. Each believer is a stone in that house and each believer is the Temple of God because of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 3:19-17). The promise speaks of David's offspring doing wrong and being punished with the rod of men and floggings inflicted by them. This never happened to Solomon. Some people reading this promise may have a difficult time with the offspring, Jesus the Messiah, doing wrong. But, if you remember that Jesus took the sin of the world upon himself, then it is easier to see that this is the wrong that God foretells.

Since this psalm proclaims the coronation of the Son, it was used in the coronations of subsequent kings of Judah because with each king there was the hope that he would be the one prophesied. But it will find its final use when Jesus comes to reign on David's throne during the Millennium. This psalm is quoted or alluded to at least 18 times in the New Testament. The psalm has four voices speaking. First is the voice of the nations and their conspiracy to rebel against God and his anointed king (vs 1-3). Second is the voice of God, the Father who mocks the plans of the nations as ridiculous (vs 4-6). Third is the voice of God, the Son proclaiming victory as he claims the throne and kingdom in the midst of the rebellion of the nations (vs 7-9). Fourth is the voice of the Holy Spirit offering the kings of the nations the opportunity to reconsider their plans and worship the Son so they won't perish (vs 10-12). This psalm includes three of the four psalm types: contemplative, refuge, and majesty.

Verses 1 and 2 are quoted in Acts 4:25-26 - "You spoke by the Holy Spirit through the mouth of your servant, our father David: Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth rise up and the rulers band together against the Lord and against his Anointed One."

Verse 7 is quoted in Acts 13:32-33 - "We tell you the good news: What God promised our fathers he has fulfilled for us, their children, by raising up Jesus. As it is written in the second Psalm: 'You are my Son; today I have become your Father.'" And Hebrews 1:5 - "For to which of the angels did God ever say 'You are my

Son, today I have become your Father.’ Or again, ‘I will be his Father and he will be my Son.’?” And Acts 5:5 - “So Christ also did not take upon himself the glory of becoming a high priest. But God said to him. ‘You are my Son; today I have become your Father.’”

Verse 9 may be alluded to in three verses of Revelation: “He will rule them with an iron scepter; he will dash them to pieces like pottery.” (Rev 2:27) “She gave birth to a son, a male child, who will rule all the nations with an iron scepter. And her child was snatched up to God and to his throne.” (Rev 12:5) “Out of his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. ‘He will rule them with an iron scepter.’ He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty.” (Rev 19:15)

There are some major theological points to be seen in this psalm. YHWH (Jehovah) is distinguished from the Messiah in verse 2. YHWH is distinguished from the king in verse 6. YHWH is distinguished from his Son in verse 7.

Psalm 8

This psalm is addressed for the chief musician to be played on the Gittith and is identified as one written by David. No one knows for certain what a Gittith is. When the Hebrew scholars translated it into Greek for the Septuagint, the Greek translates into English as “wine fats.” But Rabbis writing the oral interpretations in the Targum explain that it refers to a harp that David brought from Gath. “Wine fats” makes no sense but “harp” does.

This psalm starts and ends with the same statement – “YHWH, Adonai, how majestic is your name in all the earth.” The letters “YHWH” are the personal name of God told to Moses at the burning bush. Adonai is translated “master” or “our master.” And the statement is an acknowledgement of God’s greatness and then goes on to say that he has displayed his splendor above the heavens. God’s splendor is his glory and that it is displayed above the heavens acknowledges that he is above and outside of the creation that he made. This is exactly what Moses wrote in Genesis 1 and what John later wrote at the beginning of his gospel account.

Though his greatness is greater than all the heavens, God chooses to use the weakness of humans like little children to defeat his enemies.

After Jesus entered Jerusalem to the shouts of Hosanna he went to the Temple courts, drove out those buying and selling, overturned the tables of the money changers, and healed the blind and lame who came to him at the Temple. The chief priests and teachers of the law were indignant when they heard children on the Temple mount shouting “Hosanna to the Son of David.” Jesus replied with “Have you never read, ‘From the lips of children and infants you, Lord have called forth your praise?’” (Matt 21:1-17) Although this is not a direct quote, it is a reference to Psalm 8 verse 3.

And then David continues by asking what man is that God remembers him or the Son of man that he would visit him. If this was taken to mean man in general (mankind) then it would show that man gets his significance because God is concerned about him and visiting him means he intervenes in man’s affairs. While these thoughts are true they are not what this statement is saying. People often think that David is speaking of himself in this question but when you go on to the next statement about him being made a little lower than Elohim and yet crowned with glory and majesty, and says you (God) has made him to rule over the works of your hands (all of creation) and put all things under his feet (authority), these show that David can only be referring to the Messiah. David does not identify the Messiah as Jesus but the gospel writers do. The writer of Hebrews quotes these verses and applies them directly to Yeshua (Jesus). (Heb 2:5-18)

When Paul wrote to the Corinthians about Jesus being raised from death and returning with believers who have also been raised from death, he says that Jesus will hand everything over to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. He says that Jesus must reign until he has put all his enemies

under his feet and that the last enemy to be destroyed is death. Paul explains that when it says “For he has put everything under his feet,” it doesn’t include God himself who put everything under Christ. Paul reasons with them that when Christ has destroyed all his enemies the Son, himself, will be made subject to God who put everything under the Son’s feet so that God may be all in all. The background for Paul’s discussion is Psalm 8:6. Paul also uses this reference to everything being put under Christ’s feet when writing to the Ephesians about Jesus being raised from the dead and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body. (Eph 1:18-23)

The question arises as to when and how David came to identify the Messiah as the Son of man. The first clear identification of the Son of man as deity is in Daniel’s description in Dan 7:13-14 and also in Ezekiel’s writings who was a contemporary of Daniel. Where did they all learn to call the Messiah deity and the Son of man? A possible explanation is God revealed this to them. Another possibility is that God revealed it to Enoch, the seventh individual listed in the generations after Adam, who walked with God and was taken to be with him in the spiritual realm. He wrote about everything God showed him (in the Book of Enoch) which included all of history from his own time to the coming and work of the Son of man to the Son of man being given all authority over all of earth and heaven and believers living with him. (See Book of Enoch chapters 46 and following) Some people want to claim that the Book of Enoch was written by believers because it gives the history of the end of time and that could only be known after Jesus’ revelation of that to John. But with its discovery among the Dead Sea Scrolls, that theory of its origin has been proven wrong. It was obviously read by believers because Jude quotes from it and the early Church Father, Tertullian, not only quotes from it and says to consider it Scripture. Also, other early Church Fathers also used the information in it in their teaching, even if they didn’t reference or quote it as their source. So although direct revelation from God to David, Daniel, and Ezekiel is possible, the possibility that they all had access to the information from the writings of Enoch could be considered greater.

This psalm of David obviously is about the Messiah and identifies him as the Son of man. This is a term that Jesus used to describe himself and is shown in all the gospels. The only other person to use that term to refer to Jesus is Stephen as he is being stoned to death. (Acts 7:56) Having the Book of Enoch and knowing that it showed him as deity angered the Jews so that they claimed he was blaspheming and wanted to stone him or throw him off a cliff and kill him. (John 10:25-39)

The theme of everything being put under the authority of the Messiah here in this psalm is continued in psalm 9 and concludes with the evil people being caught in their own evil plans and end up in Sheol. But psalm 9 would not be considered a Messianic psalm.

Psalm 8 ends with the declaration of God’s name being majestic over all the earth. The type of this psalm is somewhat contemplative because it considers God’s rule over all the earth but the primary type is majesty because it proclaims God’s majesty and authority being given to the Son of God, the Messiah.

Psalm 16

The psalm begins with the statement indicating this is a Miktam of David. The meaning of the Hebrew word Miktam is uncertain. The Septuagint and modern Hebrew give it the meaning of a poem containing a pithy saying or an epigram (a Greek word that translates to write upon, but modern usage has led to it meaning an adage, maxim, proverb, or saying).

This psalm is obviously a prayer from beginning to end because it is in the first person and although much of it applies to David’s life and his relationship with God (identified as YHWH and Adonai which means Lord or My Master) in verses 10 and 11 it speaks about the soul of the Holy One and his body not experiencing decay and having eternal pleasures at God’s right hand, so this points to it being about the Messiah. So this could be seen as David writing a prayer that the Messiah would pray.

The prayer begins by asking for God's (El) safety / preservation / guarding (Hebrew word "shamar" which can be translated keep, tend, or watch over) because that is where the author finds refuge / hope. This would be David's prayer and that of everyone trusting God to be in control of their life. It continues, speaking to YHWH, saying "you are Adonai (my Master)" and that he has no good besides / apart from "you" (Hebrew "yah" indicating YHWH – Yahuwah – YHWH with vowel points). It recognizes that apart from God there is no good.

Verse 3 is problematic if someone is translating this as David's prayer about himself and has led to a translation that in no way agrees with the Hebrew and goes like this "As for the pagan priests who are in the land and the nobbles in whom all delight, I said:" and thus indicating in verse 4, it is those who are running after other gods. The Hebrew doesn't allow for that translation because a literal translation would read: "As for the holy ones (some translations use "saints" but David would not understand such a term because it is a NT idea) who are in the earth (or land), they are the majestic ones in whom is all my delight." Now, if we understand this as a prayer of the Messiah God has given to David to write, then "holy ones" could be understood to refer to believers. But in David's time, he would probably take it to mean those who were obeying the Torah.

In verse 4, the one who is praying states the sorrows will be multiplied for those running / hastening [after] other [implied other than God]. David would have recalled what happened to his ancestors during the time of the judges and how people turned from obeying God and letting him be in charge of their lives to follow the worship practices of the pagans in the land. Those practices are known to have included offering their children as sacrifices and drinking blood of animal sacrifices while calling upon the names of the pagan gods. Those pagan gods would be Satan's fallen angels pretending to be God to divert man's worship. Satan tempted Jesus by offering him the entire world if he would worship him, but Jesus replied that "it is written: Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only." (Matt 4:8-9) Jesus was quoting Deut 6:13. Here, the one praying says he will not offer those drink offerings or let the names (of those false gods) pass through his lips.

Verse 5 proclaims in a literal translation of the Hebrew: "YHWH is the portion of my inheritance and of my cup. You support my lot." In a Greek rendering of this verse, it translates to English as: "YHWH is the portion of my inheritance and of my cup. You are the one restoring my inheritance to me." It is easy to see whoever translated the Hebrew into Greek was adding his own interpretation into the literal Hebrew words. This is a tendency of all translators as they struggle to make the original language understandable in another language. Thus, someone taking this prayer to be David's about himself, can interpret this to be David acknowledging that God has provided his position / status in life, but it is hard to see God as restoring David's inheritance to him, unless you suppose that David is writing this during the time that he is fleeing from his own son (Absalom) who is trying to take the throne from him (2Sam 15 -18) or when David is an old man and his son, Adonijah, is trying to make himself king (1 Kings 1). But, taking this to be a prayer of the Messiah, it is easy to see this could be part of what Jesus was praying in the Garden of Gethsemane when he refers to his death as a cup and says to let God's will be done (Matt 26:42; Mark 14:36; Luke 22:42) or his statement to Peter after healing Malchus' ear: "Shall I not drink the cup the Father has given to me?" (John 17:11) The phrase "You are the one restoring my inheritance to me," is what Jesus asked of his Father when he was praying with his disciples in the upper room during his last supper with them and prayed: "And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began." (John 17:5)

Verse 6 saying "the measuring (or boundary) lines have fallen for me in pleasant places" and "I have a delightful inheritance" would appear to apply more to David than to the Messiah if you focus on the Messiah's suffering on the cross, but if you think of the inheritance Jesus receives by accepting the cup the Father gave him because he has a multitude of believers who have a right relationship with God for eternity, then his measuring lines (the future kingdom with all those believers) is a most pleasant place and excellent inheritance. Perhaps that is what the writer of the book of Hebrews was recalling when he writes "Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God." (Heb 12:2)

In verse 7 the one praying says he will bless YHWH who has counseled him and that his mind has been instructed even at night. This shows the close connection that the person has with God, the Father. David had a close connection with God. He didn't always obey what he knew was God's will but when confronted with his sin, as the prophet Nathan did about his adultery with Bathsheba and having her husband Uriah killed in battle, David acknowledged his sin was not just against Uriah and Bathsheba but against God and he repented of it and accepted the discipline of God. That's why God could still call David a man after his heart. But with the verses coming later that show the person praying is the Messiah, this is about Jesus' close relationship with the Father through the Spirit that rested on him at his baptism and guided and directed what he should do and when so that he was always in the Father's will. That's why Jesus could tell people that it was not the time for something to happen and then, in the case of Lazarus' death, wait four days until arriving at his grave site and resurrect Lazarus at the right time so everyone would believe that he had really be dead and brought back from the dead. This was the right time so everyone would remember this when Jesus followed God's will to give his life to pay the price of sin and be resurrected from death three days later. Everything happens in God's perfect timing if we listen to his counsel and do what he says in the time he says to do it.

Verse 8 continues the thought about the close relationship the person has with YHWH. He says YHWH is continually before him because YHWH is at his right hand and therefore he will not be shaken. That sums up the relationship Jesus has with the Father and it is the relationship he wants us to also have with the Father. The only way we can have that relationship is to accept what he did as the Messiah to pay the penalty of our sin for us so that we can have that relationship. Then he sends the Holy Spirit to guide us in that relationship just like he guided Jesus. But for that relationship to work so that we will not be shaken as this verse says, is for us to listen to what the Spirit says to us and do what he says and when he has said we should do it. Then there should be nothing that shakes up our life.

Verse 9 gives us the result of following what is given in verses 7 and 8. Here, again, there is a difference in how a literal translation of the Hebrew reads and how a translation of the Greek to which the Hebrew was translated reads, and from which many translations are derived. The translation of the Greek of this verse would read: "On account of this my heart was glad and my tongue exulted; and still also my flesh shall encamp in hope." The literal translation of the Hebrew is: "Therefore my heart is glad and my glory rejoices; my flesh also shall dwell securely." Notice that the main difference is between "my tongue" from the Greek and "my glory" from the Hebrew. Why, when the translators took the Hebrew into Greek they changed "my glory" to "my tongue" is not obvious. Perhaps they thought it should be in line with "my heart" and "my flesh" and because man has no glory of his own. This could be the result of taking this to be a prayer of David. But if you see that it is the prayer of the Messiah, then the Hebrew "my glory" is perfect for the statement because Jesus laid down his glory to become a human and live among us, so from his close relationship with the Father his heart is glad but his glory that he had rejoices in anticipation of again returning to him. Understanding his flesh dwelling securely requires continuing on to the next verse.

Here in Verse 10 we have the completion of the thought for why his flesh is secure. A literal translation of the Hebrew reads: "For you shall not abandon my soul to Sheol nor shall you allow your Holy One to undergo decay." The translation into Greek rendered Sheol into Hades (which was the Greek concept of the place to which to dead went); it made "Holy One" into "sacred one"; and it made "decay" into "corruption." Translators taking this to be a prayer of David can easily render "my soul" as "me" because my soul is the real me. Then since it is about David, "Sheol" becomes "grave" because that it where bodies are put after a person dies. And "your Holy One" becomes "your faithful one" because David is human even if he is a "man after God's own heart." But recognizing this as a prayer of Messiah, means it clearly points to Jesus and that his soul after the death of his physical body will not stay in Sheol (the place Jesus showed in his story about Lazarus and the rich man in Luke 15 where souls went to await the final judgment) and that his body will not experience decay because he will be resurrected. When preaching to the Jews in their synagogue in Pisidian Antioch, Paul was telling them the good news that what was promised to their fathers has been fulfilled by God raising up Jesus and he quotes Psalm 2:7 and the fact that God raised him from the dead, never to see decay was stated in Isaiah 55:3 that he would be given the holy and sure blessings promised to David and then quotes this verse. He ends

by comparing that David died and his body decayed to “the one whom God raised from the dead did not see decay.” Obviously Paul who was extensively trained in the Hebrew writings and expected to become the next teacher of Israel after his mentor, Gamaliel, died, recognized that this psalm is a prayer of the Messiah and used it to teach the Jews about how Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection fulfilled all that was promised about the Messiah. And thus he encouraged them to accept Jesus as the Messiah and receive forgiveness of their sin. (Acts 13:13-41)

Verse 11 completes the prayer but note again the differences between a literal translation of the Greek into which the Hebrew was translated and a literal translation of the Hebrew. The Greek would read: “You made known to me the ways of life. You shall fill me of gladness with your face. Delightfulness is at your right unto the end.” The Hebrew would read: “You shall make known to me the path of life; in Your presence is fullness of joy; in Your right hand there are pleasures forever.” Thinking this is a prayer of David, the Greek translation would make sense because David had been shown the ways of life, he would sometime in the future be filled with gladness with God’s face (in his presence), and he would know that delightfulness was at God’s right unto the end (for eternity). But with this being a prayer of the Messiah, the Hebrew makes more sense. The path of life shall be made known to him with his resurrection. God’s presence is his joy because he will once again have the glory, omniscience, and omnipotence that he gave up to come and do the Father’s work for our benefit. And he would then sit at the Father’s right hand enjoying pleasures for eternity.

From all of these verses, we can see that this is a prayer of Messiah (Jesus) that God revealed to David for him to make into a psalm for the people to clearly recognize that Jesus is the Messiah after his resurrection and lead them to put their trust in the work he accomplished by his death and be restored to a right relationship with the Father just as the Messiah had in this psalm. This is exactly what Paul tried to do in quoting this psalm. This psalm has some refuge in it but it ends with majesty.

Psalm 22

The psalm begins with a note for the director of music that it is composed by David and to be done “upon the hind of the dawn.” The word “hind” means the female of a particular species of deer which is known for its lightness and elegance of form. Since translators don’t really know what was intended to be conveyed to the musical director by this, it is translated in different ways. Some think it may refer to a particular musical song and that the psalm was to be sung using that melody. It might be a suggestion for the musician to use a tune that is light and elegant like the breaking of the dawn of the day. Since we will see that this is a lament about mistreatment and that God seemingly isn’t responding to the cry of the person, it might be more appropriate for the music to be somber rather than light and elegant. David is the author so some people see that he may be lamenting at what is happening to him at the hands of his oppressors but if this is the occasion for the writing of the psalm, then David is using exaggeration in his words.

Verses 1 and 2 cry out to God that he doesn’t seem to be hearing or responding to the cry of agony of the petitioner, whether the petitioner prays in the morning or evening. All the petitioner receives is silence from God which seems like he doesn’t care. Jesus quotes these words as he hung on the cross suffering for the sin of others. (Matt 27:46; Mark 15:34) The Hebrew statement “Eli Eli lamah `azab`tani” literally translates as “My El my El why you have forsaken [me] (implied object that is forsaken).” “Eli” is the first person possessive form of the name “El” which is the name referring to the mighty, all powerful God of creation. The petitioner is proclaiming a close, personal relationship with the mighty God of creation. The rest of verse 1 proclaims that his deliverance and the words of his groaning are far apart. Verse 2 announces that he cries out morning and night but hears nothing but silence.

Verse 3 recognizes that El is holy (set apart) and dwells (or some translations use enthroned) in the praises of Israel. Verses 4 and 5 point out to El that the petitioner’s ancestors (our fathers) trusted in him and cried out to him for deliverance and were not disappointed because he delivered them. Specifically, the thought here is probably about the suffering in Egypt and God’s deliverance from the bonds of slavery. The idea behind the petitioner’s statements is that my ancestors trusted and cried out to you in their distress and were delivered but I

don't see deliverance for me.

Verse 6 uses the example of a worm in relation to a man to indicate how worthless the petitioner feels by the reproach he receives from men and how he is despised by people. Isaiah's prophecy about the suffering of the Messiah (53:3) clearly reflects this same thought when he says: "He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not." Jesus told his disciples as they were traveling to Jerusalem before his triumphal entry: "We are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written by the prophets about the Son of Man will be fulfilled. He will be handed over to the Gentiles. They will mock him, insult him spit on him, flog him and kill him." (Luke 18: 31-33)

In verses 7 and 8, he continues that everyone who sees him laughs at him in scorn. He says they shake their head (an indication of contempt) and say, "he trusts in YHWH, let him (YHWH) deliver and rescue him since he desires him (YHWH). Matthew 27: 39 and Mark 15:29 makes note that the people passing by Jesus as he was being crucified "hurled insults at him, shaking their heads and saying: 'So you who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, come down from the cross and save yourself.'" Matthew 27:41-43 records that the chief priests, teachers of the law, and elders mocked Jesus and said: "He trusts in God. Let God rescue him now if he wants him for he said, 'I am the Son of God.'" Luke 23:39 reports that one of the two criminals (thieves by some translations) "hurled insults at him: 'Aren't you the Christ (Messiah)? Save yourself and us!'" The Apostles clearly understood the statements in these verses applied to Jesus. In contrast to this feeling of worthlessness, the petitioner remembers (verses 9 and 10) that since the time God brought him out of his mother's womb he has put his trust in God who has sustained him.

Verse 11 is the petitioner's request for God to be near him because trouble is near and there is none to help. Verse 12 proceeds to describe the trouble that is near as many strong bulls of Bashan that have encircled him. The bulls of Bashan are a breed known for their strength. This is a figurative way of saying he is surrounded by strong people. The figurative language continues in verse 13 with they (the strong people represented by bulls) opening their mouths wide against him like a ravenous, roaring lion. This would represent those strong people using their strength to violently oppose him. This definitely is the description of how the chief priests and Sanhedrin treated Jesus by deciding to put him to death as Matthew 27:1 states.

Then, beginning in verse 14, the petitioner starts describing his condition. He says he is being poured out like water, all his bones are out of joint, and his heart is like melted wax in the midst of his belly. In verse 15 he describes his strength as being dried up like a potsherd (broken piece of pottery) and his tongue cleaving (sticking) to his jaw. This shows weakness and great thirst. He says it is to the dust of death that God has led him. God tells Adam in Genesis 3:19 that he was made from the dust of the earth and because of his disobedience he will return to the dust of the earth (as the body decomposes). He says in verse 16 that dogs have surrounded him, a band of evildoers has encompassed (encircled) him, and they have pierced his hands and feet. Dogs in ancient Israel, and even in Jesus' day, were not the docile house pets like today. Dogs ran in wild packs and attacked animals and people, so to refer to a person as a dog meant they were mean and vicious. David could not be describing himself having his hands and feet pierced. In verse 17, saying he can count his bones and they stare at him, can indicate the gauntness of his body like from dehydration, or it could describe the flesh having been ripped away so that his bones were exposed. This verse reflect the reality of a body that is undergoing crucifixion. Again, David could not be describing himself unless he was using exaggeration and crucifixion was not known in David's time as far as we know. In verse 18, the petitioner says that his garments have been divided among those surrounding him and that they cast lots for his clothing. Then in verse 19 he asks YHWH to be not far off (we would say be close). Then he calls God his help and asks him to hasten (hurry) to his assistance. Continuing in verse 20 he asks God for his soul to be delivered from the sword (destruction) and his life from the power of the dogs (vicious enemy). He continues in verse 21 to ask to be saved from the lion's mouth and from the horns of the wild oxen. These verses from 14 to 21 accurately depict the Jewish religious leaders in concert with the power of the Romans attacking Jesus and crucifying him, and the Roman soldiers dividing up his clothes and casting lots for the last garment.

In verse 22 the petitioner changes from describing his condition to praising God. In verse 22, he says he will tell God's name to his brothers and praise God in the midst of the assembly (congregation). Then, in verse 23, he calls for everyone who fears (righteous awe of) the Lord to praise him, and all the descendants of Jacob to glorify him, and that all the descendants of Israel stand in awe of (revere) him. And the reason is found in verse 24 as he says, because he (YHWH) has not despised nor abhorred (disdained) suffering of the afflicted nor has he hidden his face but he heard when he cried out. In verse 25, the petitioner announces that his praise in the great assembly (congregation) comes from YHWH and that he will pay (fulfill) his vows before those who fear him (God). Verse 26 gives (at least some of) the vows the petitioner will fulfill: the afflicted (poor) will eat; those who seek him will praise YHWH; their hearts will live forever. This describes people learning about Jesus' work, trusting him, and living forever. Verse 27 says that all the ends of the earth will remember and turn to YHWH and all the families of the nations will worship before him. This very much describes the new heaven and earth with all the nations at that time bringing their tribute to honor him. Verse 28 gives the reason for why all the earth will remember YHWH and bring tribute to worship before him. It is because the kingdom is of YHWH and he rules over all the nations.

Verses 29 through 31 describe what will happen to all people. In verse 29, the petitioner says the prosperous of the earth will eat and worship. In the new heaven and earth, the prosperous are those who have trusted YHWH since the beginning of time. He says those who go down to the dust (die) will bow before him, even those who cannot keep their soul alive. In verse 20 he says that a seed (descendant) shall serve him (YHWH) and coming generations will be told about the Master (Adonai). Verse 31 says they (the ones told about the Master) will come and declare his righteousness to people who shall be born and that he did it. This ends the psalm. From it, the petitioner is seen to be one who is surrounded by evil people seeking to harm him. His suffering crucifixion is portrayed. But the petitioner praises YHWH because God has heard his cry to deliver his soul and life. He says he has received praise from YHWH and will tell his name and praises in the midst of the assembly. Those who fear (reverence) YHWH praise him, the descendants of Jacob (Israel) glorify him. The petitioner says he will fulfill his vow so that the afflicted will eat, those who seek God will praise him and they shall live forever. The kingdom of God will become a place where YHWH is trusted and all people who have died and even those who have lost their souls will bow before him. This psalm has a little amount of refuge in it but it is more majesty and messianic.

Psalm 23 and Psalm 24

These psalms have some characteristics that relate to the Messiah but that would not make them Messianic in nature. Psalm is about the YHWH being a shepherd and taking care of David so it is a psalm of Refuge. Jesus identifies himself as the Good Shepherd who takes care of his sheep (John 10:11) but that is as close as this psalm comes to any Messianic reference. Psalm 24 portrays YHWH, the Creator of everything in the universe, coming to and entering the gates of a city. Even though Jesus entered Jerusalem to the shouts of Hosanna this psalm is not a direct reference to that. This is a psalm of Majesty but not necessarily Messianic.

Psalm 40

This psalm begins with a notation to the chief musician that it is a psalm of David. Then a translation of verses 1 and 2 from the Hebrew says: "I waited patiently for YHWH and he inclined (turned) to me and heard my cry. He brought me up out of the pit of destruction, out of the miry clay, and he set my feet upon a rock making my footsteps firm." David could be using figurative language to describe how he felt when being pursued by King Saul and then being accepted by all the tribes to be their king after Saul had died. If this is taken to be about the Messiah, then the pit of destruction and miry clay would be a reference to Sheol and the grave. Setting his feet upon a rock and making his footsteps firm would then be about his resurrection.

Verses 3 and 4 translate as: "He put a new song in my mouth, praise to our El. Many shall see and fear and shall trust in YHWH. Blessed is the man who has made YHWH his trust, and has not turned to the proud, nor to those who turn aside to a lie." If this is to apply to David, then it would be recognizing that God's help

previously mentioned was heard by many people who then trusted in God and that those who trust in God rather than a lie are blessed. If this applies to the Messiah, then it would imply that with the resurrection God placed a new way of speaking praise about God so that many will respond and trust YHWH so that they will be blessed by that trust rather than following a lie.

Verse 5 translates from the Hebrew as: “Many, O YHWH my El, are the wonders which you have done, and your thoughts toward us. There is none to compare with you. If I would declare and speak, they are more than can be counted.” This sounds more like David exalting God than the Messiah. But if it is the Messiah, then it would be him proclaiming the numerous blessings of those who believe in him and the new way of speaking praise about YHWH.

Verse 6 translates as: “Sacrifice and meal offering you have not desired. My ears you have opened to me. Burnt offering and sin offering you have not required.” This seems out of character for David to write because the daily sacrifices and offerings before the altar of God were a daily duty commanded by God for the Israelites when they were in the desert at Mount Sinai. How could he imagine that God didn’t want them? But the Messiah would know that from the beginning, God only wanted man to let him be in control of everything and obey his command. But when man’s disobeyed, animal sacrifice for sin was necessary to cover man’s guilt until the Messiah would come and give his life as a perfect sacrifice to pay for sin. Hosea 6:6 says: ”For I desired mercy, not sacrifice; and the acknowledgment of God rather than burnt offerings.” After asking what shall man offer before the Lord, God has Micah write: “He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.” (Micah 6:8) Walking humbly requires letting God be in control and obeying his command. Hebrew 10:5-7 are clear that this must be Jesus, the Messiah, speaking when he writes: “Therefore, when Christ (Messiah) came into the world, he said ...” and then quotes verse 6 and continues quoting through verse 8.

Verses 7 – 10 translates as: “Then I said, Behold I come; in the roll of the book (scroll) it is written of me I delight to do your will, O my El,. Your law is in the middle of my bowels (inmost being – we would say heart). I have proclaimed glad tidings of righteousness in the great congregation. Behold I shall not restrain my lips, O YHWH, you know. I have not hidden your righteousness within my heart. I have spoken of your faithfulness and your salvation. I have not concealed your lovingkindness and your truth from the great congregations.” David might be able to write all of this about himself except for bringing the scroll written about him. This is how the writer of Hebrew quotes verses 7 and 8: “Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but a body you prepared for me; with burnt offerings and sin offerings you were not pleased. Then I said, ‘Here I am. It is written about me in the scroll – I have come to do your will, O God.’” (Heb 10:5-7) Then Hebrews 10:8-18 continues to expound upon the idea that God didn’t want sacrifices but that they were necessary until Jesus presented his body as the final sacrifice for the forgiveness of sin. So, this is obviously the Messiah recounting his faithful obedience in revealing God to men and proclaiming the good news that he has come as promised to provide salvation to everyone.

Verses 11 and 12 translate as: “You, O YHWH, shall not withhold your compassion from me; your lovingkindness and your truth shall continually preserve me. For evils have surrounded me until there is no number. My iniquities have overtaken me, so that I am not able to see. They are more numerous than the hairs of my head and my heart has failed me.” Some translations take verse 11 to be a plea that God would not withhold his mercy but always let his love and truth protect the person (author) of the psalm, because (in verse 12) numerous troubles surround him, his sins have overtaken him and that they are more numerous than the hairs on his head and therefore his heart fails him (despair). David can be easily seen writing this about himself, but it is more difficult to see this as coming from the Messiah. Difficult, that is, until you remember that upon the cross Jesus took upon himself all the sin of the world. Those would be the sins that have overtaken him and that cause his heart to fail within him.

Verses 13 - 15 translated as: “Be pleased, O YHWH, to deliver me. Make haste, O YHWH, to help me. Let those be ashamed and humiliated together who seek my soul to destroy it. Let those be turned back and

dishonored who delight in my hurt. Let those be appalled because of their shame who say to me, Aha, aha!” This is a plea for God’s deliverance from those who are seeking to do harm and that they will be turned back ashamed and humiliated. This could be a plea from David, but considering that the speaker in verses 7 – 10 can only be the Messiah, it should be accepted as his plea that those who seek to kill him should be put to shame in disgrace and be appalled at their shame.

Verse 16 translates as: “Let all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you; Let those who love your salvation say continually YHWH be magnified!” This could be David’s plea except that he can only trust in God’s promise of a Messiah who will provide that salvation and has to rely on animal sacrifices for the present time. But the Messiah, looking forward through time, can easily ask for this and know that it will happen.

Verse 17 translates as: “Since I am afflicted and needy, let Adonai (my Master) be mindful of me. You are my help and my deliverer. Do not delay, O my El.” Since the speaker is the Messiah, as seen in verses 7 – 10, this would be Jesus in his afflicted state on the cross asking his Master (Father – El) to not delay because God is his help and deliverer.

This psalm type is mainly majesty because it glorifies God and the work of the Messiah, but also a little refuge because it asks for quick deliverance.

Psalm 45

This psalm begins with this note: (Heb literal translation) “For the chief musician; according to the elations (Hebrew *al-Shoshanim*), to the sons of Korah for contemplation, a song of the beloved.” The Greek into which the Hebrew had been translated would be literally translated as “To the director for the changings; to the sons of Korah for contemplation. An ode for the beloved.” Heman, a descendant of Korah, was appointed the chief musician by David (1 Chronicles 6:31-38) and he and his descendants had the honor of providing music for worship, first at the Tabernacle and later at the Temple. The Hebrew term, *al-Shoshanim*, is most often translated as “to the tune of Lilies” can be translated “according to the elations,” “according to lilies,” or “according to changings” which is the translation of the Greek to which the Hebrew was translated. Some scholars think the word was meant to refer to a musical instrument that was probably shaped like a lily and may have had six strings. Some translating it as “elations” or “changings” seem to think it refers to the time of Passover. Obviously it is difficult to accurately translate. A Hebrew interlinear translation of the Hebrew word *Maskil* gives its meaning as “for contemplation.” The last phrase (Heb) *shir y’didoth* is sometimes translated “a song of love” or “a wedding song.” Again, a Hebrew interlinear translation of the phrase is “a song of the beloved.” That doesn’t mean it is a song sung to one’s beloved but about the beloved and could be about the groom or the bride or both. It isn’t explicitly clear that the psalm was written by the sons of Korah which is usually thought, but it could have been written by an unknown person for contemplation by the sons of Korah (temple musicians) at the change of seasons or the elation of going to the Temple for Passover or the elation of attending the wedding of the king (David or Solomon). Obviously there can be varying ideas what all of this ascription can mean, but when studying what the psalm says, it is definitely about the wedding of a king and his bride, the queen-to-be and could be written by one of the sons of Heman, the chief musician.

Verse 1 translates as “My heart overflows with a good matter; I address my verses to the king; my tongue is the pen of a rapid writer.” His heart overflowing shows the joy of the one writing (or singing). The words are addressed to the king. The words either come rapidly or, as another translation puts it, are from a skillful writer. The writer intends for the king to hear it but since David has already been crowned the King of Israel, this would have to be some other king. The Hebrew word used here is *melek* which is a generic title for any king.

Verse 2 translates as “You are fairer than the sons of men; grace is poured upon your lips; therefore Elohim has blessed you forever.” The Hebrew that is translated “fairer” is a doubling of the word for “beautiful” and that intensifies its meaning to more beautiful. So, the individual being described is the fairest of the fair of all the sons of men. Grace poured upon his lips is sometimes translated as “gracious speech” and that because of

this God has poured out his blessing upon him. A better understanding would be that grace is poured upon his lips “because” God has blessed him forever. This begins a section that is obviously about the groom but since it is addressed to the king and Elohim has blessed him forever, it must be written about the Messiah who will someday come and be King over Israel. He is not addressed as God because the writer doesn’t think of the Messiah as deity.

Verse 3 translates as “Gird your sword on your thigh, O mighty one, in your splendor and your majesty.” Some scholars see this mighty one as the human King of Israel. But, from these three verses the psalm does not appear to be about a normal human, no matter how great and mighty he could be, but about the Messiah, whom we know from the New Testament is Jesus, the King of kings and Lord of lords.

Verse 4 translates as “And prosper in your majesty ride on, for the cause of truth and meekness and righteousness. Let your right hand teach you awesome things.” Although some translations begin this verse as a new sentence, the Hebrew and even the Greek translation from the Hebrew begin this verse with a conjunction which makes it a continuation of what was said in verse 3. So verses 3 and 4 together are asking the mighty one to gird his sword on his thigh in splendor and majesty and to prosper in his majesty for the cause of truth, meekness, and righteousness. And it asks that he let his right hand (the hand recognized as power) to teach him awesome things (or show awesome things). So the author would be asking the Messiah to champion truth, meekness and righteousness and perform awesome things. This is exactly what Jesus did.

Verse 5 translates as “Your arrows are sharp in the heart of enemies of the King; the peoples fall under you.” This says the weapons of the mighty one pierce the heart of the King’s enemies and the people (nations) fall beneath him. This is a picture of the Jesus, Messiah’s conquering God’s enemies.

Verses 6 and 7 translate as “Your throne, O Elohim, is forever and ever. A scepter of uprightness is the scepter of your kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness. Therefore Elohim, your El, has anointed you with the oil of joy above your fellows.” This obviously is not about some earthly king. It has to be about the Messiah who has an eternal kingdom. The author of the NT book of Hebrews quoted these verses as applying to Jesus, the Son of God. (Heb 1:8-9)

Verse 8 translates as “All your garments smell of myrrh and aloes and cassia. Out of ivory palaces stringed instruments have made you glad.” This describes the wedding garments of the Messiah as having the aroma of spices. It also indicates that music from stringed instruments coming out of ivory palaces make him glad.

Verse 9 translates as “Daughters of kings are among your precious ones. At your right hand stands the queen in gold from Ophir.” Some translations use “honored women” as the “precious ones.” This would perhaps indicate the honored women are the bridesmaids of the wedding. That could be the indication but, since the root word for woman (*ishshah*) is not even part of the root Hebrew word (*yaqar*) that is being translated, it could also be that the “precious ones” are not adult women but the babies and children that have died before the age of accountability and therefore are precious to him. His queen, standing at his right hand (the place of honor) has a garment that has fine gold like that from Ophir woven into it.

Verse 10 translates as “Listen, O daughter, give attention and incline your ear; forget your people and your father’s house.” Now the author changes from writing about the groom, the Messiah, and gives advice to the one who will be the Messiah’s bride, his queen. He would have no way of understanding, as we do, that this is about the Church, the bride of Jesus. (Rev 19 and 22)

Verse 11 translates as “Then the king shall desire your beauty, for he is your master (Adonai) bow down to (honor) him.” The author is telling the bride-queen that the groom-Messiah will desire her for her beauty so she should honor him as her master. Little does he know that the Messiah will be God in the flesh and that he will be worshipped (honored) by the Church and in eternity by all people who have put their faith in God for their future.

Verse 12 translates as “The daughter of Tyre shall come with a gift; the rich of the people shall seek your favor.” Here, the author is warning the bride that the world and its rich people will come to her with gifts to seek her favor. That implies getting the groom to do something for them or it could mean trying to tempt her away from honoring the groom.

Verse 13 translates as “All glorious within is the king’s daughter. Her clothing is interwoven with gold.” The author now describes the bride. She has beauty in her inmost being and her clothing (gown) has gold interwoven in it. The Church has beauty in her inmost being because believers have been purified by Jesus’ death to pay for their sin and he has sent the Holy Spirit to live within them.

Verse 14 translates as “She shall be led to the king in embroidered garments. The virgins, her companions who follow after her, shall be brought to you.” The author expects the bride to be brought to the groom-king dressed in embroidered garments with her virgin companions following after her. Since the bride is the Church, it might be that the virgin companions could be the angelic host.

Verse 15 translates as “They shall be led forth with gladness and rejoicing; they shall enter into the palace of the king.” The author then describes that he believes they (groom, bride, and virgin companions) will enter the king’s palace with gladness and rejoicing. This would be for the traditional Jewish wedding feast which usually lasted for a week.

Verse 16 translates as “In place of your fathers shall be your sons; you shall make them princes in all the earth.” Naturally, the author expects the Messiah and his bride will have sons who will become princes throughout all the earth. This would be the normal course of life for a king and his bride. The author wouldn’t expect that the Messiah, being God in the flesh that died and rose in a glorified body, and his bride, who will be the believers of the Church resurrected / translated into glorified bodies, would not have any physical sons.

Verse 17 translates as “I will perpetuate memory of your name through all generations and the peoples (nations) will praise you forever and ever.” The author can’t really mean that he will cause the Messiah’s name to be remembered and praised forever, unless he expects this psalm to accomplish it. So he must be envisioning someone else who will be able to cause this to happen, but doesn’t indicate who that will be. Jesus, the Messiah, will be remembered and praised for eternity not only by his bride, the Church, but also by all the OT saints who believed God’s promise of a Messiah and lived their lives in that faith, and all the Tribulation and Millennial saints who put their faith in Jesus.

The type of this psalm is majestic because it glorifies the Messiah and his bride, the Church.

Psalm 68

This psalm is addressed “For the chief musician. A psalm of David. A Song.” We know that David appointed Heman, the great grandson (sixteen generations down) of Korah and great grandson (nineteen generations down) of Levi the chief musician for the tabernacle which later extended to the temple and appointed Asaph to serve at his right hand. (1 Chronicles 6:31-39) And we are told this was a song.

This song is more than just about the Messiah. The first six verses call upon God to display his care for the righteous, the fatherless, the widows, the lonely, and prisoners and his judgement upon the wicked by scattering them. The remainder of the song show how he has done this and how he will do it. Verses 7 – 10 show his care for Israel as he brought them out of Egypt and through the desert. Verses 11 – 14 show what he did bringing Israel into the Promised Land and dispersing the nations dwelling there. Verses 15 – 18 show him caring for Jerusalem, his chosen dwelling place, in the face of envy and leading captives in his train when he ascended and received gifts. Verses 19 – 23 move from showing how God has cared for his people to confidence that he would continue and any who resist will bring their defeat. Verses 24 – 27 envisions God returning to his

sanctuary and dwelling among his people. Verses 28 – 31 look forward to God reigning over all the earth. Verses 32 – 35 call everyone to give the proper response to God who has shown his power over everything and reigns in his awesome glory.

Verses 1 and 2 translate as “Let Elohim arise, let his enemies be scattered, and let those who hate him flee before his face. As smoke is driven away so drive them away; as wax melts before the fire, so let the wicked perish before Elohim.” These verses ask for God (Elohim) to arise and scatter his enemies so that they flee before him as smoke is blown away by the wind and as wax melts before the fire, so may the wicked perish before him (Elohim).

Verse 3 translates as “But let the righteous be glad, let them exult before Elohim. Yes, let them rejoice with gladness.” This continues the request for the righteous to be glad and exult (rejoice) before Elohim with gladness.

Verse 4 translates as “Sing to Elohim, sing praises to his name. Lift up a song for him who rides through the deserts, by Yah his name, and exult before him.” This encourages the righteous to sing to Elohim praises to his name and to lift up a song for him who rides through the deserts, “Yah” (a contraction of his name “YHWH” announced to Moses) is his name, and exalt (rejoice) before him.

Verses 5 and 6 translate as “A father of the fatherless and a judge for the widows is Elohim in his holy habitation. Elohim makes a home for the lonely. He leads out the prisoners into prosperity, only the rebellious dwell in a parched land.” These proclaim that from his holy habitation (dwelling place) Elohim is a father to the fatherless and a judge for the widows, and that he makes a home for the lonely, leads prisoners forth into prosperity so only the rebellious will dwell (live) in a parched (scorched) land.

Verses 7 and 8 translate as “O Elohim, when you went forth before your people, when you marched through the wilderness, selah, the earth quaked, the heavens also dropped rain at the presence of Elohim. Sinai itself quaked at the presence of Elohim, the El of Israel.” These say God went before his people when he marched through the wilderness and the earth quaked, the heavens also rained at the presence of Elohim and that Sinai itself quaked at the presence of Elohim, the God of Israel. The Canaanites said Baal caused lightning, thunder, rain, and earthquakes, like many other people credit the god they worship with power over the natural things of the world. Here, Elohim is shown as being in charge of the things of the world. Moses never described God sending rain on the people as they traversed the desert but David here says it and Deborah (Judges 5:16) does the same to show God meeting the need of his people.

Verses 9 and 10 translate as “You sent down a shower of plenty, O Elohim. You confirmed your inheritance when it was weary. Your living creatures settled in it. You provided in your goodness for the poor, O Elohim.” These say Elohim sent a shower of plenty and confirmed his inheritance (the nation of Israel) when it was weary and that living creatures settled in it as he provided goodness for the poor. “A shower of plenty” can be a remembrance of God providing manna, quail, and water from a rock to care for the nation in the wilderness.

Verse 11 translates as “Adonai gives the command; those who proclaim the tidings are a great host.” This speaks of God giving a command and a great host proclaim it.

Verses 12 and 13 translate as “Kings of armies flee, they flee and she who remains at the house shall divide the spoil. When you lie down among the sheepfolds, you are like the wings of a dove covered with silver and its pinions with glistening gold.” What is proclaimed is that the kings of the armies of the land flee before God and the Israelites will divide it among them. Then, when they rest in the land they will be like doves adorned with silver and gold.

Verse 14 translates as “When Shaddai (the Almighty) scattered the kings in it, it was snowing in Tsalmon.” This says that God’s scattering of the kings of the land was snow falling on Zalmon, which was a black

mountain near Shechem. Judges 9:48 tells of a victory by Abimelech on this mountain, but what is described is probably a lot greater than just this one battle.

Verses 15 and 16 translate as “A mountain of Elohim is the mountain of Bashan; a mountain of many peaks is the mountain of Bashan. Why do you look with envy, O mountains with many peaks at the mountain which Elohim has desired for his abode: Surely YHWH shall dwell there forever.” The mountain of Bashan is really an impressive range with many peaks, perhaps the highest being Mount Hermon. But although it is a mountain made by God, he chose Mount Zion as the place of his abode, where the Tabernacle and later the Temple would rest.

Verses 17 and 18 translate as “The chariots of Elohim are myriads, thousands of changes. Adonai is among them as at Sinai, in holiness. You have ascended on high, you have led captivity captive; you have received gifts among men, among the rebellious also, that Yah Elohim may dwell there.” These speak of God’s presence at Mount Zion in holiness as he was at Mount Sinai and with myriads of chariots. It says he has ascended on high and led captivity captive, that he has received gifts among men, even the rebellious, that he, Elohim, may dwell there. The historical event that David might have had in mind when writing this was his capture of Jerusalem (2 Sam 5:6-8) and then his bringing the ark up the mountain into the city (2 Sam 6), but Paul uses verse 18, not quoting it but using it loosely to illustrate Jesus’ ascending to the heavenly Mount Zion after his resurrection. In Ephesians 4:7 – 10, he writes “But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it. This is why it says: When he ascended on high, he led captives in his train and gave gifts to men. What does ‘he ascended’ mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions. He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.” Paul is emphasizing Jesus giving gifts to his followers through the Holy Spirit rather than his receiving gifts from men. But the resurrected Jesus does receive praise (gifts) from his followers and even from some who hated him in addition to giving gifts.

Verses 19 and 20 translate as “Blessed be Adonai, who daily bears burdens for us, the El who is our salvation selah, the El is to us El of salvation, and to YHWH Adonai belong escapes from death.” Since God has shown he cares for his people and scatters his enemies, his people can bless him because he daily bears their burdens, giving them salvation and escape from death.

Verse 21 translates as “Surely Elohim shall shatter the head of his enemies, the hairy crown of him who goes on in his guilty deeds.” God will continue to shatter his enemies, those who continue in their guilty deeds.

Verses 22 and 23 translate as “Adonai said I shall bring them back from Bashan. I shall bring them back from the depths of the sea; so that your foot may be dipped in blood of your enemies, the tongue of your dogs in the same.” This proclaims that God will bring his people back from the mountains and the depths of the sea. This would appear to be more than just the people returning to the land but also a resurrection since it is also from the depths of the sea. It envisions the enemies being slain so that their blood will be under foot and even licked up by the dogs (who were scavengers, not pets like we have today).

Verses 24 and 25 translate as “They have seen your procession, Elohim, the procession of my El, my King, into the sanctuary. The singers went before, then the musicians came in the midst of the maidens playing the tambourines.” This looks to a future time when God will enter his sanctuary with a procession of singers, musicians, and even maidens playing tambourines. This is rather unique for David to envision young, unmarried women playing an instrument and entering the sanctuary because the sanctuary was the holy place of the Tabernacle and later the Temple where only the priests, the male descendants of Aaron, were allowed to serve the Lord.

Verses 26 and 27 translate as “Bless Elohim in the congregation, YHWH from the fountain of Israel. There is Benjamin, the youngest, ruling them, the princes of Judah in their throng, the princes of Zebulun, the princes of Naphtali.” This sees God (Elohim) being blessed in the congregation and YHWH from the fountain of Israel (the fullness of the descendants of Israel) from the youngest and the largest. Benjamin, the youngest and Judah,

the largest tribe, along with Zebulun and Naphtali represent all the descendants of Jacob (Israel). This shows that even though the ten northern tribes were defeated by the Assyrians and scattered throughout their extensive empire so that their racial heritage is lost, will still part of the congregation of God in the land and blessing him. From the perspective of looking back from the New Testament and the vision of the future revealed to the Apostle John, this looks to be Jacob's descendants, gathered from where they were scattered, and together worshipping God at his sanctuary.

Verses 28 and 29 translate as "Your El has commanded your strength. O Elohim, be strong, in this you have worked out for us. Because of your temple at Jerusalem kings shall bring gifts to you." This sees El commanding Elohim's strength that has been worked out for us. It also sees kings bringing gifts to Elohim's temple. When David was writing this psalm, there was no temple in Jerusalem although it was his desire to build it for YHWH.

Verses 30 and 31 translate as "Rebuke the beasts in the reeds, the herd of bulls with the calves of the peoples, trampling under foot the pieces of silver. He has scattered the peoples who delight in war. Envoys shall come out of Egypt. Ethiopia shall stretch out her hands to Elohim." With Elohim residing in his sanctuary in Jerusalem displaying his strength having scattered the people who delight in war, foreign nations will reach out to him.

Verses 32 to 35 translate as "Sing to Elohim, O kingdoms of the earth, sing praises to Adonai, selah. To him who rides upon the heavens of heavens, which are from ancient times, behold, he speaks forth with his voice, a mighty voice. Ascribe strength to Elohim. His majesty is over Israel and his strength is in the skies. O Elohim you are awesome from your sanctuary. El of Israel himself gives strength and power to the people. Blessed be Elohim." Here people are called to sing praises to Adonai who rides upon (controls) the heavens from ancient times and speaks with a mighty voice (one of power and authority to command obedience). We are to recognize his strength over Israel and the skies and that he is awesome from his sanctuary.

This psalm type is Contemplative and Majesty.

Psalm 69

This psalm is addressed as translated from the Hebrew as "For the chief musician; according to Shoshanim. A psalm of David." Here we again see the Hebrew term, *al Shoshanim* that we found in psalm 45 which can be translated "lilies," "elations," or "changings" and which some individuals think refers to the time of Passover.

This psalm can be outlined in three sections as follows: A) Deliverance "Save Me" (verses 1-18) a. for my own sake (verses 1 – 5) b. for your own sake (verses 6 – 12) c. because of your character (verses 13 – 18) B) Vindication "Judge my enemies" (verses 19 – 29) C) Praise "Glorified" (verses 30-36)

A) "Save Me"

a. For my own sake (verses 1 – 5)

Verses 1, 2, and 3 translate as "Save me, O Elohim, for the waters have come in to my soul. I have sunk in deep mire and there is no standing. I am weary with my crying. My throat is parched. My eyes fail while I wait for my El." This indicates the person feels like he is drowning because his situation is pressing on him like water and making it difficult for him to breath. His crying is making his throat dry and parched. His eyes are failing (eyesight is dimming) as he waits for El to answer his cry.

Verse 4 translates as "Those who hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of my head. Those who would destroy me are powerful, being wrongfully my enemies. What I did not steal, I then have to restore." David is obviously using hyperbole and exaggeration to show that the enemies were many, powerful, and forced

payment for things not done. David wrote a similar statement in Psalm 35:19 which translates as “Do not let those who are wrongfully my enemies rejoice over me, nor let those who hate me without cause wink with the eyes.” When Jesus was telling the disciples (John 15) that if the world hates them they should remember the world hated him first, he ended by saying in verse 15 “But this is to fulfill what is written in their Law: ‘They hated me without reason.’” So, Jesus apparently saw his situation as being like David said here.

Verse 5 translates as “O Elohim, it is you who knows my folly, and my wrongs are not hidden from you.” David would readily admit that he was not sinless and that God knew all his wrongs. But he would think those were not the cause of his present situation. Jesus knew he was sinless and that the hatred against him was not due to any wrongs he had committed. He took our sin upon himself so he can be said to have sin due to ours.

b. For your own sake (verses 6 – 12)

Verse 6 translates as “May those who wait for you not be ashamed through me, O YHWH Adonai of hosts. May those who seek you not be dishonored through me, O El of Israel.” This is asking that the response to the hatred and mistreatment would not keep people who are seeking God from finding him. In response to John the Baptist’s question he sent Jesus through his disciples about whether Jesus really was “the one to come” (Messiah), Jesus refers them to his works which were the fulfillment of the prophecy in Isaiah 61:1 – 2. He ended his statement with “Blessed is the man who does not fall away on account of me.” (Luke 7:18 – 23) This wasn’t a quote of this verse but captured the essence of it. When John tells about many disciples deserting Jesus, he quotes Jesus asking “Does this offend you? What if you see the Son of Man ascend to where he was before!” (John 6:60 – 61) Then in just a few verses he quotes Jesus asking the Twelve “You do not want to leave too, do you?” (John 6:67)

Verses 7 and 8 translate as “Because for your sake I have borne reproach; dishonor has covered my face. I have become estranged from my brothers and an alien to my mother’s sons.” This would not apply to David for disobeying God, but it does to the Messiah. Even though none of the New Testament writers directly quote this passage, there are references such as Hebrew 12:2 “Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.” Jesus was estranged from his brothers because they couldn’t believe in him as the Messiah until after his resurrection. Even his mother came with his brothers to take charge of him because they thought he was out of his mind (Mark 3:21).

Verse 9 translates as “For zeal for your house has consumed me, and the reproaches of those who reproach you have fallen on me.” “Save Me” because my zeal for your house (Tabernacle because Temple wasn’t built until after David’s death) has brought suffering to me from those who don’t like you. Maybe this resulted from David’s great desire to build a temple for God and besides drawing up plans also collected together the materials that Solomon would use. When the Apostle John wrote his account of Jesus’ life, as he recounted Jesus driving the money changers, sheep and cattle from the temple courts, he says that his disciples remembered that it was written: “Zeal for your house will consume me,” a quote from this verse. (John 2:17)

Verse 10, 11, and 12 translate as “When I wept in my soul with fasting, it was to my reproach. When I made sackcloth my clothing, I became to them as a proverb. Those who sit in the gate talk about me, and I am the song of the drunkards.” David writes that mistreatment led to mourning, (people who mourned showed it with fasting and dressing in sackcloth) but instead of sympathy for the mourning it brought being talked about at the city gate and having songs sung by drunks.

c. Because of your character (verses 13 – 18)

Verse 13 translates as “But as for me, my prayer is to you, O YHWH, at an acceptable time; O Elohim, in the greatness of your lovingkindness, answer me with your saving truth.” Here is a plea for God save from all the hatred and reproach with his saving truth when God says the time is right (acceptable).

Verses 14 and 15 translate as “Deliver me from the mire and do not let me sink. May the flood of water not overflow me nor the deep swallow me up nor the pit shut its mouth on me.” This is a plea to not allow the troubles to overwhelm but be saved from death.

Verses 16, 17, and 18 translate as “Answer me, O YHWH, for your lovingkindness is good; according to the greatness of your compassion, turn to me, and do not hide your face from your servant for I am in distress, answer me quickly. Oh draw near to my soul and redeem it. Ransom me because of my enemies!” This is a plea that because of God’s character, his love and great compassion, that he would quickly answer and ransom from his enemies by drawing near and redeeming his soul.

All of these pleas for being saved because of being overcome by the situation, mistreated by enemies, especially for being zealous for God’s place of worship, and because of God’s loving, compassionate character, could easily have been David’s plea for himself.

B. “Judge My Enemies”

Verses 19, 20 and 21 translate as “You know my reproach and my shame and my dishonor. All my adversaries are before you. Reproach has broken my heart and I am so sick. And I looked for sympathy but there was none, and for comforters, but I found none. They also gave me gall for my food and for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.” The Hebrew that is translated as “gall” is the word *ro’sh* (רֹאשׁ). This is extremely similar to the Hebrew word *rosh* (רֹאשׁ). The first use of *rosh* in the Bible is in Genesis 3:15 when God tells the serpent that the offspring of the woman will bruise his head (*rosh*) while he will only bruise his heel. Head, or first, or primary is the most common translation of this Hebrew word (599 times). Another similar Hebrew word *resh* (רֶשֶׁת) is also translated head 14 times. This word (*ro’sh*) is found 12 times in the Bible and is translated as poison (4 times), poisoned (2 times), poisonous (2 times), bitterness (2 times), poisonous weeds (1 time), and gall (1 time - here). The Hebrew word that is translated “food” is *baruthi* (בְּרִיתִי) which is only used here in all of the Old Testament and is a feminine form of the word *barah* (used 6 times) which translates as “eat.” The common word for food is either *okel* (used 44 times) or *oklah* (feminine form of *okel* used 18 times). The Hebrew word *baruthi* has also been described as referring to a meal that sympathetic friends would give to a mourner to eat. That practice is not mentioned in the Bible. So perhaps verse 21 could be translated as “They also gave me bitterness for my meal and for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.” This all shows that the subject of the psalm is facing reproach, shame, and dishonor and could find no one to comfort him but he knows his adversaries are known to God. This is the depiction of Jesus, who was betrayed by Judas, one of the disciples who left the last supper to go and prepared the betrayal by a kiss as he led priests, temple guards (soldiers), and elders (members of the Sanhedrin) to where Jesus could be found. (Matt 26:14 – 49; Mark 14:10 – 26, 43 – 45; Luke 22:1 – 23, 47 – 48; 13:18 – 30; 18:1 – 6) When describing Jesus’ suffering as he hung nailed to the cross, Matthew and John tell that a sponge was dipped in vinegar and put to his lips for him to drink. (Matt 27:48; John 19:28 – 30).

Verses 22 through 28 translate as “May their table become a snare before them and that which should have been for their welfare let it become a trap. Let their eyes be darkened from seeing and make their loins shake continually. Pour out your indignation on them and may your burning anger overtake them. May their camp be desolate; let no one dwell in their tents. For they have persecuted him whom you yourself have smitten and they tell of the pain of those whom you have wounded. Add iniquity to their iniquity and may they not come into your righteousness. May they be blotted out of the scroll of life and may they not be recorded with the righteous.” After seeing this psalm so closely describing events that Jesus, the Messiah, experienced and especially verse 21 describing vinegar being given to him to drink, we might expect a plea for those causing the affliction and pain to be forgiven as Jesus asked the Father to “forgive them because they know not what they do.” (Luke 23:34) But rather than forgiveness, these verses call for judgment. For what is set before them that was for their welfare to become a snare and a trap indicates that they reject what has been provided for them. Indignation and burning anger overtaking them calls for God’s judgment because of their continued rejection of what God has provided for their good. It is requested that those doing persecution not be allowed in God’s

righteousness and be blotted out of the scroll of life and not recorded with the righteous. Luke records that Jesus sent out 72 disciples to proclaim he was coming. And when they returned rejoicing that the demons submitted in his name that they should rejoice that their names are written in heaven. (Luke 10:20) Then, in Revelation 3:5 Jesus has John write to the church at Sardis “He who overcomes will, like them, be dressed in white. I will never erase his name from the book of life, but will acknowledge his name before my Father and his angels.” Later, in Revelation 20:12 – 15, John records from the vision Jesus gave him, that he saw the Great White Throne judgment and “If anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.” This sounds like the judgment being requested for those who reject what God has provided for their benefit.

Verse 29 translates as “But I am afflicted and in pain. May your salvation, O Elohim, set me securely on high.” This sounds much like Jesus’ prayer in John 15:5 “And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.”

This closes the section requesting deliverance from those oppressing and causing the cry to “save me.” Now the psalm ends with the cry to “glorify.”

C. Praise

Verse 30 translates as “I shall praise the name of Elohim with song and magnify him with thanksgiving.” The praise is a result of the assurance that God has heard the cry “save me” and has provided “deliverance.”

Verse 31 translates as “It shall be good to YHWH above an ox or a young bull with horns and hoofs.” This says that praise and thanksgiving are enjoyed more by God than the sacrifices of totally burning oxen or bulls. God says in Hosea 6:6 “For I desire mercy, not sacrifice, and acknowledgment of God rather than burnt offerings.” And in Isaiah 1:10 – 20, God tells the rulers of Sodom that he has had enough of their offerings because they are detestable and meaningless because of their bloody hands and evil deeds. Instead he tells them to “learn to do right! Seek justice, encourage the oppressed. Defend the cause of the fatherless, plead the case of the widow.” But he says that if they resist and rebel they will be devoured by the sword.

Verses 32, 33 and 34 translate as “The humble have seen it and are glad. You who seek Elohim, your heart shall live. For YHWH hears the needy and does not despise his prisoners. Let heaven and earth praise him, the seas and everything that moves in them.” Here it is proclaimed that the humble, the needy, prisoners, all who seek God and everything in the universe will praise God. God has made known that trust (faith), obedience, praise, and thanksgiving from people is what he has desired from the beginning with Adam and Eve in the Garden.

Verses 35 and 36 translate as “For Elohim shall save Zion and build the cities of Judah that they may dwell there and possess it. The descendants of his servants shall inherit it and those who love his name shall dwell in it.” These verses say that God has a plan for the Zion (the mountain where Jerusalem is situated) and all the cities of the land of the Jews. It also says he plans for the descendants of his servants to inherit and dwell in it. The Jewish people lost their land, their status as a nation, and their temple which was the house of God because of their disobedience and worship of pagan gods. For seventy years they were captives in Babylon until Cyrus conquered the Babylonians and decreed that the Jews could return to their land and rebuild Jerusalem and the temple. When they finally did this, they again became a nation, but one under the control of other nations. This continued until Jesus came, provided the perfect sacrifice to restore people to a right relationship with Elohim, and then in 70 AD the Romans destroyed Jerusalem, the temple and scattered the people throughout the world. Now, in 1948, Israel once again became a nation and the Jews are returning to their Promised Land. We find through the prophecies of the Old Testament, Jesus’ prophecies, Paul’s prophecies, and Jesus’ prophetic revelation to John that the Jews will one day live in peace in all the land God promised to the descendants of Abraham. That time will be the Millennium described in Revelation 20:1 – 6.

This psalm type is Refuge and Majesty.

Psalm 72

This psalm is attributed to Solomon according to the superscription in many translations but while the Hebrew is translated as “of Solomon,” the Greek translates as “for Solomon.” It may have been written not by Solomon but for him because of David transferring the kingship to Solomon. (See 1 Kings 1:47 – 48; 2:1 – 4; 1 Chronicles 22:1 – 13, 19) But although it obviously is about Solomon as king, it definitely has a focus on the Messiah and therefore is considered Messianic by Jews. It is also recognized as Messianic by Christians even though it is not quoted directly by New Testament writers.

Verses 1 – 7 translate as “Of Solomon, Elohim, give your judgments to the king and your righteousness to the king’s son. May he judge your people with righteousness and your afflicted with justice. Let the mountains bring peace to the people and the hills in righteousness. May he judge the afflicted of the people, save the sons of the needy and crush the oppressor. They shall fear you with the sun and before the moon, generation of generations. May he come down like rain upon the mown grass, like showers that water the earth. In his days may the righteous flourish and abundance of peace until is not the moon.” This requests God to give Solomon the ability to rule justly. This is similar to Solomon’s request that God give him wisdom at the beginning of his reign. (1 Kings 3:9) The psalm also asks for God’s righteousness to be given to the king’s son. This could be seen as a request for Solomon as David’s son, but it seems more likely to be looking toward the Messiah who was promised would come through David’s descendants and thus as a “son” (descendant) of Solomon. The requests that the king judge God’s people with righteousness and his afflicted with justice can apply to Solomon, but more so to the Messiah. Jesus said “the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son.” (John 5:22) The request for the king to save the sons of the needy and crush the oppressor might be thought to be for Solomon but more so for the Messiah. To “fear” the king would also mean giving him reverence and “generation of generations” is a way of saying “forever and ever.” Asking for the king to come down like rain and showers upon the earth are a request for times of refreshing. These verses are about the righteousness of the king and ultimately the Messiah and end with an acknowledgement that in his days the righteous will flourish and peace will be in abundance until the moon is “no more” (no longer shines / exists).

Verses 8 – 11 translate as “May he also rule from sea to sea and from the river to the ends of the earth. Let the nomads of the desert bow before him and his enemies lick the dust. Let the kings of Tarshish and of the islands bring presents; the kings of Sheba and Seba offer gifts. And let all kings bow down before him, all nations serve him.” Sheba and Seba may both refer to an area of the southern part of the Arabian peninsula across the narrowing of the Red Sea from modern Ethiopia and in the area of modern Yemen. Tarshish likely refers to modern Spain which would be the end of the world (land) as the ancient peoples would know it. Ruling from sea to sea and from the river (Euphrates) to the ends of the earth recognizes that the king’s rule will extend over all the earth. This is exactly what is shown in Rev 20:1 – 6 in the Millennium. Isaiah Chapter 60, which was written about 500 years after Solomon became king, shows this and more as happening when the glory of the Lord has come upon Zion and Jerusalem, the city of the Lord who is the Holy One of Israel (Messiah).

Verses 12 – 14 translate as “For he shall deliver the needy when he cries, the afflicted also, and him who has no helper. He shall have compassion on the poor and needy and the souls of the needy ones he shall save. He shall rescue their souls from oppression and from violence, and their blood shall be precious in his sight.” This says the rule of the Messianic King will be for the benefit of his subjects. In the beginning of his sermon on the mount Jesus described how the kingdom would benefit the poor, the persecuted and those who mourn (Matthew 5:1 – 12)

Verses 15 – 17 translate as “So may he live and may the gold of Sheba be given to him; and let them pray for him continually; let them bless him all the day. May there be abundance of grain in the earth on top of the mountains; its fruit shall wave like the cedars of Lebanon, and may those from the city flourish like the grass of the earth. Shall his name endure forever; his name shall be proclaimed before the sun. And let men bless themselves by him. Let all nations call him blessed.” This says the peoples of the Messiah’s kingdom will

respond to his blessings in gratitude by bringing him wealth and praying for him. The kingdom will have abundance of grain and fruit and the people will multiply. Isaiah Chapter 60, Joel 3:18, and Revelation 22:1 – 2 also show this condition in the kingdom.

Verses 18 – 19 translate as “Blessed be YHWH Elohim, the El of Israel, who works wonders. And blessed be his glorious name forever. And may the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen and amen.” The reign of the king who is Solomon’s “son” (descendant) will give the kingdom’s inhabitants reasons to praise God and bless him forever.

This psalm has similar themes to psalm 22. This psalm type is Majesty.

Verse 20 translates as “The prayers of David, the son of Jesse are ended.” There are at least 18 psalms after this one that are attributed to David, so this could not be the real end of David’s prayers which are what psalms are. So, rather than a part of the psalm, it appears to be an editorial addition marking the end of Book 2 of the psalms which include numbers 42 – 72. When the Messianic Kingdom is established in the Millennium, then all of David’s prayers in all his psalms will be ended – that is fulfilled.

Psalm 89

This psalm, like psalm 72 is not quoted directly in the New Testament, but it parallels many of the Old Testament and New Testament passages that are about the Messiah so both Jews and believers recognize that it is Messianic in type. The superscription of this psalm translates as “A contemplation of Ethan the Ezrahite.” The Greek into which the Hebrew was translated, when translated into English, also translates the Hebrew term *maskil* as contemplation so that indicates its type is also contemplative. Ethan was one of the main musicians of the temple, along with Heman, the Chief musician, and his associate, Asaph. (1 Chronicles 6:33, 39, 44; 15:17).

Verses 1 - 4 translate as “I shall sing of the lovingkindness of YHWH forever. Unto generation and generation I shall make known your faithfulness with my mouth. For I have said, lovingkindness shall be built up forever. In the heavens you shall establish your faithfulness in them. I have made a covenant with my chosen. I have sworn to David, my servant, I shall establish your seed forever and build up your throne to generation and generation. Selah.” Obviously, Ethan is writing this from the perspective of God since he writes “I have made a covenant.” That covenant is referred to as the Davidic Covenant and is recorded in 2 Samuel 7 and 1 Chronicles 17 but in those passages it is never called a covenant. The terms and phrase “covenant,” “my servant, David,” and “throne” are used in several more verses throughout the psalm which indicate the Messianic intent that Ethan had in this psalm. He refers to the Davidic covenant as the surety that God’s faithfulness will establish a descendant of David who will rule from his throne forever.

Verses 5 – 13 translate as “The heavens shall praise your wonders, O YHWH, your faithfulness also in the assembly of the holy ones. For who in the skies is comparable to YHWH? Who among the sons of the mighty is like to YHWH? El greatly feared in the council of the holy ones, and awesome above all those who are around him. O YHWH El of hosts, who is like you, O mighty Yah? Your faithfulness surrounds you. You rule the swelling of the sea. When its waves rise, you still them. You have crushed Rahab like one who is slain. You scattered your enemies with your mighty arm. The heavens are yours, the earth also is yours. The world and its fullness, you have founded them. The north and the south, you have created them. Tabor and Chermon shout for joy at your name. You have a strong arm. Your hand is mighty. Your right hand is exalted.” Here, Ethan exalts YHWH for his faithfulness and his power (wonders). Those things are not just displayed in the world but in the assembly of the holy sons (the angels) – the spiritual realm. The works mentioned include control over the waters of the sea, the earth and the heavens. Since Rahab is a means of indicating Egypt, crushing Rahab probably is a reference to God bringing plagues on Egypt so his people (descendants of Jacob / Israel) could be freed from their captivity and slavery. Tabor and Chermon (Hermon) are two mountains in Israel. Tabor, which is only 1,900 feet high, was the scene of Deborah’s victory (Judges 4:14 – 16). Hermon is

actually a range of mountains and the highest peak in the range is about 9,000 feet and displays the majesty of God in physical Israel. Together, the two mountains show God's power and majesty.

Verses 14 – 18 translate as “Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne. Lovingkindness and truth go before you. Blessed are the people who know the joyful sound, O YHWH. They walk in the light of your countenance. In your name they rejoice all the day and by your righteousness they are exalted. For you are the glory of their strength and by your favor our horn is exalted. For our shield belongs to YHWH and our king to the Holy One of Israel.” Now Ethan proclaims that righteousness and justice are the foundation of God's throne and the people who acknowledge and live experiencing it are blessed, rejoicing in God as their strength and shield.

Verses 19 – 29 translate as “Then you spoke in vision to your holy ones and said, I have given help to a mighty one. I have exalted one chosen from the people. I have found David my servant; with my holy oil I have anointed him; with whom my hand shall be established my arm shall strengthen him. The enemy shall not exact against him, nor the son of wickedness afflict him. But I shall crush his adversaries before him and strike those who hate him. My faithfulness and my lovingkindness shall be with him and my name his horn shall be exalted. I shall set his hand on the sea and his right hand on the rivers. He shall cry to me, You are my Father, my El, and the rock of my salvation. I also shall make him my firstborn, the highest of the kings of the earth. My lovingkindness I shall keep for him forever and my covenant shall be confirmed to him. So I shall establish his descendants forever and his throne as the days of heavens.” Here Ethan recalls that in the past God has spoken to his holy ones (prophets – different Hebrew word for “holy ones” so not angels) and told them about his covenant and promises to David. This would be Nathan's vision which is recorded for us in 2 Samuel 7:4-17 which moves from David to Solomon to the Messiah who is flogged by men (Solomon wasn't but Jesus was) and his kingdom and throne will be established forever.

Verses 30 – 37 translate as “If his sons forsake my law and do not walk in my judgments; if they violate my statutes and do not keep my commandments; then I shall punish their transgression with the rod and their iniquity with stripes, but I shall not break off my lovingkindness from him nor deal falsely in my faithfulness. My covenant I shall not violate nor shall I alter the utterance of my lips. Once I have sworn by my holiness, I shall not lie to David. His descendants shall endure forever and his throne as the sun before me. It shall be established forever like the moon and the witness in the sky is faithful. Selah.” Ethan proclaims that God's vision says that no matter what David's descendants do that is wrong, God will punish them but he will not abandon his covenant and promise that David's throne and kingdom will endure forever. The kings that followed David, even Solomon, did not keep God's commands and they were punished.

Verses 38 – 45 translate as “You have cast off and rejected. You have been angry against your anointed. You have spurned the covenant of your servant. You have profaned his crown in the dust. You have broken down all his walls. You have brought his strongholds to ruin. All who pass along the way plunder him. He has become a reproach to his neighbors. You have exalted the right hand of his adversaries. You have made all his enemies rejoice. You also turn back the edge of his sword and have not made him stand in battle. You have made his splendor to cease and cast his throne to the ground. You have shortened the days of his youth. You have covered him with shame. Selah.” This is exactly what happened to Israel. They spurned the covenant. They profaned the crown and therefore their walls were broken down; they were plundered; their enemies overcame them; and they were brought to shame. The northern 10 tribes of Israel were captured by the Assyrians and scattered throughout their empire and integrated into their culture. The southern 2 tribes were later taken into captivity by the Babylonians, but after they were captured by the Medes and Persians and the Jews had been in captivity for 70 years they were allowed to leave Babylon. They were allowed to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the city and then the temple but from that time on they were ruled by one kingdom after another. When Jesus, the descendant of David through Mary's lineage and created by the Holy Spirit was born and raised in Nazareth, the Romans were in control over the land and the people. Although Ethan is living in the time of David and Solomon, he is giving information about the future of Israel down to the time that the Messiah would come.

Verses 46 – 52 translate as “How long, O YHWH? Shall you hide yourself forever? Shall your wrath burn like fire? Remember what my span of life is. For what vanity you have created all the sons of men! What man can live and not see death? Can he deliver his soul from the power of Sheol? Where are your former lovingkindnesses, O Adonai, which you swore to David in your faithfulness? Remember, O Adonai, the reproach of your servants, how I bear in my bosom the reproach of all the many peoples with which your enemies have reproached, O YHWH, with which they have reproached the footsteps of your anointed. Blessed be YHWH forever! Amen and amen.” Here, Ethan asks God if he is going to hide himself forever and let his wrath burn like fire because he knows Ethan’s lifespan is not long just like he created all men. Then he asks if any man can live and not see death or deliver his soul from Sheol. Of course, that is exactly what Jesus did by his death on a cross as a perfect, sinless sacrifice and subsequent resurrection. With these events Jesus established the kingdom promised to David, but it will not be experienced in its fullness by people until Jesus returns to establish it on the earth for a thousand years (Millennium).

This psalm type is Contemplation and Majesty.

Psalm 102

The beginning of this psalm (the superscription) sets the tone for what comes next. It translates as “A prayer of the afflicted when he is faint and pours out his complaint before YHWH.” In the first eleven verses the author describes the affliction that is making him faint.

Verses 1 and 2 translate as “Hear my prayer, O YHWH, and let my cry come to you. Do not hide your face from me in the day of my distress. Incline your ear to me. In the day when I call, answer me quickly.” This is his plea for God to not only listen to what is distressing him and making him faint, but also that God would quickly answer by changing the situation.

Verses 3 to 7 translate as “For my days have been consumed in smoke and my bones have been scorched like a hearth. My heart has been smitten like grass and has withered away, so that I forget to eat my bread. Because of the loudness of my groaning my bones cling to my flesh. I am like a pelican of the wilderness. I have become like an owl of the deserted places. I lie awake. I have become like a lonely bird on a housetop.” This is how he feels because of what is distressing him. He is weak because the longing of his heart has made him forget to eat. His sorrow was affecting him physically. His groaning was likely the growling of his empty stomach and his failure to eat was causing him to lose weight so that his flesh look like it was just clinging to his bones. He also felt so very alone in his distress that he was like a pelican in the wilderness (a place where a sea bird would be out of place). He describes himself as being like an owl living in an isolated place (where there is no animals around). And finally says he feels as lonely as a bird on a housetop (birds usually roost together so to be a single bird roosting on the housetop was really lonely). The result of all this feeling was that he couldn’t sleep.

Verses 8 and 9 translate as “My enemies have reproached me all the day. Those who are mad against me have sworn against me. For I have eaten ashes like bread and mingled my drink with weeping.” Because of his situation, his enemies have ridiculed him as one who is cursed by God. The ashes he has eaten likely fell from his head and shoulders where he would have placed them as part of his mourning. So many had fallen into his food that it was like he was eating them as bread. His weeping over the situation was so great that his tears were falling into his cup as he tried to drink.

Verses 10 and 11 translate as “Because of your indignation and your wrath, for you have lifted me up and cast me away. My days are like a lengthened shadow and I wither away like grass.” It seemed like his condition was because of God’s judgment against him. A lengthening shadow indicates the approaching end of the day and he felt like the remaining number of days of his life were like that – come toward an end. He felt his life was ending like grass that was withering away.

For the remainder of psalm, the author changes from lamenting his situation to proclaiming confidence that God, who lives forever, would execute justice for his own people and eventually restore the city and the people so that future generations would praise him for his faithfulness.

Verses 12 and 13 translate as “But you, O YHWH, abide forever and your remembrance to generation and generation. You shall arise and have compassion on Zion for it is time to be gracious to her for the appointed time has come.” The author acknowledges that God is eternal and that he knows and remembers everything. His confidence that God will arise and have compassion on Zion (this mostly likely refers to the city of Jerusalem sitting on Mount Zion) indicates to us that what he has been lamenting in the first part of the psalm is not only personal but something that has happened to the city and the people. Because he expects that it is time for God to be gracious to the city, it could mean he is writing toward the end of the Babylon captivity.

Verses 14 to 17 translate as “For your servants take pleasure in her stones and feel pity for her dust. So the nations shall fear the name of YHWH and all the kings of the earth your glory. For YHWH has built up Zion. He has appeared in his glory. He shall turn to the prayer of the destitute and has not despised their prayer.” Because God chose Zion, built it up, and appeared there in his glory (2 Chronicles 7:1 – 3), the author expects God to respond to the prayer of the destitute. He is confident that God will restore the city.

Verses 18 to 22 translate as “This shall be written for the generation to come, that a people to be created may praise Yah. For he looked down from the height of his holy tabernacle, from heavens YHWH gazed upon the earth, to hear the groaning of the prisoner, to set free the sons of death, to declare the name of YHWH in Zion and his praise in Jerusalem, when the peoples are gathered together and the kingdoms to serve YHWH.” Here the author imagines God looking down from his heavenly tabernacle, hearing the groans of prisoners, setting free the sons of death to declare the name of YHWH in Zion and Jerusalem. What God has revealed to him, he only sees as something that will shortly happen. In a partial fulfillment of this, when the people returned from captivity they did rebuild Jerusalem, the walls, and eventually the temple so that there was a rejoicing and declaring the name of YHWH in Jerusalem and the temple, but there was a greater fulfillment after Jesus conquered death and set prisoners free from the power and penalty of death so this would be setting free the sons of death (See Isaiah 61 and 62). The believers began to immediately proclaim the name of YHWH (God’s covenant name) in the streets of Jerusalem and from there throughout the world. But the real, final fulfillment of what the author proclaimed won’t happen until the Millennium, when all people and nations are assembled to serve YHWH (Jesus, God the Son, the Messiah).

Verses 23 to 28 translate as “He has weakened my strength in the way. He has shortened my days. I say, O my El, do not take me away in the midst of my days. Your years are in generation of generations. Of old you founded the earth and the heavens are the work of your hands. They shall perish, but you endure. And all of them shall wear out like a garment. Like clothing you shall change them and they shall be changed. But you are the same and your years shall not come to an end. Your servants shall continue and their descendants shall be established before you.” The author again considers that in his weakened conditions the days of his life are shortened. He asks God not to remove him (allow him to die) in what he considered the midst of his days (prime of his life). His own death brings him to reflect that God will never die. He thinks of the heavens and earth that God created and imagines that they can wear out like a garment so that God can change them like clothes. But nothing can change that God lives forever (eternity). Although the author did not understand all that God had given him to write, the New Testament writers did. The writer of Hebrews applied verses 25 to 27 to Jesus as something God had said to him (Hebrews 1:8 – 12).

It is not possible to be certain of the time period this lament and petition to God was written, but it could be the personal lament of the author concerning the spiritual condition of the nation of Israel which eventually led to God’s discipline allowing the temple and Jerusalem to be captured and destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar and the leaders, the priests, the highly educated, and the wealthy being killed or taken captive to Babylon for 70 years (these people would have been removed because with them gone the common people’s ability to rise up in revolt would have been severely weakened). The author may have been one of the few left behind and the first

eleven verses reflect his distress and loneliness over what has happened. But God has enabled him to understand that God's eternity and faithfulness means the city will be restored, the people set free from their prison, that God's name will be proclaimed in the city, and that peoples and nations will assemble to proclaim the glory of God's name. This revelation gave the psalmist hope in the midst of his own personal distress and this brought him comfort. Like the psalmist, when we are in the midst of some personal distress, remembering the eternity and faithfulness of God can bring us comfort because we know that Jesus' death paid the death penalty for everyone who puts their faith in him and asks him to be the Lord (Master) of their life. Accepting and doing that means we have been freed from the power and captivity of sin (disobedience) and restored to a right relationship with God so that one day we will live with him for eternity.

This psalm type is Refuge and Majesty.

Psalm 110

This psalm is quoted in the New Testament more than any of the chapters anywhere in the Old Testament. In his book, *Glory at the Right Hand: Psalm 110 in Early Christianity*, David Hay writes that he found 33 quotations of and allusions to the first four verses in the New Testament. Matthew, Mark, Luke, Paul and the writer of Hebrews all quote this psalm.

Verse 1 translates as "Of David, a miz'mor (psalm), says YHWH to Adonai: Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet." David, the writer of this psalm, claims to have heard YHWH make a statement to Adonai that he should sit at his right hand until his enemies are a footstool for his feet. Obviously, David is saying what he is writing is a revelation from YHWH. Adonai (my Lord) is recognized as being the long awaited Messiah that God promised in Genesis 3:15 would come and crush Satan who had destroyed the perfection of the Garden of Eden by tempting Adam and Eve not to continue trusting God by obeying his one command but to trust their own desire to choose for themselves what they think is right and wrong to do. Jacob prophesied in Genesis 49:8 – 12, that the scepter (rule over Israel) would not depart from him until the one to whom it belongs has come and the obedience of the peoples is his. This was recognized as referring to the Messiah for whom the descendants of Jacob (Israel) looked from that time forward. So, when Jesus, born of Mary by the power of the Holy Spirit without the action of Joseph her espoused husband, began to teach about the kingdom of God the Jewish teachers of the law opposed him. Jesus used this verse to oppose and correct the teaching of these men that the Messiah could only be a descendant of David. Matthew 22:41 – 45 records Jesus saying: "While the Pharisee were gathered together, Jesus asked them, 'What do you think about the Messiah? Whose Son is he?' 'The Son of David,' they replied. He said to them, 'How is it then that David, speaking by the Spirit, calls him Lord? For he says, The Lord said to my Lord: Sit at my right hand until I put your enemies under your feet.' If then David calls him Lord, how can he be his son?'" (See also Mark 12:35 – 37 and Luke 20:42 – 44) Jesus used this verse to explain that he was not only the descendant of David (which the people knew was true) but that he was also the Messiah of whom David wrote. Luke quoted this verse in Acts 2:34 – 36 to show that Jesus is both Lord and Messiah. And the writer of Hebrew quotes it (Heb 1:13) to show that Jesus' power is greater than the angels.

Verse 2 translates as "YHWH shall send the rod of your strength from Zion, saying rule in the midst of your enemies." Here, David says the Messiah will rule in strength from Zion (Jerusalem). Jesus, recognized as a descendant of David and who claimed to be the Messiah, never sat on the throne of David and ruled from Zion. After Jesus paid the price for all sin by his death on the cross, he returned to heaven from which he had come and sat down on the heavenly throne at the right hand of God. See Acts 1:1 – 2, 11; 7:54 – 56.

Verse 3 translates as "Your people shall be willing in the day of your power, in holy array from the womb of the dawn, your youth, are to you as the dew." This indicates that Jacob's descendants will readily accept Jesus as the Messiah when he is arrayed in the power that has been his from the creation of the dawn. The Jesus, the people are youth and fresh like the morning dew. See Rom 11:25 – 27; Zechariah 12:9 – 14; 13; 14:1 – 9; Revelation 20:4. These passages show that the Messiah's rule from Zion over all the people of the world will

happen after a time of tribulation and that during that time the descendants of Jacob will finally recognize Jesus as the Messiah and submit to him.

Verse 4 translates as “YHWH has sworn and shall not repent: You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchisedek.” In 1 Samuel 15:29, it is proclaimed that God does not change his mind, so David would have no problem writing this. But to write that the Messiah, one coming from his own descendants, would be difficult for David to be able to write or even understand. As he knew, ever since God proclaimed in Exodus 28:1 – 5 that only the descendants of Aaron could be priests, that none of the other descendants of Jacob could serve God as a priest. So he would have to wonder how a descendant of his could be the king and also be a priest. The answer comes from the information that the Messiah would be a priest according to the order of Melchisedek. David would know that as Abram was returning from rescuing his nephew, Lot, the King of Salem (peace) who is called Melchisedek (king of righteousness) and was also known as “priest of God Most High, came out from the city with bread and wine to bless Abram. (Genesis 14:18 – 20) So the idea that a king could also a priest was not unknown in the ancient world, but David knew God’s prohibition that his priests for the descendants of Jacob could only come from the descendants of Aaron. The writer of Hebrews helps us understand what God was proclaiming through David in this verse. (Hebrews 6:17 – 7:3) Jesus, as the perfect sacrifice, born of a virgin and therefore having no lineage from a man, took his own blood that was shed on the cross into the heavenly sanctuary to sprinkle it on the mercy seat to atone for the sin of mankind and sits at the right hand of God to intercede for men (his followers). Thus Jesus became a priest like Melchisedek who was both king and priest and without his genealogy being known or given in the account about Abram. (See also Zechariah 6:12 – 13; Hebrews 7:11 – 18, 21 – 26, 28; 8:13; 9:15)

Verse 5 translates as “Adonai is at your right hand. He shall shatter kings in the day of his wrath.” Here, David changes from reporting what YHWH revealed by statement to him and begins to state what Adonai, the Messiah, will accomplish. First he says, the Messiah shall shatter kings in the day of his wrath. According to the later revelations to Zechariah and the Apostle John, this battle will not be waged from heaven but from earth after Jesus returns and his feet touch the Mount of Olives from which the Apostles watched him depart into the sky. See Acts 1:10 – 11; Zechariah 14:1 – 4; Revelation 19:11 – 21.

Verses 6 and 7 translate as “He shall judge among the nations. He shall fill them with corpses. He shall drink from the brook by the wayside. Therefore he shall lift up his head.” David proclaims that the Messiah will judge the nations and fill them with corpses. He also says the Messiah will drink from the brook and therefore lift up his head. We find this described in more detail in the revelations that God gave to Isaiah (Isaiah 34:1 – 3; 35:1 – 10), Daniel (Daniel 12:1 – 3), Joel (Joel 3), Micah (Micah 4:1 – 8), and the Apostle John (Revelation 19:11 – 16; 20:1 – 4). In these revelations we learn that not only will the Messiah crush the nations and kings that oppose him but that he will restore the land promised to the descendants of Jacob to them, will restore the earth that was devastated during the seven years of the Tribulation so that it will flourish, and that he will cause a life-giving water to flow out from Jerusalem to the east and west so that the dead sea will no longer be a source of death but life to fish. After Jesus has overcome his enemies and restored the earth for his 1,000 year reign, he will be refreshed and lift up his head as the King of kings and Lord of lords.

Hallel Psalms

There are several psalms that are especially important in Jewish life. Psalms 113 through 118 are called the Hallel Psalms. Hallel is a singular (rather than plural) Hebrew word that means “praise.” When it is connected to the word “Yah” which refers to God, we get the familiar transliterated word Hallelujah which translates as “praise God” and is sometimes translated “praise the Lord” and abbreviated “PTL.” These psalms are chanted at the Feast of Passover (Pesach), the Feast of Pentecost (50 days after Passover and also called the Feast of Weeks - Shavuot), the Feast of Tabernacles (Sukkot), and the Feast of Dedication (Hanukkah). No one knows for certain the origins of the Hallel psalms because no writer is identified which would indicate a particular time frame of writing. In the Talmud, the compiled oral teaching of the rabbis, there are various ideas for the origin of the chanting of the Hallel psalms. One rabbi taught that the origin was with Moses and the people after the

exodus from Egypt and probably from that teaching they came to be known as the Egyptian Hallel. During the Passover Seder service, psalms 113 and 114 are chanted before the meal and psalms 115 through 118 are chanted after the meal. This is particularly informative concerning the description of Jesus celebrating the Passover with the disciples in Matthew 26:30 and Mark 14:26 where they record that “when they had sung a hymn they went out to the Mount of Olives.” Since Jesus would follow the traditional seder service, he and the disciples would have sung (chanted) psalms 113 and 114 at the beginning of the meal and psalms 115 – 118 after the meal where Jesus proclaimed a new covenant in his body and blood. Psalm 113 calls on God’s servants to praise him because even though he has an exalted position he has humbled himself so he can lift up the lowly. Psalm 114 describes God’s deliverance of the people out of Egypt with miracles and in the desert. While celebrating the Passover meal with the disciples, Jesus used the piece of unleavened bread that was broken and hidden to represent his body that would be broken for them and the third cup of wine which was called the “cup of redemption” to represent his blood that would be shed for the forgiveness of sin. (See Matthew 26:26 - 29; Mark 14:22 – 25; Luke 22:14 – 20; John 13 - 17; and 1 Corinthians 11:23 – 26) Then before departing for the Mount of Olives he would have sung Psalm 115 which encourages God’s people to trust God and not idols. Next, they would have sung psalm 116.

Psalm 116

This psalm begins with a promise to praise God from a loving heart for deliverance from death and ends with a promise to praise God in the temple for his blessings.

Verses 1 and 2 translate as “I love YHWH because he hears my voice and my supplications. Because he has inclined his ear to me, I shall also call in my days.” The writer says he loves YHWH because God has heard his and answered prayers. This would be particularly meaningful because Jesus has just prayed for himself to be glorified with the glory he had with the Father before the world began and then prayed for the Apostle and all those who would follow him. (John 17)

Verses 3 to 6 translate as “The cords of death encompassed me and the terrors of Sheol found me; I found distress and sorrow. Then I called upon the name of YHWH: O YHWH, I beseech (implore) you, deliver my soul! Gracious is YHWH and righteous. Yes, our El is compassionate. YHWH preserves the simple. I was brought low and he saved me.” The writer gives a picture of death being so close that the cords of death surround him and the terrors of the grave are near. So he cries out for deliverance of his soul and YHWH, because he is righteous and compassionate, save him. Who are the “simple” the writer says are preserved by YHWH? The Hebrew word is translated here as “simple” and in other places as “naïve” or even “open-minded.” So perhaps he means those people who, like little children, implicitly trust God.

Verses 7 to 11 translate as “Return to your rest, O my soul, for YHWH has dealt bountifully with you. For you have rescued my soul from death, my eyes from tears, my feet from stumbling. I shall walk before YHWH in the land of the living. I believed when I said, I am greatly afflicted. I said in my alarm, all men are liars.” The writer says the soul that was afflicted and that is rescued by God can be peaceful again because that soul has been rescued from death, and there is no more tears or stumbling. In fact, he is certain that he shall walk before YHWH in the land of the living. He says he believed even though he was greatly afflicted so his confidence was in God and not the words of men who were saying he would die. Paul quotes this verse in 2 Corinthians 4:13-15 as he was assuring believers that we all will live again. Paul goes on to say “Since we have that same spirit of faith, we also believe and therefore speak, because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead will also raise us with Jesus and present us with you to himself.” Think of Jesus chanting these verses with the Apostles after just having supper with them and telling them that his body would soon be broken for them like the unleavened bread was broken, and his blood would be shed for the forgiveness of all sin. Even though he knew he was going to his death, he knew he would live again just as this psalm proclaims to the afflicted soul that has a child-like trust in God to rescue them. Jesus said he had authority to lay down his life and take it up again because he had received that command from his Father. (John 10:18)

Verses 12 to 14 translate as “What shall I render to YHWH for all his benefits toward me? I shall lift up the cup of salvation and call upon the name of YHWH. I shall pay my vows to YHWH now in the presence of all his people.” The writer asks what can be offered to God for all his benefits toward the soul that was afflicted and rescued. In the Jewish worship there were “peace offerings” (Leviticus 7:16; 22:18 – 23) and payment at the Tabernacle or Temple upon the completion of a Nazarite vow (Num 6:1 – 21) which would remind other worshippers of God’s goodness. Again, think about Jesus chanting this with the Apostles as he joined them in drinking that third cup of wine during the meal which was identified as the cup of redemption or also the cup of salvation. And in the garden praying to his Father “My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. . . . My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done.” (Matthew 26:39 – 42). He knew that the cup he was being given would only provide redemption / salvation if he willing paid his vow to do the Father’s will and allowed himself to be crucified on the cross.

Verses 15 to 19 translate as “Precious in the sight of YHWH is the death of his godly. O YHWH, I pray, surely I am your servant, I am your servant, the son of your handmaid. You have loosed my bonds. To you I shall offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving and call upon the name of YHWH. I shall pay my vows to YHWH now in the presence of all his people, in the courts of the house of YHWH, in the midst of you, O Jerusalem. Hallelu Yah!” Verse 15 says that the death of the godly (that is the people in the Old Testament who lived trusting God, looking for the promised Messiah, and trying to obey his commands and the people since Jesus’ death who believe that he is God as he claimed and trust his death to give them a right relationship with God, the Father) is very precious to him and he doesn’t treat their dying as a trivial thing. This thought has brought comfort to the family members of many believers. But consider what it might have meant to Jesus as he chanted “I am your servant, the son of your handmaid.” He is the son of Mary, the handmaid of God, who had never had sexual contact with a man before God, through the power of the Holy Spirit created Jesus’ sinless body within her. Now, he was facing death to provide the cup of redemption / salvation for people if they just accept and ask him to make it apply to their life by letting him be the Lord of their life instead of them trying to decide what is right or wrong. In just hours he would pay his vow of obedience to God’s will in the presence of everyone in Jerusalem who would be gathering at the Temple to celebrate God’s loosing (freeing) their ancestors from their slavery in Egypt. He knows that he must die and be buried, but he also has told his disciples that on the third day he would take his body up and walk before YHWH among the living.

The writer of this psalm probably didn’t understand all of what he was writing or that it applied to the Messiah. But God prepared it for his Son and had the people chanting it when celebrating the Passover each year as they celebrated God freeing them from slavery. This psalm type is Majesty as well as Messianic.

Psalm 117

This Hallel psalm is the shortest of all the 150 psalms. It calls upon all nations and all peoples to praise YHWH for his lovingkindness is great toward us and the truth of YHWH is forever. Consider what it might have meant to Jesus’ remaining eleven disciples to chant this with him after he had told them he is the way, the truth, and the life and that no one can come to the Father except through him. (John 14:6)

Psalm 118

This is the last of the Hallel psalms and the last that Jesus and the disciples would have chanted together after their supper and before Jesus was betrayed and allowed himself to be taken captive.

Verses 1 to 4 translate as “Give thanks to YHWH for he is good, for his lovingkindness endures for ever. Let Israel say now that his lovingkindness endures for ever. Let the house of Aaron say now that his lovingkindness endures for ever. Let those who fear YHWH say now that his lovingkindness is for ever.” This is a call for Israel, the priests, and all people who fear (are in awe of) YHWH acknowledge that his love is forever. Remember that the name “YHWH” was given to Moses at the burning bush and is God’s covenant name. The Hebrew for the name means “I am who I am” or just “I am.” The Apostle John in his gospel

recounts seven statements Jesus made about himself saying “I am ... the bread of life ... the light of the world ... the gate ... the Good Shepherd ... the resurrection and the life ... the way, the truth, and the life ... the vine.” (John 6:35; 8:12; 10:9; 10:11; 11:25-26; 14:6; 15:5) And in 8:56 – 58 he records Jesus saying “Your father Abraham rejoiced at the thought of seeing my day; he saw it and was glad.” The Jews said to him “You are not yet fifty years old, and you have seen Abraham!” Jesus replied to them, “Very truly I tell you, before Abraham was born, I am.” In all of these statements was proclaiming to the people that he is the “I am” that they know as “YHWH.” Here Jesus is chanting with the disciples about the love of YHWH enduring forever and he is about to display that love by allowing himself to be sacrificed on a cross to pay the penalty for all sin.

Verses 5 to 9 translate as “From my distress I called upon Yah. Yah answered me in a large place. YHWH is for me. I shall not fear. What can man do to me? YHWH is for me among those who help me. Therefore I shall see my desire on those who hate me. It is better to take refuge in YHWH than to trust in man. It is better to take refuge in YHWH than to trust in princes.” The Hebrew word translated as “distress” is *metsar* which indicates a narrow place like a strait or tunnel. In Psalm 116:3 it is translated as “terrors” in reference to sheol. The Hebrew word translated as “large place” is *berchab* which implies a place of freedom from distress. From that distress God’s answer to the prayer request is freedom from it. Jesus knows he is facing a “distress” beginning with the Garden of Gethsemane and continuing through his death and descent in the place of holding souls awaiting final judgment which is called sheol. So this statement in this psalm would be an encouragement to Jesus’ human will that God will hear his prayer in the Garden and answer with freedom from sheol. As a result of knowing that God answers prayers when a person is in distress the next thought is since God is for, why should I fear what man can do when God is for me and among those who help me. The conclusion is that it is better to take refuge with YHWH than to trust in princes (rulers).

Verses 10 to 13 translate as “All nations surround me, but in the name of YHWH I shall destroy them. They surround me, they also surround me, but in the name of YHWH I shall destroy them. They surrounded me like bees; they were extinguished as a fire of thorns, for in the name of YHWH I shall destroy them. You pushed me violently so that I was falling, but YHWH helped me.” The psalm writer saying that all nations surround him but in the name of YHWH he shall destroy them and repeating it for emphasis in his trust of YHWH doesn’t fit with Israel’s situation during David’s and Solomon’s reigns. All nations surrounding the nation can fit with the time just before Jerusalem fell to Nebuchadnezzar and the Temple was destroyed but the idea of destroying them in YHWH’s name would be just a hope. Then when he writes that they were extinguished as a fire of thorns, the thought moves from the present to something that has been completed and that doesn’t fit Israel’s history. At this point it becomes a prophecy about whoever is the subject individual that is going to destroy the nations in YHWH’s name. The writer changes from “all nations” and “I shall destroy” to “you pushed me.” Now, it has become a personal hurt by someone but the writer doesn’t identify who the “you” is. Only when we get to Jesus being “pushed” can we see that it is Satan pushing him through the actions of the Jewish rulers and the Roman government. Thus we see “all” nations surrounding him (Israel and Rome but also the spiritual realm that follows Satan) and that he will destroy them, and even though they are pushing him YHWH is helping him.

Verses 14 to 21 translates as “Yah is my strength and song and he has become to me for the salvation. The sound of joyful shouting and salvation is in the tents of the righteous. The right hand of YHWH does valiantly. The right hand of YHWH is exalted. The right hand of YHWH does valiantly. I shall not die, but live, and tell of the works of Yah. Yah has disciplined me severely, but he has not given me over to death. Open to me the gates of righteousness. I shall enter through them. I shall give thanks to Yah. This is the gate of YHWH. The righteous shall enter through it. I shall thank you for you have answered me, and you have become to me as salvation.” It is interesting to note that in verse 14 it says “Yah is my strength” and then says “he has become to me for the salvation” and the Hebrew word that is translated “salvation” is from *yeshuah* which is Jesus’ actual name in Hebrew while Jesus is the Greek form of that name. It is interesting that Jesus who is the I AM and existed before the creation of the universe can become anything. We see that can only be as he willingly gave up his glory (which includes his divine power, his right to know everything, and his ability to be present everywhere all at the same time) to become a man so he could live like us, experience all the ways we can be

tempted, and show us that it is possible to live in obedience to God's will, and then pay the price our sin (disobedience) deserves so we can have a right relationship with God. The writer also says the sound of joy and salvation is in the tents (abodes) of the righteous (those who place their faith in God.) Then the writer proclaims the right hand of YHWH is exalted and does valiantly (repeating that twice for emphasis). Then he writes "I shall not die, but live, and tell of the works of Yah." Jesus chanting this knows and has told the disciples that no one takes his life but that he lays it down willingly and has received authority to take it up again. It appears that the disciples probably don't remember Jesus said this as they chant the psalm with him, but later John will recall and record it for us. (John 10:18) Jesus did die physically, but he did not die spiritually (separation from God – especially the second death which is eternal separation from God) because he had lived a life in perfect obedience to God's will and was given authority to take up his life again. That is what Jesus did on the morning of the third day after he died. He rose, appeared to the disciples and in a glorified body proclaimed the work of Yah.

Verses 22 to 24 translate as "The stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner (otherwise known as the cornerstone). This is from YHWH. It is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day which YHWH has made. Let us rejoice and be glad in it." Note that Jesus quoted verses 22 and 23 in the hearing of the priests and Pharisees just a few days previous to this after he told them the parable about the owner (God) of a vineyard (Israel) and the tenants who tended the vines (Jewish leaders) who beat and killed the owners servants (prophets) and even killed his son (Jesus) whom he sent to them. (See Matt 21:33 – 44; Mark 12:12 – 12; Luke 17:9 – 19; Isaiah 8:13 – 15) So this would have intensified the meaning as he chanted this with the disciples after the Passover supper. In a few weeks, after the Holy Spirit empowered the Apostles on Pentecost, Peter would tell the Sanhedrin as he was being questioned by them, that Jesus is "the stone you builders rejected which has become the cornerstone." And he would go on to say "Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved." (Acts 4:11 – 12) He also used this in a letter to believers to encourage them that they are living stones being built into a spiritual house. (See 1 Peter 2:4 – 10) Paul also wrote about Jesus being the chief cornerstone upon which the believers are being built into his dwelling place. (See Eph 2:19 – 22) Obviously after Pentecost, the Holy Spirit enabled the Apostles to recognize that this psalm was describing feelings and actions of Jesus, the Messiah.

Verses 25 to 29 translate as "O YHWH, do save now, we beseech you. O YHWH, we beseech you, make prosper now! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of YHWH. We have blessed you from the house of YHWH. YHWH is El, and he has shined upon us. Bind the festival sacrifice with cords to the horns of the altar. You are my El and I shall thank you. You are the El of mine. I extol you. Give thanks to YHWH for he is good for his lovingkindness endures for ever." When Jesus was entering Jerusalem on the colt of a donkey, the people used part of these verses which they recognized as being about the Messiah to proclaim that they believed and accepted that Jesus was the promised Messiah. The Hebrew word translated as "save" is *hoshi'ah* and is usually transliterated as "hosanna." Then those people continued with "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD (YHWH)." (See Matt 21; Mark 11; Luke 19; and John 12) Although the people proclaimed Jesus as the Messiah, they were expecting him to be a conqueror who would bring them release from Roman rule and oppression. They failed to recognize from Isaiah 53 and here in "binding the sacrifice to the altar" that the Messiah would suffer for the people and be a sacrifice for the people to provide forgiveness for their sin and to restore them to a right relationship to God.

Imagine what Jesus must have thought as he chanted these Hallel Psalms with the disciples before and after he ate the Passover meal with them and clearly told them he was going to be killed on a cross for the forgiveness of sin and that in the future as they eat the bread and drink the wine in remembrance of his sacrifice they would be proclaiming what he did until he returns to take them to be with him forever. This psalm type is Majesty as it proclaims the Messiah.