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Day 130 – May 10

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## Israel as a Monarchy (1100 – 930 BCE)

### *Psalms of the Messiah*

Readings: *Psalm 45, 47, 48, 87, 110*

#### ***Reflections:***

- Psalm 45: This royal wedding song is rich with imagery that will one day be ascribed to Christ and the church. Again the image of a coming king is not primarily in view. More the image of a true king is in focus: “In your majesty ride forth victoriously in behalf of truth, humility and righteousness....a scepter of justice will be your scepter.” The true king is a reflection of God. We will see in Jesus the truth, humility, righteousness and concern for justice for the poor that will lead future followers to see this psalm as clearly pointing to Christ and the church as his bride. One last note, joy is a key expression of his love and leadership. He is anointed with the oil of joy and he and his bride are led forth in joy and gladness. Again, this is one of the ways that Jesus is described particularly in Luke. What a beautiful psalm to reflect on when considering Christ’s great love for us.
- Psalm 47: A psalm exalting God as King of all kings. This idea of the Messiah being the king of kings will be repeated. The vision of the coming Messiah is not just that he would be king of Israel but that he would extend his kingship over the earth and bring world peace. In Jesus we see him say something radical. His kingdom is for all nations but it is not a nationally based kingdom. It is the kingdom of heaven and it transcends all earthly kingdoms uniting all people under God as his children. He declared that the peace he brings is real and lasting but it is not the kind of peace the world gives. It is a true peace that is based on a humble trust relationship with God, not a forced military peace that just controls and manages hearts that are bent on war and hatred. And so Jesus and his followers declared him the King of kings and that one day he would return as Lord and Judge with all powers and authorities submitting to him. For Christ-followers this provides incredible hope and anticipation for the future.
- Psalm 48: Here we see a psalm praising God for the city of joy God has built for his people. We see God is the fortress of his people, their refuge. He is their warrior who conquers their enemies. He is the source of unfailing love. He is the reason praise and worship extends throughout the earth. At the end of the psalm it encourages the singers to carefully consider the city of God that you might tell future generations. In its

context, this psalm reveals how the exterior structures of Jerusalem, the temple and her walls were physical representations of God's blessing, presence and protection. In Christ, this vision for the city of God moves completely away from a physical city to a spiritual city, a community of people who live in truth and love and provide refuge for a lost and hurting world. (See Hebrews 12:22; 13:12-4; Revelation 3:12, 21:10)

- Psalm 87: The connection to the Messiah in this psalm is just that it was viewed in this psalm that the Messiah would be born in Zion. The psalm itself is a foretelling of a day when all the enemies of Israel, Rahab (Egypt), Babylon, Philistia, Tyre, Cush, will all bless and acknowledge all those who were born in Zion. One day being born in God's kingdom will be honored by all of Israel's enemies. This will lead to joy as they make music and sing a song of praise to God, "all my fountains are in you." This was an actual song being quoted here. This vision of the people of God being known throughout the world and being honored by the nations of the world was realized in many ways through Jesus. Christians were both persecuted and honored as a distinct people. Again, the spiritual kingdom of Jesus replaced and supplanted the physical one anticipated by the Jewish leaders of his day. What a great vision for Christ-followers to seek to have such a positive impact in their community that people will say, "This person has got to be from the kingdom of heaven." What a great vision for our lives to make such a positive change in the world that people want to declare that all of their fountains (sources of life and blessing) are found in God.
- Psalm 110: This psalm was clearly understood as referring to the Messiah. Jesus quotes it in Matthew 22:44, Mark 12:36, and Luke 20:42. Peter quotes it in Acts 2:34. These opening verses of the psalm have David proclaiming that the Messiah would be seated at the right hand of God as God made his enemies his "footstool." This was talk by Jesus to indicate that David did not see the Messiah as his descendent but as his Lord. Therefore Jesus even though from the line of David was ultimately Lord of David and of all Israel. Also, as Peter proclaimed in Acts, Jesus' death and resurrection was not the end of the story. He was to be seated at the right hand of God as Messiah while God continued to work in the world until the day when all the enemies of God were made a footstool for Jesus' feet. This prophecy made it clear that the coming of the Messiah did not mean that everything would be done at once (that the enemies of God would be dealt with immediately by the Messiah) but that the process of God's work through the Messiah would have been initiated and would carry on after he had been enthroned at the right hand of God. This psalm continues on and declares that the Messiah would be not only a king but a priest in the order of Melchizedek. This again is very significant. Melchizedek was a priest for Abraham, a man of faith and a friend of God. He was a priest before the giving of the Law. He was a mysterious priest that we know very little about. It prophecies that this Messiah will be a priest for God's people that will open up a new way to relate to God directly through faith. Hebrews 7 explains this in more detail. There is obviously a mystery here but this prophecy sets the stage for a radical redefinition of how people can approach God. No longer will the Law or the Temple be

needed. There will be a return to relating to God as Abraham did, just by faith. What freedom we have in Jesus just to come to God exactly as we are!