

CHRIST'S KINGDOM WILL TRIUMPH!

Psalm 72: 1-20 – Pastor Richard P. Carlson

It is entirely possible that we have very little time left to proclaim and impart to our lost world their dire need for God's hope and His salvation in Jesus Christ. The Lord Jesus could tarry His return for many generations, but the signs of our times point to the possibility that He may come sooner than later. If our time is short, before Jesus returns, it may be that we have an even shorter time for us to impart God's message freely and unhindered here in our country. Persecution of believers is on the rise, and it is becoming more brutal and diabolical as the days go by. Forces are at work in our world right now that are hell-bent and intent on silencing the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ and removing us who believe and all signs of the Christian faith from public view. One of my favorite Christian authors is Richard Swenson, and one of his best books he wrote is called "Margin--Restoring Emotional, Physical, Financial, and Time Reserves to Overloaded Lives" and another book entitled, "In Search of Balance." Yet, there is a more recent book he wrote last year in 2013 entitled, "Contentment—The Secret To A Lasting Calm." A few quotes from his book may lead you to get the book. Here they are: (1) "A life without suffering is a one-way ticket to a superficial Christianity." (2) "It is not that God enjoys seeing us suffer but rather that He enjoys seeing us deepen." (3) "Adversity is an excellent barometer of authenticity. When the heat is turned up, we all have a point where we show the strain. Do we despair that God has abandoned us, or do we understand God allows adversity to mold us? Perhaps even bow the knee and thank Him for it." (4) "Heaven might be hidden, but it is not silent. We should never mistake the subtleness of God's voice for the absence of His attention, nor the hiding of His action for the absence of His power. God speaks into my life just when I need it." (5) "Contentment is pursuing God's daily agenda even if it means walking directly into the storm."

Richard Swenson's book gripped my attention in one other way. He wrote of a man born in 200 AD named Thascius, born to a noble family in the ancient North African city of Carthage. Highly educated, wealthy, a lawyer, an orator and a pagan, at age 45, Thascius became a born again Christian, changed his name to Cyprian, and gave away most of his wealth to the poor. Swenson documents a letter Cyprian wrote to his friend Donatus. Listen! "This is a cheerful world, Donatus, as I view it from my garden, under the shadow of these vines. But if I were to ascend some high mountain and look out over the wide lands, you know very well what I should see; brigands (outlaws) on the highways, pirates on the sea, armies fighting, cities burning: in the amphitheaters, men murdered to please applauding crowds; selfishness and cruelty and misery and despair, under all roofs. It is a bad world, Donatus, an incredibly bad world. But I have discovered in the midst of it a quiet and holy people who have learned a great secret. They have

found a joy which is a thousand times better than any pleasure of our sinful life. They are despised and persecuted, but they care not... They have overcome the world. These people, Donatus, are Christians... and I am one of them."

This letter of Cyrian points us wisely to understand that Solomon the King of Israel knew a day was coming when the kingdom of God would be greater than his kingdom could or would ever be. In fact, wonderful as it is to be a part of the kingdom of God today, a day is yet ahead as Psalm 72 points us to when Messiah Jesus will reign not only in heaven but both in the new heaven and the new earth, and His eternal kingdom will triumph at last—and His eternal kingdom will never end. Psalm 72, a psalm of Solomon, the son of David, ultimately points beyond himself to the greater son of David. Matthew 12: 42 and Luke 11: 31 record Messiah Jesus saying, "The Queen of the South, the queen of Sheba, will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold, something greater than Solomon is here."

As I have studied this psalm, who can read it without seeing the Messianic element in the psalm? Yet, the Messianic element in the psalm does not mean the psalm is pure prediction of Jesus Messiah. No, the reigning monarch of Israel, Solomon stands in the forefront in the psalm. Our Messianic King Jesus, stands in the background. Both kings are in the Psalm 72 picture by divine design. Psalm 72 was written to be a prayer for the King of Israel, Solomon, and by design, in later days, it was to be used for later kings of Israel. Yet the highest levels of the psalm point beyond any earthly king, beyond any temporal king to the ideal king, Messiah, who would come into the world, born of a virgin. As we will see as we get into the psalm, verse ten is impossible to be read without pointing us to the wise men, the magi. Here in Psalm 72: 10, 11, we read, "May the kings of Tarshish and of the coastlands render Him tribute; May the kings of Sheba and Seba bring gifts! May all kings fall down before Him, all nations serve Him." Both the title and theme of this psalm as I have studied it is: "Christ's Kingdom Will Triumph." With that in our view clearly, follow with me as we compare King Solomon and Messiah Jesus to see that in six major ways, Messiah Jesus alone fits Psalm 72's description. In Psalm 72, in six major ways we find that Christ as King Alone Will Ultimately Triumph. What are these six ways that only Christ as King will triumph eternally?

CHRIST AS KING ALONE WILL TRIUMPH IN PERFECT JUSTICE WITH RIGHTEOUSNESS. (I.) Psalm 72: 1-4 declares: "Give the king Your

justice, O God, and Your righteousness to the royal son! May he judge Your people with righteousness, and Your poor with justice! Let the mountains bear prosperity for the people, and the hills, in righteousness! May he defend the cause of the poor of the people, give deliverance to the children of the needy, and crush the

oppressor!” Solomon began his prayer for himself by asking the Lord to give the king His justice and righteousness. A good king should be one who leads his people with justice and righteousness--leadership only provided by God Himself. A godly ruler, a royal son, could only rule with justice and righteousness as a mere reflection of the character of God, who alone is righteous and just. This is not the portrait of most presidents, kings and emperors down through history. Most rulers have not ruled with justice and righteousness. Solomon truly was the son of David. For a good part of his reign, he ruled with wisdom, justice and righteousness. One of the greatest examples of Solomon’s justice is poignantly recorded in I Kings 3: 16-28. Listen. Yet, it is possible to rule with justice and miss ruling righteously. Turn to I Kings 11: 1-13. Solomon had to realize as king of Israel that he was not the ideal king ruling over an ideal kingdom as he had prayed. He could only hope and pray that one of his greater sons, a son of David would totally fulfill the prayer he made for the king. Only the greater Son of David, Messiah Jesus would and did fulfill the prayer of Solomon. Only Messiah Jesus would have perfect justice and righteousness in Him to so rule. But Isaiah the prophet prophesied that was exactly the portrait of Messiah Jesus in Isaiah 11: 1-5: “Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse, and a branch from his roots will bear fruit. The Spirit of the Lord will rest on Him, The spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and strength, The spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. And He will delight in the fear of the Lord, And He will not judge by what His eyes see, Nor make decisions by what His ears hear; But with righteousness He will judge the poor, And decide with fairness for the afflicted of the earth; And He will strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, And with the breath of His lips He will slay the wicked. Also righteousness will be the belt about His loins, and faithfulness the belt about His waist.” What a King is Messiah Jesus! There is a second way Christ’s Kingdom will triumph:

CHRIST AS KING ALONE WILL TRIUMPH PERPETUALLY, ETERNALLY, WITHOUT END. (II.)

Psalm 72: 5-7 declares: “May they fear You while the sun endures, and as long as the moon, throughout all generations! May He be like rain that falls on the mown grass, like showers that water the earth! In His days may the righteous flourish, and peace abound, till the moon be no more!” These themes of the perpetuity and eternity of this kingdom Solomon speaks of could never be about him primarily. Surely, he dreamed of a long kingdom, but he must have known as we all know, that only one kingdom is without end. The words, “while the sun endures,” and “as long as the moon...til the moon is no more,” signify the uninterrupted continuance of Christ’s kingdom. Solomon’s kingdom was ripped apart immediately after his death. Turmoil continued to ensue until ultimately David’s kingdom that had become Solomon’s kingdom was in shambles and in fact was overthrown and removed from the land. Solomon’s son, Rehoboam lost 10 of the 12 tribes of Israel. The furthest reach of

David's prophecy and the prayer of his son had to remain unrealized in their day awaiting a future divine kingdom when God's kingdom on earth shall be perpetual and eternal. The "greater son of David" when Solomon prayed, had yet not come. Thirdly, there is yet another way only Christ's kingdom will triumph:

CHRIST AS KING ALONE WILL TRIUMPH UNIVERSALLY, FROM SEA TO SEA, TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH. (III.)

Psalm 72: 8-11 declares the limits of Christ's reign, not the limits of Solomon's reign. In Deuteronomy, we find the farthest limits of Solomon's reign were given to Moses. Deuteronomy 11: 24, 25 states, "Every place on which the sole of your foot treads shall be yours. Your territory shall be from the wilderness to the Lebanon and from the River, the river Euphrates, to the western sea. No one shall be able to stand against you. The LORD your God will lay the fear of you and the dread of you on all the land that you shall tread, as he promised you." Now listen to the limits of Christ the King and His rule. His rule in Psalm 72: 8-11 is universal, from sea to sea, to the ends of the earth. Listen! "May He have dominion from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth! May desert tribes bow down before Him, and His enemies lick the dust! May the kings of Tarshish and of the coastlands render Him tribute; may the kings of Sheba and Seba bring gifts! May all kings fall down before Him, all nations serve Him!" Christ's kingdom is universal. It didn't just include the wise men sometimes called kings of the east, the Magi. No, every king will one day bow to Jesus, though for many it will be too late—this includes the Fuhrer Adolph Hitler, Saddam Hussein, Fidel Castro, Caesar Nero, and even our own President Barack Hussein Obama. No king or leader will be excluded—for Jesus will reign from shore to shore, to the ends of the earth. The prophet Zechariah in 9: 10 corroborates: saying, "He will speak peace to the nations; And His dominion will be from sea to sea, And from the River to the ends of the earth." Fourthly,

CHRIST AS KING ALONE WILL TRIUMPH AS REDEEMER, SEEING OUR BLOOD AS PRECIOUS TO HIM, SO MUCH SO THAT HE SHED HIS OWN PRECIOUS BLOOD FOR US IN OUR PLACE. (IV.)

Psalm 72: 12-15 declares – "For He delivers the needy when He calls, the poor and him who has no helper. He has pity on the weak and the needy, and saves the lives of the needy. From oppression and violence He redeems their life, and precious is their blood in His sight. Long may He live; may gold of Sheba be given to Him! May prayer be made for Him continually, and blessings invoked for Him all the day!" According to v. 9-11, the response to this King's rule should be marked by (1) compulsory submission (v. 9), (2) tribute from other kings (v. 10), and (3) worship by kings and all nations (v. 11). Interestingly, though, the reason for this response is given in vv. 12-14 because of the attitude of Christ the King to the poor and the needy. Isn't it interesting that no king is so mindful of the poor and needy as the King of kings and Lord of lords? Yet, the phrase that captivates my heart in this section of

the psalm is the latter part of verse 14, “He redeems their life and precious is their blood in His sight.” All I can comment on this is that simply put, Solomon is opening the door in his own prayer to the truth we can speak today, “Christ shed His precious blood for us, because our blood was precious to Him. Glory! Hallelujah! Praise the Lord! What a tremendous thought Solomon gives us; don’t forget it! “Our blood is precious to the Lord!” Fifthly,

CHRIST AS KING ALONE WILL TRIUMPH WITH HIS NAME

ACKNOWLEDGED BY ALL NATIONS AS BLESSED. (V.) Psalm 72: 16, 17

declares: “May there be abundance of grain in the land; on the tops of the mountains may it wave; may its fruit be like Lebanon; and may people blossom in the cities like the grass of the field! May His name endure forever, His fame continue as long as the sun! May people be blessed in Him, all nations call Him blessed!” Wow! This must make us do a double take about what king Solomon prayed. Blessing and A Name (vv. 15–17) Solomon begins to wrap us his prayer by focusing our attention on an important biblical theme—**blessing**. These verses tie the rule of this Messianic King to the promises made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. In Genesis 12:1–3, God called upon Abraham to leave his father’s land and to become the recipient of divine favor and blessing as the Lord made precious promises to him: “Now the LORD said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

Then do you remember the words of the Lord to Abraham after he obeyed the voice of the Lord—God’s quiet prompting as God called him to sacrifice his own son to Him. Although God spared Isaac, Abraham would have gone through with the sacrifice and he believed God would raise his son from the dead. But God stopped Abraham and showed him a substitute, a ram caught in a thicket. Then God added to his Genesis 12: 1-3 promise saying in Genesis 22: 18, “I will bless you and in your seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed because you have obeyed my voice.” Listen to the incredible connections between Genesis 12 and Psalm 72 that can be made: First, Abraham’s name would be great, just as the King’s name would be great. 2ndly, Abraham would be blessed, just as the psalmist calls upon all to bless the King. 3rdly, and most importantly, All nations would find their blessing in Abraham and in his seed, just as all nations would find their blessing in this King. Beloved, the apostle Paul takes us this glorious theme of Genesis and Solomon’s prayer in Galatians 3: 16 saying, “Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his seed or his offspring. It does not say, “And to his seeds or his offsprings, referring to many, but referring to one, “And to your seed or your offspring, who is Christ—Messiah.” Glory!” Sixthly and lastly,

CHRIST AS KING ALONE WILL TRIUMPH WITH DOXOLOGY AND PRAISES OF HIS GLORIOUS NAME FOREVER FILLING THE WHOLE EARTH WITH HIS GLORY. (VI.)

Listen to Psalm 72: 18-19. “Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, who alone does wondrous things. Blessed be His glorious name forever; may the whole earth be filled with His glory! Amen and Amen! Solomon is telling every one of us that the only proper response for us to Messiah, King Jesus is to bless the Lord. Just as this King is to be blessed by all nations, v. 11, so the psalmist, King Solomon gives to Messiah, the King a two-fold blessing—Repeat verses 18, 19. Just as the King’s name would endure forever—v. 17, so Messiah’s name, v. 18 must endure forever.—“May His name endure forever!” Just as the King’s kingdom would stretch from sea to sea, v. 8, so the psalmist prays, v. 19, “May the whole earth be filled with His glory!” When Isaiah saw the Lord in Isaiah 6: 1-3, we read, “In the year of King’s Uzziah’s death I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, lofty and exalted, with the train of His robe filling the temple. . . . And one called out to another and said, ‘Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of hosts, The whole earth is full of His glory.’” Isaiah added in Isaiah 11: 9, “They will not hurt or destroy in all My holy mountain, For the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord As the waters cover the sea.” And Paul concludes about Messiah Jesus in Philippians 2: 9-11, “God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

Then I read, in verse 20, “The prayers of David, the son of Jesse, are ended.” Doubtless, at the time of the writing of Solomon’s prayer, it would appear that the entire book of psalms closed here. For that time, it appears no other psalms were known to have been written by David or other psalmists. But as you know, other psalms of David were found and psalms by many others, so that the Book of Psalms goes to # 150. We have come to the end of this glorious psalm and to what once appeared to be the end of all the psalms as it once ended at this glorification of Messiah Jesus. How then should we respond? First Acts 17: 30, 31 tells us (1) that **we each should repent of any ounce of rebellion of this King.** “Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent, because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead.” (2) **We should embrace Messiah Jesus as our Lord.** “If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved” (Rom 10:9). (3) **We should sing the blessing of this psalm to the Lord.** With Isaac Watts, I call to sing his great hymn based on Psalm 72! “Jesus Shall Reign.” Turn to # 246. Amen and Amen!