

# Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs: The Master Musician's Melodies

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by  
William D. Barrick, Th.D.  
Professor of OT, The Master's Seminary



## Christmas in the Psalms

### Introduction

- In the Book of Psalms the only potentially direct reference to the birth or infancy of the Messiah is at Psalm 22:9-10 —
  - <sup>9</sup> Yet You are He who brought me forth from the womb;  
You made me trust *when* upon my mother's breasts.
  - <sup>10</sup> Upon You I was cast from birth;  
You have been my God from my mother's womb.
- At Psalm 69:8 (cf. 69:9 and John 2:17) there might be a reference to Messiah's mother —
  - I have become estranged from my brothers  
And an alien to my mother's sons.
- However, when we look at the birth narratives in Luke we find a number of allusions to and quotations from Psalms.

### Christmas Readings in the Psalms (NAU)

Although the Gospel of Luke is our primary focus, there is one reference in Matthew that has an echo of Psalms:

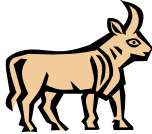
<b>Born in the Line of David</b>	
<b>Matthew 1:1</b> The record of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham:	<b>Psalm 89:3-4</b> <sup>3</sup> "I have made a covenant with My chosen; I have sworn to David My servant, <sup>4</sup> I will establish your seed forever And build up your throne to all generations." Selah.

<b>Born to Be King Forever</b>	
<b>Luke 1:33</b> “and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end.”	<b>Psalm 89:36-37</b> <sup>36</sup> “His descendants shall endure forever And his throne as the sun before Me. <sup>37</sup> “It shall be established forever like the moon, And the witness in the sky is faithful.” Selah.

Mary’s wonderful song of praise employs a number of phrases and concepts drawn from Psalms:

<b>Mary’s Song: The Magnificat</b>	
<b>Luke 1:47</b> “And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior.”	<b>Psalm 35:9</b> And my soul shall rejoice in the LORD; It shall exult in His salvation.
<b>Luke 1:48</b> “For He has had regard for the humble state of His bondservant; For behold, from this time on all generations will count me blessed.”	<b>Psalm 138:6</b> For though the LORD is exalted, Yet He regards the lowly, But the haughty He knows from afar.
<b>Luke 1:50</b> “AND HIS MERCY IS UPON GENERATION AFTER GENERATION TOWARD THOSE WHO FEAR HIM.”	<b>Psalm 103:17</b> But the lovingkindness of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear Him, And His righteousness to children’s children,
<b>Luke 1:51</b> “He has done mighty deeds with His arm; He has scattered <i>those who were</i> proud in the thoughts of their heart.”	<b>Psalm 98:1</b> O sing to the LORD a new song, For He has done wonderful things, His right hand and His holy arm have gained the victory for Him. <b>Psalm 118:15</b> The sound of joyful shouting and salvation is in the tents of the righteous; The right hand of the LORD does valiantly.
<b>Luke 1:53</b> “HE HAS FILLED THE HUNGRY WITH GOOD THINGS; And sent away the rich empty-handed.”	<b>Psalm 107:9</b> For He has satisfied the thirsty soul, And the hungry soul He has filled with what is good.
<b>Luke 1:55</b> “As He spoke to our fathers, To Abraham and his descendants forever.”	<b>Psalm 132:11</b> The LORD has sworn to David A truth from which He will not turn back: “Of the fruit of your body I will set upon your throne.”

Zacharias, the father of John the Baptizer, recovered his speech at the circumcision of his son. He praised God in a prophetic psalm that contains several references to Psalms.

<b>Zacharias's Prophecy</b>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Luke 1:68</b></p> <p>“Blessed <i>be</i> the Lord God of Israel, For He has visited us and accomplished redemption for His people,”</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Psalm 41:13</b></p> <p>Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, From everlasting to everlasting. Amen and Amen.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Psalm 72:18</b></p> <p>Blessed be the LORD God, the God of Israel, Who alone works wonders.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Psalm 111:9</b></p> <p>He has sent redemption to His people; He has ordained His covenant forever; Holy and awesome is His name.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Luke 1:69</b></p> <p>“And has raised up a horn of salvation for us In the house of David His servant — ”</p> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 20px;">  </div>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Psalm 18:2</b></p> <p>The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, My God, my rock, in whom I take refuge; My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Psalm 89:17</b></p> <p>For You are the glory of their strength, And by Your favor our horn is exalted.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Psalm 132:17</b></p> <p>“There I will cause the horn of David to spring forth; I have prepared a lamp for Mine anointed.”</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Luke 1:71</b></p> <p>“Salvation FROM OUR ENEMIES, And FROM THE HAND OF ALL WHO HATE US;”</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Psalm 106:10</b></p> <p>So He saved them from the hand of the one who hated <i>them</i>, And redeemed them from the hand of the enemy.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Luke 1:72</b></p> <p>“To show mercy toward our fathers, And to remember His holy covenant,”</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Psalm 105:8-9</b></p> <p><sup>8</sup> He has remembered His covenant forever, The word which He commanded to a thousand generations, <sup>9</sup> <i>The covenant</i> which He made with Abraham, And His oath to Isaac.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Psalm 106:45</b></p> <p>And He remembered His covenant for their sake, And relented according to the greatness of His lovingkindness.</p>

Our final encounter with Psalms in Luke's birth narrative is when Jesus was being circumcised in the Temple when he was 8 days old.

<b>Simeon and the Infant Jesus in the Temple</b>	
<b>Luke 2:30</b> For my eyes have seen Your salvation,	<b>Psalm 119:166</b> I hope for Your salvation, O LORD, And do Your commandments. <b>Psalm 119:174</b> I long for Your salvation, O LORD, And Your law is my delight.

The subject of salvation is integral to the birth of the Messiah. The angel told Joseph that Mary would "bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21). On the night of Jesus's birth, an angel told the shepherds in the fields outside Bethlehem (Luke 2:10-11),

"Do not be afraid;  
for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people;  
for today in the city of David  
there has been born for you a Savior,  
who is Christ the Lord."



Salvation and a Savior are the message of Christmas. May you and your families know from personal experience the salvation from sins that He came to provide. Prayerfully consider the words of Psalm 130:

- <sup>1</sup> Out of the depths I have cried to You, O LORD.
- <sup>2</sup> Lord, hear my voice!  
Let Your ears be attentive  
To the voice of my supplications.
- <sup>3</sup> If You, LORD, should mark iniquities,  
O Lord, who could stand?
- <sup>4</sup> But there is forgiveness with You,  
That You may be feared.
- <sup>5</sup> I wait for the LORD, my soul does wait,  
And in His word do I hope.
- <sup>6</sup> My soul *waits* for the Lord  
More than the watchmen for the morning;  
*Indeed, more than* the watchmen for the morning.
- <sup>7</sup> O Israel, hope in the LORD;  
For with the LORD there is lovingkindness,  
And with Him is abundant redemption.
- <sup>8</sup> And He will redeem Israel  
From all his iniquities.

Where is your hope this Christmas?