



Life is a series of exclamations from “O No!” to “Help!” to “Oh Yeah!” We can swing between disappointment, helplessness, and gratitude on a daily basis. The Book of Psalms knows all about this. Written over a span of time from exile and isolation to the rebuilding of the community, the poetry of the Psalms will accompany us in this series, reminding us that through it all, we can trust that God is, indeed, holding our lives.

We do not live in a land ruled by Kings, as the hearers of our first Psalm of this series did. Nevertheless, the petitions of the psalmist for justice, deliverance, defense of the poor and oppressed, and peace for all peoples is an undergirding theme of our faith. We are reminded that a just society is one that proclaims “these lives are precious” and worthy of protection. God, indeed, is holding our lives. Let this *be* our “epiphany” in this new year.

**Psalm Reading-** Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14

*O God, give your anointed one your judgment—  
and your justice.  
Teach your chosen one to govern your people rightly  
and bring justice to the oppressed.*

*The mountains will bring the people peace  
and the little hills bring justice!  
Your anointed will defend the oppressed  
among the people,  
save the children of the poor,  
and crush the oppressor.  
The reign of your anointed will endure  
as long as the sun and moon—  
throughout all generations.*

*The rule of the chosen one will be  
like rain coming down on the meadow,  
like showers watering the earth.  
Justice will flower through the days,  
and abundance of peace 'til the moon  
shall be no more.*

*Tarshish and the Isles will offer gifts;  
Arabia and Sheba will bring tribute.  
All rulers will pay homage,  
and all the nations will serve your anointed.*

*Your anointed will rescue the poor  
when they cry out,  
and the oppressed when there is no  
one to help them.*

*Your chosen one will take pity on the lowly  
and the poor,  
and will save their lives.*

*Your chosen one  
will rescue them all from violence  
and oppression,  
and will treat their blood as precious.*

Richard Bruxvoort Colligan is a modern-day interpreter of the Psalms. By the way, he also wrote the closing hymn "God is Holding Your Life." for today's worship. Richard reminded me that back in the day this psalm was written as a coronation hymn as a blessing for a king. The leader that they are singing about that they are asking God to bless was a remarkable person. This king was compassionate, generous, and always looking for justice for his people. This person paid attention to the poor, to the lowly, and to those living with violence, This king paid attention to the most vulnerable in society.

For Richard, Psalm 72 invites us to think about who is most vulnerable in our society right now, in the world, in our neighborhood, in our circle of friends, or in our family. Who is most vulnerable and what would it be like to be as compassionate and generous as this King?