

# Notes for the Ones Called-Out to Meet

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## The Kingdom of God in the Psalms

by Dan Trygg

“All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to Yahweh, and all the families of the nations will worship before You. <sup>28</sup> For the kingdom is Yahweh’s, and He rules over the nations.”

Psalm 22:27-28

“Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; a scepter of fairness is the scepter of Your kingdom. <sup>7</sup> 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

“All Your works shall give thanks to You, O Yahweh, and Your godly ones shall bless You. <sup>11</sup> They shall speak of the glory of Your kingdom and talk of Your power; <sup>12</sup> to make known to the sons of men Your mighty acts and the glory of the majesty of Your kingdom. <sup>13</sup> Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and Your dominion endures throughout all generations.”

Psalm 145:10-13

Of the over 150 times that the word “kingdom” occurs in the OT, only about 16 of them have to do with the “kingdom of God”. When the nation requested a human king to reign over them, the attention of the narrative was diverted to follow the lineage and succession of the various kings of Israel and Judah. First, there was Saul, then David and Solomon. Then, we follow the downward slide of the nation, as it was fractured and split into two separate kingdoms in about 925 B. C.

Because of Solomon’s abuse of power, and Rehoboam’s arrogance, the 10 northern tribes separated themselves from the kingdom of Davidic kings. **There were 19 kings in the remainder of the northern kingdom called Israel, over the next 204 years. Not one of them was good.** The northern kingdom was conquered by the Assyrian empire in 721 B.C.

**There were also 19 Davidic kings in the southern kingdom of Judah, and, briefly, one queen who murderously usurped power after her son was killed. The southern kingdom had 12 rulers who were evil, and 8 kings who did what was right, at least in the beginning of their reigns. The southern kingdom of Judah lasted for 339 years, until it was conquered by the Babylonians.**

As the reader follows the history of the kings of Israel and Judah, there is a hope held out that God will somehow preserve a lamp for David, a descendant who would be king (1 Kg. 11:36; 2 Kg. 8:19; Psa. 132:17). However, in Jeremiah 21 and 22, **all the surviving sons of Josiah, the last good king of the Davidic line, are judged and cursed by God. By all appearances, the lineage of Davidic kings has come to an end.** Never again in the history of the nation would there ever be a descendant of David sitting on the ancestral throne.

As you can imagine, with 41 Jewish kings mentioned in the historical books, along with the kings and kingdoms of the surrounding nations, it is no wonder that the vast majority of times that the word “kingdom” occurs in the OT it is in reference to these human kingdoms. **There are 12 passages, however, that offer prophetic hints that keep alive this notion of “the Kingdom of God” as a reality that is larger and broader than these temporary human kingdoms and their kings.** Let’s take a look at some of them:

**The first is from Psalm 22:27,28:** “All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to Yahweh, and all the families of the nations will worship before You. <sup>28</sup> For the kingdom is Yahweh’s, and He rules over the nations.”

It is interesting that **this Psalm is one of the most clear and specific prophetic passages that describe the crucifixion of Jesus. He Himself quoted the first verse while on the cross** (Matt. 27:46; Mk. 15:34), **dialing up this passage before the minds of those who were witnessing His death.** If anyone had been aware, and could recall the rest of the Psalm, they may have noticed that **the words of this Psalm were being played out right before them!**

**He was reproached, despised by the people. Those who saw Him ridiculed Him.** They “shoot out the lip and shake the head, saying, ‘He trusted in Yahweh, let Him rescue Him; let Him deliver Him, since He delights in Him!’” (vss. 6-8; Matt. 27:39-43; Mk. 15:29-32). Again, from verses 14-18, “I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint. My heart is like wax; it is melted within me. <sup>15</sup> My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue cleaves to my jaws. And You lay me in the dust of death. <sup>16</sup> For dogs have surrounded me; a band of evildoers has encompassed me. They pierced my hands and my feet. <sup>17</sup> I can count all my bones. They look, they stare at me; <sup>18</sup> They divide my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots.” **When you read the gospel accounts, it is amazing the detailed description of this Psalm, written over 1,000 years before Jesus’ crucifixion. At the time David wrote, crucifixion had not yet even been devised.** It would be *centuries* before it came to be used as the horrible, torturous, humiliating method of execution that the Romans commonly used for non-citizens. Yet, **this description by David fits perfectly the details of a naked victim, hanging from a cross near the roadway, so all passersby**

**could see.** We read in the gospels that even the guards did, in fact, divide His clothing among them, and for His seamless robe they cast lots (Matt. 27:35).

After verse 18, **the Psalm makes a radical shift. The petitioner calls out to God, and, ...then in verse 21, he claims that God has answered his prayer!** The psalm shifts to praise and the declaration of what God has done. “For He has not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; *nor has He hidden His face from him*; but when he cried to Him for help, He heard” (vs. 24). This becomes the basis for praise and celebration. It also calls for healthy reverence for God. ***This answer to prayer is what the ends of the world will remember and turn to Yahweh; it is the reason all the families of the nations shall worship God.*** Why? Because the Kingdom is Yahweh’s and He rules over the nations (vss. 25-28).

**From 1,000 years before Christ, this Psalm would not have made a lot of sense.** Why would someone’s answer to prayer be the basis of such a profound impact? **Knowing the gospel story, and looking backward, however, this Psalm makes perfect sense! Jesus’ death and resurrection is the greatest event in world history, and it is the basis for the Kingdom of God, ...a Kingdom that reaches into families of all the nations around the world.**

**The second is from Psalm 45:6,7:** “Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; a scepter of fairness is the scepter of Your Kingdom. <sup>7</sup> You have loved righteousness, and hated wickedness; therefore God, Your God, has anointed You with the oil of joy above Your fellows.”

This passage is another prophetic puzzle. **Note that God’s throne is described as enduring forever, and that His righteous scepter is the scepter of His Kingdom. This is the next mention of “the Kingdom of God”.** But notice that *because* this “God” loved righteousness and hated wickedness, “God, Your God, has anointed you with oil of joy.” **There seems to be two persons described as “God”.** One is on the throne of His Kingdom, *...and the other is called “Your God”* (the God of the first God) and *anointed the first person called God.*

**Again, from 1,000 years before Christ, this would have been very confusing. But, knowing about Jesus, that He is God in human flesh, ...and He was designated as the Christ, the “Anointed One”...this language is not problematic at all.** The writer of the book of Hebrews used this passage to show that Christ is greater than the angels. He says that this passage is about “the Son”. He is the first “God” mentioned in this passage (Heb. 1:8,9).

**The third passage is from Psalm 145:10-13:** “All Your works shall give thanks to You, O Yahweh, and Your devout ones shall bless You. <sup>11</sup> They shall speak of the glory of Your Kingdom and talk of Your power; <sup>12</sup> to make known to the sons of men Your mighty acts, and the glory of the majesty of Your Kingdom. <sup>13</sup> Your Kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and Your dominion endures throughout all generations.”

**It is evident in this song of praise by David, that he is thinking of a much larger picture than earthly kingdoms. He presents God as the Creator, Ruler and Provider of all, ...a God of wondrous works, great and awesome acts.** He is great, and greatly to be praised. David himself worships and extols God, and declares that generation after generation will speak of His mighty acts. **Not only is God great and powerful; He is also good and compassionate.** He is full of mercy and is good to all. All things are dependent upon Him for life. They look expectantly to Him, and He meets their needs. It is He who “satisfies the desires of every living thing” (vs. 16). In a similar way, **He is near to those who call upon Him in honesty of heart. He will fulfill the desire of those who reverence Him, and will hear their cry and deliver them** (vss. 18,19).

**Right in the middle of this song of praise, we find David mention God’s Kingdom four times. People will talk about God’s Kingdom, and they will make known His Kingdom.** This is because ***God’s Kingdom is an everlasting Kingdom that will endure through all generations.*** The Kingdom of God in David’s mind has to do with His reign and Lordship over all His works, ...over the plants and animals, and all people and nations, and throughout all ongoing time. Clearly, David is not thinking about earthy political potentates, or nationalistic borders. **David is worshipping the God who has created, sustains and rules over all.**

**I think it is amazing that of all the 150+ times that the word “kingdom” is used in the OT, it occurs only six times in the entire book of Psalms, ...and each time it is about the Kingdom of God.**

**In Psalm 145, God is the Creator, Sustainer and Ruler over all His creation.** Not only is He the powerful Creator, but He is full of compassion, mercy and goodness toward His creatures. His Kingdom is an everlasting Kingdom, one that will be spoken about and made known throughout the generations. **In Psalm 45, God rules over His Kingdom with justice and righteousness, and somehow He also is “anointed by God”.** In Psalm 22, God’s answer to the Righteous Sufferer who felt forsaken by Him will cause the nations to *remember what God has done, turn to Him and worship Him* because His Kingdom is over all, and He will rule the nations.