Blessed is He Who Comes in the Name of the Lord

Psalm 118:26a in the Gospels

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To Bill and Christina

and my extended family in Christ,

without whom this would have been impossible

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Introduction

The Psalms have been the prayer book and hymnal of God's people for millennia. They provide a basic structure and vocabulary for conversations with God. With the words of the Psalms, God's people express praise, confession, joy, sorrow and lament. In the ongoing conversation between God and God's people, Psalm 118 has a prominent continuing role in Jewish and Christian worship. Verse 26a, "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD," echoes through the gospels and Christian history and resonates with believers today. This paper explores what scholars and deeply spiritual Jews and Christians have discovered about the verse throughout millennia of study, in several languages.

Chapter 1: Psalm 118:26a

The Psalms, like most of the other books of the Christian Old Testament (also known as the Tanakh – the Hebrew Bible) were originally written in Hebrew. There is endless debate about who wrote the Hebrew scriptures and when various sections were written down because the oldest existing manuscripts are only copies of copies of texts standardized by the Masoretes. Few fragments of the Hebrew Bible exist that pre-date the Leningrad manuscript of 1008 A.D., on which the Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia is based.[1]

Some scholars speculate that Aramaic "square script" letters, "still in general use in the time of Jesus"[2] were used to write down Hebrew and Aramaic oral traditions. Dating of the Hebrew scriptures is connected with study of Hebrew and Aramaic scripts and their process of becoming distinct from Phoenician. This area of study is undergoing re-evaluation because of the discovery in 2005 of an Abecedary at Tel Zayit. This is a significant discovery "whether one understands it as a Phoenician script … or as an emergent Hebrew script"[3] and the discussion of its academic impact is in its early stages. Scholars generally agree that Phoenician was the first non-cuneiform alphabet, but they disagree about its effect on the literacy of cultures exposed to it, for instance, whether it facilitated general literacy of a population or only literacy of an elite subset.[4] The discovery of this Abecedary makes it more difficult for scholars to dismiss the people of ancient Israel as an illiterate, primarily oral story-telling culture, especially in the early tenth century.

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[1] Ernst Würthwein, *The Text of the Old Testament*, trans. Erroll Rhodes (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1995), 1.
[2] *Ibid*., 10.
[3] Ron E. Tappy, "Tel Zayit and the Tel Zayit Abecedary in Their Regional Context," in *Literate Culture and Tenth-Century Canaan*, ed. Ron E. Tappy and P. Kyle McCarter (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2008), 37.
[4] Christopher A. Rollston, "The Tel Zayit Abecedary and Evidence for Israelite Literacy," Tappy and McCarter, 68.

"Long before the Book of Psalms came into existence, and before the major part of its content was written, there was a tradition of psalmody in ancient Israel. The evidence for this ancient tradition is to be found in the poetic texts embedded in the prose narrative concerning Israel's early period."[5] With the exception of the most prominent early poetry found in Exodus 15:1-18, Numbers 10:35-36, 23 and 24, Deuteronomy 32 and 33, Judges 5 and 1 Samuel 2:1-10, the hymns and songs of Israel are collected in the book of Psalms. The title of the book of Psalms comes from the Greek Septuagint (LXX) version of the Hebrew Bible, ΨΑΛΜΟΙ, transliterated "Psalmoi," conveying an implication of music played on a plucked instrument. This title is carried into the Latin Vulgate, where the title is "Psalmi" or "Psalmorum." The title in the Hebrew Bible is תהילים, transliterated "Tehillim," roughly translated "praises." The ancient titles express mystery surrounding the worship practices of ancient Israel and neither the original Hebrew nor the early Greek fully explain or summarize the content of the Psalter.

The Psalms are notoriously difficult to date, having been compiled from "various periods of Israel's history"[6] and completed between 400 and 200 BC.[7] Individual Psalms, except perhaps those associated with specific events in the life of King David, are "almost impossible"[8] to date. Authorship is especially difficult to determine. Volumes have been written debating Psalm authorship - even authorship of Psalms specifically ascribed to an author, such as David or Asaph or the Sons of Korah. Although these superscriptions are not

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[5] Peter C. Craigie and Marvin E. Tate, *Psalms 1-50*, World Biblical Commentary 19 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2004), 25.
[6] W. Stewart McCullough, *Psalms and Proverbs.* Interpreter's Bible IV (New York: Abingdon Press, 1955), 10.
[7] *Ibid*.
[8] Bernhard W. Anderson, *Understanding the Old Testament* (New Jersey: Pearson / Prentice Hall, 2007), 492.

considered to be original, they are very old, unlike the various subtitles and paragraph headings found in most Bibles in books other than the Psalms. "It is generally agreed that the titles are later than the Psalms to which they are attached … but the Septuagint bears witness that the titles belong to the pre-Christian period."[9] Psalm 118 is among 24 Psalms with no "introductory notes, which were added by ancient editors,"[10] so any attempt to speculate about authorship of Psalm 118 has no starting point and the psalm remains "technically anonymous."[11]

Also ancient, but not considered original, is the division of the Book of Psalms into five books, each concluding with a doxology. "Whether the doxologies were inserted by the editor(s), or whether the presence of the doxologies in particular psalms prompted the editor(s) to choose those points in the text for the division of the Psalter into five books, is uncertain."[12] Certainly, five books within the Psalter invite searches for parallels to the five books of Moses – the Torah. Scholars who have not resisted the temptation to pursue such a search have been unsuccessful in finding enough data within the Psalms and the Torah to support a deliberate correspondence between the two collections. Psalm 118 (Ps 117 in the LXX) is found in Book 5 (Ps 107-150) of the Psalter.

Informal groupings of psalms within the Psalter are popular among commentators, but they do not coordinate well with the ancient formal divisions into five books. Collections or lists of Davidic Psalms, the Psalms of Asaph and the Psalms of the Sons of Korah are based on the superscriptions or internal evidence of many psalms. Psalms are sometimes

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[9] McCullough, 8.
[10] Michael D. Coogan, *The Old Testament*. (New York: Oxford Univ Press, 2006), 458.
[11] Craigie, 33.
[12] Craigie, 30.

grouped by scholars according to content, topic or theme. Hermann Gunkel "pioneered the method of study commonly referred to in English as *form-criticism*. He identified and described the basic literary types or genres (*Gattungen*) in the Psalms, attempted to identify the individual or communal life situations (*Sitz im Leben*) in which those types functioned, recognized the oral origins of much of the psalmodic poetry, and stressed the importance of studying the Psalms not only in the context of the OT as a whole, but also in the literary and cultural context of ancient Near Eastern civilizations. With respect to psalm types, Gunkel identified five principal types ([i] Hymn; [ii] Communal Lament; [iii] Royal Psalms; [iv] Individual Lament; [v] Individual Song of Thanksgiving) and a number of minor categories (e.g., [i] Pilgrimage Songs; [ii] Wisdom Poetry; [iii] Communal Thanksgiving; [iv] Liturgy). Some psalms were identified as "mixed" types, which were said to be of a later date than "pure" types."[13]

There are many theories concerning the long process of collecting and editing the Psalter. Among them are linguistic analyses tracking word use, especially the use of references to God. Psalm 118 contains 22 uses of יְהוָה, distributed throughout the psalm. The shortened form, יָהּ, occurs six times (twice in verse 5, and in verses 14, 17, 18, 19). The most ancient form, אֱלֹהַי, does not appear, but the shortened version, אֵל , occurs three times, all in verses 27 and 28. None of the resources consulted attempt to assert editorial or redactional theories based on this data. Gunkel draws the conclusion, "No *internal ordering principle for the individual psalms has been transmitted for the whole*."[14] "It must thus

[13] Craigie, 45 (italics his).
[14] Hermann Gunkel, *Introduction to Psalms* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1998), 2 (italics his).

remain uncertain whether Pss 90-150 preserve other collections…"[15] His opinion makes it more difficult to accept theories further dividing Book V into three sections, of which Psalm 118 is considered to "frame" the second group, Psalms 118-135, with eschatological and messianic implications.[16] Research and debate around the collecting and editing of the Book of Psalms and possible collections within it will certainly continue.

Gunkel considers Psalm 118 one of twenty individual thanksgiving songs,[17] among those which developed into liturgies.[18] Gunkel dates Psalm 118 among liturgies of the post-exilic period.[19] It is widely considered a "thanksgiving liturgy related to sanctuary" and is "processional in nature."[20] Some suggest that it was originally celebrating a specific king's "delivery from death and for a military victory.[21] There is no need for these to be mutually exclusive ideas because there is a sense that thanksgiving is being offered for specific experience(s) of rescue, while anticipating future help from God. The context of this Psalm is "praise for the assured experience of divine deliverance,"[22] giving it a generalized on-going effect. The liturgical flavor of this Psalm is apparent in its first and last verses, "Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever" (118:1, 29), which is a "liturgical formula"[23] seen throughout the Psalms and elsewhere in the Old Testament.

Most modern commentaries mention that Psalm 118 is the concluding Psalm traditionally associated with the "Egyptian Hallel" Passover collection of psalm liturgies

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[15] Gunkel, 347.
[16] Leslie C. Allen, *Psalms 101-150, revised*. WBC 21 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2002), 78.
[17] Gunkel, 199.
[18] Gunkel, 316.
[19] Gunkel, 330.
[20] Allen, 163.
[21] Mitchell Dahood, *Psalms III: 101-150*. Anchor Bible 17A (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1970), 155.
[22] C. H. Dodd, *According to the Scriptures* (London: Nisbit & Co., Ltd., 1952), 99.
[23] James Luther Mays, *Psalms* (Louisville: John Knox, 1994), 26.

(Psalms 113 – 118).[24] The earliest Christian commentators do not mention this.[25] Neither do the Reformers, such as Martin Luther and John Calvin, who show no interest in the Hallel. Surprisingly, neither does a late twentieth century Jewish Commentary.[26]

The text of Psalm 118:26a itself is not controversial. There are no Masora magna for Psalm 118:26, as there are for verses 25 and 27. The only textual issue appears in the second half of 118:26. The word בֵּרַכְנוּכֶם, which is used only here (according to Masora parva לְ), has a slightly different form, ברכנו אתכם, in the Dead Sea Scrolls.[27] This minor detail does not affect translation or interpretation from Hebrew to English of this phrase or the entire verse. In its critical apparatus, the Septuagint (LXX) critical edition contains no notes for this verse (Ps 117:26), unlike the verses preceding and following it.[28]

Translation of the Hebrew is relatively straightforward. There are only four words in Hebrew, none of which is a "to be" verb.

בָּרוּךְ הַבָּא בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה

The Septuagint, which was probably being prepared about the same time as the Psalms were reaching their final form in Hebrew, also lacks the "to be" verb in Greek.

Εὐλογημένος ὁ ἐρχόμενος ἐν ὀνόματι Κυρίου (117, 26a LXX)

[24] Mays, 378 and Craigie, 29.
[25] Quentin F. Wesselschmidt, ed., *Psalms 51-150*, *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture, Old Testament VIII* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2007), 299-312.
[26] *Tehillim / Psalms*, translation by Avrohom Chaim Feuer in collaboration with Nosson Scherman and Meir Zlotowitz (Brooklyn, New York: Mesorah Publications, 1985), 1301 – 1413.
[27] K. Elliger et W. Rudolph, *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*, (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1967/77), 1200, note 4QPs[b].
[28] Alfred Rahlfs, ed., *Psalmi cum Odis* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1967), 287.

Early English translations tend to be some variation on "Blessed be he who cometh in the name of the Lord." Contemporary translations use a gender neutral, "the one who," in place of masculine "he" although it is not literally correct. One might argue whether a modern presumption of patriarchy in the original writers ought to be counteracted by translators, but that is beyond the scope of this discussion. In this phrase, in Psalm 118:26a, the Hebrew and Greek manuscripts use masculine singular participles in the original languages for both "blessed" and "the one who comes."[29] The Hebrew text lacks any masculine personal pronouns, as does the LXX. Biblical Hebrew has the capability for gender neutral language, as conveyed in the second half of the same verse (not quoted in the Gospels), in which the common plural is used (although the form used could also be the 2nd masculine plural). If this verse is legitimately construed to be messianic, a gender-neutral translation is particularly inaccurate.

There are two different Hebrew words for which the translation in English is typically "blessed." The one used in Psalm 118:26 is בָּרוּךְ, which is usually translated εὐλογημένος in Greek. The masculine singular passive participle form of "blessed" is used in both Hebrew [qal] and Greek [perfect]. The Hebrew word for "blessed" which is not used in Ps 118 is **אַשְׁרֵי**, usually translated μακάριος in Greek and sometimes rendered "happy" in English.[30] This second Hebrew word "is never applied to God,"[31] making it "less sacred and solemn."[32] The second word pair (the one not used in Psalm 118:26a) is the Greek word used in the

[29] Todd S. Beall, William A. Banks, and Colin Smith, *Old Testament Parsing Guide* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2000), 459.
[30] Frederick William Danker, ed., based on Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago / London: University of Chicago Press, 3rd edition, 2000), 610.
[31] W. D. Davies and Dale C. Allison, Jr., *Matthew I-VIII* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, LTD, 1988), 431.
[32] *Ibid*.

Beatitudes (Mt 5:3-12). There are passages in the Old (Ps 72:17-18) and New Testaments (Lk 1:42-45) which use both words, conveying the distinction between them.

Jerome's Latin Vulgate Bible[33] offers two slightly different translations of this verse on facing pages, one based on the Hebrew text and one translated from the Greek (LXX):

benedictus qui venturus est in nomine Domini (117, 26a LXX)

benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini (117, 26a Hebrew)

Both use "benedictus" for "blessed," and the version translated from the Greek Septuagint adds a "to be" verb, as do many English translations.

בָּרַךְ has a relatively straightforward verb root definition, "to kneel or to bless,"[34] but its subtlety is in the variety of ways it is used. בָּרוּךְ – the form used in this verse - can also be a proper name (of the prophet Jeremiah's friend and scribe, Baruch, for instance). In the standard lexicon, both uses in Ps 118:26 are noted to be "of men," rather than "of God." This is translated into Greek using the passive participle form of εὐλογέω, where more shadings of meaning are developed. In the verses of interest (Psalm 118 and Gospels) the lexical meaning is stated as "acclamation."[35] This is distinguished from psalm quotes in the New Testament declaring people blessed, such as in Romans 4:7-8, quoting Psalm 32:1-2.

The giving and receiving of blessings is a rich theological thread woven throughout the Old Testament. God is reported to bless specific individuals and groups of people. Kings, prophets and other leaders seek blessings and pronounce blessings upon the people whom

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[33] Roger Gryson, ed., *Biblia Sacra: Iuxta Vulgatum Versionem* (Germany: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1969 / 1994), 920-921.
[34] Francis Brown, R. Driver, and Charles Briggs, *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2005), 138-139.
[35] Danker, 408.

they lead. Men, especially heads of families, bless their offspring (especially as they contemplate dying). Blessing is inseparable from the understanding that "All blessings ultimately proceed from God."[36] In a few instances; in the Psalms (63:4, 72:18-19, 103:1-2; 20-22, 104:1, 124:6), people "bless" God or the name of the Lord, phrasing which is seen as "virtually synonymous with"[37] praising and thanking God in a worship setting. Proclaiming or acknowledging that God is blessed is a common thread in the Psalms.[38]

Usage of forms of the verb בָּרַךְ translated as "blessed" in the Hallel Psalms (113 – 118) covers the full range of meaning from the balance of the Psalter. In Psalm 113:2a, we find "Blessed be the name of the Lord" offered in praise. Psalm 115 includes references to the Lord blessing the people (115:12, 13, 15) and the people blessing the Lord (115:18). The Hallel is flanked by psalms (112:1, 119:1-2) including the term אַשְׁר, translated by "blessed," but used in a different way, applying to the status of men who meet certain criteria in their behavior.

בּוֹא is used to mean literal and figurative coming and going and entering.[39] The Qal participle form of the Hebrew verb is used in this verse. It is translated using the present middle participle form of the verb ἔρχομαι in Greek (LXX).[40] The participle, ἐρχόμενος, is used in only four other verses in the Septuagint; Genesis 33:1, 2 Samuel 2:23, 2 Samuel 15:32, and Habakkuk 2:3. In Genesis 33:1, it is used in an ordinary descriptive sense, of Esau,

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[36] Donald E. Gowan, ed., *The Westminster Theological Wordbook of the Bible* (Louisville / London: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003), Jerome F. D. Creach, 42.
[37] *Ibid*., 41.
[38] James Strong, *The Strongest Strong's: Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001), 114-117.
[39] Brown, Driver, Briggs, 97.
[40] Danker, 393.

as he approaches Jacob. In 2 Samuel 2:23 (II Kings II.23, LXX), ἐρχόμενος, although singular, is used of all who came to the place where Asael fell and died. In 2 Samuel 15:32 (II Kings XV.32, LXX), King David is the "one coming," although the participle is apparently used in an ordinary way (rather than in a way suggesting Messianic nuance). However, because this passage is during David's flight from Absalom, with the succession unresolved, royal nuance clinging to this participle can't be completely ruled out. Habakkuk 2:3 has the most suggestive use of ἐρχόμενος:

> For the vision is yet for a time, and it shall shoot forth at the end, and not in vain: though he should tarry, wait for him; for he will surely come, and will not tarry. (Habakkuk 2:3, LXX)

This passage may be the source of the Messianic hopes attached to the participle, which is linked to the Gospel discussions of the "Coming One,"[41] elaborated upon in later chapters.

Jerome's Vulgate uses the Latin verb form "venturus" when translating ἐρχόμενος in the LXX and "venit" for translating the Hebrew text, conveying subtleties in understanding verb tenses within and between the Hebrew and Greek texts. The earliest English translations used "cometh" for this verb. Modern English translations vary between "comes" and "is coming." In this instance, a case can be made for deliberate ambiguity in the original languages. Tenses in Hebrew poetry "are extraordinarily ambiguous."[42] This ambiguity in verb tense, so important that St. Jerome carefully preserved it, is represented by the variety of layers of understanding and use of this verse in liturgy and as prophecy.

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[41] John Gill, *Matthew to Acts*, Gill's Commentary V (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1980), 95.
[42] Gunkel, 2.

בְּשֵׁם in Psalm 118:26 is nearly always translated "in the name," although the Hebrew inseparable preposition בְּ has several English meanings, including "with." Early translations of the Hebrew Old Testament into Latin and German, including Martin Luther's translation, "Gelobt sei, der da kommt im Namen des HERRN!" use words whose English translation are typically "in" and never "with." An atypical translation, "with the name,"[43] is used to support a primarily liturgical, ancient Jewish processional set of meanings and usage of the verse and the entire psalm. In a footnote in the NRSV, the phrasing is rearranged, so it is the blessing that is said to be "in the name of the Lord" rather than "the one coming."

The phrase "in the name of the Lord" has a rich history in the Old Testament. It is almost as formulaic when discussing the important movements of God's people, and especially their leaders, as the "messenger style" is when introducing the speech of prophets.[44] Moses is the earliest of those to come/go "in the name of the Lord" – to Pharaoh – to initiate the Exodus, because he was the first to learn this personal name of the LORD, יְהוָה. Among the most striking examples is the challenge delivered by a young David to Goliath, "I come to you in the name of the LORD." (1 Sam 17:45) Within Psalm 118, prior to verse 26, the phrase is used in verses 10, 11 and 12.

A very early[45] practical Christian application of Psalm 118:26a is found in the *Didache, "*But let every one that cometh in the name of the Lord be received," (12.7.1) although it is clarified by, "If he who cometh is a wayfarerer, assist him as far as ye are able; but he shall not remain with you, except for two or three days, if need be." (12.7.2) This

[43] Allen, 161.
[44] Anderson, 229.
[45] The Didache is generally dated about A.D. 100-120, but may be as early as 80 or possibly as late as 160-190.

advice comes with a warning against anyone unwilling to work, calling that type of visitor a "Christ-monger" (12.7.5) who takes advantage of Christian hospitality.[46] The *Didache* addresses reception of teachers, apostles and prophets separately in another section, "Let every apostle that cometh to you be received as the Lord." (12.6.4) These instructions include warnings about how to distinguish false prophets and teachers from true ones.

The ancient Christians saw application of Psalm 118 to Christ, whom most, including Tertullian, identified as Psalm 118:22's cornerstone. As Bede says, "there is no one who doubts that it is sung about the Lord."[47] However, verse 26 is not among the five verse excerpts included in Bede's Abbreviated Psalter for this Psalm (117).[48] The ancients also extended Psalm 118:26a's application to clergy, to anyone caring for Jesus' flock unofficially and even to anyone seeking shelter in the name of the Lord.[49] There is a strong tradition of a necessity to follow the full example of Christ in order to claim to come in God's name. This extends to self-denial, humility and acts of charity. Among the earliest Christian allusions to Psalm 118, and possibly to this verse, is in Clement of Rome's letter to the Corinthians, "this gate of righteousness is that gate in Christ by which blessed are all they that have entered in and have directed their way in holiness and righteousness,"[50] generalizing the definition of

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[46] Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, eds*., Ante-Nicene Fathers* Vol. 7 (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2004), *The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*, 381.
[47] Wesselschmidt*,* 311.
[48] Gerald M. Browne, trans., *The Abbreviated Psalter of the Venerable Bede* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2002), 76.
[49] Wesselschmidt, 306-312.
[50]Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, eds*., Ante-Nicene Fathers* Vol. 1 (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2004), *First Epistle of Clement*, *XLVIII,* 18.

who qualifies as "one who comes in the name of the Lord." Another early church father, Barnabus, quotes Psalm 118, but only verses 12, 22 and 24 (and not 26a)[51]

John Calvin sees several layers of meaning in this verse. There is the immediate blessedness and blessing for King David in the original setting of the Psalm, the messianic blessedness of Jesus foretold (and fulfilled in the gospels) and the continuing blessedness of all who legitimately "come in the name of the Lord" to care for God's people.[52] Martin Luther treasured this psalm, saying, "This is my own beloved psalm. Although the entire Psalter and all of Holy Scripture are dear to me as my only comfort and source of life, I fell in love with this psalm especially. Therefore I call it my own."[53] Luther sees a fullness of ongoing soteriological meaning in verse 26a, "This still belongs to the joyful wish that Christ, the King of Grace, enter through His Gospel and come in the name of the Lord."[54]

[51] Roberts and Donaldson*, A-NF* 1, *The Epistles of Barnabus*, 140.
[52] John Calvin, *Commentary on the Book of Psalms*, trans. James Anderson, Calvin's Commentaries VI (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1979), 390.
[53] Jaroslav Pelikan, ed., *Luther's Works: Selected Psalms III*, 14 (Saint Louis: Concordia, 1958), 45.
[54] *Ibid*., 102.

Early Christian liturgical use

Early church liturgical use of this verse can be reliably traced back as far as the sixth century, when Chant was organized by Pope Gregory, even though it was not written down until musical notation was invented in the 9th century. Psalm 118:26a is found among the earliest traditional chants preserved, believed to be "either taken directly from the Jewish chants from the Old Testament or at least based on them,"[55] and still in use today. Its current title is ***Benedictus qui venit*** following Gregorian Mode V and it is featured in the liturgy for the Christmas dawn Mass.[56]

Other settings of Psalm 118:26a appear in the Missal for use at the Baptism of the Lord and Palm Sunday.[57] Obviously the early church considered this verse in a messianic light, if traditional liturgy is an indication. Martin Luther retained the chants when revamping worship liturgies in 1523, saying, "Let the chants in the Sunday masses and Vespers be retained; they are quite good and are taken from Scripture."[58]

[55] Robert M. Fowells, *Chant Made Simple* (Brewster, MA: Paraclete Press, 2007), ix.
[56] Fowells, 20 and *Gregorian Missal*, 195.
[57] *The Gregorian Missal for Sundays*, (Solesmes, France: Abbaye Saint-Pierre 1990), 224, 272.
[58] Timothy F. Lull, ed., *Martin Luther's Basic Theological Writings* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2005), 302.

Chapter 2: Psalm 118:26a in Judaism

Shared and Diverging Paths Through Scripture

It is difficult to avoid looking back through Christian history at Psalm 118 and seeing it through a New Testament lens. For verse 26a, a Passion Narrative perspective is almost impossible to ignore. However, this psalm is part of a parallel Jewish path, along which is found a shared Judeo-Christian history, predating and preparing the way for the Incarnation and Passion of Christ.

Septuagint

The Bible of most first-century Christians, many of whom began life as Jews, was the Septuagint (LXX). The name of this Greek translation of the Hebrew scriptures evokes the romantic tale associated with its origin. The legend has its roots in a letter from Aristeas to Philocrates, possibly written "between approximately 250 BC and AD 100" [59] and for which a number of reliable manuscript copies dated from the 11th to the 15th centuries survive. The story is told in the first person by Aristeas, who proposes that translation of the Jewish Law, extant only "on parchments in Hebrew characters" (v. 4), are needed for the royal library in Alexandria (v. 10). The copies are to be authorized by the Jewish high priest (v. 12) and come to be translated by six members of each of the twelve tribes of Israel (v. 32), whose names are listed (vv. 47-51), for a total of seventy two translators. To general amazement and delight, the translating is claimed to be completed in only 72 days (v. 308)! Only the Law or Torah is specifically discussed in this account, but obviously the rest of the

[59] James H. Charlesworth, ed., *The Old Testament Pseudapigrapha*, Volume 2 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1985), 12-34.

Hebrew scriptures were also translated. Finally, the apocryphal books, which are not part of the Hebrew canon and some of which were composed in Greek rather than translated from Hebrew, were added to the Septuagint collection. According to the scholars who have studied it, the resulting Greek text is "a collection of versions made by various writers who differed greatly in their translation methods, their knowledge of Hebrew, their styles, and in other ways."[60] It may not be clear how, why and precisely when the Hebrew Bible was translated into Greek, but it is generally accepted that the Septuagint was probably the Bible of Greek-speaking Jews and certainly of early Christians. If the translation purpose was liturgical, one might expect more internal evidence, particularly in the Psalms, that the LXX differs from the Masoretic Text (MT) in ways that indicate liturgical use.[61]

Among the legends associated with the Septuagint is "Origen's account of the treatment of divine names, that in the more careful copies of the Greek Old Testament the Old Hebrew script was used for the Tetragram."[62] Fragments of a leather scroll dated "to the century between 50 B.C. and A.D. 50"[63] containing books of the Minor Prophets in Greek, with Old Hebrew used for יְהוָה, back up Origen's account. Origen's Hexapla is of interest here only because it reflects the pervasive usage of Κυρίος, "Kurios," for יְהוָה throughout the Hebrew scriptures and, of course, in Psalm 118:26a.

The Septuagint may be considered "a repository of textual variants to the Masoretic Text" or "the oldest 'commentary' on the Hebrew Bible"[64] because the Hebrew Bible is

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[60] Würthwein, 53.
[61] Jennifer M. Dines, *The Septuagint* (London / New York: T&T Clark, 2004), 49.
[62] Würthwein, 4.
[63] Würthwein, 192.
[64] John R. Kohlenberger, III, ed., *The Comparative Psalter*, (New York / Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2007), x.

widely believed to have been translated from Hebrew to Greek between 285 BC and the first Century AD. The Psalms were translated towards the later end of that time, while the Psalms in Hebrew were "in the process of being standardized."[65] For this reason, points related to the Septuagint are interwoven with Masoretic textual discussions in Chapter one.

Targum

It may seem surprising that the Hebrew scriptures were used and circulated more widely in Greek than in Aramaic, which was the spoken language of "Palestine in the time of Christ, and indeed for some centuries preceding it."[66] "The **Targums** (Targumim) are Aramaic translations – some of them literal, some of them very free – of the biblical books, made for Jews who no longer spoke Hebrew."[67] "The TARGUMS, or Chaldee paraphrases, these being the most ancient writings the Jews have; it is certain there were Targums, before the composition of the Talmud, and even of the Mishnah, since there is express mention made of them in both; and it is no less certain, that they were in being and use, in the times of Christ and his apostles."[68] The Targum of the Psalms (TgPss) can be tentatively dated to the "fourth to sixth century, C. E., but this is little more than guesswork. It is possible and even likely that it contains material belonging to more than one period."[69] The Targum postdates the Septuagint by several centuries, but existed alongside the Masoretic Text as a more casual version for common people rather than for scholars.

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[65] Maarten J. J. Menken, *Matthew's Bible* (Leuven University Press, 2004), 7.
[66] Martin McNamara, *Targum and Testament* (Shannon, Ireland: Irish University Press, 1972), 11.
[67] Raymond E. Brown, *An Introduction to the New* Testament (New York: Doubleday, 1997), 82, emphasis his.
[68] Gill, v.
[69] David M. Stec, *The Targum of Psalms*, The Aramaic Bible, Vol. 16 (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2004), 2.

"The general objection to Talmudic and Rabbinical writings is, that they are stuffed with fables, idle tales, impertinences, and fooleries; and nothing is more common, than to represent the Rabbins as a set of romantic and fabulous writers, as foolish, stupid, and dotards; and this is plentifully done for the most part, by such who have never read them."[70] Targum differed from other forms of Jewish writing known around the turn of the century. "Mishnah" refers to "the authoritative code of Jewish law," dating to "about A. D. 180."[71] The "*Mishnah* makes no attempt to base its laws on the Bible."[72] On the other hand, midrash is "rabbinic interpretation of the Bible."[73] Modern scholars make the Targum sound more like a verse by verse commentary than a serious translation or even a paraphrase. There were a variety of different Targum versions in circulation, as is apparent from surviving manuscripts and fragments, but no apparent attempt to carefully compare or consolidate them and keep a single pure version, as there was with the Masoretic Text. There is general agreement that its "different versions share in varying degrees certain characteristics which reflect their common practical purpose. The community was to be taught and edified; it was necessary to spell out clearly for them the message of the text."[74] Paraphrasing and explanatory notes – indicated in italics in modern translations - are typical. A Targum of Psalm 118:26a reads:

> "Blessed is the one who comes in the name of *the memra of* the Lord," *said the architects*.[75]

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[70] Gill, x.
[71] McNamara, 6.
[72] McNamara, 9.
[73] *Ibid*.
[74] Würthwein, 80.
[75] Stec, 210.

Another version of the Targum for this verse substitutes "*the word of*" and "*builders*" for the italicized words.[76] The terminology concerning "architects" or "builders" is first seen in verse 22, which appears in a paraphrased form almost unrecognizable from the MT and LXX. The Aramaic word for "keystone setters"[77] is nearly the only link between Scripture and Targum for that verse. It may be significant that the term appears also in verse 26.

There is debate about the use of terminology "the *Memra* of God and the Lord," which is common in the Psalms and throughout the Palestinian Targum. There is wide variation among the texts in which the terms are not used or used in one instance and not another. The debate concerns whether this custom was "a contributing factor towards John's doctrine of the *Logos*."[78] It is clear that *memra* means "word." It is not clear whether or when personification became associated with the use of the term. "For a Jew, of course, these were merely other ways of saying 'the Lord'. They were reverential ways of speaking about the God of Israel."[79]

The "Targum recognized the participation of different voices"[80] in verses 23-29, offering possible evidence of liturgical use of the psalm. There are scholars who disagree with the prevailing opinion that the purpose of the Psalter was primarily liturgical. "Unlike the Law and the Prophets, the Hagiographa did not form part of the Synagogue liturgy. No Aramaic rendering was then required for synagogue use. Yet we possess targums to all these works, … in Palestinian Aramaic."[81] Even these scholars include in their writing

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[76] Edward M. Cook, http.//targum.info/?page_id=11, 2001.
[77] Stec, 210.
[78] McNamara, 102, italics his.
[79] McNamara, 98.
[80] Allen, 163.
[81] McNamara, 209.

examples of commonly used blessings, such as the "liturgical Kaddish,"[82] containing words and phrases clearly drawn from (or echoed by) the psalms.

Jewish doctrine may be traced through study of the Hebrew scriptures, mishnah, midrash and targum. "The doctrine of messianism, the future life and other beliefs developed considerably after the exile."[83] "In later times the Messiah was expected to come at the Passover."[84] Although precise dating is not possible, there is evidence that the clearly pre-Christian Palestinian Targum "look forward longingly to the coming of the Messiah."[85]

Apocrypha

A collection of books, known since Martin Luther's German translation in 1534[86] as the Apocrypha, are not recognized as part of scripture by Jews, whose history they represent, but are part of Jerome's Latin Vulgate . These books are valued to varying degrees by Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox and Protestant traditions. Luther placed them together between the Old and New Testaments. Protestant Bibles usually place them after the New Testament, if they are included at all. Catholic Bibles intersperse them among the Old Testament books. As with the other books included in the Septuagint, there is debate regarding the date and circumstances of their composition in Greek or translation into Greek. Most germane to this discussion is whether the authors or translators of the

[82] McNamara, 42.
[83] McNamara, 32.
[84] McNamara, 77.
[85] McNamara, 86.
[86] Bruce Metzger, "Preface to the Apocrypha," (1957) in *The New Oxford Annotated Bible with the Apocrypha*: *Revised Standard Version* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), x.

Apocrypha had access to "the text of the LXX Psalms."[87] It is difficult to determine whether formulaic phrases or verses believed to be liturgical are quoted from the Psalter or from other sources. It is especially difficult if the phrase is used frequently in various Psalms.

Psalm 118 (LXX 117) incorporates several phrases believed to be part of liturgies. Among them is the liturgical chant found in verses 118:1b, 29b, "His love endures forever." Scholars disagree whether this is quoted in 1 Maccabees 4:24, and if so, from which Psalm it originates.[88] Another common phrase, a Jewish blessing formula from the Psalms, "Blessed be the Lord" appears in various forms throughout the Apocrypha. Examples include a private prayer in Tobit 3:11a, "Blessed art thou, O Lord, my God, and blessed is thy holy and honored name for ever." Other examples include public praise for victory, such as in Judith 13:17b, "Blessed art thou, our God, who hast brought into contempt this day the enemies of thy people." and 2 Maccabees 1:17, "Blessed in every way be our God, who has brought judgment upon those who have behaved impiously." All three of these verses use the Greek form εὐλογητὸς instead of the form used in Psalm 118:26a. Versions of both of these phrases (in Hebrew) are still in use in Jewish public and personal worship and prayer.

Other Writings

Some of the Jewish literature which has survived makes use of the psalms.[89] This psalm is used in only one of them, the Testament of Abraham "20:14 uses a phrase from

[87] Ralph Brucker, "Observations on the *Wirkungsgeschichte* of the Septuagint Psalms in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity," *Society of Biblical Literature*, 53 (2006): 355.
[88] Brucker, 356.
[89] George J. Brooke, "The Psalms in Early Jewish Literature in the Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *The Psalms in the New Testament*, ed. Steve Moyise and Maarten J. J. Menken (London: T&T Clark, 2004), 15ff.

LXX Ps 117:15," [90] but neither quotes of, nor allusions to, the verse of interest are extant. Philo of Alexandria "explicitly quotes several verses from the LXX Psalms,"[91] but none from Psalm 118 (117 LXX). "Josephus does not quote the Psalter."[92]

The canon of the New Testament was not firmly established until the early fourth century, although there are lists of generally accepted books much earlier than that.[93] Many manuscripts survive - containing early Christian ideas or ideas derived from Jewish thought but which are not clearly either Jewish or Christian.

Dead Sea Scrolls

The exciting discovery of "psalms manuscripts from the eleven Qumran caves,"[94] among many manuscripts commonly called the Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS), sheds new light on how the psalms were formed, preserved and used. One of the intriguing features of a "Psalm scroll from Cave 11 (11QPs^{a}), the square script is used except for the divine name יהוה and both אל and אלי, which are written in Old Hebrew."[95]

The discovery of the DSS has led to new speculation about "whether at least one group of Jews in the late Second Temple period had more than one psalter." [96] It is not obvious whether the "36 manuscript copies"[97] of the psalms were intended to be complete collections or were excerpts copied and collected for some other purpose. "In many

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[90] Dale C. Allison, Jr., *Testament of Abraham* (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2003), 49.
[91] Brucker, 358.
[92] Brucker, 360.
[93] The Muratorian fragment, in *Readings in World Christian History*, Vol 1, Johm W. Coakley and Andrea Sterk (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2004), 66-67.
[94] Brooke, 5.
[95] Würthwein, 4.
[96] Brooke, 5.
[97] Brooke, 5, N9 quoting Vermes.

instances it is simply no longer possible to determine whether the remains of a particular manuscript indicate either that a whole collection of psalms was originally written on it or whether the manuscript contained just one or a few selected psalms."[98] This does raise the possibility that "not only in oral targumizing, but also in the copying of the sacred text itself, a certain freedom in harmonization, expansion, etc., was exercised."[99] The conclusion is that "there existed side by side at least three literary editions of the Psalter."[100] The final question relating to the Qumran psalm collections is how (in what way and to what degree) the different versions reflect "the point of view of what was peculiarly authoritative for the sect"[101] and how that might relate to mainstream Judaism of the time.

Also of great interest is the potential relationship between Qumran and the earliest Christian traditions. "Most of the Qumran literature was composed and copied before the composition of the first Christian literature (c. A.D. 50)."[102] Speculation concerns the possibility of Qumran influence on Christianity and also the reverse - early Christian influence on Qumran. "In no passage of the New Testament is there a direct citation of a known Qumran work, and there is no evidence that Jesus or his followers had direct contact with the sectarians or their writings."[103] The possibility of indirect influence remains intriguing.

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[98] Brooke, 7.
[99] Robert Horton Gundry, *The Use of the Old Testament in St. Matthew's Gospel* (Leiden, Netherlands: E.J.Brill, 1967), 173.
[100] Brooke, 9.
[101] Brooke, 14.
[102] Raymond E. Brown, "The Dead Sea Scrolls and the New Testament," in *John and the Dead Sea Scrolls*, James H. Charlesworth, ed. (New York: Crossroad, 1990), 1.
[103] *Ibid*., 2.

Unfortunately, no copies of the Book of Psalms in Greek were discovered among the DSS,[104] so there is no basis for comparison of alternate Greek psalm collections to the Septuagint. Surprisingly, no copies of the Targum of the Psalms were found at Qumran, although a copy of Job was discovered in Cave 11,[105] so the possibility exists, but cannot be proven, that psalms in Greek or Aramaic were also known to the curators of that collection.

Jewish Liturgical Usage

Scholars generally agree that the "Psalter was originally the hymnal of the Second Temple,"[106] at least in its final form, although most concede that "psalmography in Israel dates back to very old times."[107] Sigmund Mowinckel is not alone in recognizing in psalm poetry "close relation to the language and phraseology of Ugaritic poetry."[108] There is a common assumption that passages were used liturgically[109] in public worship, but that they were used also "in private piety. There is eloquent evidence of this in *4 Maccabees*, a book that was probably written between 19 and 54 CE."[110]

Review of scholarship from the past century indicates that liturgical use of Psalm 118 is believed to have passed through several changes over the millennia. Psalm 118 is among a few (Pss 24; 68; 132) "psalms that obviously presuppose, and are made for, a festal procession,"[111] which, in fact, "can only be understood in connexion with a vision of the

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[104] Dines, 4.
[105] Würthwein, 79 n2.
[106] Samuel Terrien, *The Psalms and their Meaning for Today* (New York: Bobbs-Merrill Co., Inc.1952), 93.
[107] Sigmund Mowinckel, *The Psalms in Israel's Worship, II*, trans. D. R. Ap-Thomas (New York: Abingdon Press, 1962), 150.
[108] *Ibid*.
[109] Davies and Allison, *Matthew: A Shorter Commentary* (New York: T&T Clark, 2004), 347.
[110] Moyise and Menken, eds., *The Psalms in the New Testament* (London: T&T Clark, 2004), 1.
[111] Mowinckel, I, 5.

procession itself and its different acts and scenes."[112] Mitchell Dahood makes a case for a "royal, hence pre-Exilic, nature of the victory hymn."[113] This means that the procession it describes is toward the original temple. Although Dahood follows Psalm 118 no further through Jewish liturgical history, Mowinckel has no problem with hymns composed for various prior purposes being collected for use "in the cult of the second Temple."[114] Presumably, the processional nature of the psalm was easily adaptable to the rebuilt temple. It may be because the "who?" of Psalm 118 is left open and indefinite"[115] that it is easily adapted to liturgy.

Psalm 118 was part of "the cycle of Psalms called the Hallel … sung at all the joyous festivals celebrated in early Judaism."[116] This was especially true at Passover, "at the slaying of the Paschal lamb."[117] A later source mentions also "the first six days of the Passover and the seventh day."[118] Mowinckel builds a convincing case for his assertion, "There can be no doubt that the psalms were meant to be sung."[119] He generally favors public cultic singing over "Gunkel's groups of psalm-singing pious laymen among the lower classes."[120] Mowinckel only grudgingly concedes that "at the time of Jesus it had become a custom at the private paschal repasts in the homes to sing the very psalms that were used at the temple festival."[121]

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[112] Mowinckel, I, 5.
[113] Dahood, 156.
[114] Mowinckel, I, 2.
[115] Mays, 375.
[116] Mays, 362.
[117] Mowinckel, I, 3, referencing Mishna.
[118] Mowinckel, I, 3, quoting Talmud Sopherim XVIII.
[119] Mowinckel, I, 8.
[120] Mowinckel, II, 88.
[121] Mowinckel, II, 107.

Because of this Passover Hallel tradition, there has long been speculation that Psalms 115-118 may have been the origin of the "hymn" Jesus and the disciples sang (Matt 26:30, Mark 14:26) as they walked to Gethsemane on the night Jesus was betrayed.[122] This may be especially true of Psalm 118, since it is the concluding Psalm and because of its inherent processional nature. Jeremias further asserts, "Like many contemporary commentators, Jesus also gave an eschatological-Messianic meaning to Psalm 118, and applied it to Himself: He found in this psalm a description of how God would guide His Messiah through suffering to glory and of the ceaseless Divine praises of the age to come."[123] Although more recent scholars challenge the dating of the rabbinic material on which Jeremias bases his conclusions, they concede that "the widespread use of Psalm 118 in the New Testament suggests that the convention of interpreting the psalm messianically pre-dates the writing of the Gospels."[124] "Use of Psalm 118 in the Jewish liturgy may have facilitated its interpretation in an eschatological sense… Interestingly, the end of Psalm 118 was emphasized in the liturgy by repetition of vv. 21-29 (m. Suk. 3.11; cf. b. Suk. 39a; b. Pes. 119b). This is just the section of the psalm that Luke and the other evangelists quote directly."[125]

Modern Jewish Application

A twentieth-century Passover Haggadah includes explanation of the Hallel Psalms (113 - 118), printing the first two in Hebrew and English for recitation "before the meal, and

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[122] Joachim Jeremias, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus*, trans. Arnold Ehrhardt (New York: Macmillan, 1955), 173.
[123] Jeremias, 174.
[124] J. Ross Wagner, "Psalm 118 in Luke-Acts: Tracing a Narrative Thread," in *Journal for the Study of the Hebrew Testament Supplement Series*, 148 (1997), 161.
[125] Wagner, 160.

four after the meal."[126] When Psalm 118 is read responsively after the meal, the verses are now printed only through verse 24, stopping short of any messianic nuance that might cling to verses 25 and 26. The focus is securely on the Exodus story, although a generalized liberation and social justice theme supplies an undertone for the ceremony. Sources are silent regarding exactly when verses 25 and 26 were dropped from liturgical use at Passover and whether the reason is related to their earlier Messianic interpretation, which Christians consider fulfilled in Jesus.

Jews stopped pronouncing יהוה, the divine name, even with the alternate pronunciation "Adonai" for "Lord" and began saying and writing "Hashem" which they do to this day. Therefore they translate this verse, "Blessed be he who comes in the name of HASHEM."[127] Hints of a repentance and redemption theme cling to this verse in modern Jewish commentary.[128] A second thread of meaning, associated with an alternate translation connected with Talmud – substituting "with" for "in" – emphasizes the virtues of studying Torah.[129] The modern commentary makes no mention of Messianic hopes.

Although it is difficult to trace specific evidence of the Messianic hopes of Jews up to the time of Christ, it is clear that such hopes existed, that those hopes were attached to Psalm 118:26a and that there was a connection with Passover.

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[126] Alfred J. Kolatch, *The Family Seder* (New York: Jonathan David, 1991), 56.
[127] *Tehillim*, 1412.
[128] *Tehillim*, 1412.
[129] *Tehillim*, 1413.

Chapter 3: Psalm 118:26a Applied to Jesus in the Gospels

Quotes, allusions and echoes

The New Testament authors were steeped in the Old Testament scripture to a degree that seems astonishing today. Perhaps because of this, the New Testament is a tapestry of quotes, paraphrases of and allusions to Old Testament passages. When evaluating intertextuality, scholars agree that a passage prefaced by a phrase such as "it is written" qualifies as a quote, others consider it an "explicit"[130] quote. Most scholars concede that some obvious quotes do not have a "formulaic introduction"[131] but assign such quotes to a lower tier on a quote scale. Others say, "Unmarked quotations are verbatim derivations without an introductory or concluding formula."[132] The more words quoted exactly, the higher the rank on the scholarly quote scale. As the number of quoted words grouped together decreases, the phrase descends on the quote scale to accidental borrowing or allusion.[133]

There is lively discussion among scholars about the purposes of various New Testament authors for quoting Old Testament passages. The purposes may range from deliberate exegetical reference, for instance, to explain fulfillment of scripture, to unconscious use of familiar material. In any case, it is best to remember that "the writers of the New Testament, in making use of passages from the Old Testament, remain true to the main intention of their writers."[134] The New Testament authors generally do not quote scripture in a way that refutes or contradicts the original intent, unless that purpose is

[130] Dale C. Allison, Jr., *The New Moses: A Matthean Typology* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 19.
[131] J. Samuel Subramanian, *The Synoptic Gospels and the Psalms as Prophecy* (London: T&T Clark, 2007), 9.
[132] Maarten J. J. Menken, "The Psalms in Matthew's Gospel," in Moyise & Menken, 61.
[133] Allison, *The New Moses*, 19.
[134] Dodd, 130.

clearly identified. An example is when Jesus says, "You have heard that it was said to the men of old, 'You shall not kill; and whoever kills shall be liable to judgment.' But I say to you that every one who is angry with his brother shall be liable to judgment…" (Matthew 5:21-22, RSV). Jesus models appropriate handling of scripture by quoting the original verse and carefully, clearly explaining the change.

"The New Testament draws more heavily on the Psalms than on any other book of the Old Testament."[135] This is the case regarding explicit quotes, unmarked quotes, short informal quotes and allusions. Quotes may be embedded in the narrative, as explanatory material, or incorporated in the dialogue. "In the Synoptic Gospels the psalm quotations are spoken (recited) by the acting persons, especially Jesus."[136]

Among the handful [approximately 31][137] of passages common to all four Gospels is one that stands out because of the Psalm quote woven through each of the four accounts of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem: [138]

> **Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord**. We bless you from the house of the Lord. (Psalm 118:26, NRSV; quoted portion in bold)

This quote is attributed by all four evangelists to the excited crowds greeting Jesus in a festive procession. It is suggested that Psalm 118, "which was in the pilgrims' minds with the approaching Feast of Passover," would have been a natural response.[139]

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[135] Patrick D. Miller, *Interpreting the Psalms* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986), 27.
[136] Brucker, 362.
[137] Allison, Unpublished Handout List, NT01, 1-14-08.
[138] Burton H. Throckmorton, Jr., ed., Gospel *Parallels: A Comparison of the Synoptic Gospels* (London: Thomas Nelson, 5th edition, 1992), 154.
[139] Donald A. Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, World Biblical Commentary 33B (Dallas, TX: Word Books, 1995), 596.

The phrase of interest is the first half of a verse excerpted from a Psalm from which other verses (Psalm 118:15, 16, 20, 22, 25)[140] are also quoted in the Gospels and Acts. All four gospels quote this verse with surprisingly little alteration. There are five words in Greek (plus one definite article), which appear in the same order in all four gospel quotes. It is unusual that all three synoptic gospels and also John use the same quote in the same setting. "This is the only psalm quotation found *verbatim* in all four gospels."[141]

Scholars debate whether all four evangelists independently quote the LXX or whether they quote one another quoting the LXX. There are even those who doubt that this particular quote must necessarily originate in the LXX, "because the LXX here offers a correct translation of the Hebrew and alternative translations are hardly possible."[142] This discussion is complicated by 20th century scholarship leading us to believe that the Old Testament "text – Greek and Hebrew - was not yet standardized" in the first century.[143] One could hardly imagine a quote standardized better than this phrase! It has been categorized among passages called "slavishly literal renderings."[144] This leads to speculation about "evidence of a common pre-canonical tradition."[145] "After their previous divergences this doubly surprising agreement between John and the Synoptists from the story of the triumphal entry onwards, as well as the integration of Mark's Passion story into the whole

[140] Greek Bible, 789.
[141] Margaret Daly-Denton, "The Psalms in John's Gospel," in Moyise & Menken, 126, italics hers.
[142] Menken, Moyise & Menken, 70.
[143] Maarten J. J. Menken, *Matthew's Bible*, p. 7, quoting Stendahl.
[144] Gundry, 20.
[145] Dodd, 61.

framework of Mark's Gospel, proves that the Passion narrative constitutes a coherent and a very early block of Gospel tradition."[146]

The word for word quote of Psalm 118:26a (LXX 117:26a) appears in Matthew 21:9, Mark 11:9-10, Luke 19:38 and John 12:13, excerpted below, with the quoted words in bold:

ὡσαννὰ (Matthew, Mark and John) τῷ υἱῷ Δαυίδ· (Matthew only)

εὐλογημένος ὁ ἐρχόμενος (Luke inserts βασιλεὺς) **ἐν ὀνόματι Κυρίου·**

(John appends ὁ βασιλεὺς τοὺ ᾽Ισραήλ.)[147]

Textual issues abound in all four Gospel quotes, but they seem to be interrelated. Copyists throughout the centuries seem to have attempted either to avoid or to achieve harmony among the four Gospel quotes of Psalm 118. In various manuscripts, words (and definite articles) are included or excluded and arranged in differing orders within the verses in which they are embedded. An example of the difficulty of deciding which variants are more likely to be original appears in a different Greek parallel version than the one excerpted above, where the definite article is included in Luke's insertion rather than in John's addition.[148] Placement of that definite article features in discussion of the only textual issue within any of the four Gospel quotes of Psalm 118 important enough to be published by Bruce Metzger, addressing Luke 19:38, "The reading ὁ ἐρχόμενος ὁ βασιλεὺς (B arm $^{(mss)}$), being the most difficult, accounts best for the origin of the others."[149]

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[146] Jeremias, 62.
[147] Edward Robinson, *A Harmony of the Four Gospels in Greek* (Boston: Crocker and Brewster, 1845), 117.
[148] Kurt Aland, ed., *Synopsis of the Four Gospels* – Greek-English Edition (German Bible Society, 2001), 235.
[149] Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* (New York: American Bible Society, 2002), 145.

The biggest debate over translating the phrase quoted from Psalm 118 is whether ἐρχόμενος means that the "coming one" is blessed in the name of the Lord or whether that one is simply "coming" (as in "arriving" or "entering") in the name of the Lord – or whether there is a difference between the two meanings,[150] or whether there are layers of meanings.[151] Certainly it is possible for someone to be coming in the name of the Lord and also to be blessed in the name of the Lord. There is a general assumption that ἐρχόμενος, "The one who is coming," is "perhaps a Messianic title."[152] Development of the basis for this idea will be explored in the following pages as each passage is discussed.

Four of the six Gospel quotes of Psalm 118:26a are in the parallel accounts of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem, discussed in this chapter, and two are in Jesus' lament over Jerusalem, addressed in Chapter 4. In addition to those clear quotes, there are several possible allusions to that famous verse. One way to select passages which might allude to the verse is to look at the forms of the words used in the Septuagint.

The masculine nominative singular present middle participle of the verb ἔρχομαι is used only 26 times in the New Testament, of which six are in the Gospel quotes of Psalm 118:26 quotes and another 12 are also in the Gospels. The other 12 uses in the Gospels will be addressed as possible allusions to Psalm 118. Gospel uses of ἐρχόμενος are listed in the following table:

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[150] Davies & Allison, *Matthew: A Shorter Commentary*, 347.
[151] Matthew Henry, A *Commentary on the Whole Bible*, Vol. V (Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1721), 525.
[152] Fritz Reinecker and Cleon Rogers, *A Linguistic Key to the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1976, 1980), quoting Hill, 62.

Table 1. Gospel use of the Participle ἐρχόμενος

Matthew 3:11	(Mark 1:7-8)	(Luke 3:15-16)	John 1:15; 1:27; 3:31
(Matthew 7:24-27)		Luke 6:47-49	
Matthew 11:2-3		Luke 7:19, 20	
			John 6:14
			John 6:35
			John 11:27
		Luke 15:25	
Matthew 21:9	**Mark 11:9-10**	**Luke 19:38**	**John 12:13**
Matthew 23:39		**Luke 13:35**	

Passages clearly quoting Psalm 118 are in bold type. Parallels to these passages which do not use the participle are listed in parentheses.

The eight uses of ἐρχόμενος in the New Testament outside the Gospels have thinner evidence on which to base the possibility of allusion or echo, either to Psalm 118 or to Gospel quotes thereof. The viability of their claims to allusion will be addressed. The verses using ἐρχόμενος beyond the Gospels are Romans 15:29, 2 Corinthians 11:4, 2 Timothy 4:13, Hebrews 10:37, and Revelation 1:4, 1:8, 4:8 and 11:17.

Psalm 118:26a in Matthew

"Quotations and allusions to Old Testament passages are even more prominent in Matthew than they are in the other three gospels."[153] The Gospel of Matthew contains "many quotations from and allusions to the Psalms."[154] They can be summarized as "five marked quotations," "ten unmarked quotations" and "44 verses in Matthew that contain allusions to the book of Psalms." [155] Of the 15 quotes, three are from Psalm 118 and two of those quote verse 26. A list of marked (*) and unmarked Psalm quotations follows:[156]

[153] Subramanian, quoting Graham Stanton, 103.
[154] Menken, Moyise & Menken, 61.
[155] Menken, Moyise & Menken, 62.
[156] Menken, Moyise & Menken, 62.

Table 2. Psalm quotations in Matthew

Matthew 4:6 *	Psalm 91:11-12
Matthew 7:23	Psalm 6:9
Matthew 13:32	Psalm 104:12
Matthew 13:35*	Psalm 78:2
Matthew 16:27	Psalm 62:13
Matthew 21:9	Psalm **118**:25-26
Matthew 21:16*	Psalm 8:3
Matthew 21:42*	Psalm **118**:22-23
Matthew 22:44*	Psalm 110:1
Matthew 23:39	Psalm **118**:26
Matthew 26:38	Psalms 42:6, 12; 43:5
Matthew 26:64	Psalm 110:1
Matthew 27:35	Psalm 22:19
Matthew 27:43	Psalm 22:9
Matthew 27:46	Psalm 22:2

Based on this summary, Matthew shows greater interest in Psalm 118 than in any other psalm except Psalm 22.

Matthew reports only one visit made by Jesus to Jerusalem during his public ministry. Meticulous preparations by Jesus' disciples, orchestrated by Jesus, for a dramatic entrance, mounted on a donkey's colt, are related in detail, followed by a description of the procession. "According to Matt. 21:1-17, Jesus entered Jerusalem to public acclaim."[157] The people cheered him, using words from Psalm 118 (LXX 117):

> The crowds that went ahead of him and that followed were shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David! **Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the LORD**! Hosanna in the highest heaven!" (Matt 21:9, NRSV; Ps 118:26a in bold)

[157] Allison, *The New Moses*, 248.

Matthew does not insert the word "king" into Psalm 118:26 when quoting it, as does Luke, nor does he append kingship language, as does John. Neither does he mention a kingdom, as does Mark, in verses subsequent to Mark's parallel to this one. Instead the royal flavor is implicit in Matthew, with the Zech 9:9 quote prefacing this verse supplying the clear connection between the king coming and this one coming.[158] This treatment by Matthew is striking "in view of the kingdom-motif throughout the first gospel."[159] Matthew prefaces his quote of Psalm 118:26 with the title, "Son of David." "Among the Gospel writers, Matthew alone indicates that Jesus is explicitly welcomed with this title."[160] In the previous passage (Mt 20:29-34), "Jesus is thrice acclaimed Son of David,"[161] preparing the way for this proclamation. It seems natural to read that, immediately following this procession, Jesus is the talk of the town, causing people to ask, "Who is this?" (21:10). During the first day of this visit, after his triumphant entry, Jesus zealously cleanses the Temple of moneychangers (21:12), heals the blind and lame (21:14) and is praised by children (21:15-16).

Commentaries agree that, "Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem is an important dividing point in the Gospel. The Galilean ministry has come to an end, and the journey to Jerusalem has been completed."[162] Many scholars notice the difference between this event and Jesus' prior ministry style. "The first noteworthy point is that our Lord initiates the whole incident, and deliberately sets Himself to evoke the popular enthusiasm, by a distinct voluntary fulfillment of a Messianic prophecy. The allusion to the prophecy, in his sending for the colt and mounting it, may have escaped the disciples and the crowds of pilgrims; but they rightly

[158] Allison, *The New Moses*, 248.
[159] Gundry, 40.
[160] Subramanian, 105.
[161] Davies and Allison, *Matthew: A Shorter Commentary*, 341.
[162] Hagner, 591.

caught his intention to make a solemn triumphal entry into the city, and responded with a burst of enthusiasm, which He expected and wished."[163]

There is no mention in Matthew that anyone in the procession (or watching it) wonders why Jesus rides a borrowed donkey, instead of a finer animal, nor that any observers notice the absence of a traditional saddle or other tack for the beast. Commentators make much of these details, "deliberately staged by Jesus so as to agree with and fulfill OT prophecy."[164] As John Calvin remarks, "This would have been a ridiculous display, if it had not been in accordance with the prediction of Zechariah."[165] These details and the chant of the crowd lend credence to the story. "Despite the prevalence of skepticism in our culture, there is little reason to question the substance of this account. Later storytellers would probably not have thought to have invented accurate allusions to Jerusalem Passover customs, such as an acclamation to Psalm 118 (which was recited during festivals); this suggests genuine historic tradition in the triumphal entry."[166]

There are important points to the scene, including the quote of Psalm 118:26a. "Our Lord Jesus, in all that he did and suffered, had very much his eye upon this, *That the scriptures might be fulfilled*."[167] Because of this, there is much interest among scholars concerning the composition of the crowd. Those "*that went before him*: these seem to be the much people that met him from Jerusalem, *and that followed* him; which were perhaps

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[163] Alexander Maclaren, *Expositions of Holy Scripture*, 7 (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1984), 89.
[164] Hagner, 593.
[165] John Calvin, *Commentary on a Harmony of the Evangelists*, Matthew, Mark and Luke, v2, Calvin's Commentaries XVI, trans. William Pringle (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1979), 447.
[166] Craig S. Keener, *Matthew* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1997), 311.
[167] Matthew Henry, 295, italics his.

those that came from Jericho, and other parts."[168] "It was foretold concerning this Son of David, that *all nations shall call him blessed* (Ps. lxxii.17); these here began, and all true believers in all ages concur in it, and call him blessed; it is the genuine language of faith."[169] The applicability of words from Psalm 118 to Jesus from the crowds is praised by commentators, "since the Psalm from whence they were taken belongs to him; the whole of it is, by some Jewish interpreters, said to be spoken concerning him."[170]

Because of this clear quote of Psalm 118:26a and the one by Jesus in his lament over Jerusalem (Matt 23:39), possible allusions to this verse elsewhere in Matthew become legitimate.[171] Among the many Psalm allusions in Matthew identified by scholars are two associated with Psalm 118:26a. They are in Matt 3:11 and Matt 11:3, in which John the Baptizer is foretelling and then requesting confirmation that Jesus is this "one coming." In both verses, the Greek word ἐρχόμενος is the same participle form quoted from Psalm 118.

John the Baptist's first allusion to Jesus as the "one coming," ἐρχόμενος, is in his "christological statement:"[172]

> I baptize you with water for repentance, but one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. (Matt 3:11, NRSV)

Most commentators[173] acknowledge this allusion as clearly Messianic, in part because of the way Matthew uses the participle. The parallel passages in Mark and Luke do not use the participle quoted from Psalm 118:26a, so Matthew "comes closer to turning 'the coming

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[168] Gill, 190, italics his.
[169] Matthew Henry, 297, italics his.
[170] Gill, 191.
[171] Dale C. Allison, Jr., *The Intertextual Jesus: Scripture in Q* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press, 2000), 12.
[172] Davies and Allison, *A Shorter Commentary*, 43.
[173] Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, 51; Gill, 20

one' into a title."[174] Some, like John Calvin, are less interested in Greek participles and more interested in the issue of identifying the source of authority for the sacrament of baptism.[175] Matthew is careful to note that John the Baptist is addressing those who might be expected to be most responsible for recognizing the arrival of the promised Messiah, "the Pharisees and Sadducees that came to his baptism, v.7."[176]

John the Baptist's second, more provocative, allusion to Jesus as the "one coming," ἐρχόμενος, is in his question from prison:

> When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" (Matt 11:2-3, NRSV)

Matthew is quite clear in this verse, by using the title "Messiah," that Jesus is the promised "one coming." Commentators vary regarding capitalization and word order in what amounts to a title, the "Coming One" or the "one coming." "On John's lips the title referred either to Elijah or – more probably – to the Messiah. In Matthew the reference is to the Messiah."[177] Much debate has occurred throughout the centuries concerning the content and intent of this question from John to Jesus. "An old interpretation of these verses considers doubt to be inconsistent with John's role as Christ's forerunner. Noted commentators such as Chrysostom, Augustine, Jerome, Luther, Calvin, Beza, and, more recently, John Ryle, have argued that John's question was asked not for his benefit but for the sake of the disciples."[178] "John could not be ignorant of this, who had seen the Spirit of God descending on him at his baptism, heard a voice from heaven, declaring him the Son of

[174] Davies and Allison, *Matthew 1-13*, 314.
[175] Calvin, v1, XVI, 197; see also Gill, 20.
[176] Henry, v5, 24.
[177] Davies and Allison, *Matthew 8-18*, 241.
[178] James Montgomery Boice, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Vol. 1 Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2001), 189.

God; and had so often pointed him out to others, and had borne frequent testimonies that he was the Lamb of God, and bridegroom of his church."[179] Some of those, including Calvin, are emphatic, "The opinion entertained by some, that he sent them partly on his own account, is exceedingly foolish."[180] Calvin's main interest in this passage is pastoral, crediting John the Baptist with endeavoring to detach his disciples from himself, "to direct them to Christ, who is the only Teacher."[181]

In spite of the obvious fact that John was human and in prison, and therefore possibly less optimistic and sure of himself than usual, there is reluctance to admit that John the Baptist's faith may have wavered. Among commentators, "Tertullian was the exception. According to him, John's doubts were genuine."[182] Modern scholars are likely to agree with Tertullian, "Jesus' ministry had so far fulfilled none of John's eschatological promises; John had preached that the Coming One would baptize in the Spirit and fire, casting the wicked into a furnace of fire (Mt 3:10-12). It is no wonder that John doubted, and that John's questions arose *when* he heard of Jesus' deeds, not in spite of them."[183] "Some think that John sent this question for his own satisfaction. It is true that he had borne a noble testimony to Christ; … But he desired to be further and more fully assured, that he was the Messiah that had been so long promised and expected."[184] An alternate theory is "that John asked in order to lure Jesus into making a public declaration."[185] Here, as in Jesus' triumphal entry, prophecies are being fulfilled or partially met in ways that do not match popular

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[179] Gill, 95.
[180] Calvin, *Harmony of Matthew, Mark, Luke*, Vol 2, XVI, 7.
[181] Calvin, 8.
[182] Davies and Allison, *Matthew: A Shorter Commentary*, 174 (see also their *Matthew 8-18*, 241).
[183] Keener, 213, (italics his).
[184] Henry, vol 5, 148.
[185] Davies and Allison, *Matthew: A Shorter Commentary*, 174.

Messianic expectations. "If Jesus has brought the kingdom and if Christians have begun to experience eschatological blessings through the ministry of the Holy Spirit, it is perhaps natural to expect and want the eschaton now. But that is precisely what Jesus does not offer. … John the Baptist was the first person who had to learn this paradox, and since John, the paradox of existence in an era of fulfillment that is nevertheless short of the consummation has had to be learned by the apostles, by the members of Matthew's church, and by each Christian of every generation."[186]

In response to Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem, after greeting Jesus with the quote from Psalm 118:26a, declaring him the "Coming One," the crowds ask a very appropriate and timeless question, "Who is this?" (21:10). John the Baptist proclaims Jesus as the "Coming One," and later asks for confirmation, but it is appropriate to wonder, "Whom did John expect? Who was the coming one?"[187] That John the Baptist expected the Messiah, one of six alternatives[188] discussed by commentators which stands out among the rest, seems best supported by scripture and subsequent tradition.

Psalm 118:26a in Mark

"In keeping with the rest of the New Testament, Mark's interest in the Psalms is second only to Isaiah, whose hope of a new exodus – itself heavily influenced by psalmic language – provides the overarching paradigm for his gospel. Four psalms, each cited or alluded to at least twice, play a major role in Mark."[189] One of these key psalms is Psalm 118 and one of its verses is set in Jesus' very public entry into Jerusalem:

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[186] Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, 302.
[187] Davies and Allison, *Matthew I-VIII*, 312.
[188] Davies and Allison, *Matthew I-VIII*, 314.
[189] Rikk Watts, "The Psalms in Mark's Gospel," in Moyise and Menken, 25.

> Then those who went ahead and those who followed were shouting,
>
> "Hosanna! **Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord**! Blessed is the coming kingdom of our ancestor David! Hosanna in the highest heaven!"
>
> (Mark 11:9-10, NRSV; Psalm 118:226a in bold)

It is significant that only the first half of Psalm 118:26 is used by Mark, because "unlike the psalm, Israel's response is bitterly divided. The attendant pilgrim crowds rejoice, but ominously the Temple hierarchs offer no blessing from the house of the Lord."[190]

Like Matthew (or perhaps because Mark is an important source for Matthew's Gospel), Mark reports only this one important visit to Jerusalem. Also like Matthew, Mark explains details of Jesus' instructions and the disciples' preparations for the festive entrance. Like the other writers of the Synoptic Gospels, Mark remains silent on the readers' natural question concerning whether this fortuitous provision might be because "Jesus previously made an arrangement with the owner of the colt, which would explain why"[191] the disciples were able to carry out the instructions. There is speculation among commentators about whether the owner(s) might be believers and also regarding the identity of the two disciples sent, "perhaps Peter and John."[192] Mark describes cloaks or garments and "leafy branches" spread on the road (11:8) by the crowds, who join the procession. Mark is vague about the composition of the people in the parade, not actually using a word for "crowd." No further reaction of the crowds or the town is recorded by Mark. Unlike Matthew, Mark features this important procession as the main event of the

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[190] Watts, 32.
[191] Lamar Williamson, Jr., *Mark* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1983), 202.
[192] Gill, 375.

day, reporting that Jesus only visited the temple that day (11:11), but cleansed the temple the following day (11:12).

Commentators address Mark's account much as they analyze Matthew's. The crowd's welcome takes place on several levels. "They *welcomed* his person (v. 9); *Blessed is he that cometh*, the *ὁ ἐρχόμενος*, *he that should come*, so often promised, so long expected; he comes *in the name of the Lord*, as God's Ambassador to the world; *Blessed be he*: let him have our applauses, and best affections; he is a *blessed* Savior, and brings blessings to us, and blessed be he that sent him. Let him be *blessed in the name of the Lord*, and let all nations and ages call him *Blessed*, and think and speak highly and honourably of him."[193] Most commentators mention the disparity between the triumphal and royal psalm proclamation and the humility of Jesus' mount and its tack. "To be clear about the grandeur of the divine lowliness is important because we tend to become like the God or gods we worship. It is easy enough to join the crowds that sing "Hosanna" fore and aft of Jesus. Jesus makes no objection to these demonstrations, but his silence in their midst is striking."[194]

Mark records an allusion in John the Baptist's preaching to "The Coming One"[195] of Psalm 118. The allusion is included in a parallel to the same account appearing in Matthew and Luke:

> He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit. (Mk 1:7-8, NRSV)

[193] Henry, 525, italics his.
[194] Williamson, 205.
[195] Throckmorton, 13.

Mark's version uses ἔρχεται instead of the Greek participle ἐρχόμενος found in Matthew and Luke, but the allusion is acknowledged by commentators.[196] Calvin even states, "The three Evangelists relate the Baptist's discourse in the same words."[197] It is clear that John the Baptist "preached Christ, and directed his hearers to *expect him* speedily to appear, and to *expect great things* from him."[198] This allusion to the "coming one" of Psalm 118 seems clear to the first century audience even without a direct quote of the psalm or use of any of its exact words.

Psalm 118:26a in Luke

Like the other synoptic gospel authors, Luke makes use of quotations, "near quotations" and allusions to psalms, although he "makes more use of allusions than of quotations."[199] "Five of Luke's six psalm-quotations in his gospel … are shared with Triple or Dual Traditions,"[200] including this one from Psalm 118:26:

> saying, "**Blessed is the** king **who comes in the name of the Lord**! Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest heaven!" (Luke 19:38, NRSV; Psalm 118:226a in bold)

Luke is the only one among the four gospel authors to alter the Psalm quote in any way. He preserves the exact words from the Septuagint, in their original order, but inserts the word "king." "Luke has highlighted the royal connotations of the Psalm, identifying 'the one who comes' as 'the king'."[201]

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[196] Gill, 308.
[197] Calvin, XVI, v2, 196.
[198] Henry, 451.
[199] Peter Doble, Moyise and Menken, 83-84.
[200] Doble, 84.
[201] Wagner, 157.

Although Luke shows greater interest in Jerusalem throughout his gospel than do the other gospel authors,[202] he joins the synoptic gospel writers in reporting only this one official visit by Jesus. Like Matthew and Mark, Luke reports the preparations for Jesus' entrance. Speculation regarding the arrangements for the colt have some basis in that "Syriac and Persic versions read *our Lord*, yours, and ours; probably the owners of the colt might be such as knew the Lord Jesus Christ."[203] Luke supplies a subtle difference, in stating that the disciples "set Jesus on" the colt (19:35) instead of Jesus getting on the colt himself, as Matthew and Mark say. In Luke, there are garments strewn on the road, but no mention of branches. Luke implies that the crowd consists only of Jesus' disciples, but twice refers to them as a "multitude" and specifically states that Pharisees are among them – a seeming contradiction. It helps clarify this paradox to learn that the "Arabic and Persic versions divide these words, and read, *the multitude, and the disciples*; not only the apostles, but the whole of the people that were with Christ."[204] Like Matthew, Luke includes the cleansing of the temple on this triumphal first day of this visit, but Luke inserts Jesus' lament over Jerusalem (19:41) between the entry and the cleansing of the temple (19:45).

Even before Jesus' public ministry begins, Luke firmly establishes Jesus' identity as the "Coming One," without directly quoting Psalm 118:26a. In his commentary on Luke 2:33-39, Calvin suggests Psalm 118:26 as the most appropriate content for the blessing offered by Simeon over the infant Jesus, although there is nothing in the text to suggest

[202] "Jerusalem" appears 32 times in Luke's Gospel; 13 in Matthew; 11 in Mark; 13 in John
[203] Gill, 555, italics his.
[204] Gill, 555, italics his.

it.[205] Calvin is not alone in linking Simeon and Anna to the trail of mounting evidence that Jesus is the Messiah.[206] By the time John the Baptist actually alludes to the psalm, it seems natural, even anticlimactic. In the parallel passage to Matthew 11:3 (and Mark 1:7), Luke 3:15-16 uses the Greek participle ἐρχόμενος to allude to Psalm 118:26a, identifying Jesus as the "coming one."

> As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, John answered them by saying, "I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. (Lk 3:15-16, NRSV)

Commentary on this version of John the Baptist's proclamation has a slightly different focus than on Matthew's account. There is speculation concerning whether John knew "the secret thoughts of their hearts by divine revelation… and therefore, to put them out of doubt, and that he might not have an honour conferred on him, which did not belong to him, he addressed himself, in a very public manner, to the whole multitude."[207]

John the Baptist's second allusion to Jesus as the "one coming" parallels Matthew 11:2-3 and appears twice in Luke 7:18-20, using the Greek participle ἐρχόμενος both times:

> The disciples of John reported all these things to him. So John summoned two of his disciples and sent them to the Lord to ask, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" When the men had come to him, they said, "John the Baptist has sent us to you to ask,' Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?'" (Lk 7:18-20, NRSV)

Commentaries to this passage parallel the comments on Matthew's account of the same event, speculating on John the Baptist's motives for sending his disciples to ask Jesus the

[205] Calvin, XVI, *Harmony* v1, 147.
[206] Gill, 438.
[207] Gill, 438.

question. The most common opinion is that John never "doubted that Jesus was the Messiah; nor was it for his own satisfaction so much that he sent these disciples of his with this question, but for theirs; and to remove all doubt and hesitation from them about Christ."[208]

There are two other passages in Luke using the Greek participle ἐρχόμενος. Neither clearly alludes to Jesus in a Messianic way, but both are worth investigating, if only because of the use of the participle. In the first, Jesus says,

> I will show you what someone is like who comes to me, hears my words and acts on them. (Luke 6:47, NRSV)

The parallel to this passage in Matthew does not use the participle or emphasize "coming," but instead emphasizes hearing and acting on Jesus' words. This passage in Luke and its parallel in Matthew extend the applicability of Jesus' teachings and their benefits beyond "preachers, so here, to hearers, his disciples and followers in general."[209] It is interesting that Calvin, commenting on both Matthew 7:24-29 and Luke 6:47-49, summarizes the "general meaning of the passage is, that true piety is not fully distinguished from its counterfeit, till it comes to the trial."[210] This theme may connect, although loosely, with Jesus' quotation of Psalm 118:26a in his lament over Jerusalem.

In the final passage investigated here, Jesus tells the story of the Prodigal son and applies this Greek participle, ἐρχόμενος, "the one coming," not to the prodigal, nor to the welcoming father, but to the disgruntled elder brother:

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[208] Gill, 462.
[209] Gill, 60.
[210] Calvin, XVI, *Harmony* v1, 370.

> Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. (Lk 15:25, NRSV)

This use of the participle seems incidental – not at all connected with a Messianic "One Coming." Commentators do not seem interested in the participle, but see this story as very symbolic of religious leaders or of those professing faith but "in a state of nature and unregeneracy."[211] Calvin considers the elder son symbolic of the Jews or their leaders,[212] again possibly a distant echo of the emotional content of Jesus' lament. The presence of the participle offers a tenuous hope, by association with its primary uses, to those who are not appropriately joyful and welcoming when Jesus says it is appropriate.

Psalm 118:26a in John

The Gospel of John incorporates clear quotes from 7 psalms[213] and also several "'composite' quotations"[214] featuring Psalms, which John identifies as scripture. On a percentage basis, John borrows more of his "explicit 'scriptures'" from the Psalms than do the Synopticists: 62% to Matthew's 18%, Mark's 21% and Luke's 31%.[215] It is not surprising that one of the formal quotations is from Psalm 118:26a, because John is more interested throughout his Gospel in the "Coming One" and a "coming-sent motif" than the writers of the Synoptic Gospels.[216] As in the other Gospels, John's quote is verbatim from the Septuagint:

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[211] Gill, 522.
[212] Calvin, XVI, *Harmony* v2, 350.
[213] Brucker, p 364, n38.
[214] Daly-Denton, 119.
[215] Daly-Denton, 121.
[216] Andrew C. Brunson, *Psalm 118 in the Gospel of John* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003), 240.

> So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, shouting, "Hosanna! **Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord** – the King of Israel!" (John 12:13, NRSV; Ps 118:26a in bold)

Although John does not insert the word "king" when quoting Psalm 118:26a, as does Luke, he appends it as a title after the quote. This verse contains "the only OT quote in the Gospel that is not prefixed or followed by a formula of introduction such as, "The Scripture says…" The omission of such a formula is more common in the Synoptics."[217] "Although it is quoted only once, Ps 118's influence on the structure of the narrative extends beyond John 12.13, underlying the Entrance and providing the model for an enacted liturgy."[218]

John's Gospel is much more focused on Jesus' ministry in Jerusalem than are the Synoptic Gospels. Because of this, he reports several visits by Jesus to the city. This visit is the last of what appear to be a series of visits to celebrate Passover (four times, according to some sources[219]) and other Jewish feasts. Because John specifically mentions palms, there is some discussion of the possibility that the triumphal entry may not have been at Passover. "Palm branches played no prescribed part at Passover; it was at Tabernacles that" palm branches are prescribed (Lev 23:40).[220] Psalm 118 is part of the Tabernacles liturgy (but also sung at Passover and Dedication)."[221]

Commentaries focus on explaining the differences between this passage in John and the parallels in the Synoptic Gospels. As in the Synoptic versions of this visit, Jesus enters

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[217] Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel According to John (i-xii)*, The Anchor Bible, Volume 29 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1966), 457.
[218] Brunson, 181.
[219] Robinson, xii.
[220] F. F. Bruce, *The Gospel of John* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B Eerdmans, 1983), 259.
[221] Brown, *John (i-xii)*, 457.

Jerusalem riding on a donkey, to the acclaim of the crowds. "John seems to imply that this "great crowd" (the same expression as in 6:5 – a crowd that also tried to make him king) is receiving Jesus with political enthusiasm."[222] John elaborates (beyond the other gospels) on the composition of the crowd, specifying that they are visiting Jerusalem for Passover. "John speaks of several (two or three) crowds of the Jews, some accompanying him and some coming out to meet him."[223] Some among the crowds are supposed to have come "from Jerusalem to Bethany, to comfort the two sister of Lazarus on his death."[224] "Two crowds are distinguished: the crowd that had witnessed the raising of Lazarus (John 11:45) and the crowd of pilgrims that had reached Jerusalem earlier and now came out to meet Jesus with palm branches and escort him on the remainder of his way to the city (12:12). The former crowd bore loud testimony to what they had seen and heard, and the others voiced their appreciative response."[225] The third component of the crowd is comprised of those coming out to meet Jesus who already knew something of his deeds.

Unlike the Synoptics, John's Gospel neglects to report any details of how Jesus "found" a donkey to ride (12:14), implying that, in response to the crowd's excessive enthusiasm, "Jesus acts out a prophecy; he rides a donkey to show that, like the king promised in Zechariah, he is come to bring peace and salvation."[226] Some commentators suggest "that John's narrative is simply a theological rewriting of the Synoptic account and that differences can be explained in terms of adaptation to John's theology."[227] Others

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[222] Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel and Epistles of John* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1988), 67.
[223] Brown, *John (i-xii)*, 460.
[224] Gill, 717.
[225] Bruce, 261.
[226] Brown, *Gospel and Epistles*, 67.
[227] Brown, *John (i-xii)*, 459, quoting Freed, refuted by D. M. Smith.

refute the opinion that John had access to the other Gospels, although they agree that John's Gospel has strong theological unity.

John neglects to mention the people in the crowd throwing their clothes on the road along with the branches. John's is the only Gospel to specify "palm branches" (12:13), apparently deliberately "reminiscent of the processions that greeted the political victories of the Machabees."[228] Commentators discuss the palm branches at length, including speculation regarding their growing season and whether they would have been available in Jerusalem at Passover. Most concede that palms could have been available even if not grown there and that their mention rings true. "Even today, most of the palm for Palm Sunday is brought to Jerusalem from Jericho."[229] "Matthew and John expressly quote the oracle of Zech. 9:9 as finding its fulfillment in this incident, and Mark and Luke probably had the oracle in their minds, even if they do not quote it. Moreover, it is probable to the point of certainty that our Lord himself had the oracle in mind, and deliberately arranged to fulfill it."[230] The specific Greek phrase for "palm branches" "occurs again in the Greek Bible only at 1 Macc. 13^{51}, in the account of Simon's triumphal entry into Jerusalem.[231]

John drops his account of the entry after making a remark about Jesus' disciples not immediately understanding the significance of the events of the procession (12:16). Unlike the other Gospels, John does not relate Jesus' cleansing of the temple following closely after his entry into the Holy City. Instead, the same (or a similar) event is reported much earlier (2:12-25), part of the "disconcerting lack of agreement between John and the

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[228] Brown, *Gospel and Epistles*, 67.
[229] Brown, *John (i-xii)*, 457.
[230] Bruce, 266.
[231] J. H. Bernard, *St. John*, (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1928), 424.

Synoptics on matters of history."[232] Also unlike Matthew and Mark, John reports the story of the woman anointing Jesus (12:1-11) immediately before this episode instead of later, in anticipation of his death (Mt 26:6-13; Mk 14:3-9) or in an apparently unrelated scene, as in Luke (7:36-38). Despite these differences in chronicling, "Christian tradition has followed Jn. in putting the triumphal entry on Palm Sunday."[233] Commentators disagree even on this detail, saying, "the day does not appear to have been a Sunday by John's chronology."[234]

Even before Jesus is acclaimed as the "Coming One" by crowds of Passover pilgrims, John's Gospel sets the stage for that scene. "From the beginning Jesus is identified at least in part as one who comes."[235] Among John's allusions to the "Coming One" of Psalm 118:26a are three which use the Psalm's Greek participle ἐρχόμενος and roughly parallel passages with similar content in the Synoptic Gospels. They are John 1:15, 1:27 and 3:31, all attributed to John the Baptist (English translation of the participle in bold):

> (John bore witness to him, and cried, "This is he of whom I said, '**He who comes** after me ranks before me, for he was before me.'") (Jn 1:15, RSV)
>
> John answered them, "I baptize with water; but among you stands one whom you do not know, even **he who comes** after me, the thong of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie." (Jn 1:26-27, RSV)
>
> He who comes from above is above all; he who is of the earth belongs to the earth, and of the earth he speaks; **he who comes** from heaven is above all. (Jn 3:31, RSV)

In each of these uses of the participle to refer to Jesus as "he who comes," John the Baptist offers evidence that Jesus' is the expected Messiah. In saying this "coming one" "was before

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[232] Barnabas Lindars, Ruth B. Edwards, John M. Court, *The Johnnine Literature* (England: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 33.
[233] Bernard, 423.
[234] Bruce, 258.
[235] Brunson, 241.

me" (1:15), John speaks of Jesus' "eternal existence, as the Word, and Son of God, who was before John, or any of the prophets; before Abraham, and Noah, and Adam, or any creature whatever: the Arabic and Persic versions read, *for he was more ancient than me*; being from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was."[236]

The other three uses of Psalm 118:26a's Greek participle, ἐρχόμενος, in John's Gospel include verses 6:14, 6:35 and 11:27. Two of these verses are clear allusions to the "Coming One" of Psalm 118:26a:

> When the people saw the sign which he had done, they said, "This is indeed the prophet who is to come into the world!" (Jn 6:14, RSV)

> She said to him, "Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, he who is coming into the world." (Jn 11:27, RSV)

The people whom Jesus miraculously fed subsequently use the participle to identify the person about whom they express their faith (Jn 6:14) and Martha voices her simple faith, using the participle, prior to Jesus' miracle of raising Lazarus.

In the other, Jesus uses the participle similarly to the way he uses the participle in Luke 6:47 – applicable to someone who comes to the Lord:

> Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; he who comes to me shall not hunger, and he who believes in me shall never thirst." (Jn 6:35, RSV)

There is a distinction made between coming to Jesus with true faith in Jesus as the "Coming One" and merely "corporeally, to hear him preach, or preached, or merely to his ordinances, to baptism, or the Lord's table; but so as to believe in him, feed, and live upon him."[237]

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[236] Gill, 598.
[237] Gill, 656.

"The quotation of Ps 118.26 in the Entrance thus is the climax of, and is invested with the meaning carried by, the entire network of allusions."[238] Scholars agree that "there can be no serious question that Ps 118 is the source of ὁ ἐρχόμενος in the Entrance."[239] However, "there is some question whether Ps 118 was an influence for some of the previous ἐρχομαι allusions."[240] The allusions to ὁ ἐρχόμενος in this study address only part of the network of allusions examined by others.

[238] Brunson, 258.
[239] *Ibid*., 259.
[240] *Ibid.*

Chapter 4: Psalm 118:26a Quoted by Jesus

Psalm 118:26a is quoted by Jesus in Matt 23:39 and Luke 13:35 in a very different context from his triumphal entry into Jerusalem ("Lament over Jerusalem").[241] In both Matthew and Luke, the Psalm 118 quotes are prefaced by,

> O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, killing the prophets and stoning those who are sent to you! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not! (Matt 23:37, Lk 13:34, RSV).

Jesus continues his lament:

> Behold, your house is forsaken and desolate. For I tell you, you will not see me again, until you say, '**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord**.' (Matt 23:38-39, RSV, Psalm 118:26a in bold)

> Behold, your house is forsaken. And I tell you, you will not see me until you say, '**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord**.' (Lk 13:35, RSV)

As is the case in the Psalm 118:26a quotes set in all four accounts of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem, the Greek words are quoted exactly as they appear in the Septuagint. There are no textual variants for Matthew 23:39 and none for the Psalm quote in Luke 13:35. It seems significant that the psalm is quoted so precisely.

The sequence of this setting of Psalm 118 relative to the quote set in Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem is presented differently by Matthew and Luke. In Luke, Jesus expresses his sorrow over Jerusalem in these words before his triumphal entry, although immediately after the procession Jesus weeps over the city (Lk 19:41-44). In Matthew, the same scene is recorded later. An early Harmony of the Gospels does not consider these two

[241] Throckmorton, 168.

passages parallels in spite of the nearly identical wording.[242] Because of this different timeline, some commentators raise the possibility that Jesus' quote of Psalm 118:26a could be considered to be prophecy swiftly fulfilled (or partially fulfilled) in Luke but not in Matthew. Whether this lament by Jesus over Jerusalem occurs before or after the triumphal entry, or whether it may have occurred more than once, "spoken by Christ at different times, in different places, and to different persons,"[243] the episode "may hint at an earlier Judean ministry not recorded in the Synoptics."[244] Perhaps because of the mysterious mismatched chronology of this and other passages among the Synoptic Gospels, commentators such as Calvin are satisfied with "those who conjecture that Christ repeated the same discourses on various occasions, I have no great objections."[245]

The debate about fulfillment of Jesus' prophetic quote from Psalm 118:26a covers a full range of possibilities. In spite of the chronology in Matthew's Gospel, there are commentators who insist the prophecy was "fulfilled in the triumphal entry."[246] One view is that Jesus' prophecy applies to a future time "when his welcome at his first coming will be repeated with loud acclamations."[247] "Some make this to refer to the conversion of the Jews to the faith of Christ; then they shall see him, and own him, and *say, Blessed is he that cometh*; but it seems rather to look further, for the complete manifestation of Christ, and conviction of sinners, are reserved to be the glory of the last day."[248] Even among those who think Matthew rather than Luke has recorded the verse in the correct chronological

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[242] Robinson, xii.
[243] Gill, 504.
[244] Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, 680.
[245] Calvin, XVII, *Harmony,* vol 3, 112.
[246] Keener, 341.
[247] Henry, 344.
[248] Henry, 344, italics his.

order, there is a sense that Jesus is addressing those who "*will not see me* to be the Messiah till then when it is too late."[249] In fact, it is not unusual for there to be ambiguity within the commentaries from a single commentator concerning whether Jesus' return will be greeted with joy or with sorrow and recognition that their acclamation comes too late. One view of the fulfillment of Jesus' prophetic use of Psalm 118:26a in Matthew is, "until the time comes, that the fulness of the Gentiles shall be brought in, and all Israel shall be saved, the Jews shall be converted, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king; when they shall readily and cheerfully say these words to Christ, who will then appear in glory."[250] This is considered to apply especially to the Jews who are hindered by their leaders from accepting Christ.[251] The same commentator, writing about the parallel passage in Luke, says, "their posterity, who will be converted in the latter day: and shall acknowledge the Messiah, the blessed of the Lord, who will come in his name."[252] He continues, "or else the meaning is, that when Christ shall come a second time, … these Jews … shall wish themselves among those, that shall receive him with joyful acclamations."[253] Calvin broadens the set of unbelieving people addressed by Jesus' words from Jews to Jewish leaders, extrapolating it also to Papists, and "all despisers of the Gospel, more especially to those who falsely profess his name, while they reject his doctrine."[254] Calvin seems particularly annoyed that the Papists regularly sang the words to Psalm 118:26a in the cycle of the church liturgy. So,

[249] Henry, 729, italics his.
[250] Gill, 231.
[251] Gill, 230.
[252] Gill, 504.
[253] Gill, 505.
[254] Calvin, XVII, *Harmony,* vol 3, 112.

perhaps the singing crowds at Jesus' triumphal entry do not fulfill Jesus' prophecy even if Jesus made it before his entry.

This setting of the Psalm 118:26a quote (rather than the quote set in Jesus' triumphal entry) is the one scholars identify as probably originating in Q.[255] "The approximate 220-235 vv. (in whole or in part) of non-Markan material that Matt and Luke have in common is called the "Double Tradition."[256] Q "is a hypothetical source posited by most scholars to explain" this Double Tradition.[257] Q (from *Quelle*, meaning "source" in German) is believed to be "a second written source, a document now lost."[258] Naturally, there is debate over the order of verses believed to originate in Q, especially when Matthew and Luke use them in a different order from each other, as with this verse. "There is no consensus as to where this stood in Q,"[259] so analyses of verse order in Q are not helpful when determining whether Jesus quotes Psalm 118:26a as prophecy to be fulfilled or partially fulfilled in his own triumphal entry.

Jesus quotes this verse from Psalm 118 at the end of a heart-wrenching lament, whatever its timing during his ministry. "But as often in the case of God in the Old Testament, Jesus' love for Jerusalem here gives way to the brokenhearted pain of their rejection."[260] Such emotion is consistent with other instances of Jesus' expressions of genuine concern over the lost, such as in Matthew 9:36 (and Mark 6:34) when Jesus compares them to "sheep without a shepherd."

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[255] Michael Labahn, "The Psalms in Q," in Moyise & Menken, 53.
[256] Brown, *Intro*duction *to the New Testament*, 111.
[257] *Ibid*., 116.
[258] Dale C. Allison, Jr., *The Jesus Tradition in Q* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press, 1997), 1, italics his.
[259] Allison, *The Jesus Tradition in Q,* 19.
[260] Keener, 341.

Inclusion of such a well-known psalm quote in Jesus' lament over Jerusalem is certainly deliberate, for "εὐλογημένος is not an expression of fear and trembling, nor is it typically voiced by the ignorant, the condemned, or those in mourning. In the LXX – including, notably Ps 117:26, which is cited in our text – and in the NT, εὐλογεῖν and εὐλογημένος (like the Hebrew **ברך**) are often expressions of joy, and they consistently have a very positive connotation."[261] The original hearers of this lament by Jesus must have drawn hope from it on behalf of their unbelieving friends and family. It is not possible to sever the quote from the joy that illuminates Psalm 118. This one verse from a famous song of thanksgiving evokes everything that Psalm 118 stands for in the celebratory life of Israel's worship, providing "the most beautiful hours in the life of the pious."[262]

That the Jews, and perhaps even Calvin's Papists, will be able to proclaim Psalm 118:26a joyfully someday in the future requires repentance on their part. "The thought of judgment is present because, for now, Israel has not received God's messenger; the people have refused to accept the one sent to them, and so the redemption has not come. And yet, despite this element of judgment, the thought of salvation is also present. For Jesus affirms that Jerusalem will be forsaken only until the time when the people bless in the name of the Lord the one who will come, an act which will lead to deliverance. We have here, in effect, a call to repentance. When the holy city recognizes its error and accepts the Messiah, he will come."[263]

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[261] Allison, *The Jesus Tradition in Q*, 193.
[262] Gunkel, 200.
[263] Allison, *The Jesus Tradition in Q*, 201.

Jesus accepted the Psalm 118 title "Coming One" from the crowds during his dramatic entry to Jerusalem and applied its "eschatological-Messianic meaning" to Himself in his lament over the city.[264] Among the appearances of the participle ἐρχόμενος in the Gospels outside Jesus' entry and his lament are three uses attributed to Jesus. These possible allusions to Psalm 118:26a have been discussed previously. In two of these passages, Luke 6:47-49 (and the Matt 7:24-27 parallel not using the participle) and John 6:35, Jesus applies the participle in a way that makes a distinction between true believers and people whose hearts are not wholly his. Even the use of the participle, applied to the elder brother in the story of the prodigal son (Luke 15:25), may be viewed through a "Coming One" lens, if only because it is used by the "Coming One."

Psalm 118:26a Allusions Beyond the Gospels

Eight possible allusions to Psalm 118:26a outside the Gospels may be associated with the Gospel quotes through the Greek participle ἐρχόμενος. These eight appearances of the participle have thinner evidence on which to base the possibility of allusion or echo, either to Psalm 118 or to Gospel quotes thereof, but the participle alone may be evidence enough because it is so rarely used in the New Testament and because the six uses in quotes of Psalm 118:26a make it stand out. The passages in which the participle occurs are Romans 15:29, 2 Corinthians 11:4, 2 Timothy 4:13, Hebrews 10:37, and Revelation 1:4, 1:8, 4:8 and 11:17.

[264] Jeremias, 174.

Only the Revelation verses clearly connect Jesus with the "coming one" in an overtly Messianic way. All four verses repeat the same phrase with little variation, except that the word order varies slightly. The phrase is excerpted below:

> Who is and who was and who is to come (Rev 1:4, 1:8, 4:8, RSV)
> ὁ ὢν και ὁ ἦν και ὁ **ἐρχόμενος**

The most interesting thing about these potential echoes or allusions of Psalm 118:26a is that the past and present verb is the Greek "to be" verb, but the future uses the participle "to come." In Revelation 11:17, the participle is part of a widely accepted variant to this verse consisting of a very similar phrase.

In Romans, Paul identifies himself as one coming, although his use of εὐλογίας to mean "blessing" in the same sentence seems significant:

> and I know that when I come to you I shall come in the fullness of the blessing of Christ. (Rom 15:29, RSV)

A deliberate allusion to Psalm 118:26a or the Gospel quotes and allusions is a possibility. However, Paul may simply be identifying himself fully with Christ, as he often does in various ways throughout his letters.

In 2 Corinthians, ἐρχόμενος, the "one coming," is portrayed as an opposite of Messiah – someone preaching a different Jesus:

> For if some one comes and preaches another Jesus than the one we preached… (2 Cor 11:4a, RSV)

The allusion might be deliberate, to contrast the real with the false "one coming," but the evidence is thin. It might be unintended. The participle is the only real evidence on which to base a claim of echo or allusion.

Hebrews 10:37-38 quotes Hab 2:3-4, which employs the participle as used in the LXX:

> For yet a little while, and the coming one shall come and shall not tarry (Heb 10:37, RSV)

2 Timothy uses the participle in a relatively ordinary sense:

> When you come, bring the cloak … (2 Tim 4:13a, RSV)

None of the references consulted for this study mention any of these passages as potential echoes or allusions associated with Psalm 118:26a or the Gospel quotes thereof. Perhaps these uses of the famous participle, whether or not they qualify to be deliberate allusions or echoes, help broaden the applicability of who is or can be "one coming in the name of the Lord." The original setting of Psalm 118 had a broad and a specific sense (pilgrims and individual leaders / victors). Sometime before Christ, the meaning became Messianic and was used then to greet Jesus as he entered Jerusalem. Later, the meaning of Psalm 118:26a quotes broadened again, even as the term "Lord" broadened explicitly to encompass Christ, so "one coming in the name of the Lord" was used of anyone identifying themselves with Christ, either as ministers or as ones in need of ministry.

Chapter 5: Conclusions and Applications

Psalm 118 is among the most beautiful, most joyful, and most hopeful of the psalms. It has been claimed by generations of Jews and Christians to express gratitude towards God. Its festive, processional nature has made it a key part of Jewish and Christian celebrations throughout the centuries. Almost hidden in the middle third of Book V of the Psalter, this anonymous psalm is waiting to be reclaimed by each of us. It is ready to be sung solemnly and joyfully as we praise God on our journey in the name of the Lord, becoming ever more aware of how blessed we are, have been and always will be in the Lord and seeking ways to share the blessing with the world.

I consider Psalm 118:26a a "secret decoder ring" verse within the Bible. Old Testament verses quoted in the New Testament provide a linguistic bridge between Hebrew and Greek that anchors our understanding of the languages and of the ways certain words and phrases are understood and used in context. This verse, quoted so exactly from the Septuagint – not once, but six times in the New Testament – must contain really important messages for Christians of every era to comprehend. It is applied to Jesus during his triumphal entry to Jerusalem in all four Gospels. Jesus applies it to himself in his lament over Jerusalem, recorded in Matthew and Luke.

"Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord" evokes a procession of mental images, from ancient triumphant military heroes, to Jewish pilgrims on their way to the temple, to Jesus and the enthusiastic Passover crowds in Jerusalem, to Palm Sunday celebrations and pilgrimages ever since Jesus' triumphal entry. In its original setting, the Psalm celebrated the immediate event for which God's people offered thanksgiving. Even

then, it looked forward to further blessings. As part of the Hallel (Psalms 113-118) it was sung at feasts and festivals, especially at Passover. Sometime before Christ, Psalm 118 and verse 26a attracted Messianic hopes. At the time of Christ, Psalm 118:26a was repeated twice during its Passover liturgical use. It is apparent in Jesus' triumphal entry that some people of that time thought their Messiah had finally come. Jesus made it clear in his lament over Jerusalem that the prophecy expressed in Psalm 118:26a was not entirely fulfilled in his time. Even today, this verse looks forward, through God's grief over the unbelievers among Jew and Gentile, to the day that every voice will recognize the Lord with joy.

After much research, it is abundantly clear that the primary meaning of Psalm 118:26a is prophetic and Jesus fulfills its Messianic prophecy – partially in the first century and fully when he returns. The Greek participle used in that verse, ἐρχόμενος, is a linguistic thread connecting other verses with Psalm 118:26a and its six Gospel quotes. Two of those verses are spoken by Jesus. Several others are attributed to John the Baptist. Because of these verses, early church tradition extended the definition of "Who can come – to be blessed in the name of the Lord?" So, could this quote also have to do with prayer? We come to God the Father in the name of the Lord Jesus and we are blessed by the simple act of coming, regardless of the outcome.

The original working title of this thesis was a question, "Who is / was / can become 'Blessed in the name of the Lord'?" Answers based on the research include: King David, other successful God-fearing warriors, pilgrims to the (second) Temple in Jerusalem, "the Coming One," Messiah, Jesus, apostles, itinerant preachers, clergy, anyone invoking the

name of the Lord and exhibiting Christ-like behavior, travelers seeking aid… All of these have their origins in the texts and the commentaries. However, this turns out to be the wrong question for this psalm. Better questions are, “What is God doing with this verse? How is God calling us closer with this verse? How shall we offer this verse back to God in praise?” The following Daily Devotional and Bible Study or adult Sunday School curriculum are designed to help others address this revised set of questions and discover the answers for themselves. These materials are especially appropriate for Lent, but might be used any time.

Devotional Introduction

The whole Bible is written on so many levels, having many layers of meaning. There is the immediate application and there are many subsequent applications. With a prominent verse such as Psalm 118:26a and its quotes and echoes, we can track the meanings which have swirled around it over the centuries. This leads us to contemplate deliberate ambiguity in the original languages that leaves room for meanings which were not intended by the original authors and were not even possible to imagine at the time the words were first written, much less when they might have first been heard (before they were written). Saint Augustine advises us to be open to the Holy Spirit when reading the Bible, since the true author is God, not the people who wrote down the words.

Following are seven days of meditations for Psalm 118:26a and its Gospel quotes. They could be used once a week during Lent or daily during Passion Week for special reflection. Each page consists of the scripture, a short synopsis of historical background, thoughts for reflection and a melody line to assist in musical meditation. At the top of each page, Psalm 118:26a is printed in Greek and Hebrew. At the bottom of each page, the tune is in the key of “D” so it can easily be played on simple instruments, such as the Irish whistle. A sheet of camera-ready artwork which can be used to create business card sized memory verses for the series is attached.

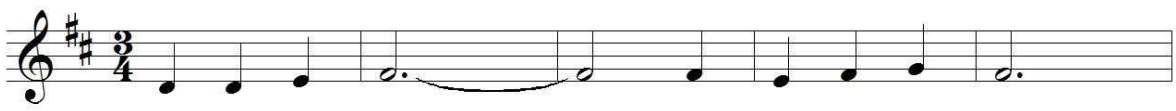
Εὐλογημένος ὁ ἐρχόμενος ἐν ὀνόματι Κυρίου בָּרוּךְ הַבָּא בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה

Week 1 / Day 1 / Sunday Psalm 118:26a

"Blessed be he who cometh in the name of the Lord."

Psalm 118 is a victory celebration. It helps us envision a joyful parade, praising the Lord for success. The original author of this anonymous psalm was aware that all good things come from God and that it is appropriate to express thanks, privately and publicly. The original use of this psalm may have been simple thanksgiving for God's deliverance and hope for future blessings from God. In time, the psalm and this verse became attached to Passover liturgy (Psalms 113-118) and also attracted Messianic hopes.

Psalm 118 connects us to a rich heritage of worship that has its roots many centuries before Christ. We do not know exactly how Jews sang their psalms in worship, but this verse was apparently emphasized in the Passover liturgy – at the time of Christ it was repeated twice. (Since then, it has been eliminated from the Jewish Haggadah.) These words are beautiful in Hebrew. Try chanting them slowly and prayerfully, to this traditional tune,[265] as Jews have throughout generations. The phrases can be pronounced solemnly or joyfully.



Ba-rukh hab- ba ba-shem a- do- nai…

[265] Donald Barnum, Ira Rohde, Neil Levin & Schola Hebraeica, *Barukh Habba* (Psalm 118:26-29), Jewish Voices in the New World, Miken Family Foundation, 2004.

Εὐλογημένος ὁ ἐρχόμενος ἐν ὀνόματι Κυρίου בָּרוּךְ הַבָּא בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה

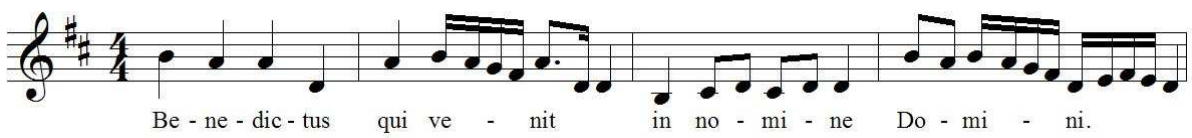
Week 2 / Day 2 / Monday Matthew 21:9

When this psalm next appears in the Bible, it explodes from the lips of excited crowds in Jerusalem. We think the crowds spoke Aramaic, which is similar to Hebrew, so was this shout in Aramaic? We don't know, but the original written language of the Gospels is Greek, so the quote appears in Greek in the earliest New Testament manuscripts:

> The crowds that went ahead of him and that followed were shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David! **Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the LORD**! Hosanna in the highest heaven!" (Matt 21:9, NRSV; Ps 118:26a bold)

Simple joy and celebration characterize the procession. It is obvious that the crowds thought their Messianic hopes, nurtured for centuries, were embodied in Jesus. Their enthusiasm was undaunted by the humble donkey and colt on which Jesus rode. It is no surprise that after the procession, people asked, "Who is this?" (Matt 21:10). It is a question appropriate in any language at any time.

Gregorian Chant immortalizes these words in Latin, dating back to the sixth century and still in use today. This tune is from the Christmas mass, adapted from chant notation.[266]



[266] Gregorian Missal, 194-195.

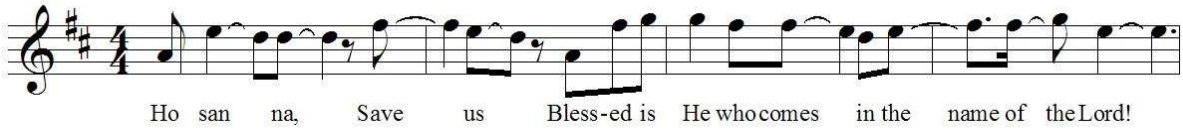
Εὐλογημένος ὁ ἐρχόμενος ἐν ὀνόματι Κυρίου בָּרוּךְ הַבָּא בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה

Week 3 / Day 3 / Tuesday Matthew 23:39

Speculation over the details of eschatology is always popular, but do we dare try to glimpse God's perspective through this verse? God in Christ grieves over the lost, until each of us repents and is able to joyfully acknowledge our Messiah. Jesus quotes Psalm 118:26a (117:26a) in a heart-wrenching lament:

> O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, killing the prophets and stoning those who are sent to you! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not!" Behold, your house is forsaken and desolate. For I tell you, you will not see me again, until you say, '**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord**.'" (Matt 23:37-39, RSV)

There is scholarly debate regarding whether this prophecy may have been already partially fulfilled by the people in the crowds during Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Whether or not that is the case, many people, including most Jews of that era and until today, have yet to understand the joy available in acknowledging the Lordship of God's Messiah. Have we become so bored with the details of Jesus' passion narrative that we forget the passionate concern God has for us? The following refrain from a contemporary praise song captures the essence of the attitude we need towards Jesus:[267]



[267] Dave Lubban, *Save Us*, arranged by David Bauer, orchestrated by Dan Galbraith (Praisecharts.com: Integrity Music, 2001).

Εὐλογημένος ὁ ἐρχόμενος ἐν ὀνόματι Κυρίου בָּרוּךְ הַבָּא בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה

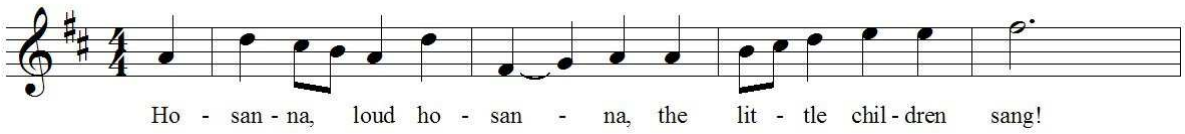
Week 4 / Day 4 / Wednesday Mark 11:9-10

What a dramatic scene featuring a famous Psalm! Mark quotes Psalm 118:26a verbatim from the Septuagint (LXX; Greek Old Testament), as does Matthew:

> Then those who went ahead and those who followed were shouting, "Hosanna! **Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord**! Blessed is the coming kingdom of our ancestor David! Hosanna in the highest heaven!" (Mark 11:9-10, NRSV; Psalm 118:226a in bold)

Mark's Gospel is the shortest and offers the simplest account of scenes that appear in the other Synoptic Gospels. Mark's account of Jesus' triumphal entry is nearly identical to Matthew's, but Mark never uses the Greek word for "crowd," speaking more generally of "those who" went before and after Jesus in the joyful procession. According to the passages just prior to these (10:46-52), "Blind Bart" was among the joyful followers. With miracles like blind seeing, no wonder there was such excitement that people were throwing their clothes on the road! Jesus was greeted as their equivalent of a rock star or royalty. Wait – didn't they mention King David? These people greeted Jesus as their promised Messiah.

If Psalm 118 was the "hymn" Jesus and the disciples sang after the Last Supper (Mk 14:26 and Matt 26:30), might the triumphal entry have lingered in their minds?[268]



[268] Jeannette Threlfall, *Hosanna, Loud Hosanna*, 1873.

Εὐλογημένος ὁ ἐρχόμενος ἐν ὀνόματι Κυρίου בָּרוּךְ הַבָּא בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה

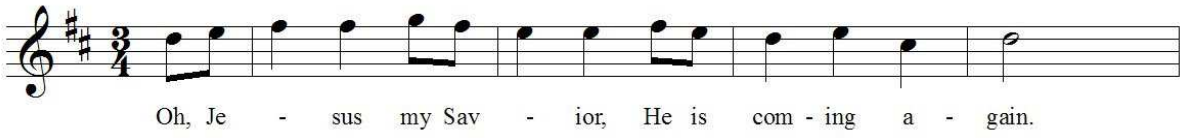
Week 5 / Day 5 / Thursday Luke 13:35

Psalm 118:26a was applied to Jesus by the people in his triumphal entry into Jerusalem. In this passage, Jesus applies the verse to himself in his lament over Jerusalem. Jesus laments:

> O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, killing the prophets and stoning those who are sent to you! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not!" Behold, your house is forsaken. And I tell you, you will not see me until you say, '**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord**.'" (Lk 13:34-35, RSV; Psalm 118:26a in bold)

Because Luke records Jesus' lament over Jerusalem before the triumphal entry (instead of after, as in Matthew), some say it is prophetic of that event and that it is fulfilled or partially fulfilled then. It is interesting that Luke records Jesus weeping over Jerusalem just after his triumphal entry (19:41-44) but not using these words. A full perspective on the events in Jesus' life and words he spoke can only be achieved through all four Gospels.

Jesus' compassion and frustrated grief are evident in these passages. If we are wondering when Jesus will return, does his focus on the Jews change our priorities concerning evangelism? The following round captures the theme of Jesus' return:[269]



[269] Gerald S. Henderson, *He is Coming*, from *The Diapason*, 1860 (Word Music, 1986).

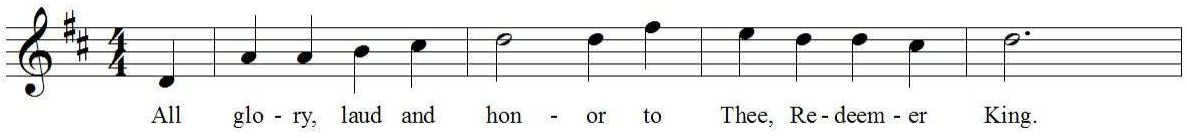
Εὐλογημένος ὁ ἐρχόμενος ἐν ὀνόματι Κυρίου בָּרוּךְ הַבָּא בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה

Week 6 / Day 6 / Friday Luke 19:38

How can we take this important verse for granted when all three synoptic Gospels quote Psalm 118:26a so exactly? Only Luke makes the slight change of inserting the term "king" into the crowd's acclamation:

> saying, "**Blessed is the** king **who comes in the name of the Lord**! Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest heaven!" (Luke 19:38, NRSV; Psalm 118:226a in bold)

Luke makes the most detailed account of the triumphal entry, in which the disciples have a more prominent role. All three Synoptic Gospels share the story of how Jesus sent two disciples to get the colt for him to ride. Commentators are very interested in exactly how that happened, but no curiosity is expressed by anyone in the Gospels. They must have been accustomed to miraculous things. After this verse, the Pharisees asked Jesus to rebuke his disciples. His famous answer rings with wonder, "I tell you, if these were silent, the very stones would cry out." A Reformation era hymn conveys the mystical joy surrounding the events of that day:[270]



[270] Melchior Teschner after St Theodulph, trans. John M. Neale, *All Glory, Laud and Honor*, 1613 (c. 820).

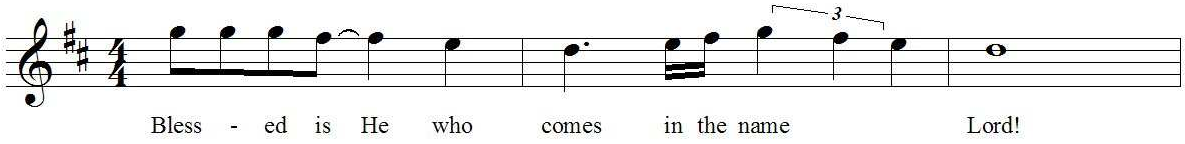
Εὐλογημένος ὁ ἐρχόμενος ἐν ὀνόματι Κυρίου בָּרוּךְ הַבָּא בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה

Week 7 / Day 7 / Saturday John 12:13

Palm Sunday is named after a detail that appears only in John's Gospel – palms. We sometimes neglect to notice that all four Gospels share this quote of Psalm 118:26a in reporting Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem and that our memory of it blends the four accounts.

> So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, shouting, "Hosanna! **Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord** – the King of Israel!" (John 12:13)

John tells us more about the crowds than the other Gospels - specifically that they had come to celebrate the feast. Most commentators agree that the feast was Passover. John tells the story in a slightly different order from the Synoptic Gospels – indicating that Jesus "found a young ass" and rode it in response to the excitement of the crowd. This passage is prefaced by the raising of Lazarus from the dead, so some of the energy of the crowd during this passage and the verses following it are attributed by scholars to that specific miracle. The following Introduction to a popular Gospel tune expresses the emotions of the people:[271]



[271] Sandi Patti, Phill McHugh, Gloria Gaither, *In the Name of the Lord,* 299 in the Celebration Hymnal (1986).

Adult Bible Study Worksheet: "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord"

This Bible study explores Psalm 118:26a and the six places in the Gospels where it is quoted, plus possible allusions to it in the Gospels. The study includes cross-references and word studies, some Hebrew and Greek words. A Bible (translation, not paraphrase) is needed, but other materials will be provided by the study leader.

1. Before the first class, read Psalm 118.
2. Skim through the Book of Psalms (for context)
    a. Notice the divisions into five Books
        i. Note first and last psalm of each book
    b. Observe the subtitles; authors and musical instructions
    c. Take a closer look at Psalms 113-118 (the "Hallel")
3. Study Psalm 118
    a. Outline Psalm 118 or divide it into topics
    b. Underline or asterisk familiar verses
    c. Highlight or underline "God" and "Lord" throughout
    d. Look up "God" and "Lord" in a concordance (try Strong's)
    e. Meditate on Psalm 118:26a
4. Read all 4 Gospel accounts of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem (in the attached Gospel parallel)
5. Compare the accounts, noting similarities and differences. (If you read commentaries, check them against the scripture – sometimes they are wrong!)
    a. What does Jesus ride?
    b. How is Jesus' mount arranged?

c. Who is in the crowd?

d. What is spread on the road?

e. Who quotes the Psalm?

f. Are there other quotes from the Old Testament?

6. Do a word study on “Blessed”

a. Use a concordance

b. Look up in dictionary (in Greek and Hebrew, if possible)

7. Check the Gospel context - skim verses before and after each Gospel account

a. List important details in Matthew

b. Mark

c. Luke

d. John

8. Look up “The Coming One” cross references:

a. John the Baptist’s proclamations:

Matthew 3:11

John 1:15, 1:27, 3:31

b. John the Baptist’s question:

Matthew 11:2-3

Luke 7:19-20

c. Check out two others – who said it and why?

John 6:14

11:27

9. Check for other Old Testament quotes:

10. Study “in the name of the Lord”

11. Read the accounts in Matthew and Luke of Jesus’ lament over Jerusalem (below)

    a. Notice their chronology relative to Jesus’ triumphal entry

    b. Consider prophetic meaning

Gospel Parallel: Jesus’ Lament over Jerusalem (RSV)

Matthew 23:37-39	Luke 13:34-35
O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, killing the prophets and stoning those who are sent to you! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not! Behold, your house is forsaken and desolate. For I tell you, you will not see me again, until you say, ‘**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord**.’	O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, killing the prophets and stoning those who are sent to you! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not! Behold, your house is forsaken. And I tell you, you will not see me until you say, ‘**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord**.’

Adult Bible Study Leader's Guide: Psalm 118:26a

"Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord"

1. Read Psalm 118 out loud – each person taking a turn verse by verse.

   [Suggested visual aid / handout: Psalm 118]

2. Skim through the Book of Psalms (first, check the Table of Contents, mentioning the arrangement of the books in the Christian and Jewish Bibles)

   [Suggested visual aid / handout: Bible T of C]

   a. Point out the divisions of psalms into Books I – V (mention the different numbering: 118 in MT and 117 in LXX)

      Psalms 1-41, 42-72, 73-89, 90-106, 107-150

   b. Discuss the subtitles: authors David, Solomon, Asaph, Korah, etc. & musical instructions – mention that they are ancient but not original – ask if anyone noticed Psalm 118 has none (one of 24 anonymous psalms)

   c. Take a closer look at Psalms 113-118 (the "Hallel") – Discuss Jewish use.

3. Study Psalm 118

   [Suggested visual aid / handout: Psalm 118]

   a. Outline Psalm 118 or divide it into topics – point out liturgical features

   b. Underline or asterisk familiar verses

   c. Highlight or underline "God" and "Lord" throughout

   d. Look up "God" and "Lord" in a concordance (about 30 + 45 pages, respectively, in Strong's; explain how to use a concordance.

      [Suggested visual aid / handout: Names of God in Hebrew, Greek & English]

e. Meditate on Psalm 118:26a – [suggest musical settings]

4. Read all four Gospel accounts of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem (in attached Gospel parallel) – mention that Palm Sunday traditions blend the accounts
5. Compare the accounts, noting similarities and differences. (If you read commentaries, check them against the scripture – sometimes they are wrong!)

[Suggested visual aid / handout: Gospel parallels]

(Discuss the questions, circling or underlining them on the parallels)

a. What does Jesus ride?

b. How is the mount arranged?

c. Who is in the crowd?

d. What is spread on the road?

e. Who quotes the Psalm?

f. Are there other quotes from the Old Testament?

6. Do a word study on "Blessed" word pairs

[Suggested visual aid / handout: Concordance Excerpt + Hebrew / Greek]

a. Use a concordance

b. Look up in Greek and Hebrew dictionary

7. Check the Gospel context - skim verses before and after each Gospel account

a. Matthew = most Jewish

Before: 20:29-34 – Jesus heals the blind, who see and follow him

21:1-3 – Jesus sends 2 disciples to get the donkey and colt

After: 21:12-13 – Jesus cleanses the temple

21:14-16 – Jesus heals, is "Hosanna'd" by children, priests plot

b. Mark – earliest, shortest, simplest

Before: 10:46-52 Jesus heals blind Bart

Jesus sends 2 disciples to arrange colt

After: 11:11 Jesus visits temple, overnight at Bethany

11:12-15 Jesus & fig tree, Jesus cleanses temple

c. Luke – most Gentile, most interested in Jerusalem

Before: 19:1-10 Zacchaeus & money

19:11-27 parable of the talents

19:28-34 Jesus sends 2 disciples to arrange colt

After: 19:41-44 Jesus weeps over Jerusalem

19:45 Jesus cleanses the temple

d. John - not "Synoptic"

Before: 11: Lazarus (Martha's confession 11:27)

After: 12:17 witnesses spread the word

8. Look up "The Coming One," ἐρχόμενος (from Greek concordance)

[Suggested visual aid / handout: Summary of all verses]

a. John the Baptist's proclamations: Matthew 3:11, John 1:15, 1:27, 3:31

b. John the Baptist's question from prison: Matthew 11:2-3, Luke 7:19-20

c. Others: John 6:14; 11:27 [the fed / satisfied crowds; Martha before her brother is raised]

9. Check for other Old Testament quotes: Zech 9:9, Ps 118:25

10. Study “in the name of the Lord”

11. Read the accounts in Matthew and Luke of Jesus’ lament over Jerusalem

    a. Notice their chronology relative to Jesus’ triumphal entry

       Matthew – 21:9 triumphal entry – 23:39 lament

       Luke – 13:35 Lament - 19:38 triumphal entry

    b. Consider prophetic meaning

    c. Discuss commentaries

Gospel Parallel: Jesus’ Lament over Jerusalem (RSV)

Matthew 23:37-39	Luke 13:34-35
O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, killing the prophets and stoning those who are sent to you! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not! Behold, your house is forsaken and desolate. For I tell you, you will not see me again, until you say, ‘**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord**.’	O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, killing the prophets and stoning those who are sent to you! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not! Behold, your house is forsaken. And I tell you, you will not see me until you say, ‘**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord**.’

Bible Study Visual Aids / Handouts

Visual aids are suggested in the Leader's Guide. For larger classes, overhead projector transparencies or PowerPoint slides might be the best format. For smaller classes, handouts might be best. In some cases, they may consist of large-print copies of pages from the Bible or other reference (concordance, for instance).

Basic teaching materials include:

- A good study Bible (RSV, NRSV, NIV, NASB)
- Concordance – Strong's is readily available
- Bible Dictionaries
- Hebrew and Greek Lexicons
- Interlinear Bible / Hebrew Old Testament + Greek New Testament
- Commentaries are optional
- Visual aids designed especially for this curriculum (below and attached to the Worksheet)

There are several different words translated "God" or "Lord." Most study Bibles explain in their Preface how the Hebrew and Greek words are translated to English. The specific Hebrew and Greek names for God found in Psalm 118 are listed below.

Visual Aid 3. Psalm 118: "God" and "Lord"

Psalm 118 verse	**English**	**Strong's #**	**Hebrew (MT)**	**Greek (LXX)**
1 (& 22 times)	LORD (Yahweh)	3068 (Heb) 2962 (Grk)	יהוה	Κύριος
5 (2X), 14, 17, 18, 19	Lord (Yah)	3050	יה	
27, 28	God	410 / 2316	אל	θεός
(28 KJV)	God	430	אלֹהים	

There are many word pairs in Hebrew and Greek which may be translated to the same English word. Among those are two Hebrew and two Greek words for "blessed," explained below.

Visual Aid 6. "Blessed" (secret decoder verses)

Verse	**English**	**Strong's #**	**Hebrew (MT)**	**Greek (LXX)**
118:26a Ps 72:17	Blessed	1288 (Heb) 2127 (Grk)	בָּרוּךְ	εὐλογημένος
Ps 72:17	(Happy)	833 (Heb)	אַשְׁרֵי	μακάριος
Beatitudes: Mt 5 / Lk 6	(Happy)	3107 (Grk)		μακάριος
Magnificat: Lk 1:42 / Lk 1:45	Blessed / (Happy)	2127 / 3107		εὐλογέω μακάριος

It is difficult to look up the words "Coming One" without a Greek concordance, so the results of such a search are listed below. Passages clearly quoting Psalm 118 (with the participle, of course) are in bold type. Parallels to these passages which do not use the participle are listed in parentheses.

Visual Aid 8. Gospel use of the Participle ἐρχόμενος

Matthew 3:11	(Mark 1:7-8)	(Luke 3:15-16)	John 1:15; 1:27; 3:31
(Matthew 7:24-27)		Luke 6:47-49	
Matthew 11:2-3		Luke 7:19, 20	
			John 6:14
			John 6:35
			John 11:27
		Luke 15:25	
Matthew 21:9	**Mark 11:9-10**	**Luke 19:38**	**John 12:13**
Matthew 23:39		**Luke 13:35**	

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