



WBC Verse for the Year 2020

'The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness'
(Lamentations 3 verses 22-23)

Psalm 72

As mentioned in our last Sunday service sheet, here is a summary on Psalm 72, with some things to reflect on.

A video of this is available online - <https://youtu.be/y5OOiV3henA>

Psalm 72, like Psalm 45 which we looked at on Sunday, causes us to rejoice in the King.

Imagine a King's (or Queen's) Coronation. A prayer is uttered, asking for God's blessing on the new monarch and on their reign. We have that in mind as we come to Psalm 72. The title says 'Of Solomon,' which could mean it is Solomon's prayer or that it was written for him. Perhaps, by his Father, King David. Verse 20 suggests it could be, but that's actually a broader conclusion to this whole section (Book II) of the psalms, rather than limited to Psalm 72. Whoever wrote it, in much the same way that Psalm 45 was a 'Wedding March' for Israel's kings, here we have a 'Coronation Prayer.' One which (like Psalm 45) points us beyond any earthly king to Jesus, the king of kings!

READ: PSALM 45 verses 1-7
An Unending Righteousness

Verse 1, the psalmist asks for the king to rule with the justice and righteousness of God. The verses that follow, reflect the effects this will have on the people. Notice it's 'your' people - God's, not the kings. A people we read are '*afflicted*' - those who are poor, weak. It can refer to their literal state or those who acknowledge that this is their state - that they are in need of justice.

Verses 3-7 then reveal the fruit of this righteous reign. It results in 'prosperity' for those who are poor and needy 'prosperity' - it will be a source of rich blessing to their lives. He will, verse 4, defend the cause of those who are afflicted (see above), and crush their oppressor.

Verses 5-7 then elaborate on how this will provide an ongoing blessing. To say '*as long as the sun, as long as the moon*' is a way of saying his reign will endure for ever and ever. Generations that follow will be blessed. The picture of rain falling, of showers watering the earth suggests an ongoing provision of blessing. Notice how, verse 7 at this point, having received the 'fruit of righteousness' (verse 4), the people are now considered to be righteous.

READ: PSALM 45 verses 8-14
A Universal Rule

From ruling with unending righteousness, verses 8-14 shift our focus to the extent of his rule. It is beyond a nation's boundaries, to the ends of the earth submitting to his rule.

Verse 8 - he will rule from '*sea to sea and from the river to the end of the earth.*' This is beyond Israel's boundaries - it is praying that the whole world will know the effects of, and submit to his righteous reign. The reference to desert tribes (verse 9) as well as being physical tribes of the desert, bring up images of those in barren wastelands. A comparison to the watered earth of verse 6. Enemies will 'lick the dust' - an image of being brought low.

Verses 10-11 elaborate on the extent of his reign. Tributes and Presents will come from Tarshish [Modern Spain] in the South, to Sheba and Seba [South of Egypt]. **All** kings (verse 11) will bow down to him. **All** nations will serve him.

Why?

For, verses 12-14, he will deliver those who are in need. Those currently afflicted. Those who are weak and helpless. This king will bring about their salvation from oppression, violence, from death itself.

The king will hear their cries and take pity on them, *'for precious is their blood in his sight.'* (verse 14). They are precious to him.

READ: PSALM 45 verses 15-20 Unlimited Praise

His reign is unending, his rule is universal, so our response should be unlimited praise!

Long live the king is a familiar refrain. One echoed in our national anthem - 'long to reign over us.' So too, the psalmist ends his prayer with a desire that this king, who reigns in justice, with all the righteousness of God would live forever! That he would receive all the blessing and honour. That all people would seek his blessing, would pray for his reign to endure, because (verse 17b) of the blessing they receive through him!

Which results in the praise and honour going to God - the source of such blessing.

So - a Coronation prayer for the King. A prayer, a desire for a king to rule with justice and righteousness. One whose reign would result in righteousness for his people. A reign that would know no bounds, as all serve under him. A reign that would last forever!

Such a reign cannot be found in any earthly king, or kingdom - but points us firmly to the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the one who reigns with the righteousness of God. Who has restored those who recognise their 'afflicted' status before God. He is therefore our source of hope in any of our present afflictions.

REFLECTION

Spend some time re-reading the passage, and thinking about the following

Reflect on and giving thanks for the justice and righteousness reign of Jesus.

Think about how (verse 2) he comes to judge in righteousness, and that through him we too are considered righteous (verse 7). [See also Romans 3 verses 10, 21-26]

What confidence do you gain from verses 4 and 12-14?
Both for today, and for the future

What comfort do you gain from verse 11?

What does the fact that his reign is eternal mean for you?

Whilst ultimately this points to Christ, how should this passage drive our prayers for our earthly rulers?

How does this passage encourage us in our witness?

These are just some thoughts.

What else strikes you about this passage?