

MESSIANIC PSALMS

I. Definition of a Messianic psalm

A Messianic psalm is a psalm that makes predictions about the Messiah. These predictions include predictions about His birth, His person—that He would be fully God and fully man in one person, His life, His death, burial, and resurrection, His ascension into heaven, His priestly ministry, His second coming, His victory over His enemies, and His universal reign on the earth.

II. Proof of the existence of Messianic psalms

Jesus says there are things written in the Psalms concerning Him (cf. Luke 24:44).

III. Criteria for identifying Messianic psalms

- A. If the new Testament says a psalm is Messianic, then we may say that psalm is Messianic, e.g. John 19:23, 24 cf. Psalm 22:18.

Note: John says when the Roman soldiers divided Jesus' clothes among themselves and gambled over his coat to determine who would get it, they fulfilled the prediction in Psalm 22:18 that this would happen. Since that is so, the personal pronouns "my" in Psalm 22:18 must refer to Jesus. Thus, this verse should be read, "They part my (Jesus') garments among them, and cast lots upon my (Jesus') vesture." If we look at the personal pronouns preceding and following this verse, we find they all refer to the same person that the personal pronouns "my" in this verse refer to, and that person is Jesus. This entire psalm then is a Messianic psalm, and it predicts the words Jesus would speak to His father starting with the fourth saying on the cross "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (cf. Ps. 22:1) and going up to the sixth saying on the cross, "It is finished." Jesus spoke the fourth saying on the cross to His Father audibly, and then He spoke the following words in Psalm 22 to Him silently up through the middle of verse 15 where it says "and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws." At that point He spoke audibly the fifth saying on the cross, "I thirst." After that, He spoke the rest of the words in Psalm 22 to His Father silently, and then He spoke audibly the sixth saying on the cross, "It is finished."

- B. If a psalm can only be applied to the Messiah and cannot possibly be applied to a mere human being, then we may say that psalm is Messianic, e.g. Ps. 16 (cf. vs. 10—"neither wilt thou permit thine Holy One to see corruption.")

Note: Sometimes both of the criteria mentioned above apply to the same psalm, e.g. Ps. 16—The New Testament says this psalm is Messianic (cf. Acts 2:25-31 and 13:35-