



Second Sunday of Advent

December 8, 2024

Psalms for Advent

OUR DELIVERER IS COMING!

Psalm 72



1. Opening Discussion Questions: (in a group setting you may not want to use all of these)

- a. Some parents have taken to telling their children “Make good decisions” as they leave for school. Have you ever used such a phrase? What exactly did you mean by it? What is implied in such a statement regarding decision-making? About the child to whom it was said?
- b. When something, e.g., your car, an appliance, etc., breaks is your first inclination to fix it yourself or to seek a professional’s help? Have you ever had an experience where that inclination has led you in the wrong direction (repairs ended up costing more because of your attempts at self-help or the repairman pointed out how simple it was to fix)? Do you have a favorite story of a self-help effort going astray?
- c. Who is a political leader that you particularly admire in your lifetime or history? What did she/he do that you found admirable? Was he/she more concerned about taking care of himself/herself or with taking care of the needs of others?

2. Sermon Outline/Key Points

- a. The Messiah Delivers Those in Need
 - i. A "royal psalm" about the coming Messiah Who is King of the entire world
 - ii. The Messiah delivers those who call on Him
- b. Our Spiritual Deliverer Has Already Come
 - i. Celebrate that Jesus has come to deliver us spiritually from sin and death!
 - ii. Through His First Advent, Jesus also delivered us from the curse of legalism
- c. The World's Deliverer Has Come and Will Come Again
 - i. Christ's earthly ministry previews the physical deliverance coming at the Second Advent
 - ii. Total deliverance is coming from all affliction

3. Study/Discussion Points:

a. *Sunday Afternoon*

- i. As soon as possible after listening to the sermon set aside some time to ponder these questions prayerfully:
- ii. What one thing most stood out to you in this sermon?
- iii. What new truth did you learn or of what truth were you reminded?
- iv. After listening to the sermon, is there a Scripture passage you feel led to meditate on or commit to memory this week?



- v. What is one thing you feel God is leading you to do after hearing this message?
- vi. Did God convict you of a need to make any changes in your life and walk with Him?

b. Monday:

- i. Like Psalm 2 studied last week, Psalm 72 is considered both a Messianic and a Royal Psalm and was very likely written for the coronation of Solomon. Begin the week by reading Psalm 72 aloud in a regal manner as if you were doing so at a coronation or inauguration. Then read it a second time slowly meditating on each segment.
 - 1. The Psalm is introduced by the words “Of Solomon” but scholars agree that this could mean either that it was composed by Solomon or that it was written (by David) for his son’s coronation. How would each of these two views change how you understand what the Psalm is saying?
 - 2. If written by Solomon what would suggest that it must have been done early in his life (see 1 Kings 11:1-13)?
 - 3. The other Psalm attributed to Solomon is 127. Read this short Psalm. In what ways is it either similar to or different from Psalm 72?
 - 4. Many of the expressions in Psalm 72 can be understood either with a prophetic (looking to the future) view or with a wishful/prayerful sense (e.g., verse 2, “May he judge...”). What examples of such phrases can you identify?
- ii. When understood as forward-looking (prophetic) to whom would this Psalm apply?
 - 1. How does Matthew 12:42 help support your answer?
 - 2. Which verses do you see that seem to apply predominantly to the Messiah and less to King Solomon?

c. Tuesday:

- i. Read Psalm 72 again and try to identify four main themes. If in a group, discuss what the four themes are and where you see them starting and ending before going on to the next questions.
- ii. Verses 1-7 present the first theme. According to verses 1 & 2, how would you describe the theme?
 - 1. What specific request does the Psalmist make to God?
 - 2. Read Romans 3:10-18, Psalms 14:1-3 & 53:1-3, and Ecclesiastes 7:20. What do these verses tell us about why it is necessary to request these qualities from God rather than just assuming the king will have them?
 - 3. Read Solomon’s prayer in 1 Kings 3:6-9. How does his prayer reflect the same desire as that expressed by the Psalmist? How does God’s response to Solomon’s prayer in verses 10-14 show that God is also answering the Psalmist’s petition? What practical lessons might we take from this regarding our prayers?
 - 4. What was the king to use his power to accomplish and what particular groups of people should be his focus? How did Jesus display this during His earthly ministry?



5. Read Acts 3:14 & 7:52 and 1 John 2:1. How does the title assigned to Jesus in these verses show that He was fulfilling the prophetic aspects of verses 1-7?
 6. And appropriately for this Advent season, read the angel's message to Mary in Luke 1:26-33. What specific parts of Psalm 72:1-7 does the angel tell Mary will certainly be fulfilled by Jesus?
- iii. Verses 8-11 introduce a second theme. What would you call it?
1. Read 1 Kings 4:21-24. How does this description of Solomon's kingdom at its height compare with what the Psalmist prayed for in verses 8-11? Which part of the prayer did Solomon not accomplish (at least in an absolute sense)?
 2. Read Daniel 7:13-14, Matthew 28:18, John 17:2, Ephesians 1:20-22, Philippians 2:9-11, Colossians 1:16, and Revelation 11:15. Who do these verses all confirm as the ultimate fulfiller of the Psalmist's prayer?

d. Wednesday:

- i. Read Psalm 72:12-20.
- ii. A third theme is presented in verses 12-14. How would you describe this theme.
 1. A king could rule with righteous judgment as requested in the first section of this Psalm, but his subjects might not find it very desirable. According to Romans 5:12 and 6:23a, how would we be treated if our King was only a Righteous Judge?
 2. Read Hosea 2:19, Zecharia 7:9-10. What additional quality should the king possess?
 3. In Luke 4:16-21 Jesus initiated His public ministry by reading Isaiah 61:1-2. How does Jesus' selection of this passage align with what the Psalmist prayed for and prophesied in verses 12-14? Jesus was often criticized for his close association with "sinners". What does His response to such criticism while dining with Matthew (Matthew 9:12, Mark 2:17, or Luke 5:31) show about where Jesus felt compassion (mercy) was most needed?
- iii. The final theme is found in verses 15-17. How would you describe the message of these verses?
 1. How does this portion of the Psalm relate to the near-term fulfillment of prophecies from the Old Testament (see Genesis 12:1-3 and 2 Samuel 7:11-12 & 16)?
 2. How does the New Testament's portrayal of Jesus in Romans 11:36, Ephesians 3:21, 1 Peter 4:11 & 5:11, Jude 25 and Revelation 1:6 & 5:13 show the fulfillment of the prophetic aspects of verses 15-17?

e. Thursday:

- i. The second Sunday of Advent is often associated with the lighting of the Bethlehem candle. Read Micah 5:2-5a, Luke 2:1-7, and Matthew 2:1-10.
- ii. The passage from Micah is most often mentioned as a prophecy about where Jesus would be born but what similarities do you see in it to the Psalm we have been studying?



1. What were the coming ruler's origins? What does that mean to you that the ruler is "from of old, from ancient days"?
2. What will be the work of this ruler? How did Jesus display this (see John 10:11 & 14)?
- iii. After reading the parts of the Nativity account from Luke and Matthew how important would you say Bethlehem was to the story?
 1. Considering just the first few verses of Luke 2 how many details can you identify that God had to orchestrate in His Sovereignty for the birth to occur where it did?
 2. Why do you think God selected Bethlehem as the birthplace of His Son (see 1 Samuel 20:6 and use a concordance to locate the many other references to Bethlehem in the Old Testament)?

f. **Friday:**

- i. Faith is also highlighted on this second Sunday of Advent. How do you see faith demonstrated in Psalm 72? What kind of faith must the Psalmist have had to ask God for what Psalm 72 requests? How might the faith be viewed differently if the Psalm is composed by Solomon praying for himself as opposed to David praying for his son?
- ii. Read these verses about faith: Genesis 15:6, Psalm 20:7, Habakkuk 2:4, Matthew 21:21-22, John 1:12, and 2 Corinthians 5:7. On the basis of what these verses teach why is faith particularly relevant to our celebration of Christmas?
- iii. Close the day's study by reading and meditating on Hebrews 11:1-12:3.

g. **Saturday:**

- i. End the week by reading Psalm 72 one more time focusing on how it applies to that precious baby born in a stable so many years ago. End by listening to Isaac Watts's hymn "Jesus Shall Reign" which is based on Psalm 72. A good version is at <https://youtu.be/BE4DDB5whyk>
- ii. How should what is presented in Psalm 72 change how you live as a Christian?

4. **Application:** Our commercialization of Christmas and our focus on a "babe in the manger" often results in losing sight of the fact that "the baby" was the Creator of everything, is the sustainer of it all, including our very lives, and will be, forever, the Sovereign King and Righteous Judge. Be sure to spend time this Advent season considering the implications of these truths and thanking our Heavenly Father for sending Him.

5. **Prayer Points:**

- a. Adoration – Psalms 8:1 and 29:1-2
- b. Confession – Proverbs 28:13 and 1 John 1:8-10
- c. Thanksgiving – Psalms 95:1-2 and 100:4-5
- d. Supplications – Matthew 21:22 and John 16:19