

Third Week of Advent Fasting

The Incarnation Through the Psalms

There are many prophecies in the Book of Psalms that foreshadow what Christ went through. For example, [Psalm 22](#) talks about the sufferings Christ experienced on the Cross. [Psalm 24](#) is a prophecy that points to when Christ opened the gates of Paradise. [Psalm 16-10](#), *“For you will not abandon my soul to Sheol, or let your holy one see corruption”*, is a prophecy that points to the Resurrection. Therefore, it is not a surprise that there are a couple of Psalms that point to the Annunciation and the Incarnation.

The first of these psalms is [Psalm 45](#). Famously quoted from this Psalm is the following verses: “Hear, O daughter, and consider, and incline your ear: forget your people and your father's house, and the king will desire your beauty, since he is your lord, bow to him.” ([v. 10-11](#)). This Psalm prophecies that God chose St. Mary to become the Mother of God. The interpretation of this verse is further validated by its choice as the psalm for the Gospel for the 2nd Sunday of Kiahk as well as the Feast of the Annunciation. Additionally, in the [Hymn of the 10 Strings](#), this is one of the “verses” that David sings as he plucks the strings of his lyre.

Additionally, [Psalm 8](#) addresses the topic of the Incarnation and Christ becoming Man. King David writes in this Psalm *“what is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him? Yet you have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor.”* ([v. 4-5](#)). The “son of man” that David refers to is Jesus. This is known because Jesus refers to Himself as the Son of Man multiple times; for example, Christ calls Himself the Son of Man when healing the Paralytic ([Mark 2:1-10](#)). In telling the paralytic to take up his bed and walk, Jesus showed that He has the power to forgive sins. But Jesus said *“the Son of Man has the authority to forgive sins”* ([Mark 2:10](#)). That would mean that Christ is the Son of Man. When King David writes about Him being made lower than the angels, He is talking about his time on Earth. St. Paul elaborates on this by saying *“But we see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone”* ([Hebrews 2:9](#)), and in the Gregorian Liturgy, the Priest says “You, the Infinite, being God, did not consider equality with God a thing to be grasped/but emptied Yourself/and took the form of a servant/and blessed my nature in Yourself”. Especially noting the multiple cross references, [Psalm 8:4-5](#) is particularly of note because it emphasizes that in God becoming Man, He humbled Himself for our sake.

The beauty of the Coptic church is amplified by what is sung in the hymns complements what is written in Scripture, and while the Psalms are strong prayers, many Psalms are simultaneously prophetic in nature, making them all the more beautiful.

Further Readings/References:

- [A Letter of Athanasius, Our Holy Father, Archbishop of Alexandria, to Marcellinus on the Interpretation of the Psalms](#)
- ESV Bible
- [Hymn of the 10 Strings](#)
- Gregorian Liturgy
- [Christ in the Psalms](#)