

1. Let me open with a positive statement: How many of you would like God to bless you for the rest of your lives? If that gets your attention, you have come to the right place.
2. Before I explain that title, let me remind all of us where we are in the Psalms. The Book of Psalms is divided into five separate books. Most bibles will show a break after Psalm 41, which is the end of Book #1. There is another break after Psalm 72 (in today's lesson) and that break will indicate that is the end of Book #2. Each of the five books ends with a doxology, which in effect is a big thank you to God for what He has done for us.
  - a) We are also close to the halfway point of the book of Psalms. There are 150 Psalms. Therefore, Psalm 75 marks the half waypoint. Given the fact that Psalm 72 is only the end of the second book, that tells us the next three books are shorter in length.
  - b) I stated many lessons ago many scholars tie each of the five psalm books to the first five books of the Old Testament. In other words, some scholars argue the first book of the psalms ties to Genesis. A lot of those psalms are "beginnings" in that they focus on the basics or the beginnings of our relationship with God. The second (the one we are in now) ties to Exodus, the third to Leviticus, etc. While I don't think that tie is crystal clear, I have to admit, now that we are finishing the second book I do see some tie in.
    - i) Let me explain: The second book of the bible, "Exodus" is about the Israelites leaving Egypt and learning to trust in the God that separated them from the Egyptians. As a large group, the Israelites had to learn what God wanted from them, how they are to worship this God and how they are to trust in Him.
  - c) With that said, think of all the lessons we have had in this second book of the psalms about asking for God's help in this problem or that problem within his life. We have had lesson after lesson talking about trusting God with different problems and different aspects of our lives. That ties to what I will teach in this lesson: Separating us as believers as we learn to trust Him with our lives and in effect, serving Him with our lives.
3. The next thing I want to state is that I am amazed at what God has shown me through these psalms studied to date and the amount of time it takes to describe these psalms.
  - a) When I started writing about the psalms, I figured by now, roughly 25 lessons later, I would be done. Instead, I'm working at a slower pace than I originally figured and at the same time God has taught me a lot of insights about these psalms. I figure that if God has gotten me this far, then I trust He will get me through the rest of this book.
  - b) For those of you reading these lessons as I write them, I am going to take a short New Testament break just so I am not spending a whole year in just this one book. After I finish that "break", God willing, I will finish all the psalms.
  - c) For those of you reading these lessons one day in my archives, hopefully there are lessons going up to the last psalm.
4. At this point let me describe the two psalms in this lesson. Psalm 71 has no title. We don't know who is the author, and as of course, I have a theory as to why there is no title. ☺
  - a) What this psalm does do in effect is look forward to our future in this lifetime. This psalm says in effect, I have trusted God with my life to date, but I am still worried about my future. I understand I am saved and I believe I will be in heaven one day. I still wonder about the rest of my life here on earth. How do I plan, and what do I do to trust in God for the rest of my life here on earth? That last sentence is my title for this lesson.
5. We also have Psalm 72 in this lesson. That psalm continues along that same theme of discussing our eternal future, but this one looks forward to the day all Christians get to enjoy Jesus ruling over the world. This psalm focuses on our eternal future with Jesus as our king. We will find it to be an appropriate ending to this second book of the Psalms.

6. This leads us well to this lesson: One key subject we have not discussed in this second book of the psalms (in detail) is about trusting God in our future. That is the key point to this lesson.
  - a) We know as Christians that God has worked on us "behind the scenes" to get us where we are today. The next question is what do we have to do practically to allow God to help us for the rest of our lives? That is the question that is addressed in effect here in these last two psalms of this second book. In other words, this lesson is about how God can and will bless the rest of our lives here on earth as well as our eternal lives with Him.
  - b) With that said, let us talk a little about planning and trusting God. There is a famous scripture in the New Testament (James 4:13) that says in effect we should not make plans for our future without praying about it first. The scripture gives an example of going to a new city and planning on making money in that city. That scripture says in effect we should not do any such thing unless it is God's will.
    - i) The big question of course is, how do we know what is God's will for our future? Should we make plans for our future or just "trust God" to lead us?
    - ii) It is important for me to say right here that I have nothing against planning for our future and I believe good Christians should plan for their future.
    - iii) With those plans in mind, we must as believers trust in the fact that God has every right to change those plans and guide us in the direction that He wants us to go. We can make plans, but we, as believers must be flexible enough to adjust our plans based on what we believe God wants to do with our lives.
    - iv) If one has no idea what God has planned for our future, first of all, welcome to the club. ☺ No believer knows what God has planned for us say, tomorrow or the next year. What we do know is that we have trusted God to get us this far in life and we should have that same trust that He will guide us through our future.
      - a) At the same time, we can have plans or even dreams for our future. We simply have to be willing to change those plans if we believe God is leading us down a different path.
  - c) Well, I believe I have now scared all of us enough to worry about our future, so, let's all take a deep breath, remember that the God has gotten us this far will also get us through our future, and that too is a key point of this lesson. With that said, let's get started.
7. Psalm 71, title: (None)
  - a) This psalm is one of a number of psalms that has no title whatsoever. I suspect it is because whoever wrote it, wants all believers and all people to realize that our future is God's hands, so in effect this psalm belongs to anyone and everyone who is willing to believe in the principals that this psalm is teaching.
  - b) I believe this title was specifically left blank, so that each of us could personally in effect, own this psalm. But John isn't that true for all of the psalms? Yes it is. However, we get scared when contemplating our own future, so maybe (it is strictly a theory) that this title was left blank so we would not think about the author here, but strictly focus on our relationship with God and what that means for our future.
8. Verse 1: In you, O LORD, I have taken refuge; let me never be put to shame.
  - a) This psalm starts with the usual type of message that we have commonly seen in the psalms. That is, the author is in some sort of trouble, and then describes taking refuge in God. That is, the author is thinking about God helping to get him through a problem.
  - b) I believe the point here in Verse 1 and through the first few verses of this psalm, is not about a specific problem the author is dealing with, but is about the unnamed author reminding himself and reminding the reader that God has been a place for comfort for any and all believers willing to trust in Him. The second part of this verse reminds us that despite all of our worries and fears, we never have to be ashamed of our relationship with God and what that means for our lives.
  - c) In short, this verse reminds us that God has gotten us this far and won't let us down now.

9. Verse 2: Rescue me and deliver me in your righteousness; turn your ear to me and save me.
  - a) This second verse asks God to rescue the author "in His righteousness". Personally I don't think the author is in any particular trouble at the moment. I could be wrong, but I think the author is just asking for God's protection over his or her whole life.
    - i) I say that, because that is the flavor of this entire psalm.
  - b) This verse then asks God to "turn His ear to me". This verse is not saying that God has ears or that we need to get His attention in order for Him to be aware of our problems. The verse is saying in effect, "Dear God, please work in my life in a way that is obvious to me that You are there and You are watching over me." Maybe the author is in a particular jam at the moment and just needs God's help. Or, more likely, the author just wants God to guide Him and be with Him as that author (and us) goes about their lives.
  - c) Think of it this way: we as people may not get God to work obvious miracles in our lives every moment of the day, but we do ask that He always be there, always watch over our lives and guide us in what He desires for us.
10. Verse 3: Be my rock of refuge, to which I can always go; give the command to save me, for you are my rock and my fortress. <sup>4</sup> Deliver me, O my God, from the hand of the wicked, from the grasp of evil and cruel men.
  - a) Notice the word "be" to start off Verse 3. My point is the author wants God to be in charge of our life. The author wants God to always be a place where the author (and us) can run to for "mental safety and protection".
  - b) Now notice the last part of the Verse 3 says in effect God "is" my rock and fortress.
    - i) So did God "move" from being asked to guide this person to actually doing it? Of course not. It is about us being aware of God's presence. The author is asking God in effect to help that author be aware that He is there, He is watching over us, and He wants to guide us through whatever we are dealing with and to be our "rock and fortress".
  - c) It may help to quickly explain that phrase, "rock and fortress". Imagine being inside a medieval city with high walls. Imagine that city being impregnable to enemies (this is before the days of airplanes) and even being impregnable to anyone climbing over those walls or even shooting arrows over those walls. In other words, the author is giving a visual picture of safety. It is a place one can mentally run to for safety from whatever one is dealing with.
    - i) Yes, the reality of whatever we deal with is still there. Having that mental place of comfort gives us the strength to face whatever we do have to deal with. That place can also be where God guides us how we deal with our issues.
  - d) Verse 4 then goes on to give the specifics of the problem the author is facing.
    - i) Let me put it this way: At this moment we may or may not be dealing with wicked and cruel people. In order for us to have both the strength and wisdom to face whatever such people are doing to us, we first need to go to that "mental place" (for a lack of a better term) where we can focus on God and focus on Him both protecting us and guiding us through that time.
    - ii) Once we accept the idea that God is in charge of our particular situation, we can better face whatever we have to deal with. At that point, the results are now His problem and not ours. Once we let go of those results, we can better face whatever it is we have to deal with, be it "wicked and cruel men" or whatever we have to face.
11. Verse 5: For you have been my hope, O Sovereign LORD, my confidence since my youth. <sup>6</sup> From birth I have relied on you; you brought me forth from my mother's womb. I will ever praise you.
  - a) Let me address those of you who have trusted in God since you were young. Isn't it amazing how you can look back at your life and realize how much God has gotten you through things? Isn't it amazing to realize how God has gotten you this far in life?

- b) Let me take that concept one step further and address those of us who have not given our lives to Jesus until later in life. When we look back at our lives, isn't it amazing how God has been there to guide us despite all the mistakes we have made and despite all of the sins we have committed?
    - i) I like to put that concept this way: If you have given your life to serving Jesus, that means God was aware of that commitment before you or I were born. A perfect God cannot learn anything. That means that He had His hands on us (so to speak) since we were young and was there guiding us through all of our years prior to us giving to lives to serving Him.
    - ii) If you can't think of a good reason to praise God at this moment in time, stop and consider the fact that You or I are still alive at this moment and it is very possible we would not have even made it to "this moment" if it wasn't for God guiding us?
    - iii) That concept of "God was always there guiding us" is the main point of these two verses. Verse 6 ends with the author praising God for the realization that He was always there guiding his or her life even since birth.
  - c) I can't leave this section without talking a little about my family history. All four of my grandparents immigrated to the United States from what is now Croatia. I have traveled there and seeing how hard some of my relatives lived. It makes me all the more grateful for how wonderful life has been for me. I doubt very much I would be doing today what I have been doing for God if I was still living in that country. The point is God has been guiding all of our lives even before we were born whether we realize it or not.
12. Verse 7: I have become like a portent to many, but you are my strong refuge.
- a) I admit I had to look up the word "portent" to see what it means. The idea is essentially that one's life is a surprise to many people. While other people may see us and wonder how we got so religious or do so many things for God, it is God Himself who provides us with the strength and ability to do what we do. That is the point here.
    - i) You or I may dedicate a lot of time to some project in our church or give our time to say, raising Godly children. Others may look at us and wonder, "How did that person get to be like that? What they don't realize is that it is God who is our strength who gives us the ability to do what we do.
  - b) An interesting statistic in the United States is that devout Christians are far more giving of their time and money than those who have not committed their lives to God. Those who are secular (i.e., non-religious) in this country in many cases make more money but are also a lot less generous with their income. It is a statistical fact that has been true for a long time. What nonbelievers refuse to see is the fact it is our trust in God that gives the ability to do what we do for God with both our time and our resources.
  - c) I said in the beginning of this lesson is that it is about our future. A simple point here is that if God has gotten us this far, we can trust in Him to guide us the rest of our lives.
13. Verse 8: My mouth is filled with your praise, declaring your splendor all day long.
- a) This is the first of many verses in this psalm telling us to praise God "all the time". So does mean we should be praising God as we walk down the street or driving in our car? While such actions may get us in a better mood, I don't believe that is the point here.
  - b) The point is that what we say and do in life should be pleasing to God. If we are trusting God to guide our lives, then we are trusting that what "comes out of us", be it any good work, is in fact God guiding us. In that sense, we are praising God all day long. It doesn't mean we are perfect all the time. It means that if we make the effort to be conscious of God guiding our lives, He in turn does actually guide us, and our actions do in fact praise Him whether we realize it or not.
  - c) I've come to realize that one reason God wants me to pray daily is that it gets my focus on Him and that in turn gets me to do the things He wants me to do through the day. That concept in effect, is what this verse is teaching.

14. Verse 9: Do not cast me away when I am old; do not forsake me when my strength is gone. <sup>10</sup> For my enemies speak against me; those who wait to kill me conspire together. <sup>11</sup> They say, "God has forsaken him; pursue him and seize him, for no one will rescue him."
- a) There are many commentators who think the writer of this psalm is getting up there in age and now that writer is worried that God may forsake that person when he is old.
    - i) It is a natural fear of all believes that when we reach an age where we can't do what we used to do, at that point, God may "forsake us" in order to use younger people to do His will in the world.
  - b) Verses 10 and 11 give a specific example of how one can feel forsaken when they are old. Verse 10 talk about having enemies and the fear that the author's enemy will now be too strong for us to be able to resist that enemy.
    - i) Let's talk about spiritual enemies: Such demonic creatures don't age like we do. Further, such demonic creatures cannot take away our salvation if we are trusting in Jesus' sin payment. They can and do harass us because it is their goal for us to be ineffective witnesses for Jesus. The fear is that when we are old we won't have the strength to battle such forces. Remember that it is up to God to protect us. Just as He loves us, we have to trust in that love as long as we live.
    - ii) OK John, what about human enemies? They may not lighten up on us once we are old. A key point here is that if we can trust in a God that has guided us since before we were born is the same God that can be trusted to guide and protect us the remaining days that He has called on us to serve Him in this lifetime.
    - iii) A God who has guided us since before we born will not abandon us if we can't physically cope like we used to. That is what God is reassuring us in these verses.
15. Verse 12: Be not far from me, O God; come quickly, O my God, to help me.
- a) Verse 12 has a panic tone to it. It is almost as if the writer is thinking, "I am in big trouble dealing with my enemies and I'm facing the fact I am getting old."
    - i) Most of us have had those moments where it feels like God is not there and we do need His help here and now. That is the tone of this verse.
  - b) The results of the prayer of this verse are not known. I simply know from my own history that during the tough moments of my own life, God has been there and the fact that I am alive and still breathing is a testimony that God is still there working in my life.
    - i) I should also add the fact that God never promises a pain-free life. He only promises that our trust in Him will see us through the difficult times of our lives.
16. Verse 13: May my accusers perish in shame; may those who want to harm me be covered with scorn and disgrace.
- a) If there is one thing I have come to learn by now in the psalms, is that they love to go back and forth between focusing on God and then focusing on our problems at hand. It is as if the author is reminding God, "Yes I trust in You, but my enemies are still there and I want those enemies to fail in shame of what they did and are trying to do to me. "
  - b) This psalm is also about having our whole life in perspective. If we can recall that God has guided us so far in life, that will help us to trust in Him that somehow and someday He will work out whatever we are dealing with at this moment.
  - c) In summary the way to give God our problems often involves the concept that if we can recall the fact that God has been guiding us all of our lives, that fact can help us deal with whatever we are facing at the present moment.
17. Verse 14: But as for me, I will always have hope; I will praise you more and more. <sup>15</sup> My mouth will tell of your righteousness, of your salvation all day long, though I know not its measure.
- a) Stop and consider the following point: Did the author's problems magically go away between Verses 13 and 14? Of course not. What is changing is the author's perspective. The point is if we are trusting in God, there is always hope that He will get us through our current situation no matter how difficult the problem may seem to you and me.

- b) The last phrase of this verse is about praising God "more and more". As we watch God get us through another day or another situation, that should give us another reason to actually praise Him for our lives.
    - i) If you read through this psalm a few times, one will notice that a recurring theme in this psalm is the idea of praising God "more and more". The idea is the longer we have lived, the more reasons we should have accumulated to praise God as we should be able to count how God has worked in our past.
  - c) But John, I thought you said the purpose of this lesson is to understand how God is going to work in our life in the future, not in the past. Yes I did and I meant it. ☺
    - i) The way we face our future is to remind ourselves every now and then that God has been there in our past, and that gives us the strength and courage to face whatever we have to face at the present moment and in the future.
  - d) Continuous praise is about regularly pausing to praise God (say, in our prayer time and in group worship settings) for what He has and will do in our lives. We remind ourselves that God is guiding us, especially when we don't have a solution for our problems.
  - e) Remember that God is more powerful than we can describe. Just because we can't fully understand Him, should not prevent us for being grateful for what He does for us.
18. Verse 16: I will come and proclaim your mighty acts, O Sovereign LORD; I will proclaim your righteousness, yours alone.
- a) The "praise fest of God" continues here in Verse 16. This verse describes how we will come and praise what God has and will do for us. So when are we going to do this? A way of letting others know about the God we love is to share that love with others. One way we do that is to publicly thank Him for the things He has done in our lives.
  - b) Let me ask an entirely different question: Would you rather hang around grateful people or unhappy people? Everyone has problems but nobody wants to hang around a person who complains all the time. On the other hand, a person who is grateful for the things God has done in one's life is positively contagious and makes a great witness for Him.
19. Verse 17: Since my youth, O God, you have taught me, and to this day I declare your marvelous deeds. <sup>18</sup> Even when I am old and gray, do not forsake me, O God, till I declare your power to the next generation, your might to all who are to come.
- a) Verse 17 mentions our youth and the fact that God has always guided us since we were young whether we realize that or not. Verse 18 asks God not to forsake us when we are old and finally, this verse asks us to spread our knowledge of Him to the next generation.
  - b) First let me focus on "us" and then I'll discuss the next generation.
    - i) I have already stated in this lesson that if we have given our hearts to God, we can look back at our lives since we were young and realize how God has had His hand on us all through the years prior to us actually committing our lives to Him.
    - ii) The point of these two verses is that if we are aware that God has been with us since our beginning, then we should also trust in the fact that He will be there until our end (of our time on earth and beyond) and He will continue to guide us.
    - iii) We don't have to fear growing old. We may fear a day when we don't have the strength to do things younger people are doing, but just as God has been with us through the past we can trust He will guide and help us when we are old.
  - c) I've always held the view that a Christian never really retires from serving God. Recently I ran into a former pastor of mine who retired from my former church some years back. He reminded me that a Christian never really retires. He and his wife now travel back and forth to Thailand and they work at a bible college there. The point is not that we have to travel when we are old. The point is we can and should never stop being useful to God and if we are willing to trust in Him when we are older, then God can and will give us ways we can serve Him when we are old. That is the idea behind the phrase in Verse 18 of declaring Him to the next generation.

20. Verse 19: Your righteousness reaches to the skies, O God, you who have done great things. Who, O God, is like you?
- The idea of Verse 19 is not that God is so tall He could stand up and reach the sky. ☺ The idea is that if one could recount all the ways God has been guiding us and watching over us since our youth, that "book of remembrance" would be big enough to in effect "reach the sky". The point is no false deity or no other deed can do compares to the great deeds God does for those and through those who trust in Him.
  - In the bible, there are references to a number of "books" that God has about us. One of them is called the "Book of Remembrance". (See Malachi 3:16.) The idea is that God keeps track of all the times we have thought of Him and in effect "remembered" His existence. I believe here in Verse 19, we are seeing the reverse of that concept in that when we stop to consider all that God has done for us, it gives us yet another reason to praise Him when we realize again, that nothing in this life compares to the God of this world.
21. Verse 20: Though you have made me see troubles, many and bitter, you will restore my life again; from the depths of the earth you will again bring me up.
- Notice Verse 20 does not say that trusting in God will make us problem free. Instead it is saying that God has made us (as in allowed us) to see many troubles. This verse is then saying in effect that God will bring me out of those problems, period.
    - The point is not that we will get out of our troubles on our timing or by the way we think we will. The point is God promises to see us through our troubles.
    - The end of our troubles may be in heaven or that may be on earth. Either way, it is a cause to celebrate what God will do in our lives (again, notice the future tense), which is the key point of this psalm.
22. Verse 21: You will increase my honor and comfort me once again.
- I stated that this psalm is about our future. The point here is that we can praise God today for what He will (big emphasis on "will") do in our future.
  - We can count on God to get us through whatever problems we are facing today. There will come a day, either when we go to heaven or still in this lifetime when God will increase our honor (i.e., He rescue us from our problems) and give us comfort.
23. Verse 22: I will praise you with the harp for your faithfulness, O my God; I will sing praise to you with the lyre, O Holy One of Israel.
- Is this verse saying we have to take harp lessons to praise God? No. It is saying we should make the effort to praise God and if we have or will have a musical talent we should use that talent to glorify Him.
  - I read that the instrument called a lyre here is actually a tough instrument to learn. Just as it takes time to learn how to play an instrument, so we should not be afraid (at any age) to take the time to learn something new that we could use to praise God.
24. Verse 23: My lips will shout for joy when I sing praise to you-- I, whom you have redeemed.  
<sup>24</sup>My tongue will tell of your righteous acts all day long, for those who wanted to harm me have been put to shame and confusion.
- The psalm ends with praise for what God has done in our lives. I believe these verses are describing our future "in the past tense" as if it is already done. The point of these two verses is that we should take the time to regularly praise God for the good He has done and will do for us in our lives.
  - In summary, we should praise God, for our sake, as to keep our focus on Him and remind us that He is always there guiding us and that praise makes a good witness to others.
  - Before I wrap up Psalm 71, let me share one more bit of interesting information: None of the verses in this psalm are original. Every verse in this psalm is taken from somewhere else in the psalms. Why is that? I suspect that the writer of this psalm, matured to the point where he is now not just reading previous psalms but taking them personally and growing in what they teach. That is God's goal for all of us, to personalize these psalms.

25. Psalm 72, title: Of Solomon.
- a) Notice the title does not say "by" Solomon, but "of" Solomon. I believe David wrote this psalm, but it was written for the coronation of David's son, Solomon. That will become clearer as we study this psalm.
  - b) Remember that God promised David that one of his descendants would rule the world forever. That "royal line" of kings began with King Solomon. (See 2nd Samuel 7:12-13.)
  - c) It might be worth a few minutes (while I'm in the neighborhood ☺) to explain how Jesus is a direct descendant of King Solomon. If one studies Jesus' genealogy in Luke's Gospel, Jesus is not a descendant of Solomon, but of one of his half brothers, named Nathan. (See 2nd Samuel 5:14 and Luke 3:31.) So if Jesus was born of a virgin birth and his mother's line is through Nathan, how is Jesus a direct descendant of King Solomon?
    - i) Great question. Joseph was Mary's husband, but not Jesus actual father. Joseph was a direct descendant of Solomon and part of that royal bloodline. However, God cursed one of Joseph's ancestors named Jeconiah. Therefore, Joseph's bloodline was not allowed to be part of God's blessing to David's descendants through Solomon. (References: See Jeremiah 22:23 and Matthew 1:11. Also see Jeremiah 24:1 to verify that when Jeremiah speaks of a man named Coniah, it is actually the same person as the Jeconiah who was an ancestor of Joseph.)
    - ii) That is why the virgin birth was a necessity, to get around that curse. In the Old Testament law, a woman must marry someone from her own tribe, so whatever is hers is not lost to another tribe. If a Jewish woman owned property, that property becomes the property of her husband once they are married. By marrying within one's own tribe, the property of that tribe never changes in size. The same idea could apply to her children. By Jewish law, Jesus became the legally adopted son of Joseph because Mary agreed to marry Joseph and in effect, "what belonged to her now belonged to him". (See Numbers 36:8 for this law about Jewish marriage.)
    - iii) The point is, Jesus became part of the royal line of Solomon despite the curse on a descendant of Solomon and that is why the virgin birth was necessary.
  - d) OK, last time I checked, we are studying Psalm 72, and not the virgin birth. ☺ My point of this whole exercise is to show how Jesus is also part of that "royal line" that began with Solomon and as we'll discover, is the key point of this psalm.
26. Verse 1: Endow the king with your justice, O God, the royal son with your righteousness. <sup>2</sup> He will judge your people in righteousness, your afflicted ones with justice.
- a) This verse is asking God the Father to endow (as in give) the king your justice and fill up the "royal son" with God's righteousness.
  - b) As I stated earlier, I believe this psalm was written for the coronation of King Solomon. The writer of the psalm, who I believe was David was asking God that Solomon be given the ability to rule "the right way".
    - i) The idea here is that the ability to be a good ruler does not come from "inside of us", but comes from God. The idea for us is that if we want our political leaders to be good rulers, it is in effect not up to them, but God to work through them.
    - ii) One can see the immediate application applies to Solomon and it will become clear in a few verses that the long-term application is for Jesus himself.
  - c) OK John, good for Jesus and I guess good for Solomon. ☺ What does that mean for me?
    - i) This is a reminder to us to pray for our political leaders. This includes the ones we don't like. What we should pray for is that our political leaders rule "correctly" and "fairly", which in effect is the same word as "justly".
    - ii) So why do we actually have to pray for our leaders? The answer is that God put them in charge and God wants them to rule correctly. Know that there are people and demonic forces that always want to drive our leaders away from God's will and it is up to us to pray for those leaders to get them to do His will.



27. Verse 3: The mountains will bring prosperity to the people, the hills the fruit of righteousness.
- What this verse is saying in effect is that the king is governing so well, that the land is prospering. This verse is a prayer for our leaders to make wise decisions so that our land (nation) will be prosperous and in effect glorify God through that prosperity.
  - So does that mean we should pray for prosperity for our land? In effect, yes. The key to financial success of a country (or any area) is that God's people need to be seeking Him (God) for that success. We should pray for God to work through our leaders to do what is right, so then all the people subject to that leader are then benefiting.
  - What if I disagree with our political leaders? Let me put it this way: Paul taught us to pray for our political leaders (See Romans 13:1-6) and when he wrote that, a wicked Roman emperor (Nero) was ruling. Do you think Paul liked Nero's rule? Of course not. However, Paul understood that all leaders are God appointed and therefore God calls on us to pray for our leaders that they govern well over the area that God has given them.
    - Well, is it ok to vote against rulers we don't like? If we have that freedom to vote, then vote for whom you believe is the best candidate for each position. However, we should also remember that God rules, and because He rules, we pray to Him for the results of any and all elections as ultimately He decides who rules.
28. Verse 4: He will defend the afflicted among the people and save the children of the needy; he will crush the oppressor.
- It is much easier to read these verses thinking about Jesus than it is to think about my elected leaders. That is because I believe that when Jesus literally comes back to rule over the earth, He will do so in a perfect and just way, and I want that to happen.
  - With that said, let us look at Verse 4. This verse says that the leader who do God's will, will defend the afflicted and save the needy children and crush the oppressor. I can summarize this in one thought: The leader will help those who cannot help themselves.
    - In effect, the verse is about not letting wicked people get away with things. Yes, that will only truly be fulfilled when the one perfect king rules over the world, but in the meantime we should pray for our own leaders to also do what is right.
29. Verse 5: He will endure as long as the sun, as long as the moon, through all generations.
- If one has any doubts that this psalm is ultimately pointing toward a single entity that will rule forever, I present Verse 5. This verse is saying in effect this person will rule forever.
  - On one hand, this verse is asking that Solomon may he be such a good ruler that we want that ruler to continue as long as possible. This verse could be a poetic of desiring for a good ruler to be in charge as long as possible.
  - The ultimate fulfillment of this verse only coming through God's "appointed one", who the Jewish people call the Messiah and what we Christians call Jesus in His role in the Second Coming when He comes to rule over the world.
    - One of the reasons the Jewish people of Jesus' day (2,000 years ago) could not accept Jesus, is they saw psalms like this talking about a Messiah who will rule the world and the Jews couldn't see Jesus in that past day fulfilling that role.
    - A devout Jewish person may ask, "Where in the Old Testament does it specifically say the Messiah will come two times? The correct answer is it does not. However, the bible also never states the Messiah will only come once. The point is one can read passages about a "suffering Messiah" and a "ruling Messiah" and come to the conclusion that either there are two Messiahs or the same one comes twice.
30. Verse 6: He will be like rain falling on a mown field, like showers watering the earth.
- Remember that Israel is a desert climate, so they look at rain as a blessing from God. Just as rain is a blessing to land so that it naturally produces vegetation for us to survive, so we are asking that God bring us a leader that is as good to us as rain is to the earth.
  - Does this mean I should pray for rain? Many a farmer has done that through history. I believe if we need rain, we should ask Him to respond His way and on His timing.

31. Verse 7: In his days the righteous will flourish; prosperity will abound till the moon is no more.
  - a) The tone of this psalm is increasing to the point where it could only apply to God's Messiah (Jesus) ruling over the world. This verse says that when this person rules over the world, the righteous (those who seek God) will flourish and those who trust in Him will be successful until the moon is no more.
  - b) Let me comment on "the moon is no more". It may just be a colorful way of saying this leader will rule forever until in effect the world no longer exists. It could also be talking about the future day where there is no source of light other than God Himself (see Revelation 21:23) and therefore the moon, as a source of light is no longer needed.
  - c) OK John, what exactly do we Christians do when Jesus actually rules over the world? First of all, the bible promises that believers will rule and reign with Him. (See 2nd Timothy 2:12.). I suspect that if God gives us a desire to do something for His glory, that desire will continue in the next life. Yes we will have rest, but at the same time I believe God will make us productive for Him and that is the idea of eternal prosperity.
32. Verse 8: He will rule from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth.
  - a) This verse is saying in a colorful way that this person will rule over the whole earth.
  - b) When the text mentions the River, it is not referring to the Jordan River bordering Israel, but the Euphrates River in Iraq. The idea in effect is that the land of Israel where Jesus will rule from will be greatly extended to include much of the Middle East.
  - c) I should pause here and say that there are a lot of good Christians who don't believe that Jesus will literally rule from the earth one day. They just believe that God wraps up this world as we know it and we all go to heaven. While I do believe such people are saved if they are trusting in Jesus' complete payment for their sins, I do believe they are wrong in their views of "end-time theology" as taught in psalms like this.
  - d) It is psalms like #72 that give me the evidence to believe that Jesus will literally rule over the entire earth one day. The verse says from sea to sea, or in effect over the whole world.
33. Verse 9: The desert tribes will bow before him and his enemies will lick the dust.
  - a) A person might wonder, "Well, the Israelites might agree to have Jesus rule over them, but what about the enemies of Israel? Or what about the remote locations of the world?"
    - i) The short answer is Jesus will rule over the enemies of His people and the most remote parts of the world. How that specifically will be organized, I don't know.
    - ii) Part of the answer involves trust. If we can trust in a God we cannot see to guide our lives than we can also trust in a God to appoint His anointed one (that is what "Messiah" literally means, appointed one) to rule over the entire world.
    - iii) Will that involve conquering the whole world? Revelation Chapter 16 speaks of a great battle, or literally a great "wipe-out" of the forces that oppose God.
    - iv) We don't have to worry about how the Messiah comes to power or how He rules over the entire world, but simply to accept the idea that if there is an all-powerful God, He can and will make this happen.
34. Verse 10: The kings of Tarshish and of distant shores will bring tribute to him; the kings of Sheba and Seba will present him gifts.
  - a) Scholars debate over what or where is "Tarshish". Some argue it is Spain, and others say England. The point here is the most distant land an ancient Israelite can imagine will pay tribute to this king of Israel.
  - b) The verse then mentions Sheba (Ethiopia) and Seba (most likely Egypt). The idea here is that powerful leaders will present this king with gifts. While the queen of Sheba did visit Solomon, (See 1st Kings 10,) the ultimate fulfillment does come when the Messiah rules.
  - c) OK John, tell me again why I should care that future kings will bring Jesus gifts? As Christians we should care about what He does and even what He receives. Remember that Christians will be busy ruling and reigning with Jesus (again see 2nd Timothy 2:12). Whatever gifts Jesus receives, in effect belong to us as well. (See Revelation 21:7.)

35. Verse 11: All kings will bow down to him and all nations will serve him.
- a) Verse 10 gave the examples of two local kingdoms (Sheba and Seba) and a place that was to an Israelite in effect the end of the world and that was Tarshish.
  - b) Verse 11 makes it clear that it is not just these specific locations that acknowledge the future Israelite king as King of the whole world, but that all kings and all nations will acknowledge either by force or by free choice that Jesus is in charge.
  - c) There are times as a Christian believer when one questions if everything we believe in is worth the time and trouble. Other religions also argue for a view of paradise with their god being in charge. How do we know our view is correct?
    - i) For starters, history records support the stories of the bible. Further, the bible is the only book filled not only with predictions future to us, but of predictions that have already come true. The reason we can trust our bible is because it already has a great track record for being accurate. With that in mind, we can also trust in effect that we are "betting on the right horse" to be in charge for all of eternity.
36. Verse 12: For he will deliver the needy who cry out, the afflicted who have no one to help. <sup>13</sup> He will take pity on the weak and the needy and save the needy from death. <sup>14</sup> He will rescue them from oppression and violence, for precious is their blood in his sight.
- a) The point of these three verses is that Jesus won't just be sitting there accepting gifts from people. He will also help the needy. These verses teach us that God cares about people and wants to rescue those who are in trouble.
  - b) So does this mean when Jesus comes back there will still be problems in the world? Yes, because we as humans will still have our "sin nature" within us.
  - c) The book of Revelation, Chapter 20, speaks of a 1,000-year period where Jesus literally rules from the earth. That chapter also says that Satan will be bound up during that time.
    - i) The way I see the end times, is that there is a great battle, as described in most of the book of Revelation, but some people do survive through this time and they are the people who Jesus rules and reigns over. However, even with Satan being bound up, the problem is that human nature "on its own" is still bent on sinning.
    - ii) What that means in effect, is there will still be people trying to take advantage of others. There will still be people in need of being rescued. During this reign, people will still need help and maybe that is one way we rule and reign with Him.
37. Verse 15: Long may he live! May gold from Sheba be given him. May people ever pray for him and bless him all day long.
- a) It is interesting to think about this verse from the perspective of Solomon. He did live a long life. Gold from Sheba (again, Ethiopia) was given to Solomon as described in 1st Kings Chapter 10. I'm sure many Israelites happily prayed for Solomon if for no other reason, that country was blessed with great wealth and peace at that time.
  - b) So does this mean that Jesus' rule will be a lot like Solomon's? It will in the sense of gifts, justice and even though Jesus will rule forever, people will pray for Him and bless Him.
  - c) OK John, if Jesus is ruling forever, why should we pray for Him at that time?
    - i) Praying is always about getting God's will done for our lives. Praying for God's will is about reminding ourselves to do His will. Praying now for that time era is what we pray every time we say, "Your kingdom come" as part of "The Lord's prayer" (See Matthew 6:10 or Luke 11:2).
38. Verse 16: Let grain abound throughout the land; on the tops of the hills may it sway. Let its fruit flourish like Lebanon; let it thrive like the grass of the field.
- a) Here is another verse about God blessing the land itself. This verse is saying that when this ruler (again, Jesus) is in charge, our crops be blessed as they grow well in this land.
    - i) Remember that in Israel's day, a great fear was enemies coming to steal what produce that was growing in order to support foreign armies. This verse is in effect, asking for God's protection of what grows in the ground.

39. Verse 17: May his name endure forever; may it continue as long as the sun. All nations will be blessed through him, and they will call him blessed.
- a) As this psalm applies to Solomon, one can see how it is asking that he be a king for a long time and may his rule be a blessing to other nations.
  - b) As it applies to Jesus, the ultimate fulfillment is asking that a king come who rules as long as the sun shines i.e., forever.
  - c) Verse 17 is the beginning of a final blessing that runs through the end of the chapter. Let me add the last three verses and then talk about this final blessing.
40. Verse 18: Praise be to the LORD God, the God of Israel, who alone does marvelous deeds.  
<sup>19</sup>Praise be to his glorious name forever; may the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen and Amen. <sup>20</sup> This concludes the prayers of David son of Jesse.
- a) The idea here is to praise our God, who will make all of these future predictions as described in this psalm happen. The short-term fulfillment was through Solomon, but the long-term fulfillment comes when God's promised Messiah will come to rule and reign over the earth.
  - b) As a final thought on this lesson, think about this blessing in terms of the second book of the five books of the psalms. The big picture idea is that God did not separate us as a group of believers just to worship Him and in effect, "that's it". God calls on us to trust in Him through all of our trials and God is promising there is coming a future day that is much greater than anything we can imagine in this lifetime. In other words God did not save us to just let us suffer here in this lifetime. He has a great plan for our future both in terms of our lives here on earth and our eternal future ruling and reigning with Jesus. That is the positive message of this psalm and of this lesson.
    - i) I promised this lesson is about God blessing our lives, and I meant it. By trusting in God, we can be blessed for the remainder of our lives here and in the next life by simply trusting God through whatever we are dealing with at any moment.
  - c) To end this lesson another way, Psalm 71 teaches us to be grateful as to trust in God's future plan for us in this lifetime while Psalm 72 teaches us to be grateful for what God has planned for us in the next lifetime. For all of that we should be grateful to God and that is the main point of this message.
  - d) The final line of this psalm says that the "prayers of David are ended". That does not mean this is the last of David's psalms. What that means is this psalm (#72) was written by David to coronate Solomon as well as look forward to the ultimate ruler.
41. Father, I don't know what the future holds for me, but You do. I don't know what You have planned for me for the rest of my life here on earth, but I do know that my goal in life should be to do Your will now and forever. Help me to trust that You have a wonderful plan for me and for me to be grateful for what You will do in my life in the future and for eternity. For that we are eternally grateful and we express that gratitude so as to remind ourselves of what You will do and to share that love You have for us with others. We ask this in Jesus' name Amen.