

- C. Praying the Psalms is praying for the increase of His government (kingdom) and peace, that he would reign over people such that we would do His will, so that his kingdom is established and sustained with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. Amen.

Summary: The arrangement of the Psalter has an underlying story. When we begin to read the Psalms in that framework they teach us the language of faith, they teach us how to pray in a broken world for the kingdom come. The kingdom to come, yes, and the kingdom which comes in and through us as we do the Father's will on earth as it is in heaven.

LIVE THE STORY

The following questions are designed for use in our Community Groups as an aid to growth in the Gospel and Community.

- In what ways might Psalm 1 serve as an introduction to the whole?
- How does Psalm 2 set up a framework for understanding the psalms of lament, or psalms in which the pray-er is experiencing injustice?
- What is the nature of many of the psalms of David (beginning in Psalm 3)? How might this help us understand the relationship between the Psalms and the Kingdom of God?
- Read quickly through the Psalms 3-41, the first book of the Psalms, and imagining how you might tell the story of what David is going through.
- Psalm 89 is the end of book III of the Psalms. What is the story of this psalm and what hope does the psalmist have by the end of it?
- How does the hope for a future king change in books IV & V?
- Why is praying the psalms important for us today?
- Why do you think the NT authors regularly saw Christ as fulfilling the Psalms? How does the story of the Psalms help explain that?
- Why are the Psalms ideal for praying in an already/not yet kingdom?
- How are you going to put into practice the use of psalms for praying in a broken world for the kingdom come?

Psalms: Praying in a Broken World for the Kingdom Come

Jerry Cisar — July 17, 2022

Text: Psalm 1-2

Introduction

Athanasius: "Most of Scripture speaks to us; the Psalms speak for us."

I. Psalms of the Suffering King and His Kingdom

- A. Psalm 1 serves as an introduction to the whole.

To believe that the righteous are blessed and that the wicked shall not stand will require faith!

- B. Psalm 2 introduces the conflict.

- C. Then begin the psalms of David.

- i. Psalm 3 begins, "Lord, how many are my foes! How many rise up against me!"
- ii. Psalm 6 "How long, Lord, how long?"
- iii. Psalm 7 is the consummate Kingdom prayer as it cries out for God to decree justice. (7:3-5, 6, 9).
 - Isaiah 9:6-7
- iv. Psalm 8-9 lift our eyes up to see God's rule.

- a) God made the heavens; He made us as vice-regents.
- b) “Arise, Lord, do not let mortals triumph....” (9:7-10, 19)
- v. Psalm 10: Why do the wicked rule the day?
- vi. Psalm 13 “How long, Lord? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me?”
- vii. Psalm 18 David’s “How long” is answered when God delivers him from Saul’s pursuit to kill him.
- viii. Psalm 19 exalts the Law of the Lord and its perfection.

II. Psalms and the Ultimate Coming of the Kingdom

- A. Psalm 1 serves as an introduction to the whole, which is arranged in 5 books which end in a benediction.
 - i. 41:13
 - ii. 72: 18
 - iii. 89: 52
 - iv. 106: 48
 - v. 145:21
 - vi. Psalm 146-150 are an extended doxology, a fitting conclusion to the whole Psalter.
- B. The first 3 books deal heavily with the rise and safety of the Davidic kingdom, ending in Psalm 89 with the seeming failure of that promise.
 - i. Psalm 89:20-37

- ii. 89:38-45
- iii. The final cries of the psalm: “How long, Lord? Will you hide yourself forever?” (89:46)
- iv. From this point forward, the focus is on YHWH as King over all the earth, not a mere human king in the Davidic line.

III. The Psalter and Us

- A. If the Psalms are prayers from the sufferings of David and for the suffering of Christ, why would we still pray them?
 - i. Because we *too* take up a cross and follow him as the means of His kingdom work.
 - ii. We are called to share in Christ’s sufferings and glories to follow, so too we should share in His prayers.
 - a) 2 Cor. 1:21-22
 - b) In a broken world we proclaim an already/not yet kingdom. We need prayers for praying in a broken world for the coming kingdom.
 - c) We need prayers in which we commit ourselves, as the psalms do, to walking in God’s ways.
- B. Some may wonder: why pray them if I don’t understand them?
 - i. Bonhoeffer: “How am I to pray something that is still so incomprehensible to me?” “How are you to understand *what you have not yet prayed*? Rather than our own prayer being the standard for the psalm, it is rather the psalm that is the proper standard for our prayer.”
 - ii. We learn how to pray by praying rightly... and the Psalms, as does the Lord’s prayer, teaches us how to do that.