

The Doctrine of the Messianic Psalms¹

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Classification of the Messianic Psalms		
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Summary Chart	Which Theologian Classifies Which Psalms as Messianic	The Progressive Revelation of Jesus Christ in Scripture

Preface: In the psalms, there is no neat way to divide them up into various groups, either by author or by type, and not leave some psalms out. Or, if enough categories are devised, then there will be overlap. Therefore, we have no way of completely classifying the psalms as we can classify, for instance, the epistles. That being said, there are a number of psalms which are often referred to as the Messianic Psalms. Unfortunately, these are not as well-defined as we would like.

Since we are covering a large number of psalms in this study, exegesis will be minimal and one's interest in a particular passage may be more stimulated than satisfied.

- Definition: a Messianic Psalm is a psalm which makes reference to the Messiah.** Although the tenor or topics of the psalm may deal with a variety of subjects, somewhere in the psalm, we have a glimpse of the Messiah to come. In several of these psalms, the emphasis is upon the Messiah.
 - Actually, the word *messiah* is *māshîyach* (מָשִׁיחַ) [pronounced *maw--SHEE-ahkh*], which means *anointed, anointed one, messiah*. Strong's #4899 BDB #603.
 - This is a word often applied to kings as being anointed by God (for instance, I Sam. 16:6 26:9, 11).
 - David's greater son would be King for all time. Although this word is more often applied to individual kings, it is occasionally applied to Jesus Christ (e.g., Psalm 89:51).
 - Both Jewish and Christian theologies tend to apply this word more often to the Messiah to come.
- Since there is division among theologians as to what psalms are actually messianic, we must have some method or some sort of **guidelines by which we can distinguish and isolate the Messianic Psalms.**

¹ This doctrine is inspired and taken in part from *The Complete Word Study Old Testament*; Dr. S. Zodhiates; ©1994 AMG Publishers; p. 1410. My original list of Messianic psalms came from my notes in my NASB; which notes presumably came from R.B. Thieme Jr. I added several psalms added to this list (Psalm 31 41 68 69 104 109 118). This is not to say that Bob missed these psalms in his teaching; it may be that I missed these psalms in my own notes. Furthermore, some of these psalms might be questionably designated as Messianic Psalms.

- a. The testimony of Old Testament authors. If an Old Testament author connects a psalm, or a passage in a psalm with the Messiah to come, then we consider that to be a Messianic Psalm.
 - b. Christ made reference to a psalm in connection with Himself.
 - c. A New Testament author makes reference back to one of these psalms and ties it to Jesus Christ, the Messiah of Israel.
 - d. There is the historic testimony of Jews and/or Christians to indicate that a particular psalm is messianic.
 - e. As we will see, the entire thrust of the psalm did not have to be Messianic (e.g., Psalm 34).
3. **The proper application or interpretation of these psalms to the Messiah:**
- a. One view is that these psalms (or some of them) are directly about David and indirectly about Jesus Christ. A modification of this view (point d below) is the most reasonable interpretation.
 - b. Some see the trials of these psalms as pertaining only to David, but not to the Messiah. A problem here is that some of the sufferings alluded to were apparently not suffered by David, but certainly suffered by our Lord in His incarnation.
 - c. Another view is that David wrote these psalms while in the Spirit and that they were directly about the Messiah to come. David looked to these psalms for comfort in his own trials and tribulations. This also allows for Christians to look back on these psalms for comfort in their own troubles. This is too narrow a view, although its occasional application is legitimate. The introduction to Psalm 34 or 56 make it clear that these psalms were written by David during a time of great pressure. Applying the bulk of these two psalms to Jesus is just unrealistic.
 - d. The first view, with modifications, appears to be the most universally applied. David wrote these psalms while inspired by God the Holy Spirit. He was occasionally caused by God the Holy Spirit to step out from his own direct experience and to present the Messiah apart from himself (e.g., Psalm 22:16–18). However, much of the time, what we find here are the trials and tribulations of David, which are a veiled glimpse of the sufferings of God's Son. There are some cases where, even though Jesus quoted a line from one of these psalms, that the psalm itself was not necessarily a Messianic Psalm in its entirety (e.g., Psalm 31). In other words, some of these psalms which as classified in this way do not deal directly with the coming Messiah.
4. **A proper classification of Messianic Psalms.** There is a tendency among some believers (and I was one of these) to, when I saw something about this or that verse being fulfilled, I wanted to look back at the Old Testament passage and see at least the shadow of what came to pass. That is, while our Lord was on the cross, and a gospel writer makes reference to this or that Old Testament passage, I wanted to see at least a short dissertation of the Messiah, either His suffering or His ultimate victory, carefully entrenched in the passage in question; however, this is *not* always the case. Almost at the end, our Lord's said, "**Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit**" and this was a quotation of Psalm 31:5a. Well, I wanted to look back at Psalm 31 and find, at least in the immediate context, shadow references to the cross. However, they are not there. In v. 5b, we have **you have ransomed me, O God of Truth**. David, the writer of the psalm was ransomed; the Jesus the Messiah was *not* ransomed and therefore would not quote all of v. 5. In the psalm, David is speaking of himself throughout; and *committing his spirit* was not his final words at death, but a declaration of his dependence upon God. When Jesus quotes this, He gives a parallel usage of those words (and, it is not even a parallel situation). Those words were not fulfilled, per se, in Jesus' words and last few minutes on the cross. My point is, not every psalm which is quoted in the New Testament is a Messianic Psalm. In fact, there are a few times when nothing in the psalm is messianic, and yet it is still quoted. Therefore, we need to properly classify these psalms that we will be examining:
- a. The bulk of the psalms that we will study is about either the 1st and/or 2nd advent of our Lord—at least in part. The application of this psalm to David, if such an application exists, is secondary and sometimes nonexistent in portions of the psalm. This would be properly classified a **Messianic Psalm**.
 - b. There are psalms which are principally about David (or the writer of the psalm); however, there are glimpses of the cross or of our Lord's 1st advent. Sometimes these glimpses are apart from the writer's experience and sometimes there is a parallel. Although this is not really a Messianic Psalm, it is a **Psalm with Messianic highlights**.
 - c. There are some psalms which are clearly about some experience in the writer's life; however, there is a passage here or there which seems to allude to the 1st advent. Often, this passage is even quoted by our Lord or by a New Testament author. These are parallel passages, and their primary application

is to the writer of the psalm. Strictly speaking, this is not a Messianic psalm, but a ***Psalm with Messianic parallels***.

d. All of the psalms will be properly classified at the end of this doctrine in the **Summary Chart**.

5. **A list of all possible Messianic Psalms:**

a. **Psalm 2** predicts the Messianic King and presents Him as God's Son to be worshiped forever. This psalm is undeniably Messianic.

i. Synopsis: Psalm 2 presents the nations of the earth in rebellion against the Messiah.

ii. Quotation: **Why are the nations [or, the Gentiles] in an uproar and the peoples plot a vain thing? The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers take counsel together against Jehovah and against His Messiah [or, Anointed]** (Psalm 2:1–2) is quoted in Acts 4:25–26.

iii. Quotation: **He said to Me, "You are My Son; Today I have sired You."** (Psalm 2:7) is quoted in Acts 13:33 Heb. 1:5 5:5.

iv. Quotation: Psalm 2:9 may be referenced to in Rev. 2:27 12:5 19:15.

v. Important theological points: Jehovah is distinguished from the Messiah in v. 2, Jehovah is distinguished from His King in v. 6, and Jehovah is distinguished from His Son in v. 7. Bearing this in mind, Rev. 12:5 (which may reference this psalm) clearly distinguishes the Son from God.

b. **Psalm 8** is clearly Messianic. It presents the Messiah as the Son of Man (a title often found in Luke and primarily a self-designated title—i.e., others did not refer to Jesus as the *Son of Man*). He is seen as the restorer of the earth in vv. 4–8.

i. Synopsis: The Creator of the Universe is tied to the Son of Man Who is to come, Who will rule over the earth.

ii. Quotation: **What is man that You take thought of him? And the Son of Man that You care for Him? You have made him a little lower than Elohim [possibly, the angels] and you crown him with glory and majesty. You make him to rule over the works of Your hand and You have put all things under his feet** (Psalm 8:4–8) is quoted in full or in part in I Cor. 15:27 Heb. 2:6–8.

iii. Important theological point: this psalm seems to flow seamlessly from references to mankind (v. 4a) to Jesus, the Son of Man (v. 4b). The sentiment of this psalm can be found in Rom. 8:17–21.

c. Although **Psalm 16** begins as a homage to and a glorification of Jehovah, near the end, it speaks of the resurrection of the Messiah.

i. Synopsis: David speaks of taking refuge in the LORD as well as his many blessings which he has received at the hand of Jehovah. Near the end of this psalm, David speaks of his bodily resurrection, and one may apply this to the resurrection of our Lord as well.

ii. Quotation: **I have set Jehovah continually before me; because He is at my right hand, I will not be shaken. Therefore, my heart is glad and my glory rejoices; my flesh will also dwell securely. For You will not abandon my soul to Sheol; neither will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption. You will make know to me the path of life; in Your presence is fulness of joy and in Your right hand there are pleasures forever** (Psalm 16:8–11) is quoted in full or in part in Acts 2:25–28 13:35.

d. **Psalm 22** is one of the most clearly messianic of all the psalms. This psalm, along with Isa. 53, provides us with greater details of the crucifixion than can even be found in the gospels, some of which were written by or guided by eye-witnesses. The LORD is presented as the Father in v. 22.

i. Synopsis: This is again a Davidic psalm, which begins with the famous quotation, **"My God My God, why have You forsaken Me?"**

ii. Quotation: The first verse, noted above, Psalm 22:1a, is quoted by our Lord on the cross (Matt. 27:46 Mark 15:34).

iii. Quotation: **And those who were passing by were hurling abuse at Him, wagging their heads** (Matt. 27:39, partially quoting Psalm 22:7; see also Mark 15:29).

iv. Quotation: **"He trusts in God; let Him deliver [Him] now (if He takes pleasure in Him); for He said, "I am the Son of God."** (Matt. 27:43, quoting Psalm 22:8).

v. Quotation: **And when they had crucified Him, they divided up His garments among themselves, casting lots** (Matt. 27:35, quoting Psalm 22:18; see also Mark 15:24 Luke 23:34 John 19:24).

vi. Quotation: **I will tell of Your name to my brothers in the midst of the assembly I will praise You** (Psalm 22:22) is quoted in John 20:17 Heb. 2:12.

- vii. Theological themes: I feel more like I am standing at the foot of the cross in this psalm than I do in any of the gospels.
 - viii. One of the questions, particularly by those who are either resistant to God or newly converted is, *why does God allow suffering?* In this psalm, it is clear: David apparently was suffering a great deal as revealed in this psalm, and the result of his suffering was a psalm which really portrayed Jesus on the cross. Apart from David enduring these sufferings, this psalm would not have existed. It is theologically necessary for the cross to be clearly revealed throughout the Old Testament.
- e. **Psalm 24** presents the Messiah as the King of Glory.
- i. Synopsis: In this psalm, we see Jesus during His second advent. This may be left off some Messianic psalm lists, as it has nothing of the first advent in it, apart from a reference to salvation in v. 5, which some could misinterpret as *temporal deliverance*. Since this is tied to righteousness, however, *salvation* in this verse would refer to *eternal salvation*.
 - ii. Quotation: There do not appear to be any direct quotations, which would also cause some to leave this psalm off of their lists. However, submitted for your approval, vv. 3–4: **Who may ascend into the hill of Jehovah and who may stand in His holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who has not lifted up his soul to falsehood.** Now Rev. 5:1–6: **And I saw lying on the open hand of Him Who was seated on the throne a scroll written within and on the back, closed with seven seals. And I saw a strong angel announcing in a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the scroll? And who is entitled to break its seals? And no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or to look at its contents. And I wept loudly and bitterly because no one was found fit to open the scroll. Then one of the elders said to me, "Stop weeping! Look, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has overcome. He can open the scroll and break its seven seals!" And there between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders I saw a Lamb standing, as though it has been slain, with seven horns and with seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God Who have been sent into all the earth.** Obviously not a direct quotation; however, the gist of the passages, the worthiness of our Lord, is the same.
- f. **Psalm 31** is another psalm written by David.
- i. Synopsis: David first speaks of his being protected by God and then of his troubles and sorrows and how some have plotted against him. At the end of this psalm, David asks for deliverance and then urges others to depend upon Jehovah God.
 - ii. Quotation: **And Jesus, calling out with a loud voice, said, "Father, in Your hands I commit My spirit." And having said this, He breathed His last** (Luke 23:46, quoting Psalm 31:5; see also Matt. 27:50 Mark 15:39 Acts 7:59). Jesus was quoting Scripture, although He was not applying the passage in full from which it came directly to Himself (v. 5b reads: **You have ransomed me, O Jehovah, God of truth [or, faithfulness]**).
 - iii. Quotation: One might apply vv. 11–13 to our Lord, although it was not necessarily written with Him in mind: **Because of all my adversaries, I have become a reproach, especially to my neighbors, and an object of dread to my acquaintances, those who see me in the street flee from me. I am forgotten as a dead man, out of mind, I am like a broken vessel. I have heard the slander of many, terror is on every side; while they took counsel together against me, they schemed to take away my life.** Although none of these verses were applied to our Lord, it is possible that they could have been.
- g. **Psalm 34**, primarily because of v. 20, is seen to be a Messianic Psalm.
- i. Synopsis: David was inspired by his close call in Gath before the king of Gath to write this psalm as a testimony to God's faithfulness, power and deliverance. There is also a call for righteous behavior. Although Jesus Christ is presented as a Deliverer of the faithful, this psalm is applicable to any time period.
 - ii. Quotation: **The soldiers broke the legs of the first man and then of the other man who had been crucified with Jesus. When the soldiers came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they didn't break his legs. However, one of the soldiers stabbed Jesus' side with his spear, and blood and water immediately came out. The one who saw this is an eyewitness. What he says is true, and he knows that he is telling the truth so that you, too, will believe. This happened so that the Scripture would come true: "None of His bones will be broken."** (John 19:32–36, slightly

paraphrasing Psalm 34:19–20, which reads: **The distresses of the Righteous One [are] many, but Yehowah delivers Him from all of them. The LORD guards all of His bones. Not one of them is broken**).² However, John 19:36 could also refer back to the ceremony of the Passover lamb, of which is said, **“The meal must be eaten inside one house. Never take any of the meat outside the house. Never break any of the bones.”** (Ex. 12:46). What is most likely is, both verses are fulfilled in Christ.

- iii. Given that the one verse which is quoted could apply to the tenor of the psalm and given that John could be quoting another portion of Scripture, some may not include Psalm 34 in with the Messianic Psalms. However, what we find in Psalm 34 is a change from the plural (vv. 7, 9–11, 15, 17–18) to the singular in v. 19, where the psalm could be applied to our Lord as well (a parallel application).
- h. **Psalm 40** speaks of the sacrifice of the Messiah in vv. 6–8. He is also called a prophet in vv. 9–10.
 - i. Synopsis: In Psalm 40, David looks to the Messiah as his Deliverer Who will come to David because he is *afflicted and needy*.
 - ii. Quotation: (Psalm 40:6–8) is quoted in Heb. 10:5–10 reads: **Therefore when He comes into the world, He says, “Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, but You have prepared a body for Me. In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin You have had no pleasure. Then I said, Lo, I come (in the volume of the Book it is written of Me) to do Your will, O God.” Above, when He said, “Sacrifice and offering, and burnt offerings and offering for sin You did not desire, neither did You have pleasure in them” (which are offered according to the Law), then He said, “Lo, I come to do Your will, O God.” He takes away the first so that He may establish the second. By this will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.** Psalm 40:6–8 reads: **O Jehovah my God, many things You have done, Your wonderful works and Your thoughts which are toward us; they cannot be set in order to You; I will declare and speak, for they are more than can be numbered. Sacrifice and offering You did not desire; My ears You have opened; burnt offering and sin offering You have not asked. Then I said, Lo, I come, in the volume of the Book it is written of Me; I delight to do Your will, O My God; and Your Law is within My heart.** Although the quotation is not exact, it is actually quoted from the Septuagint, which reads: **Sacrifice and offering You would not, but a body You have prepared for me. Whole burnt offering and a [sacrifice for] sin You did not require. Then I said, “Lo, I come. In the volume of the book it is written concerning Me. I desired to do Your will, O My God, and Your law [is] in the midst of My heart.”** (Psalm 40:6–8 in the Septuagint). The author of Hebrews was obviously using the LXX for his quotation.
 - iii. Theological milestone: Even though the Jews, year after year, offered animal sacrifices, in accordance with the Law of Moses, here we are told that God did not desire these sacrifices; and that a body had been prepared (which would become the True Sacrifice for our sins). Although this makes perfect sense to the believer, this passage would cause great theological difficulty for the Jewish theologian. One cannot say that David is claiming that, instead of offering up sacrifices, he needed to lead a more holy life, because in this passage we also find, **“Listen, I come. in the volume of the Book, it is written of Me.”** This is clearly the Messiah, not David.
 - iv. Quotation: **I have preached righteousness in the great congregation; lo, I have not kept back My lips, O Jehovah, You know. I have not hidden Your righteousness within my heart; I have declared Your faithfulness and Your salvation; I have not hidden Your grace and Your truth from the great congregation** (Psalm 40:9–10). This describes the ministry of Jesus Christ. Although this is not quoted anywhere specifically, we find a similar tenor in John 17:4, 6, 8, 14, 26.
- i. **Psalm 41** has but one verse which is later quoted in the gospel of John. Apart from this verse, there is nothing which would distinguish this as a Messianic Psalm, any more than any other psalm which looks to Jehovah for protection.
 - i. Synopsis: Psalm 41 deals with the protections and sustenance of the Lord. David also speaks of personal betrayal, including one who ate bread with him and rose up against him (v. 9).
 - ii. Quotation: **“I do not speak to all of you, I know the ones I have chosen; but the Scripture may be fulfilled, ‘He who eats My bread has lifted up his heel against me.’”** (John 13:18, quoting from Psalm 41:9).

² I provided the capitalization, which is a matter of interpretation.

- j. **Psalm 45** not only predicts the Messianic King but presents the Messiah as God in v. 6. This is one of the rare Messianic psalms not composed by David.
- i. Synopsis: The Messiah is presented as King, and apparently over the entire world (vv. 5–6, 16–17).
 - ii. Quotation: **Your throne is forever and ever, O God. A scepter of uprightness is the scepter of Your kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness. Therefore, God, Your God, has anointed You with the oil of joy above Your fellows** (Psalm 45:6–7) is quoted in Heb. 1:8–9.
- k. **Psalm 68** is a psalm of moderate length (35 verses), written by David, which presents Adonai as God over Israel.
- i. Synopsis: This psalm presents God as One Who vanquishes his enemies (vv. 1–2, 21, 23), is a Champion of the helpless (vv. 5–6), as the God Who led Israel in the desert-wilderness (v. 7) and as Ruler over Israel (vv. 26–27, 34), as a personal God to us (vv. 19–20), and as a God to be praised throughout the earth (v. 32).
 - ii. Quotation: **You have ascended on high; You have led captive captives. You have received girls among men** (Psalm 68:18a) is brought into the New Testament as: **When He ascended on high, He led captive a host of captives and He gave gifts to men** (Eph. 4:8).
- l. **Psalm 69** is a psalm which briefly alludes to the sufferings of our Lord. Also a psalm of David.
- i. Synopsis: For the bulk of this psalm, David speaks of his own pain and suffering, which applies to the humiliation of our Lord. There is a brief section on the destruction of those who persecute him, and the psalm ends with praise for God.
 - ii. Quotation: Interestingly enough, although it would have been apropos to quote Psalm 69:8 (**I have become a stranger to my brothers and an alien to my mother's children**) in John 7:3–5 (where it is revealed that not even his half-brothers believed in Him), this is not cited.
 - iii. Quotation: **They gave Him wine to drink, mingled with gall** (Psalm 69:21, quoted in Matt. 27:34a Mark 15:23 Luke 23:36 John 19:28; in Psalm 69, this is in the 1st person).
 - iv. Quotation: (Psalm 69:25) is quoted and applied improperly in Acts 1:20a.
 - v. Quotation: **They have persecuted Him Whom You Yourself have struck** (Psalm 69:26a) could be applied to our Lord; however, it is not quoted as such.
 - vi. I would not list this as a Messianic Psalm per se; however, it does afford us a couple of veiled glimpses at the cross.
- m. **Psalm 72** is a psalm written by David about his son Solomon.
- i. Synopsis: Like most Messianic Psalms, there are two levels. On the one hand, we are presenting Solomon as an idealized ruler—the best that he could be; on the other hand, this is a picture of David's Greater Son.
 - ii. Quotations: **In His days, the righteous will flourish and peace will abound till there be a moon no longer. He will have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the [Euphrates River to the ends of the earth. ...All kings will fall down before Him, and all nations will serve Him. For He delivers the needy when he calls, as well as the poor and him who has no helper...His name will endure forever; His name will be continued as long as the sun. and men will be blessed by Him; and all nations will call Him blessed!** (Psalm 72:7–8, 11–12, 17). Although this can clearly be applied to the Messiah-King to come, we do not find these verses quoted in the New Testament.
- n. **In Psalm 89**, the Davidic Covenant is fulfilled by the Messiah. Messiah is herein referred to as the Son of David (vv. 3, 4, 27, 29).
- i. Synopsis: This psalm promises to establish David's seed forever. It is surprising that the New Testament is not littered with quotes from this psalm; however, no verse from this psalm is quoted directly.
 - ii. Quotation: The angels promise to Mary, who was pregnant with our Lord, was: **"He will be great and He will be called Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever; and His kingdom will have no end."** (Luke 1:32–33). This appears to have the spirit of Psalm 89 in mind.
 - iii. Quotation: Paul, in Acts 13:23, says, **"From the offspring of this man [David], according to promise [Psalm 89], God has brought to Israel a Savior, Jesus."** This Davidic covenant is found in II Sam. 7:8–16 and in Psalm 89.

- iv. Quotation: In Psalm 89:4, David writes from the perspective of God: **Your Seed I will establish forever and I will build up your throne for all generations. Selah.** Also, v. 29: **His seed I will also make to endure forever, and His throne as the days of heaven** (see also v. 36). Although Paul does not quote either of these verses, he refers back to them in part and to Ex. 12:40 specifically when he writes: **Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, "And to seeds," as many, but to one, "And to your seed;" that is, Christ** (Gal. 3:16).
- o. **Psalm 102** is sandwiched between two psalms written by David; however, David's name is not affixed to this psalm.
 - i. Synopsis: The first half of Psalm 102 is a parallel between the personal affliction of the psalmist and our Lord. The latter portion of this psalm hails Jehovah Elohim as a ruler forever.
 - ii. Quotation: **Because of the loudness of my groaning, my bones cling to my flesh** (Psalm 102:5) could easily be applied to our Lord on the cross, but it is not.
 - iii. Quotation: **My enemies have reproached me all day long; those who deride me have used me as a curse. I have eaten ashes like bread and mingled my drink with weeping. Because of Your indignation and Your wrath, for You have lifted me up and cast me away** (Psalm 102:8–10). This passage could have been applied in part to our Lord on the cross by one of the gospel writers, but it is not.
 - iv. Quotation: **Of old, You founded the earth and the heavens are the work of Your hands. Even they will perish, but You will endure; and they will wear out like a garment, like clothing, You will change them and they will be changed. But You are the same and Your years will not come to an end** (Psalm 102:25–27) is quoted in Heb. 1:10–12.
- p. **Psalm 104** is a psalm which testifies to the power of God. Since Jesus is not shown in His 1st advent, this is often left off some lists of Messianic Psalms.
 - i. Synopsis: The Messiah of Israel has two advents; in the first, He is God's suffering servant, paying the penalty for our sins; in the second, He comes to destroy His enemies and to rule over the earth forever. This psalm actually concentrates on His creation and sustenance of the earth, and then alludes to the second advent at the very end.
 - ii. Quotation: **[God] Who makes winds His messengers, flames of fire His ministers** (Psalm 104:4) is quoted in Heb. 1:7.
 - iii. This is one of the most difficult psalms to classify, as it is clearly about God throughout: God the Creator and God the Preserver of His Creation. Therefore, we are speaking of Jesus Christ. However, there is nothing in this psalm which provides us a direct glimpse at the coming Messiah. So this is really more about His initial creation and his sustaining of that creation. For this reason, I don't see Psalm 104 as being messianic per se.
- q. **Psalm 109** is an imprecatory psalm written by David.
 - i. Synopsis: David speaks of one who has repaid his love with hatred, and David asks that God take vengeance out on this man. This is, by the way, a legitimate request. However, note that David asks God to take care of this man; David does not do it himself. At the end of the psalm, David wants it to be very clear that God has judged this man of evil.
 - ii. Quotation: **They have opened the wicked and deceitful mouth against me; they have spoken against me with a lying tongue** (Psalm 109:2) could have easily been applied to our Lord at His trials, but it was not. Bear in mind, this could be said about those who lie and bear false witness against anyone else.
 - iii. Quotation: **They have also surrounded me with words of hatred, and fought against me without cause. In return for my love, they act as my accusers; but I am in prayer. Thus they have repaid me evil for good and hatred for my love** (Psalm 109:3–4) could also be applied to our Lord, but was not.
 - iv. Quotation: **Let another take his office** (Psalm 109:8b) is improperly applied in Acts 1:20b. This is when the Apostles, realizing that the death of Judas created a vacancy in their midst, that they ought to find another Apostle. They therefore quote this Scripture and elected Matthias as Judas' replacement, a man that we never hear about again.
 - v. Summary: Although this psalm is first and foremost about David and a personal conflict that he was having, one might see the Messiah in the first five verses. Given the fact that this psalm is not

quoted in the New Testament (except incorrectly), one might reasonably leave this psalm off the Messianic Psalm list.

- r. **Psalm 110** is considered by many to be the most prophetic of the Messianic psalms. It is certainly the most quoted psalm in the New Testament. This psalm predicts the Messianic King, presents the Messiah as the Priest-King (v. 4), and portrays Him as David's Lord.³
- i. Synopsis: This is a psalm of the Messiah and the kingdom to come. It speaks of the Messiah and the destruction of the kingdoms of the earth in the Tribulation. Most importantly, our Lord is spoken of as **a priest forever, according to the order of Melchizekek**.
 - ii. Quotation: **Jehovah said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet"** (Psalm 110:1) is found quoted in part or in its entirety in Matt. 22:44 Mark 12:36 Luke 20:42 Acts 2:34–5 Heb. 1:13 10:13 12:2. Other references to this passage may include: Matt. 26:64 Luke 22:69 Eph. 1:20, 22 Col. 3:1 Heb. 1:3.
 - iii. Quotation: **Jehovah has sworn and will not change His mind, "You are a priest forever, according to the order of Melchizekek"** (Psalm 110:4) is quoted in Heb. 5:6 (in part) 7:21b (in full). Although this is a quotation that many churches and denominations gloss over, the church that Grew up in (correctly) made a big deal out of this. Jesus is our High Priest, and His Old Testament shadow was not Aaron (for the Aaronic priesthood), but Melchizekek, who ministered to Abraham after Jehovah God made the great promises to Abraham (Gen. 12:1–3 13:14–18 14:18–20).
 - iv. Quotation: **The Lord is at Your right hand. He will shatter kings in the day of His wrath. He will judge among the nations. He will fell them with corpses and He will shatter the rules over a broad country** (Psalm 110:5–6) is not quoted in the New Testament, but it very obviously applies to the Tribulation and our Lord's participation in the final war of that time period (compare Rev. 6:3–17 9:13–21 14:14–20).
- s. **Psalm 118** is one of the few Messianic Psalms not naming David as its author; however, just like Psalm 109, it can be found on anyone's list of the Messianic Psalms.
- i. Synopsis: Psalm 118 begins with the grace of Jehovah and then speaks of God's protection in distress as trumping man's evil. Beginning with v. 10, we have all of the nations surrounding the psalmist, which introduces a segment on the Tribulation. In v. 18, we have severe discipline; in v. 19, we have the righteous entering into the gates of righteousness, and God has become the narrator's salvation. The end of the psalm focuses on Jesus Christ, **Whose grace is everlasting** (Psalm 118:29b).
 - ii. Quotation: **Jehovah is for me, I will not fear. What can man do to me?** (Psalm 118:6 quoted in Heb. 13:6). This is not a specifically Messianic passage, nor is it quoted and applied as such.
 - iii. Quotation: **The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. This is Jehovah's doing and it is marvelous in our eyes** (Psalm 118:22–23) and is quoted in full or in part in Matt. 21:42 Mark 12:10–11 Luke 20:17 Acts 4:11 I Peter 2:7; see also Eph. 2:20).
- t. **Psalm 132**, although it is not said to have been written by David, is about David.
- i. Synopsis: This is a psalm about David desiring to build a permanent structure for God's earthly presence.
 - ii. Quotation: **For the sake of David, Your servant, do not turn away the face of Your Anointed [or, Messiah]. Jehovah has sworn to David, a truth which He will not turn back: "From the fruit of your body I will set upon your throne."** (Psalm 132:10–11). This passage is clearly alluded to in Acts 2:30: **Being however a prophet, and knowing that God had sealed to him with an oath that He would set one of his descendants on his throne.**
 - iii. Quotation: **Jehovah has chosen Zion; He has desired it for His habitation. "This is my resting place forever; here I will live, for I have desired it...Her priests I will clothe with salvation and her godly one will sing aloud for joy. There I will cause the horn of David to spring forth; I have prepared a lamp for My anointed [or, My Messiah]."** (Psalm 132:13–14, 16–17). Although this passage is not quoted in the New Testament, it clearly suggests that Psalm 132 is Messianic.
6. I have already mentioned that not all sources agree as to which psalms are Messianic. My notes in my NASB (not their notes) leave off the list Psalm 24 31 34 104. It is easy to see why these psalms would be seen

³ Paraphrased from *New American Standard Bible, Study Edition*; A. J. Holman Company, ©1975 by The Lockman Foundation, p. 534.

as questionably being classified as messianic. Delitzsch felt that only Psalm 110 was messianic; Cheyne⁴ did not believe that any psalms were messianic.

7. The psalms which I would exclude as having direct messianic references would include Psalm 34 41 68 104. These psalms may have been quoted in the NT more by way of citing a parallel passage or situation.
8. A list of which theologians categorize which psalms as Messianic

Which Theologian Classifies Which Psalms as Messianic	
Theologian	Psalms
Cheyne	None
Delitzsch	Psalm 110
Gary Kukis ⁵	Messianic Psalms: 2, 8, 22, 24, 72, 89, 109, 110, 118. Psalms with Glimpses of the Messiah: 16, 31, 40, 45, 102. Psalms with Messianic Parallels: 34, 41, 68, 69, 109.
J. Barton Payne (ZPEB) ⁶	Psalm 2, 8, 16, 22, 40, 45, 69, 72, 89, 102, 109, 110, 132
Robert B. Thieme Jr. ⁷	Psalm 2, 8, 16, 22, 24, 40, 45, 89, 102, 110

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9. ZPEB has an outstanding chart⁸ on the Messianic psalms which I will change slightly, and embellish with the additional psalms which others see as Messianic:

I should point out that the Old Testament clearly speaks of Jesus Christ (or, *Jesus the Messiah*, as *Christ* means *Messiah*). He is promised as early as Gen. 3:15 (“**And I will put enmity between you [the serpent] and the woman, between your seed and her seed; He will bruise you on the head and you will bruise Him on the heel**”), and as late as Mal. 3:1 (“**Listen, I am going to send My messenger and he will clear the way before Me. And the Lord, Whom you seek, will suddenly come in His temple, and the messenger of the covenant, in whom you delight; listen, he is coming,**” says the Lord of hosts). Jewish believers and unbelievers alike have looked to their Scriptures for the promise of the Messiah to come. Jesus also tells us that the Old Testament Scriptures speak of Him: **Now He said to them, “These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled (Luke 24:44).**

By the way, so that there is no confusion, Jesus did not simply imply that He was the Messiah; He stated this outright. **The woman said to Him, “I know that Messiah is coming (He who is called *Christ*); when that One comes, He will declare all things to us.” Jesus said to her, “I Who speak to you am [He].” (John 4:25–26).**

⁴ Some old Bible guy?

⁵ This is a list of every possible Messianic Psalm, with the exception of Psalm 104.

⁶ Some of the material for this doctrine came from *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*; Merrill Tenney, ed., Zondervan Publishing House, ©1976; Vol. 4, pp. 940–943. In this is a fantastic chart which gives the psalm, the verses, where these verses are quoted, and additional contextual evidence.

⁷ This list is from notes in my Bible; so I am assuming that they came from Bob’s teaching. There may be a different source for these psalms.

⁸ Taken from *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*; Merrill Tenney, ed., Zondervan Publishing House, ©1976; Vol. 4, p. 942. There were errors in the original printing of this chart (some of the *Additional Evidence* did not line up with the proper psalm).

Key	Primarily <i>Messianic</i>	Not Messianic but glimpses of the Messiah (<i>Messianic Highlights</i>)	Not Messianic; some parallel situations or passages (<i>Messianic parallels</i>)		
Summary Chart					
Person	Psalm	Subject	Messianic Verses	New Testament Verification	Additional Evidence
Christ speaks of Himself in the 1st Person	Psalm 2	The kings of the earth rebel against the Messiah	vv. 1–12	Acts 4:25–28 13:33 Heb. 1:5 5:5	The speaker of this psalm is God's begotten Son (v. 7) and Jehovah and the Son are distinguished from one another (vv. 2, 7). The speaker possesses more than David—all of the earth (v. 8).
	Psalm 16	Occupation with Christ; He preserves	v. 10	Acts 2:24–31 13:35–37	Not seeing corruption (v. 10) cannot be applied to David.
	Psalm 22	The Passion of Christ	vv. 1–31	Matt. 27:35–46 John 19:23–25 Heb. 2:12	His pierced hands and feet cannot be applied to David (v. 16). Lots cast for his garments is not true of David (v. 18).
	Psalm 31	David takes refuge in God and pleads for His grace	vv. 5a, 11–13	Luke 23:46	Although this psalm is principally about David depending upon God, Jesus quotes v. 5a as the last thing that He says upon the cross.
	Psalm 40	David depends upon God; the Incarnation	vv. 6–9	Heb. 10:5–10	Praises in vv. 1–5, 9 are interrupted by a description section (vv. 6–8). Although David did not always delight to do God's will, Christ did (v. 12). David offered up sacrifices, even though it tells us here that You have not desired sacrifices and offerings (v. 6a).
	Psalm 41	God delivers the helpless; David is betrayed.	v. 9	John 13:18–19	The passage cited is a parallel passage; this psalm is not necessarily messianic.
	Psalm 69	An imprecatory psalm.	vv. 8, 21, 26	Matt. 27:34, 48 Mark 15:23 Luke 23:69 John 19:28 Acts 1:16–20	There are too many problems with applying this directly to our Lord. For instance, the imprecatory nature of vv. 22–25 are not in keeping with Jesus saying, "Forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing."

Summary Chart					
Person	Psalm	Subject	Messianic Verses	New Testament Verification	Additional Evidence
Christ is addressed in the 2 nd person	Psalm 45	A celebration of the King	vv. 6–7	Heb. 1:8–9	He is deity (v. 6) but not the Father (v. 7).
	Psalm 68	The God of Mount Sinai and of the Sanctuary	v. 18–19	Eph. 4:8	This psalm is both in the 2 nd person (vv. 18, 28b–29) and in the 3 rd person elsewhere. There is really not a lot of reason to see this as Messianic and the quote is more of a parallel than a fulfillment.
	Psalm 102	The afflicted pours out his heart to God.	vv. 5, 8, 10, 25–27	Heb. 1:10–12	Address to Yahweh (vv. 1–22); to El, a change (v. 24), applied to Christ.
	Psalm 110	Ascension and Priesthood	vv. 1–7	Matt. 22:43–45 Acts 2:33–35 Heb. 1:13 5:6–10 6:20 7:24	He is David's Lord (v. 1). He is the Eternal Priest (v. 4).
Christ is referred to in the 3 rd person	Psalm 8	Humiliation and glory of the Messiah	vv. 4b–8	Heb. 2:5–10 I Cor. 15:27	All things are under His feet (v. 8), which cannot be applied to any man.
	Psalm 24	The earth is the Lord's and the King of Glory is worthy.	vv. 1–10	Rev. 10:1–6	It is clear that the emphasis upon the King of Glory to come in (i.e., to come into history—vv. 7–10) coupled with the plea for One Who is clean (vv. 4–5), is a reference to Jesus Christ.
	Psalm 34	David speaks of seeking and then taking refuge in God.	v. 20	John 19:36	
	Psalm 72	The rule of Messiah	vv. 1–19	A psalm need not be quoted in the NT in order to be Messianic	Transition to the future (v. 5). His reign is forever (v. 7). Territory (v. 8). All worship Him (vv. 9–11).
	Psalm 89	The Davidic Covenant	vv. 3–4, 28–29, 34–36	Acts 2:30	The seed is eternal (vv. 4, 29, 36–37).
	Psalm 104	God as Creator and the One Maintaining the earth	v. 4	Heb. 1:7	This is a verse which was quoted in the New Testament, but not necessarily as any sort of Messianic fulfillment.

Summary Chart					
Person	Psalm	Subject	Messianic Verses	New Testament Verification	Additional Evidence
	Psalm 109	An imprecatory psalm	Vv. 6–19	Acts 1:16–20	Adversaries in the plural (vv. 4–5) shifts to one preeminent betrayer in v. 6. The plural is resumed in v. 20.
	Psalm 118	The grace and protection of God	vv. 21–23	Matt. 21:42 Mark 12:10–11 Luke 20:17 Acts 4:11 I Peter 2:7	Although the bulk of this psalm could be examined apart from any specific reference to the Messiah, the verses noted are clearly Messianic, which pulls the rest of the psalm into that category.
	Psalm 132	David's Greater Son	vv. 11–12	Acts 2:30	The seed is eternal (v. 12).

10. Summary: the Messianic Psalms are those which see the coming Messiah, whether the first or second advent, and often present a particular aspect of His ministry (i.e., His kingship, His sacrifice, His priesthood).
11. **Bonus doctrine:** the Messiah/Savior is promised from the earliest chapters of Scripture. The psalms play an important part in revealing this to us. Like much of Biblical revelation, this is progressively revealed. The table below was taken (and slightly revised) from *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*; Merrill Tenney, ed., Zondervan Publishing House, ©1976; Vol. 4, p. 943. The passages given with the prophets and after were added by me. The passages previous to this have been slightly embellished.

The Progressive Revelation of Jesus Christ in Scripture	
Before 6000 B.C.	At the fall, God warned Satan (the serpent) that there would exist enmity between his seed and the seed of the woman (not the seed of Adam). “He will bruise you on head [a death blow] and you will bruise His heel [a non-fatal injury].” (Gen. 3:15b). What we know from this prophecy is that there is a promise associated with the seed of the woman (a person) who would destroy the serpent.
5000–4000 B.C.	Noah prophesied that Canaan and Japheth would be subservient to Shem (who was the line of the Jews). Gen. 9:25–27.
2000 B.C.	When Abram offered up his only son Isaac, and God provided a substitute sacrifice, God promised to multiply the seed of Abram and that He would bless all the nations of the earth through Abraham's seed (Gen. 22:1–18).
	God promises the same thing to Abraham's son, Isaac (Gen. 26:3–4).
	God promises Jacob, the son of Isaac, grandson of Abraham, that his seed would be like the dust of the earth and that the world would be blessed through his seed (Gen. 28:13–15). In all of these promises, there is every indication that the blessing would come through one individual person (see Gal. 3:16 for Paul's dissertation on the singular word <i>seed</i>).

1400 B.C.	Prophet (Deut. 18:15, 18 Acts 3:22 7:37)	King (Num. 24:17) Messiah in I Sam. 2:10		Priest (Lev. 16:32)	
	Human	Divine	Human	Divine	Human
1000 B.C.	Psalms 22:22–31 ⁹ (cf. Heb. 2:12)	Psalms 2 (cf. Acts 13:33) Psalm 48:2	Psalms 132 ¹⁰ (cf. Luke 1:32)	Psalms 110 (cf. Heb. 5:6)	Psalms 22:1–21 (cf. John 19:24)
	Expected (v. 26) human (v. 22) prophet (v. 23)	Expected (v. 12) divine (v. 7) king (vv. 2, 6)	Expected (vv. 13–18) human (vv. 11, 17) king (v. 12)	Expected (v. 3) divine (vv. 1, 4) priest (v. 4)	Expected (v. 8) human (v. 9) priest (v. 11)
		Human and Divine Psalm 89:27, 29 (II Sam. 7:12, 14)		Human and Divine Psalm 110:2	
	Prophet, King and priest Combined Psalm 22:22 and Psalm 110:2				
800 to 400 B.C.	Isa. 52:7 Nahum 1:15	Isa. 9:7 Jer. 23:6 Micah 5:2	Jer. 23:5 Zech. 9:9		
30 A.D.	Jesus Christ				
	Human	Divine	Human	Divine	Human
	Matt. 13:57 21:11, 46 Mark 6:4 Luke 4:24 7:16 13:33 24:19 John 4:19, 44 6:14 7:40 9:17 Acts 2:30	Matt. 5:35 25:31–34 Luke 19:38 John 1:49	Matt. 2:2 21:5 27:11–12 Mark 15:2 Luke 23:3 John 12:13, 15–16 18:37		
35 to 90 A.D.		Acts 17:7 I Tim. 1:17 6:15		Heb. 2:17 3:1 4:14 5:5–10 6:20 7:15–17, 21, 26 8:1 9:11 10:21	Heb. 4:15

⁹ I present these passages from the psalms as given in ZPEB; however, I don't find them to properly reflect the same level of prophecy that we see in Deuteronomy; i.e., Deut. 18:15, 18 clearly prophesy that God will raise up a prophet like Moses; the passages from the psalms are not as clear—the word *prophet* only occurs in the title of Psalm 51 and then in Psalm 74:9, where the lack of a prophetic voice is noted by the psalmist.

¹⁰ I don't know that this psalm can be taken strictly to present the King to Come as human, as at least one verse speaks of *forever* (v. 14). I also question the application of the passages in Psalm 22 as applying to the priest (although they do apply to the sacrifice of the Messiah).

1400 B.C.	Prophet (Deut. 18:15, 18 Acts 3:22 7:37)	King (Num. 24:17) Messiah in I Sam. 2:10		Priest (Lev. 16:32)	
	Human	Divine	Human	Divine	Human

We do not need for there to be a set of verses in each and every cell. In fact, one good Old Testament verse properly fulfilled in the New Testament with one clear verse is all we need for any of these. As has been mentioned, some of the verses cited in the psalms from Payne's table in ZPEB may not apply as he has indicated that they do. Whereas it would be nice to fill in each and every cell with 2 or more references, those reference are not required to be in each and every time period (for instance, given that the priests of our Lord's day were so corrupt, the gospels did not present Jesus as a priest. In fact, even in the epistle to the Hebrews, Jesus is associated with Melchizedek rather than with the Aaronic priesthood, and that was no doubt due, in part, to the corruption of the Aaronic priesthood. Obviously, from a doctrinal standpoint, we need a High Priest to all mankind, as opposed to a High Priest just for the Jews.

Also, one needs to be aware of the careful parallel that Jesus allowed: the corrupt (i.e., human) High Priest offers up the sacrificial lamb (Jesus) for the sins of the many (John 11:49–50: **And one of them, Caiaphas, being the high priest of that year, said to them, "You do not know anything at all, nor do you consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and not that the whole nation perish;"** see also John 18:14). This makes the Old Testament shadow of the sacrificial lamb all the more salient, dramatic and parallel.