



MONDAY 26 MARCH 2018

SERIES: EASTER

Read: Psalm 118

Plug In...

We ended our reading in Matthew at chapter 21. This commenced Jesus' last week before His death. Each of the four Gospels give the most space to this last week of Jesus' life, with the greatest focus on the period of Jesus' suffering: betrayal, arrest, trial, crucifixion. These suffering passages of the Gospels are called the *Passion Narratives*. [NB: 'passio' is Latin for 'suffering'.]

As Jesus' last week and sufferings are spoken of in the Gospels, we notice a huge increase in Old Testament references appearing. The book of the Bible most quoted is Psalms. This Easter week we'll look at each of the Psalms mentioned by the Gospel writers.

In Psalm 118 the person speaking is clearly a king. A king in distress who called out to God and God proved to be his salvation (v.4).

This is the Psalm the excited crowd yelled out about Jesus as He entered Jerusalem the week before His death ([Matthew 21:9](#)). This is also the final Psalm sung at Passover. It most likely was the one Jesus sung with His disciples before heading out to the Mount of Olives where His distress began ([Matthew 26:30](#)).

Chew It Over...

The Easter day of salvation extends across our whole Christian life. Are you rejoicing in it? Psalm 118:27 shows the people conducted a festival with their gifts and thanks

toward God – a response to His salvation. What are you doing today that marks your unrestricted joy and entire thanks that God is your God? How will you exalt Him?

Prayer Suggestion

Help us Lord Jesus to rejoice in this day you have made. May we be glad in it. You are our God and we will give you thanks.



TUESDAY 27 MARCH 2018

SERIES: EASTER

Read: Psalm 8

Plug In...

When we read sequentially the Psalms from Psalm 1 to 8, Psalm 8 is the first Psalm that is a song of praise. The first 7 Psalms all offer a prayer to God for salvation out of suffering.

Chew It Over...

In [Matthew 21:4-17](#), we see Jesus heal people in the temple complex just after cleansing it. The children get excited and start chanting Psalm 118 again. The leaders tell Jesus off. Jesus says these children get it and haven't you read what it says in Psalm 8!

Why would God listen to the prayers of human beings who are suffering? Because as Psalm 8 says, humans have that very very special place in God's Kingdom. They image God. They rule on behalf of God.

The antagonism Jesus experiences from the leaders will climax with their rage at Him, driving them to kill Him. Yet, Jesus allows all this to happen to Him, in order to answer the prayers of those that need salvation. God becomes human, a human that gives His life as a ransom. He does this because He loves those humans – even the ones that rage against Him.

Prayer Suggestion

Thank you Jesus that while we were your enemies, you died for us, to bring us to God, to restore our dignity, our humanity, our role and position within your Kingdom.



WEDNESDAY 28 MARCH 2018

SERIES: EASTER

Read: Psalm 110

Plug In...

Jesus points out that in this Psalm we see the high and royal David speaking to someone even higher and more royal than himself.

David had some success in his lifetime, he occupied a small area of the earth and was able to thwart enemy attacks. David's kingdom was protected and at peace. But what about the rest of the world. David knew that God was the God of everything and the promise of a Messiah was such that one day the whole world would be subdued under the feet of the King.

This Psalm follows Psalm 8 logically, for in the Messiah that David saw in the future, humanity is restored to its place and function: all of creation is subdued under them as they are under God.

Chew It Over...

Think about the phrase, 'Jesus is King'. What are we confessing when we say it?

How does gathering with others at Easter reveal who is King?

Peter said everyone must know that God has made the man Jesus, which the Jews of the time crucified, both Lord and Messiah ([Acts 2:32-40](#)).

Prayer Suggestion

Pray that Jesus is our King. May we live in obedience to our King.



THURSDAY 29 MARCH 2018

SERIES: EASTER

Read: Psalm 41

Plug In...

This Psalm expresses that righteousness is looking after the poor and needy. God is righteous, God's character is to look after the poor and needy. God will bless the person that does this (*cf.* [Matthew 5:7](#)).

The Psalm shows that the person who attacks the one trying to help the weak and poor is an enemy of the weak and poor, and so an enemy of God.

On the night that Jesus is arrested – a Thursday night – He had a final meal with His closest friends. Jesus was deliberately going to the cross in order to help the weak and needy ([Matthew 9:9-12](#); [Matthew 26:26-30](#)). One who shares the meal with Jesus betrays his friend. Read [Matthew 26:17-25](#).

Chew It Over...

We've seen the Psalms show that Jesus restores humans to their proper identity: people that image God. The world is broken, hurting, suffering. To image God, while we wait for the new creation, is to care for the weak and needy.

This Easter, don't let this thought be abstract. Pray and think now of who needs help and care. Who has burden, heavy shoulders, is downcast, is isolated because of sickness, is emotionally done-in because of circumstances. Reflect God. Jesus disadvantaged Himself to advantage us. This is the way of righteousness.

Prayer Suggestion

Impress on my heart Lord Jesus whom I can care for. Help me not postpone, nor forget. Cause me to orientate my long weekend around extending love to the needy in my proximity, to lifting up the down-hearted.



FRIDAY 30 MARCH 2018

SERIES: EASTER

Read: Psalm 22

Plug In...

The Gospel writers take us deep into the trauma that Jesus is experiencing in dying for our sins. They take us into the moment by retaining the mother-tongue of Jesus' anguished cry. In Aramaic: *Eli, Eli, Lemá Sabachtánai* ([Matthew 27:46](#)).

Chew It Over...

Importantly, 'forsaken' in Scripture means to be put under the wrath of God without God removing His hand of judgement. So, Jesus is not experiencing the Trinity split up (i.e. it is just now the human part of Jesus on the cross). Jesus is experiencing God's active judgement and it is not being removed.

Yet, notice where the Psalm ends? Salvation. And, blessings of that salvation for all the people associated with this saved one. The next words we hear from Jesus is, "It is finished" ([John 19:30](#)).

Prayer Suggestion

Dwell on each line from [Romans 8:1-4](#) allowing it to bring praise and thankfulness from your heart and requests from God to apply the benefits of Christ to your life.



WEEKEND 31 MARCH – 1 APR 2018

SERIES: EASTER

Read: Psalm 22:19-31

Plug In...

This Psalm is an individual crying for help. Then the individual rejoices in God's help and declares his praises to others and gives the benefits of his help to others.

Chew It Over...

See how the Psalm has a certain individual going through suffering and then salvation for the benefit of others.

The more we see what Jesus has done for us before the Holy God, the more the *theme of praises* will issue from our hearts that will live forever.

Prayer Suggestion

More than a quick prayer, or recitation, create space today, this Easter weekend and meditate on Jesus' life for us. Do so until your heart begins to praise.