

Dr. Bruce Waltke, Psalms, Lecture 24

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This is Dr. Bruce Waltke in his teaching on the book of Psalms. This is session number 24, Messianic Psalms, Psalm 16.

So, we've been looking at different methods that have been used to enter more fully into the mind of the psalmist.

We've looked at the spiritual approach if you want to put it that way. We looked at the historical approach and we've been informed of criticism and the various branches of form criticism. Then we looked yesterday at the rhetorical approach.

Now we're up to the Messianic approach, reading the Psalms with reference to the Messiah, or as Amiralta put it, keeping our left eye on the historical king, keeping our right eye on the ideal king that he represents. But before we go any further, let's begin our lecture with prayer.

Father, as the psalmist has said, the lines have fallen to us in beautiful places. Namely, you are our portion. You are our inheritance. We have no good apart from you. Today we have the delight of thinking about the Son in whom you are well pleased. And you've said to us, this is my beloved Son in whom I'm well pleased. Listen to him. And we decide to do that.

So, as we meditate upon the Psalms and we meditate upon our Lord, we pray that you will add substance to our faith, order to our virtue, confidence to our confession, and purpose to fidelity when we are tested. You are the author of all these good things and we praise you for it. So, Lord, with the psalmist, we take refuge in you in Christ's name. Amen.

All right. I've divided the lecture into several parts. This is now on page 314 of your notes. We will, first of all, look at the definition of what we mean by Messianism.

Then we'll look at the historical background to it. Then third, we'll look at in the New Testament, Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of the ideal of the Messiah. First of all, and then later on, in the second part of the lecture we're going to look at a Messianic Psalm in particular, one that deals with his resurrection, and that will be Psalm 16.

But first of all, the definition of Messiah. I failed to put in your notes the etymology of it or where the word originates. Messiah, the Hebrew is Mashiach.

It's translated through the Greek into English as Messiah, but the Hebrew is Mashiach. That comes from the root mashach. Mashach means to paint, to smear, to daub, to anoint.

We saw yesterday how the king is anointed that the prophet would come with his flask or ram's horn of oil. He would douse the king. He would anoint the king with the scented oil.

By that, we said, the king became God's property. He was anointed and therefore set apart to God. Also, he was validated as the king appointed by God.

Third, we said that with that anointing came empowerment upon the king. So that's the root meaning of the word of the Messiah. It means the anointed one.

Now, when we talk about Messiah, however, we're talking about the ideal king. We're talking about the king that will bring in at the end of history, the ideal A, the ideal of a universal righteous kingdom. So, I wrote in your notes, it's the realization of God's promise to give Israel an ideal king who will establish a universal rule of righteousness and peace at the end of the ages.

I shouldn't have said at the, well, at the end of the ages is better than at the end of history, I guess. Now we look at the historical background to this theology that God is going to send an ideal king who establishes rule according to his 10 commandments, according to righteousness at the end of the ages. According to the biblical narrative, the origins are already found in the garden of Eden when God said and sentenced the serpent.

He said that the woman who on her own had identified with the serpent and his lie, that God would intervene. He would put a new spirit in the woman. He would put enmity in the woman so that she rejected the serpent and would identify with him.

It was purely sovereign grace. So, I will put enmity, God said to the serpent, between you and the woman and between her offspring and your offspring. So already here we have that there's going to be a seed of the woman and that seed of the woman is going to destroy the serpent and destroy his seed.

So, it goes on to say that of this seed of the woman, he will crush your head and destroy you. But in this process, you will crush his heel that he will establish this kingdom through sufferings. We already get that right in the Garden of Eden.

As you know, the rest of Genesis is pretty much a matter of identifying that seed of separating out the seed of the woman that will be victorious over the seed of the serpent, referring to those who are antagonistic to the kingdom of God. So, I think

that Eve thought it was going to be Cain. He turned out to be the seed of the serpent and instead, it's Seth.

Then you have the whole line of Seth down to Noah. Then out of Noah's sons, it's going to be Shem, out of his, not Ham or Japheth. Then out of the sons of Shem, it's going to be Abraham.

And out of Abraham, it's going to be Isaac and not Ishmael. And then Isaac's son is going to be Jacob and not Esau. And then Jacob has the 12 tribes and we're told it's going to be the tribe of Judah, that the scepter will not depart from the tribe of Judah.

And that's where Genesis ends. We don't know who it will be in the tribe of Judah until we come to David. And there we have a decisive moment when God anoints David to be the king and then enters into covenant with David and assures David that his house will endure forever.

That is to say that his dynasty will be an eternal dynasty. And that will be realized because it's going to be realized in an eternal son. All dynasties eventually die off, but his dynasty never died off.

And the serpent constantly tried to destroy the house of David. In fact, at one point he blew out all the candles on the birthday cake, as it were. The rite of kings likens David's seed or offspring to a lamp or a light.

I think of it as a birthday cake. And he blew out all the candles except a little Joash. And God preserved his kingdom through that one flicker.

And finally, it ends up with the son of David being Jesus, the son of David. And he becomes the eternal son. I think of Jesus as a trick birthday candle that Satan blew him out, but he came back to eternal life and he lives forever.

And he's assured not only of an eternal dynasty but he's assured of an eternal kingdom. That is a sphere of rule that will be ruled by the 10 commandments, a moral kingdom. And that kingdom has endured right on to the present age in the church, which is the kingdom of God today, which establishes the rule of righteousness.

And he's assured an eternal throne, the symbol of his rule. And so, God took the throne away from his offspring for a while, yet it really always belonged to the house of David. So, it's very similar to what I did with my children when they, my boys, when they were young, I gave them a Lionel train set, but they always turned the transformer all the way up.

And they like to see the locomotive race around the track. And then invariably it went flying off the rails. And since they didn't know how to use it, I took it away and put it on a shelf until they could use it responsibly.

So, it was theirs, but it was taken away for the time being until they could use it responsibly. And that's what happened in the history of Israel that David's sons lost the throne in the intertestamental period. But eventually, Christ, as we saw in the interpretation of the liturgical Psalms, the coronation Psalms, today, the reality is God's throne in heaven, Christ's throne in heaven at God's right hand.

And so, it is an eternal throne. Well, that is the background for the house of David that your dynasty will last forever and that kingdom will last forever. And that throne will last forever.

That is the real origin of the hope for an ideal king from the house of David that will establish a universal righteous kingdom. People like Mowinckel, because of their presuppositions that Genesis is late, therefore they begin with the house of David. Most academics do, but the biblical narrative takes us back to the Garden of Eden.

Well, that is the origin and somewhat of the development of the messianic hope. We now look at the Psalter's contribution to this messianic expectation, and messianic hope. And as we saw that the Psalms largely pertain to the king and many of the Psalms praise the king and present him in very idealistic terms.

And so, we saw, for example, in Psalm 2 that he says, ask of me, my son, I'll give you the heathen to the ends of the earth and you are to break them with the rod of iron and you are therefore to establish the righteous kingdom. Or Psalm 110, we saw another coronation liturgy, expectation of David's son, and he's going to be seated at God's right hand. He's going to be a king and a priest who establishes a universal kingdom.

Gunkel did not interpret those as an expectation of a real person. He did not interpret it as a reference to a future king and to a Messiah. For Gunkel, the German word, it was the Hofstahl.

That is to say, it was court hyperbole. It was exaggeration of an idea, but never really with the expectation that anyone would fill such a large image. Mowinckel, by contrast, thought it referred to the Messiah in his book, He that cometh.

And I cite that in your footnote. So, the Psalter glorifies the king and with these Psalms of praise for the king elaborates upon his rule from sea to sea and shore to shore. So that actually it expanded the Abrahamic covenant, which was from the river of Egypt to the great river Euphrates.

It expands it from sea to sea and shore to shore and makes it a universal and a righteous kingdom. On C on page 315, I move from the Psalms themselves, which were sung at the coronation, maybe even the birthday of the king, and at other moments to celebrate the ideal king and expectation, David a prophetic expectation of the ideal king. They were really sung for the historic king in the first temple period.

But what happens when the Psalter is completed, it's completed in the exile when Israel has no king. So therefore, these Psalms that were sung for the historic king and painted in the idea of what would come, they now become the reference to the king, now becomes future. These royal Psalms are draped upon the future Messiah.

So, the way I picture it is that at the coronation, for example, these Psalms were put on the shoulders of the historical king who presented to sight and sound the hope for the ideal. But all of the kings, their shoulders were too small and the purple robes slipped off them. So, they were put upon the successor, but each successor was smaller, to a large extent, smaller than his predecessor until eventually there is no king at all.

So, Israel is left with a wardrobe of these royal Psalms waiting for a king to wear them. It isn't until Jesus who is worthy to wear these Psalms that he's draped in this royal messianic expectation and ideal. Another contributing factor to messianism is apocalyptic literature from the intertestamental period.

Apocalyptic literature is characterized by a dualism, a radical dualism. So, in apocalyptic literature, you thought about the present age as radically distinct from the future age. Furthermore, the present age is thought of as a time of sin, death and evil.

The future age is an age without sin, without death, the ideal age. The present evil age is under the rule of Satan. The future age is under the rule of Messiah.

In this literature, it's expected now that this Messiah, that Jesus identifies himself as the son of man, was with God from the beginning. He will bring in this new rule of righteousness upon the earth. So, they had a radical dichotomy between this age and the age to come.

They saw it as a cataclysmic event that would separate the old age under Satan from the new age under Christ. So, Christ will say, as he's introducing the new age, I saw Satan fall from heaven, which means that Luke 10:18, which means that he loses his ascendancy and that he is greater than Satan and he will triumph over him. He's introducing a new age.

Of course, that's why John the Baptist comes preaching a message of repentance for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. That is this cataclysmic event that's associated

with the Messiah. It's going to be a time when you destroy the wicked and those who repent of sins are prepared to enter into the kingdom of righteousness under the Messiah.

So, he pictures the Christ is coming with the Spirit, making people holy. He pictures it as a time of fire when there will be the judgment, and the chaff will be burned up and the righteous will enter into the kingdom. So, they are baptized with repentance and being prepared for this new age under the Messiah.

All of that then is entering into this messianic expectation. Then we come to Christ and John the Baptist said that this is the ideal king and I'm not even worthy to untie the latchet on his sandal. But when Christ comes, it becomes apparent that there are going to be two advents of Christ.

There's this first advent when he comes and he's going to suffer. He's going to suffer for sin and he's going to take the penalty of death upon himself. It's going to be at his second coming that he establishes the universal ideal kingdom.

But in this era, on his first advent, when he's going to suffer for sin and he's going to experience death, at the same time, he's already inaugurating the new age. So, you have what is known in realized eschatology is that he is now inaugurating the new age, but it's not a radical dichotomy. Jesus talks about the mysteries of the kingdom, and what had been hidden.

What is the old model of the apocalyptic, the present evil age, and the future age of righteousness, it now becomes more extended. So, you have the Son of Man who is sowing the seed of wheat, but at the same time, Satan is still operative. He's inferior to Christ, but he's still operative.

He is sowing the weeds and the two are growing together until a future when again, at that time, there will be the radical separation of the wheat from the weeds or the tares, as we put it. So, we have a new model now instead of just a simple dichotomy. We have a first advent when Christ is suffering for sin and death, but at the same time, he's ascended into heaven and he's established in his kingdom, but it's a mixture.

We wait for the consummation at the end of the age. So that's kind of the outline in the New Testament when I have there the two advents of the Messiah and the two aspects of his fulfillment and the mystery form. And then I talk on page 316 of the role of the Psalter in the New Testament.

The Psalter speaks of the sufferings of the Christ and also of the glories of the Christ. As Peter says to the church of the diaspora, he says, before Christ, they didn't put

together clearly how the Messiah was going to both suffer and yet he's going to reign. They couldn't put together the sufferings of Christ with the reign of Christ.

But the New Testament appropriates the Psalter both for the passion of Christ and also for the triumphs of Christ and makes it clear that they've belonged to these first coming and the second coming. I say the New Testament directly quotes the Old Testament 283 times. And of these 116 times are quotes from the book of Psalms.

In other words, 41% of the quotes from the Old Testament are taken out of the book of Psalms. I also note that the book of Psalms is used in three different ways in the New Testament. It's used as a proof text of God showing he is sovereign over the career of Christ and that he had predicted crucial events in the life of Christ.

And so, Christ is the fulfillment of these Psalms, which made predictions about the Christ. So, for example, and usually to some extent it's apologetic because you could be offended by the fact that the Messiah, they expected the Messiah to bring in this new age, this political age that would have destroyed Rome. And yet the truth is this Christ is going to die.

How do you explain that? Jesus, for example, gives to the Pharisees and the chief priests, the parable of the land owner with his vineyard. And so, he says, this land owner had a vineyard and he put a wall around it to protect it. He dug a wine press within it for the crushing of the grapes.

And he built a watch tower to take care of it. So, he had everything prepared for the vineyard. Then he rented out the vineyard while he went on a distant journey.

But when it came time to reap the harvest from the vineyard, he sent the servants to the tenants in order to get the fruit from his vineyard. Whereupon the tenants seized the landowner's servants and they beat them up. They killed them.

They stoned them. And so he sent more servants and they did the same to them. And then finally the landowner said, I'll send them my own son.

I think the servants represent the prophets such as John the Baptist whom they had rejected. And now here comes the son himself, namely Jesus Christ. But they did the same to him and they seized him and put him to death.

And Jesus says this is fulfillment. Have you never read what was in Psalm 118 about verse 23, I think, that the stone the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. I should have continued the vineyard a little bit more because he said, what will the landowner do? But he will take the vineyard.

He will destroy the tenants. He will take the vineyard away from them and he will give it to new tenants, new people. And that's the history of the church because he took the kingdom away from Israel and he gave it over to, I'll interpret the parable, he gave it over to the Gentile, mostly Gentile church.

So that by the second century, the church was almost entirely Gentile and he gave it to new people. And he says this is the fulfillment of the prophecy that the stone the builders rejected, namely the Messiah, has become the chief cornerstone of the kingdom. So that their rejection had been anticipated.

Again, you have another, I'm just giving illustrations of direct fulfillment. You have it in the case of Judas. And here is one that Jesus chooses and he betrays him, betrays Jesus.

And Jesus says, that's the fulfillment of Psalm 41 where out of David's experience, when he was sick on some occasion and his enemies slandered him and talked against him. Then he says, my own close friend, my trusted friend with whom I shared my bread turned against me. And that was a type of prophecy of Christ and Judas.

He shared his bread with him and he turned against him. So that Psalm becomes a prophecy that's fulfilled in Judas. So that's one way the Psalter is used.

It's used as the fulfillment of a prophecy, proof-texting in the career of our Lord Jesus Christ. This might be too big of a question to ask, but if you look at David's Psalm about my friends turning against me, you would never read it as a prophecy. No, but Jesus says it is a prophecy.

Right. How do you put those two together? Because the question arises that when you're reading that Psalm originally when David is giving those words that my own trusted friend betrayed me. The question is, did David understand in that case that it was a prophecy? I think when he spoke in the coronation liturgies that sit at my right hand that he's going to have a universal kingdom, that was a real prophecy.

We're going to see it in Psalm 16, where he says that of one, he will not see corruption that could be not of himself. So, you have real prophecy on one hand. On the other hand, you have typology.

When you're going through a type, you do not know that the type is intended as a prophecy for a future event. So, you have, for example, with Balaam and his donkey. Balaam and his donkey is a type of the king of Moab, Balak with Balaam the prophet.

So that as the donkey was to Balaam, Balaam is to Balak. So, Balaam is like the donkey. So, the donkey is a type of Balaam and Balaam is a type of Balak.

So, what happens is the donkey could see the angel of the Lord. He had a supernatural vision, but Balaam couldn't see it. So, in the fulfillment of the type, Balaam can see what Balak, the king of Moab cannot see.

And furthermore, there are three times the donkey sees the angel of the Lord. The first time he, let's see, what does he do the first time? He goes off into a field. The second time he crushes Balaam's foot against the wall.

The third time he just lays down underneath him. And each time it gets more painful to Balaam. And the same thing, Balaam gives three prophecies.

His eyes are wide open. He says he sees things. And each time the revelation becomes more painful as he sees the ascendancy of the king of Israel over the king of Moab.

Then the text says, that the third time this happened, the donkey saw the angel of the Lord and responded painfully to Balaam. It says the third time Balaam got angry. And in the fulfillment of the type, the third time he gives this prophecy, we're told that Balak got angry.

And the climactic moment is that whereupon, when he wants to beat the donkey, the donkey speaks miraculously. And it's a type of Balaam who now speaks miraculously. It says that God opened the mouth of the donkey and now God opens the mouth and puts the words into the mouth of Balaam.

So, it's a real picture. My point is that while Balaam is going through this experience, he does not know that he's being a type of greater event. And I think that's how typology works.

That while you're going through it, you're not aware that it's under the superintendence of God to be a picture of a greater event. And so, therefore, I don't think David knew in that particular case that he was a type. It's only in later revelations and Jesus' experience that you realize that it was a divinely intended type.

And here's the fulfillment of the type. So maybe that's helpful, Bill, for a helpful question to clarify the matter. Okay.

So, we go back to the role of the psalter it is cited as proof-text in the near of Christ. The psalter is also used by the apostles to teach doctrine. So, for example, when Paul in Romans 3 wants to talk about the universality of man's corruption and sin, he cites several Psalms to do it, including Psalms 14 and the synoptic parallel, which is Psalm 53.

So, the psalms teach prophecy and this seated at God's right hand becomes part of the liturgy in the confessions of the church. Those are the three ways that the psalms are used. On page 316, I'm talking about the role of the psalter.

It's used in three ways. And then we said Jesus Christ alluded to the Psalms over 50 times. And then finally, I make the point that Jesus said the Psalms speak of him.

From Luke 24, when he meets the disciples on the Emmaus Road, he says to them, this is what I told you while I was still with you. Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms. So, it is Jesus who asks us to read the Psalms with reference to himself.

And I'll say more about how they speak of Christ at the end of this lecture. But at any rate, Jesus said we should read the Psalms with reference to Christ. Yet I'm astounded when I read even commentaries by evangelical academics, how little they do or read the psalms in the light of Christ, as we're told to.

On page 317, I cite some of these 50 passages and I divide it up into Christ's passion, his fervor, and his glory. So, we take up psalms that refer to his passion. So, when he says in John, my soul is troubled, he is citing Psalm 6. When he asks on the cross, why have you forsaken me? He's citing Psalm 22.

When John says, divided his garments, divided my garments, it's a reference to Psalm 22. On the cross, when he says, into your hands, I commit my spirit. It's a citation from Psalm 31.

Without going, that's all written down there. And there's no point in my reading it all to you. But the point is you can see that he is seeing David as a type of himself or a prophetic prophecy about himself.

And so, he sees himself as the fulfillment of the royal expectation. So this is far more than 10 psalms that deal with the king. The whole Psalter is not the whole, but much of the Psalter is about the king.

Therefore, they are referring to Christ. So even when he cleanses the temple, it is the zeal for his house that comes out of Psalm 69. And so constantly you have in the New Testament that they see the Psalms as a prophecy or a type of Jesus Christ.

That takes me to page 318. And I talk about kinds of Messianic Psalms. I divide that, and this is following from Delitzsch.

There are four kinds. One is called indirect and typical. So, I say, David, the earthly king, foreshadows his greatest son, the heavenly king.

I don't think David necessarily knew that he was a type as we explained earlier. But in the light of the total revelation, you only see typology in light of the total revelation. In light of the total revelation, you could see how the historical king is a type of his greatest son of Jesus Christ.

So, these Psalms that refer to the king are indirectly at the least typical of Jesus Christ because that's how the New Testament reads it. Secondly, it is what you might call typical prophetic. That is, David is a type of Christ, but he uses language to refer to his experience that is exaggerated to some extent, but finds its fulfillment uniquely in Christ.

This would be, for example, in Psalm 22, when David's probably going through some crisis and feels abandoned by God, yet he describes his experience in terms of the cross. So, he pictures his thirst. He pictures they're dividing his garments among them.

The language, as we looked at Psalm 22, transcends his own historical experience. And it actually becomes prophetic of Christ when it is fulfilled literally in the life of Christ. So I call those typical prophetic.

David's sufferings and glories typify Jesus Christ, but his language transcends his own experience and finds its fulfillment in Jesus Christ. So that's the second kind. It's a mixture of type and prophecy.

Some Psalms are purely prophetic and that would be like Psalm 110, when the Lord said to my Lord, sit at my right hand until I make the enemies your footstool of your feet. You could read a typical prophetic, but it is uniquely fulfilled in Jesus Christ. These Lord's enthronement Psalms that we saw in Psalm 93 and 99, where the Lord reigns, they are interpreted in the New Testament as a reference to Jesus Christ and his reign.

So, these are the four ways I see the Psalms being used. Well, I think that gives you some orientation to a Messianic approach in interpreting the Psalms. So, this is the time for questions if you want to ask any more questions.

Bill, I'm anxious for your input and Ed for yours. Was it that clear? Is it that clear? Yeah, it was that clear. Back on prophecy, one of the things that I don't know if I learned it or just thought it out, was that so often on these prophecies that don't seem like it's your first category, indirect or typical.

I mean, I'm thinking of the Hosea out of Egypt, I've called my son, so I mean, this is a general question. Is part of it just that God does the same kinds of things over and over? So, the first time something happens, because God does things cyclically, then

it becomes a type of what's going to happen. I mean, is that I guess, I mean, the question I hear a lot from people is, like they'll read a passage, you go, well, that's not a prophecy.

The New Testament says it is a prophecy. So, I'm always looking for ways to explain it. So, type is a good way to do it. Type is one way of doing it. I think that the idea that in Hosea out of Egypt, I have called my son. See, I think that's a reference that Israel is the son of God.

Israel typifies the ultimate son of God. Okay. Yeah.

So, I see it as a type that's the whole six birth narratives of Matthew. They all find fulfillment in prophecy. So, some of them very direct like Bethlehem with the wise men of Bethlehem, but then with the slaughter of the innocent, and he sees it in Jeremiah that as Israel is going into captivity, he sees it as a type, but a type is a divinely intended picture.

It takes the full revelation before you can see it as a divinely intended picture. So, a type is a divinely intended picture of a greater event, of a greater event in the future. Okay.

That's what I understand by typology. It's a picture of a greater event, but it's a divinely intended picture. The issue that's raised, of course, at this point is do we follow Marsh and the only legitimate types are those that are given to us in the New Testament? Or are we free to see types that are not articulated in the New Testament? I'm of the opinion that it's a way of interpreting Scripture that we are free to see types.

The problem with it is you have no control over that. But there's another way of hearing God, I think, in poetry. So, I think it's more than just a scientific method that we can fully control.

I think there's an openness to the Spirit at this point. So, what you have with Paul and Galatians and the two mountains, that they're types in his mind. Yeah.

Well, actually that's a, I think he says he's allegorizing. That is to say, it was not, I think what he's saying there when he's allegorizing, he's saying this is more than what is in the text. Okay.

So that'd be beyond types? I think the case of that with the Sinai and with Jerusalem and Hagar and Zion and Sarah, I think that's taken us beyond what's in the text itself. I'll have to look at that more, but that's my initial response to it.

This is Dr. Bruce Waltke in his teaching on the book of Psalms. This is session number 24, Messianic Psalms, Psalm 16.