

Ways of Seeing Christ in the Psalms Where Christ Remains in the Background

N.B. In this case of these categories Christ may be seen in almost every Psalm

Where Christ as both Son of Man (or David) and Son of God . . .

1. Is the basis (or originator) of the life of faith expressed by the Psalms ¹
2. Identifies with the experience of the Psalmist (including, us)²
3. Takes up into Himself and encapsulates the whole range of expressions of faith found in all the Psalms³
4. Is the goal, *telos*, fulfillment of the faith expressions and hopes of the psalmist⁴

¹ E.g. Katharina Schütz Zell on Psalm 51 "I connect this *Misere* [Psalm 51] with Jesus Christ, even though it was prayed before Christ became a man. [Why?] It has struck me that we must all be preserved in Jesus Christ. According to the scripture . . . He is the savior of all flesh, the A[lpha] and O[mega], beginning and end, the key of David, who opens to all the faithful."

² E.g. Andrew Kreigshauser: "And so if the psalm prays, "Out of the depths I call to you, O Lord," it is Christ in his Passion praying along with Christ in his suffering members throughout the world right now. If it prays, "I will praise you among the nations," it is the risen Christ praising the Father in the Church spread throughout the world" (*Praying the Psalms with Christ*, p.). Walters on Psalm 22 (p. 11): "By doing so [reciting from Psalm 22] he [Jesus] identified himself with all who have ever suffered. . . . in his death, Jesus was one of us, a partaker of flesh and blood touched with the feelings of our extreme infirmities. His solidarity with us is first of all his experience of the worst that people can do to one another. . . . [T]he Lord Christ identifies himself with all that we experience and feel, especially that which is negative, hurtful, and destructive, and offers the sustenance of his life and of his body and blood for us."

³ E. g. St Augustine (4th century AD): "Neither the narrow life span of the individual psalmist nor the limited history of Israel, but only the time-transcending subject of the whole Christ could entirely embrace and perfectly assimilate the individual and collective experiences condensed in the psalms. . . [the psalmists'] spiritually-interpreted reality became the expression of a single life that endures from the morning of creation to the last day to reach fulfillment in eternity." (Errationes)

⁴ E. g. Martin Luther: "The psalmists asked for blessing and gave thanks for blessings as members of the covenant people of God, relying on God's grace, trusting his promises, worshiping in his temple, receiving his forgiveness. Yet all of these -- covenant, grace, promise, temple, and forgiveness -- found their fulfillment in Jesus Christ. Christ "is himself the God whom we are exhorted to worship." When the psalmist exults that God's "love endures forever" . . . Christ "stands hidden" in that phrase" (Bruce Cameron summarizing Luther.) Note also John Corbon (cited by Kriegshauser): "In this single book of the Old Testament the entire economy of salvation became prayer, and now this love-inspired plan has been fulfilled in Jesus Christ."