

PSALMS:
THE PRAYER BOOK
OF JESUS

Session 9: The Royal Psalms

PSALM 20, *Exaudi te Dominus*

May the Lord hear you in the day of trouble, *

the Name of the God of Jacob defend you;

Send you help from the sanctuary, *

and strengthen you out of Zion;

Remember all your offerings, *

and accept your burnt sacrifice;

Grant you your heart's desire, *

and accomplish all your plans.

We will rejoice in your salvation, and triumph in the
Name of the Lord our God; *

may the Lord grant all your petitions.

Now I know that the Lord helps his Anointed,
and will answer him from his holy heaven, *

**even with the saving strength of his right
hand.**

Some put their trust in chariots, and some in
horses, *

**but we put our trust in the Name of the
Lord our God.**

They are brought down and fallen, *

but we will arise and stand upright.

O Lord, save the King, *

and hear us when we call upon you.

THE ROYAL PSALMS

- “Royal Psalms” or “Kingship Psalms” are psalms that speak about the Davidic king’s
 - coronation (2, 110),
 - royal wedding (45),
 - wars (18, 20, 144),
 - ruling in righteousness and justice (72, 101),
 - and his fulfillment of God’s covenant promises with David (89, 132).
- The Psalter itself doesn’t define this category, but it is widely recognized in biblical scholarship. Representative examples include Psalm 2, 18, 20, 21, 45, 72, 89, 101, 110, and 132.

THE ROYAL PSALMS

- Within this group, some psalms highlight:
 - the **installation** or **coronation** of the king (Psalm 2, Psalm 110),
 - the king's **military role** and God's protection (Psalm 20),
 - the king's **marriage** (Psalm 45),
 - the king's call to **justice and righteousness** (Psalm 72),
 - God's **covenant with David** (Psalm 89),
 - the king's commitment to holiness (Psalm 101),
 - the significance of **Zion** and David's line (Psalm 132).
- Together they present a theology of kingship rooted in God's covenant and Israel's vocation.

THE ROYAL PSALMS

- While these psalms speak of earthly kings, their deeper emphasis is on the **kingship of God**:
 - God appoints the king.
 - God defends and directs the king.
 - God judges the king.
 - God uses the Davidic line as the instrument of his reign.
 - In this sense, the Royal Psalms always point upward.
Even psalms that appear political or historical are fundamentally **theological**.
- Israel's king is never an absolute monarch; he is God's **vice-regent**—a servant appointed to mediate God's rule of justice and blessing.

THE ROYAL PSALMS

- Thus, these psalms form a theological foundation for understanding Christ:
 - His incarnation as the Son of David,
 - His passion and enthronement,
 - His eternal priesthood,
 - His universal reign.
- They are among the most frequently quoted psalms in the New Testament, second only to the Psalms of Lament.

THE ROYAL PSALMS

- Royal Psalms often use:
 - Enthronement imagery (“Sit at my right hand,” Ps. 110)
 - Temple and Zion imagery (Ps. 132)
 - Battle language (Ps. 20–21)
 - Covenant formulae (Ps. 89)
 - Royal metaphors (scepter, throne, crown, footstool)
 - They often blend history, prophecy, and liturgy, making them especially powerful within corporate worship.

THE ROYAL PSALMS

- The early Church saw the Royal Psalms as profoundly **messianic**, because they speak of:
 - a king who rules the nations (Psalm 2),
 - a king who is priest forever (Psalm 110),
 - a king whose reign brings universal peace (Psalm 72),
 - a king enthroned at God's right hand (Psalm 110),
 - a king from David's everlasting line (Psalm 89, 132).

PSALM 110, *Dixit Dominus*

The Lord said unto my Lord, "Sit at my right hand, *

until I make your enemies your footstool."

The Lord shall send the scepter of your power out of Zion: *

"Rule in the midst of your enemies."

In the day of your power the people, in holy raiment, shall offer you freewill offerings; *

from the womb of the morning, the dew of your youth belongs to you.

The Lord has sworn and will not recant: *

"You are a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek."

The Lord at your right hand *

shall smite kings in the day of his wrath.

He shall judge the nations; *

he shall fill the lands with dead bodies, and strike down heads over many countries.

He shall drink from the brook by the way; *

therefore shall he lift up his head.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; *

as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

THE ROYAL PSALMS

- Spiritually, these psalms remind believers that:
 - Christ reigns now, even when the world seems chaotic,
 - God's purposes for justice and righteousness are not thwarted,
 - We belong to a kingdom not of this world but rooted in God's eternal reign,
 - Our hope is not in any earthly power but in the King who rules with mercy and truth.

THE ROYAL PSALMS

- In Christian worship, Royal Psalms have long been associated with:
 - **Advent**, where we anticipate Christ the King,
 - **Christmas**, celebrating the Son of David born for us,
 - **Ascension** and **Christ the King Sunday**, highlighting Christ's enthronement,
 - Other occasions that emphasize Christ's lordship and priesthood.