

The Righteous King

By Don Green

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Truth Community Church
4183 Mt. Carmel Tobasco Road
Cincinnati, OH 45255

Website: truthcommunitychurch.org
Online Sermons: www.sermonaudio.com/tcomm

After a hiatus last week, we are glad to return to our study of God's word in the Psalms and I invite you to turn to our Psalm for this evening, Psalm 72, as we approach the halfway point in our odyssey through that great portion of God's word. Psalm 72 is one of the two Psalms in Scripture ascribed to Solomon, the other is Psalm 127, and I'm going to read it to put it in our minds here this evening before we go through it verse by verse. In verse 1 it says,

1 Give the king Your judgments, O God, And Your righteousness to the king's son. 2 May he judge Your people with righteousness And Your afflicted with justice. 3 Let the mountains bring peace to the people, And the hills, in righteousness. 4 May he vindicate the afflicted of the people, Save the children of the needy And crush the oppressor. 5 Let them fear You while the sun endures, And as long as the moon, throughout all generations. 6 May he come down like rain upon the mown grass, Like showers that water the earth. 7 In his days may the righteous flourish, And abundance of peace till the moon is no more. 8 May he also rule from sea to sea And from the River to the ends of the earth. 9 Let the nomads of the desert bow before him, And his enemies lick the dust. 10 Let the kings of Tarshish and of the islands bring presents; The kings of Sheba and Seba offer gifts. 11 And let all kings bow down before him, All nations serve him. 12 For he will deliver the needy when he cries for help, The afflicted also, and him who has no helper. 13 He will have compassion on the poor and needy, And the lives of the needy he will save. 14 He will rescue their life from oppression and violence, And their blood will be precious in his sight; 15 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 day long. 16 May there be abundance of grain in the earth on top of the mountains; Its fruit will wave like the cedars of Lebanon; And may those from the city flourish like vegetation of the earth. 17 May his name endure forever; May his name increase as long as the sun shines; And let men bless themselves by him; Let all nations call him blessed. 18 Blessed be the LORD God, the God of Israel, Who alone works wonders. 19 And blessed be His glorious name forever; And may the whole earth be filled with His glory. Amen, and Amen. 20 The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended.

Now to start this evening and to kind of put this Psalm in its proper context, I want to take you all the way back to Psalm 1:1 and remind you of how the entire Psalter opens because it speaks of the man who is blessed. In the opening verse of the entire book of Psalms is found in Psalm 1:1 when it says,

1 How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked,
Nor stand in the path of sinners, Nor sit in the seat of scoffers! 2 But his
delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and
night.

Scripture in the Psalms opens up pronouncing a blessing upon the man who gives himself over to the meditation on God's word, and in Psalm 72 we see another aspect of the blessing that belongs to those who are biblical Christians. As we speak in New Testament terms, we are under the word of God but we are also under the blessed reign of the King who is also God.

Go back to Psalm 72 and as I point this out to you, Psalm 72, it speaks about the King and it says may his name endure forever, may his name increase as long as the sun shines, and let men bless themselves by him. There is a dual aspect of the blessing that we enjoy as the people of God that I just want to paint for you in very broad strokes. We are blessed to be under the authority of God's word. We are blessed to have a written revelation from God that transforms us as we study it, as we understand it, as we trust it, as we obey it. That is a blessing from God and Psalm 1 opens with that blessing and describes it. Here in Psalm 72, we come to the end of the second section of the Psalms. The Psalms are actually a composition of five different books, as we looked at in our message titled "A Jet Tour of the Psalms." Psalm 72 is the last Psalm of the second book of the Psalms. Psalms 1 through 41 is the first book, 42 through 72 is the second book, and so the second book concludes with this blessing that it is to be under the reign of God's king, and Psalm 72 points us to the perfections of God's King.

Now, many commentators believe that Solomon wrote this Psalm on the occasion of his own coronation as he succeeded his father to the throne of Israel, and what this Psalm does, is it describes the nature of the reign of God's King. Now, it is not quoted in the New Testament, Psalm 72 is never directly applied to the Lord Jesus Christ by Scripture writers but what we'll see as we go through this Psalm is that this Psalm most definitely points us to the coming of Christ. It points us to the coming reign of Christ when he will reign on the earth because it far transcends anything about the nature of Solomon. So as we read the writing of Solomon here in Psalm 72, what I want you to see is I want you to be looking beyond Solomon and looking to a still future day to us when Jesus Christ reigns on the earth, and that will tell us, Psalm 72 informs us what his reign will be like. What will it be like when Christ is King on the earth during his millennial kingdom. What will the attributes of the King be. What will mark his rule over the nations. And what you'll find as we look at this, is that this is a time and that is an event, an episode, an epic in world history to long for, to look forward to, and it is going to be so much better than what we know now. We don't realize, I'm convinced, I'm convinced that we have no

idea, we have no concept of how badly sin has affected our inner man, how it has affected our horizontal relationships, how it infects the entire environment in which we live.

Well, Psalm 72 lifts us beyond our present environment and causes us to understand what the reign of Christ is going to be like and it is glorious. It is wonderful. It is something that every redeemed heart will find resonating within his inner man saying, "I want that far more than what I have right now," because the reign of Christ is going to be a reflection of the perfections of Christ and that's what we're going to see here. Psalm 72, pointing us to the coming reign of Christ and just by way of final little bit of introduction or overview here, we know that to be the case because Psalm 72 has never been fulfilled in any earthly king that Israel ever had. Psalm 72 pulsates with expectations that far transcend anything that has occurred in history up to this day. So we read, we get a preview of coming attractions, a preview of coming history as we study Psalm 72 together.

What is the reign of Christ on earth going to be like? I'm going to give you five perspectives on it, and first of all, it is going to be a righteous reign. It is going to be a righteous reign. This Psalm opens with a prayer that God would give his King the ability to judge righteously. Look at verse 1,

1 Give the king Your judgments, O God, And Your righteousness to the king's son.

Now, right from the very beginning, there is a recognition in this prayer that righteousness and justice ultimately come from God himself. Righteousness and justice could never emanate from a sinful man, from a sinful ruler, from someone who has corruption in his own being. Righteousness, therefore, is something that comes from God and the psalmist is asking God to manifest his righteousness during the reign of his King.

And what is righteousness, you ask? Well, righteousness refers to a conformity to an ethical or moral standard. An ethical or moral standard, and in Scripture that standard is God himself. It is the nature of God. It is the will of God. God in his very nature is righteous. He is holy. He is perfect. He is without moral blemish. He is separate and his will is always good and right and perfect so that God's judgment in any human situation would be the right judgment. And for a king to have sovereignty, for a king to be able to dispense by his authority the implementation of righteousness would be the greatest thing that earth had ever known. It reflects a conformity to God's law and to God's nature.

You can see this expressed in Jeremiah 22, if you would turn there with me for just a moment. Jeremiah 22 as we see an expression of what it means for righteousness to come from the throne of David. Jeremiah 22:1,

1 Thus says the LORD, "Go down to the house of the king of Judah, and there speak this word 2 and say, 'Hear the word of the LORD, O king of Judah, who sits on David's throne, you and your servants and

your people who enter these gates. 3 Thus says the LORD, "Do justice and righteousness, and deliver the one who has been robbed from the power of his oppressor. Also do not mistreat or do violence to the stranger, the orphan, or the widow; and do not shed innocent blood in this place. 4 For if you men will indeed perform this thing, then kings will enter the gates of this house, sitting in David's place on his throne, riding in chariots and on horses, even the king himself and his servants and his people.""

My point in taking you to that passage is to simply see what the Lord by his own word associates with a righteous reign; that there is deliverance from those who rob the innocent; there is a greater power brought to bear to turn back oppression of those who suffer at the hands of their tormentors; there is comfort, there is help, there is compassion upon the stranger, the orphan and the widow; those who are in an alien environment, you say, weak and without someone alongside to defend them. The nature of God's King is in righteousness to come alongside and to be their protector, to be their helper against powers that would otherwise take advantage of them. That is sweet. That is precious as you contemplate the wickedness of the world around us.

Go back to Psalm 72 and you see this expanded upon in Solomon's words here in verse 2 when, speaking of the King, perhaps referring to himself in the third person, he says,

2 May he judge Your people with righteousness And Your afflicted with justice. 3 Let the mountains bring peace to the people, And the hills, in righteousness. 4 May he vindicate the afflicted of the people, Save the children of the needy And crush the oppressor.

Here's what I want you to see: three times that word "righteousness" is used in these opening verses. It is the foundation of the Psalm. Verse 1, "Your righteousness to the king's son." Verse 2, "May he judge Your people with righteousness." Verse 3, "Let the mountains bring peace to the people, And the hills, in righteousness." And here is what I would have you see, beloved, as we contemplate the coming reign of Christ and what God describes as his ideal king. Righteousness is the foundation of this entire Psalm. It starts out in righteousness and it builds from there, pointing out to us that the throne, the foundation of the reign of God's King is built on righteousness as its first principle. In the psalmist's view, prosperity is rooted in righteousness. Righteousness is the foundation of the kingdom and prosperity and peace flow from that. You can't have godly prosperity without righteousness. You can't have godly peace without righteousness.

And that word "peace" found in verse 3, "Let the mountains bring peace to the people," that is the word "peace" from the Hebrew word "shalom," and that means more than just the absence of conflict. You know, we are at peace with Canada or other nations right now, we are at peace with certain nations, simply meaning that we are not at war with them. There is an absence of conflict. This word goes far beyond that negative sense of an absence of conflict and it communicates an idea of wholeness, of completeness, of utter full well-being. So the idea is that a righteous king during his reign is going to be an

instrument of the well-being of God poured out upon his people. And we know from our own earthly experience in a non-covenant nation, that our lives are affected by our leaders. Our lives are affected by their character, by their policies. Well, how much more, then, for the people of God to be living under their righteous king? And beloved, I can't wait when Christ plants his feet on this earth and establishes his reign. That is something to look forward to.

And we know that this has to be looking forward beyond Solomon to a greater King yet to come from the writing of the Psalm and from even our own day because as we read about the life of Solomon in the Old Testament, we know that he started well but he did not end well as he accumulated foreign wives to himself and imposed harsh taxation on the people. James Montgomery Boice says this, "As Solomon's reign progressed, he turned away from the Lord, followed other gods, and began to oppress the people with high rates of taxation to finance his building projects." So Solomon himself did not even achieve the ideal of the Psalm that he wrote, and that tells us that because we believe in the authority of God's word, because we believe that every word will be fulfilled, as we look and see that there hasn't been a fulfillment, the kings got worse after Solomon, not better, generally speaking, then our hearts are left throbbing, our hearts are left aching. There is the sense of unfulfilled promise, unfulfilled expectation. When will this reign take place because we haven't seen it in the world yet, where righteousness provided a foundation that endured during a king's reign? And we look with longing anticipation, "O Lord, when will your King of righteousness come? When will your King establish this on the earth as your word speaks?" We find ourselves still waiting for the ideal King of righteousness, and as we look in the latter prophets, as we look in the New Testament, we say it has to be Christ coming one day to find the fulfillment of God's word because God's word will not go unfulfilled.

What else can we say about this King's reign? It's a righteous reign. Secondly, and I love this, it is an extensive reign. It is an extensive reign and let me just frame it this way. You know, a king's glory is magnified the broader his realm is. The more territory over which he reigns, he is viewed as a greater king. The more subjects that he has under his rule, the greater his realm is. His glory is measured by the extent to which he reigns. Well, what we find here in Psalm 72 is two aspects of a broad reign to God's king. First of all, Psalm 72 contemplates a long chronological reign. A long chronological reign. There will be a long reign in time. This won't be a blip on the radar. This won't be a four-year term for God's King.

Look at Psalm 72:5 where it says,

5 Let them fear You while the sun endures, And as long as the moon,
throughout all generations. 6 May he come down like rain upon the mown
grass, Like showers that water the earth. 7 In his days may the righteous
flourish, And abundance of peace till the moon is no more.

All generations. Till the moon is no more. This is speaking of a long-term reign as Solomon writes here. The sun and moon were created by God even before mankind was

created, and as such, given their permanence, there has never been a time in the history of mankind where he was not under the testimony from the skies of the sun and moon to the glory of God, and as such, they symbolize longevity. And what the psalmist is praying for here in light of that enduring comparison of time, he's asking that the reign of God's King would result in long-term reverence for God. "May your righteousness inform the reign of this King." May he reign throughout all generations and, therefore, when he is reigning in such extended length, the glory of God will be on display continually, again and again repeatedly, continually, continuously, God's glory being manifested through the reign of his King. Well, that didn't happen with Solomon. He does not fulfill the ideal of Psalm 72 at all. He reigned 40 years, a great reign by earthly standards, you might say, but that's not all generations. That's not the length of which this word speaks. Like all earthly kings, he died. Like all earthly kings, his memory fades away. It's the nature of earthly kings.

You know, we are far too wrapped up in the mechanisms of earthly political power. Who is the president and who is the senator and which party is controlling the seats of congress or our state legislator or any of that stuff. Listen, listen, when we are wrapped up in that, we are looking at life with blinders on. We are not seeing it at all from God's perspective. We are not even seeing it from a proper human historical perspective, let alone from any sense of biblical perspective. Who are earthly kings? Who are United States presidents except men whose breath is in their nostrils, who rise up for a time under the providential opportunity given to them by God, but then they fade away and they die.

Many of you know that I have visited a number of the presidential gravesites, the United States presidential gravesites. It's remarkable to go to these places, some of which are virtually forgotten or visited very rarely. You can go to the gravesite of Martin Van Buren in upstate New York, our eighth president, 1837-1841, at one time, the king of the hill, metaphorically speaking. Now today, you can barely even read the inscription on his gravesite. You really can't read it unless you are getting just the sun just exactly right. His monument, the highest marker in the cemetery, as I recall, you go to it now some 160 years later, 175 years later, you can barely even read it. And most of you, I would venture to say, couldn't name one fact about Martin Van Buren. That's okay. I don't expect you to. He's not important, especially when we are opening God's word. I'm just making a point. At one time, he was the man and now his memory is virtually erased from our public consciousness, except for those who read about such things.

Don't you see that when we talk about earthly leaders, we are talking about men who rise for a time and they fade away? Then why are we so wrapped up in what they do? Why are we so wrapped up in what they think? Why are we so wrapped up in the decisions they make? Because we are too bound up in the mechanisms of time and we are not seeing it from God's perspective. We haven't thoroughly drunk in the fact that the only reign that matters is the coming reign of Christ and that is certain to occur, though uncertain in its timing, and we give glory to him and we look forward to that rather than being preoccupied by these, it's the word that's in my mind, these pipsqueaks that hold power for a short period of time and then they die and they are forgotten.

We must view earthly power from the perspective of God's word. We must measure all men by the glory of Christ and their temporary glory fades into nothing when we do. God's King is going to endure and not only that, not only is he going to endure over time, this King is going to have a broad geographic reign as well. Over time, he will rule and he will rule over all the earth.

Look at verses 8 through 10, Psalm 72:8-10. Speaking of this extensive reign of God's King, Scripture says,

8 May he also rule from sea to sea And from the River to the ends of the earth. 9 Let the nomads of the desert bow before him, And his enemies lick the dust. 10 Let the kings of Tarshish [probably a city in Spain] and of the islands bring presents; The kings of Sheba [modern Yemen on the other side of Saudi Arabia] and Seba [a region in northern Africa] offer gifts. 11 And let all kings bow down before him, All nations serve him.

So there is this expectation that every nation will bring tribute, every nation will bow before this King. Now, Solomon tasted a portion of this when the Queen of Sheba came from distant lands and others came to hear his wisdom, but nothing, nothing like this. Nothing where all nations bow before him, where all nations served him. Solomon is not the fulfillment of this.

Look again at verse 11 just to reemphasize the point, "let all kings bow down before him, All nations serve him." So what you have described here is a King with an open ended reign that is adored and worshiped and served by all the earth. That's only speaking of Christ, beloved. There is no one else that could have such a worldwide impact. And what you find as you follow the logic, as you follow the force of what is said in this Psalm, is that God's King, God's righteous King, he deserves a worldwide dominion. So great is his glory, so great is his righteousness, that it is only proper and fitting that nations bow before him, that all men would bend the knee and recognize him for the greatness of his glory and Scripture points us to the fact that one day that will belong to Christ.

Go back to Revelation, the back end of your Bible, Revelation 11. Oh, I can't wait for the fulfillment of these things because it's going to be so very much better than anything we've ever known. Revelation 11:15,

15 Then the seventh angel sounded; and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever."

Chapter 21 of Revelation, if you would turn there. Chapter 21 beginning in verse 22 as the Apostle John describes the vision that he saw, still future to us, not accomplished in A.D. 70, contrary to preterist thinking. Revelation 21:22,

22 I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. 23 And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine

on it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb. 24
The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring
their glory into it.

Do you see the worldwide dominion?

25 In the daytime (for there will be no night there) its gates will never be
closed; 26 and they will bring the glory and the honor of the nations into
it; 27 and nothing unclean, and no one who practices abomination and
lying, shall ever come into it, but only those whose names are written in
the Lamb's book of life.

The nations. The kings of the earth will bring their glory into it. All bowing to the greater
glory of God's righteous King. The righteous King who has this extensive reign, who has
this worldwide dominion, that's God's King. We haven't seen it yet but, beloved, one day
we will and that will be magnificent. That will be glorious. That will be the fulfillment of
this God-inspired Psalm.

Now, these lofty themes would almost overwhelm us, wouldn't they, the surpassing
righteousness of this King, his extensive reign, his long reign, his glorious reign all
submitted to him, but there is more to this King. There is more to his reign and, thirdly,
what we see as we read Psalm 72 is that this will be a reign of compassion. A reign of
compassion and the psalmist now moves from the Kings glory into his very character,
who he is as a ruler, and in verse 12 he says this,

12 For he will deliver the needy when he cries for help, The afflicted also,
and him who has no helper. 13 He will have compassion on the poor and
needy, And the lives of the needy he will save. 14 He will rescue their life
from oppression and violence, And their blood will be precious in his
sight;

In other words, their lives will be precious in his sight. And though this King, though
God's King reigns in righteousness and in glory and for extended generations over all of
the earth, you know, the only thing that we know by human experience is that when a
sinful man ascends to something of heights, we are so accustomed to the display of
arrogance, the display of pride, "Look at what my hands have done." I mean, for
goodness sakes, an athlete makes a good play and thinks he's the king, pounding his chest
and displaying his glory because he put a ball through a hoop or a football through the
air. Are you kidding me? These pipsqueaks, these men of dust celebrating what they
perceive to be their own glory? No, I'll tell you what glory is, glory is when Christ reigns
and all of the nations are bowing before him. We have never seen anything like that.

But when Christ comes and reigns and displays his majesty, what we're going to find is
that he is a compassionate King. He is a King who considers the lowly and in verse 12
where we see he delivers the needy, in verse 14, he will rescue their life from oppression
and violence, I want to make a point here: oppression expresses the idea of people with

power exploiting those who have no power, exploiting those who are defenseless, using them for their own purposes. Violence, referring to a ruthless disregard for life. I want to say something important here: you and I are conditioned by the violence in which we live to such a point that we are numb to it, that we assume it as something that is an acceptable part, maybe, of life. We've lost our sense of outrage. We've lost our sense of moral indignation by what is around us. How else can we describe the general apathy of mankind to the plagues of abortion, the prevalence of mass murder. Well, there was another one today. I'm not telling you news. The plagues of abortion, mass murder, so-called entertainment in the form of violent movies and violent video games. How can it be that humanity increasingly embraced the bloodlust of mixed martial arts fighting in cages, especially with women combatants, how can we look at this and say anything other than our Western culture is so degraded and so debased and glories in violence and glories in oppression, to say nothing about adults who take sexual advantage of children that are entrusted to their care; people using their positions of trust in order to execute their lustful desires on those that are defenseless to stop them.

This is despicable, the world that we live in. It is twisted. It is distorted. As I said on Friday night, it is broken and there are none of us that are Christians that should say, "I'm comfortable living in this environment." Somewhere in our hearts there should be a sense that says, "This is an offense to me because I know it's an offense to my God, and I know it's an offense to my God because my God is a God of compassion. My God is a protector of the weak. He is a protector and a provider for the needy. He is a shepherd to helpless and defenseless sheep." No. No, beloved, this violence and even more, this love of violence that marks our culture, shows us in a mirror how desperately sinful we are as a race. We see what ungodliness leads to, a denial of God, a refusal of Christ. What a godlessness leads to is violence. It leads to bloodshed inevitably. Ungodliness leads to unrighteousness.

Well, what's the glory of Psalm 72? What's the glory of biblical prophecy? What is the glory of the anticipation of the return of Christ? I'll tell you what it is: it's not always going to be like that. This is not the final word. Christ will come and he will change it and God's King will defend the weak. God's King will defend the vulnerable. God's King will provide for the poor. And the redeemed heart says, "Oh, may that day come. Come, Lord Jesus. Let that day hasten. Lord, thy kingdom come. That would be glorious."

You know, I've said in the past, teaching on the so-called Lord's prayer in Matthew 6, that element where the Lord teaches us to pray, "Thy kingdom come," do you realize that that prayer is an assault on the existing world order? To look around to see the sin, to see the darkness, to see the deception in the world around us, to say nothing of the remnants of indwelling sin in our own hearts and to say, "Lord, I see what this world is like. Bring your kingdom down. Lord, I call your kingdom down. I pray that your kingdom would come because I identify in heart desire with the righteousness and the godliness of the coming reign of Christ. I don't accept what I see around me. I don't embrace it. I deny it. I reject it. I want your kingdom to come." And here in Psalm 72, we see what that is going to be like when God's King comes.

So worthy is God's King, that tribute and honor is given to him. Verse 15,

15 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 day long.

It will be a reign of compassion and when such pristine, perfect, holy goodness is on display, the response will be to honor him who implements that in his reign, a righteous reign, an extensive reign, a compassionate reign. But there's more. Fourthly, Solomon describes a reign of prosperity. A reign of prosperity. God's blessing will be seen from the wealth that attends his rule.

Look at verses 16 and 17,

16 May there be abundance of grain in the earth on top of the mountains; Its fruit will wave like the cedars of Lebanon; And may those from the city flourish like vegetation of the earth. 17 May his name endure forever; May his name increase as long as the sun shines; And let men bless themselves by him; Let all nations call him blessed.

Prosperity, abundance for all, marked by the reign of God's King. Why? Because righteousness is attended with under the reign of God's King, this righteousness will be attended with prosperity. He will usher in prosperity as well as peace and compassion, and this prosperity is pictured with fruit and grain covering the landscape from the valley to the mountaintop. Those of you that perhaps come from farming communities and are familiar with those golden moments just before the harvest and the land is bursting with a full crop and there is such a sense of anticipation, well, multiply that by 10,000 by 10,000 and get a sense of what the glory of this reign will be, the prosperity that attends his rule. And this universal reign and this universal prosperity points to a great blessing, points to a reign that had to go beyond Solomon, that has to be still future to us. And while we are not promised that prosperity of the false teaching of word of faith teachers in our day, there is a time when Christ will come and institute true prosperity. He will really deliver on it. He will fulfill the promise rather than hold out an empty promises so that the person who gets rich is the one who is teaching.

Blessing for the nations. Do you know what this language reminds us of? We've looked at it in the past. This language reminds us of the promise that God made to Abraham. Turn back to Genesis 12. Solomon in Psalm 72 has talked about a submission that attends this reign but in Genesis 12 when God called Abram out of paganism, he makes promises to him. Chapter 12, verse 1,

1 Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go forth from your country, And from your relatives And from your father's house, To the land which I will show you; 2 And I will make you a great nation, And I will bless you, And make your name great; And so you shall be a blessing; 3 And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed."

All the families of the earth are going to experience blessing under the descendants of Abraham, under the ultimate descendant, the ultimate seed of Abraham, better stated. And Psalm 72 describes that blessing that all the families on the earth are going to enjoy. You see, the nations are not only going to submit to Christ, they will do that, but they will share in the blessing that he brings when he establishes the fulfillment of this Psalm. It's going to be wonderful. It's something to look forward to and to anticipate.

So you say, "Well, what do I do with this? How do I respond to this?" Well, the Psalm leads us in that and we see finally in our fifth point for this evening, is that this will be a reign of praise. A reign of praise. Righteousness will mark this reign. It will be an extensive reign of chronology and glory. It will be a reign of compassion, a reign of prosperity, and there is only one thing that the believing heart can say in response, "Praise God! Praise God that this is still ahead! Praise God that this is coming!" And such a blessing from the reign of God's King calls forth praise from his people.

Look at verse 18 and 19 with me.

18 Blessed be the LORD God, the God of Israel, Who alone works wonders. 19 And blessed be His glorious name forever; And may the whole earth be filled with His glory. Amen, and Amen.

The prophet Habakkuk speaks of that in chapter 2, verse 14, "the whole earth will be filled With the knowledge of the glory of the LORD." So there is this ascription of praise that Solomon recognizes under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit that a day like this is coming, and in recognition of the greatness of the glory and goodness of God that will be on display, and the fact that he will share this blessing with his people, that he will share this over the earth, the only thing to do is to respond and praise him, to honor him. "God, this is what you will do. This is who you are. And God, this transcends human existence. This transcends human thought, certainly in the realm of a sinful man's heart, God, this transcends everything and in the presence of your greatness displayed through the coming of your King, in the presence of the goodness of the blessing that you will bestow when this comes, God, all I can do is worship you. You are superior to me. You are infinitely beyond me. You are beyond me in your goodness, your grace and your mercy. You are beyond me in your essence. So I bow and I ascribe glory to you. I give honor and glory and praise to your name."

So with that, this Psalm ends book two of the Psalms as you see in verse 20. It says,

20 The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended.

This inscription here might sound a little bit odd except when you realize that there are like ascriptions attached on the other ending books of the Psalms. There are other Psalms of David yet to come that we'll find, Psalm 86, 101, 103, 108-110, and several others, 138-145. What this inscription may be referring to is an earlier collection before the Psalms were put in their final form. There is really no way for us to reconstruct that now.

We just see that here book two of the Psalter comes to an end and it comes to end on the highest of notes as it looks forward to the coming righteous reign of God's King.

Now what can we say about this today? We've kind of looked back at Solomon, we've looked forward, what do we say about it? What do we say about it today? Beloved, I want you to see how high and lofty Scripture shows the work of God as he builds a people to one day populate his kingdom. These themes of which we have briefly spoken here this evening are high and majestic, and here you and I are with the people of God, in the body of Christ if we have received him by faith, and you and I are a part of what God is doing to prepare for that coming day. Through joys, through sorrows, through the work of his word, through the sanctifying influence of his Holy Spirit, through the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, even with our seemingly routine fellowship with one another, what is God doing? What is the Lord Christ doing in anticipation of that coming kingdom? He is working now, he is working in our midst, he is working in this moment as we look into his precious word. Christ is working even now to build a people to populate his kingdom and if you belong to Christ, when he comes and reigns, you will be there and you will be rightfully a part of the glory of that kingdom.

It's phenomenal to think that he's doing that in our midst. It goes into another realm when you realize what the work that he accomplished in order to make that happen, Not to make it possible, we're not Arminians here, to make it happen. To make sure that it would come to pass when this King offered his own innocent blood on the cross to save sinners like you and me; this King whose blood, if I could be so bold as to say, this blood of compassion, this blood of mercy, this blood shed for those oppressed by their own sins, oppressed by the devil. This King, who is this King? How great is his compassion? It was his blood that was shed voluntarily to wash away their sins and to give them a status of perfect righteousness before a holy God that they might be able to enter in. It was this King who sent his Holy Spirit to impart to us a new nature, to open our eyes, to draw us to faith in Christ, and once we were saved, to increasingly conform us in character to God's righteousness.

Do you see? Do you see it? That the coming greatness of this kingdom is being prepared for now in the midst of the work of God amongst his people in small humble congregations like ours and countless others throughout the world where the name of Christ is proclaimed and his word is taught and sinners are called to faith in Christ? And we are a part of that. We share in that.

Beloved, this is our destiny. This is what lies ahead. As I said on Friday night, soon enough our feet will be on the shores of glory. And we start to see, we start to see that we are on the receiving end of unspeakable unconquerable grace; that God has initiated such favor to sinners like you and me. We have it good now to share in the foretaste, to share in the firstfruits of his kingdom, but then we realize that it's going to be so much better when the King establishes his reign. And as the hymnwriter says, we sang it in one of these recent services, we are lost in wonder, love and praise. We realize that we are still waiting for the fullness and thus we pray, "Lord, thy kingdom come," but we pray that not from a position of weakness but of strength. "Lord, I know it will come, I'm just eager

for it to get here. Lord, you could come now." Wouldn't it be great to just enter straight into the presence of glory while we are studying his word together? But that coming reign of Christ will be glorious and we seek it in the midst of our sinful culture, we seek it in the midst of our own sinful lives, knowing that a more glorious day lies ahead for us. No more tears. No more pain. No more sin. No more sorrow. No more politics. No more violence. No more death. Only an uplifted look at our glorious King. You don't want to miss that, beloved, and if you're in Christ, you won't. You'll be there. You'll be a part of it.

So we are left with the question: have you turned from sin to embrace Christ the King? I want you there, beloved.

Let's pray.

Father, we thank you for the coming glorious reign of our Lord Jesus Christ. We thank you that it will be so much different from what we are accustomed to; that it will be so much better than what we are accustomed to. We thank you for your righteousness. We praise you for it. We acknowledge that you are the rightful King over all of your realm which is over all of the universe. We look forward to that day when nations bow before you and you display yourself as the King of kings.

Lord, we thank you for your compassion. We are reminded as we read this that our lives are precious in your sight, that our broken lives and our broken hearts are not lost on you but they are the objects of your tender mercy and compassion. We ask you, Father, to exercise that toward us even this evening.

Father, we know that we have brothers and sisters unknown to us by name but throughout the world suffering persecution under fear and intimidation of those who would try to silence Christ, and perhaps in physical or even spiritual weakness of faith they seek to be faithful to you. We ask you to come alongside and rescue their life from oppression and violence and give them hope of the better day to come.

Father, we pray for those anywhere under the sound of my voice that are still outside, that have foolishly and ignorantly and in darkness and deadness, have declined Christ, have turned him away. O Father, may this be the day where they recognize the glory of your kindness, the glory of your compassion, the wonder of your goodness, and may the wonder of who you are teach their hearts to so hate sin and to so run to Christ and find that he receives them just like he has others among us. Your compassion has not been exalted. Your power to save is still operative. So Father, we ask you to do that. You are a saving merciful God and we call upon you to exercise your saving mercy to our loved ones who don't know you either in this room or in the home of our hearts in another location.

Father, have compassion on those that grieve. Provide for those in need and want. Thank you for the ways that you have shown such goodness to us in so many ways, not the least of which, Father, is that you have given us this place, given us this body where we can

gather together around your word to share in a common love for Christ and a common love for his people. Thank you for each one that you have brought. Father, we know that each one is dear in your sight and we thank you for them. In the name of Christ we pray. Amen.

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