

Psalm 72:6–7 | Rain on the Mown Field

As I read this Psalm, it brought back vivid memories of my childhood. I can still picture looking out of the window of our home across the countryside, watching the farmers working in their fields beside us.

I remember the fields after the grass had been freshly mown. And I remember the sounds of the countryside, the familiar call of the cuckoo, the distinctive cry of the corncrake, and the skylark rising high into the sky, filling the air with song.

Those are memories that have stayed with me through the years.

But there is something else I remember about those fields. Once the grass had been cut, the field looked very different. What had been tall and flourishing was suddenly short and exposed. A long dry spell turned green to brown.

And yet, that wasn't the end of the story.

Given time, sunshine, and refreshing rain, the grass would grow again.

Anyone who has ever mown a lawn knows this. We saw our lawns that turned brown this summer turn green again after rain returned.

As I read Psalm 72, it was a beautiful picture that took my thoughts back to those fields of my childhood. The Psalmist says in verse 6:

“May he be like rain falling on a mown field, like showers watering the earth.”

What a wonderful picture of the refreshing grace of God, revealed so powerfully in Jesus Christ!

Some of us may have walked in this morning feeling like that parched field, and in need of the reviving refreshing touch of God in our lives.

If that is you, I have good news this morning, and it comes from an unlikely place: **an ancient psalm about a king.**

There are many magnificent descriptions of Jesus Christ throughout the Bible. He is the Good Shepherd, the Bread of Life, the Light of the World, and the Prince of Peace.

But Psalm 72 offers a picture that is simple and deeply comforting: **a king whose reign is like rain falling upon a freshly mown field.**

The King Behind the Psalm

Psalm 72 is a prayer for Israel's king, and it carries the name of Solomon.

Picture a coronation. The people gather, and instead of shouting for power, they pray for righteousness: **God, give the king your justice. Then the psalm paints what a good king looks like.**

He defends the afflicted. He saves the children of the needy. He crushes the oppressor. And right in the middle of all that strength, we find one of the most tender pictures in the whole Bible. **Psalm 72:6–7**

“May he be like rain falling on a mown field, like showers watering the earth. In his days may the righteous flourish and prosperity abound till the moon is no more.”

Not a storm against a fortress. Not a sword against an enemy. **Rain on a field that has just been cut.**

The psalmist is praying that the king's reign will bless his people as gentle rain blesses a thirsty field. Where there is oppression, he will bring justice; where there is suffering, compassion; **where there is barrenness, renewed life.**

The picture is first about the blessings of righteous kingship, and from there it speaks powerfully to our own need for the Lord's mercy.

Solomon's reign began with great promise. He received remarkable wisdom, and Israel knew an amazing season of prosperity. **But even Solomon fell short of this picture.**

His heart eventually wandered, and his people carried heavy burdens (1 Kings 11; 12:4). **Psalm 72 points beyond Solomon to a greater King.**

As Christians, we see its fullest hope in Jesus, the Son of David. He is the righteous King whose compassion reaches the needy. And the image of rain gives us a way to consider His gracious work in our lives. **Three simple thoughts will guide us this morning.**

I. The Field Has Been Mown

Notice first what the psalm is willing to say out loud: the field has been cut. Scripture never asks us to pretend the stubble isn't there. The Bible is full of grass that withers (Psalm 90:5–6; Isaiah 40:7), and it tells us plainly that to be human in a broken world is to be mown.

Life mows us with loss, illness, and the passing of years. People mow us with betrayal, and harsh words we replay over in our minds as we lie awake at 3 a.m.

And we mow ourselves, with sins we regret and schedules that leave nothing standing. **The psalm cares about all of it, because the king in this psalm is the champion of the needy.**

Here is where many of us go wrong. We assume that faith means looking green all the time.

We put on a brave face on Sunday morning. We say “**I feel fine**” in the foyer when asked “**how are you,**” and then home we go, carrying the stubble home with us.

But believers who can’t admit they have been mown will never learn to look up for rain. Rain only matters to a field that **knows** it is dry.

And here’s the great hope that’s tucked inside this first point:

A mown field is not a dead field. Look at what happens when you cut grass. The blades come down, but the roots stay put.

The life is still underground, **waiting**. Israel knew this better than anyone. By the time of the exile, the royal family of David had been cut down to a stump.

It looked finished, done for. And yet Isaiah said, “*A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit.*” **Isaiah 11:1**

Cut, but not finished. Stripped, but not severed. So if you are in a season of stubble, hear this: Your cutting-down is real, but it’s not the end of the story.

The roots are still there, and the rain is on its way.

That is not a promise that every painful circumstance will immediately improve. It’s a reminder that God can preserve hope when everything around us seems stripped bare.

II. The Rain Comes Down

Now look at the second thing: the direction of the rain. **Rain doesn’t rise. It falls.** A field can’t produce it, can’t earn it, can’t schedule it.

All a field can do is lie open beneath the sky and receive. **That is grace, and grace means a King who comes down.**

Philippians 2:6–8 tells us that Christ, though truly divine, humbled Himself, taking the nature of a servant. The Son of God did not remain distant from our need.

He came down among us.

Isaiah says God’s word comes down like rain and does not return empty, but waters the earth and makes it bud and flourish (Isaiah 55:10–11).

And John tells us that this Word became flesh and dwelt among us (John 1:14). The rain didn’t stay in the clouds. **It came all the way down to the field.**

Second, notice how gentle this rain is.

The psalm does not say flood; it says showers, soft rain that soaks in.

A field that has just been cut cannot take a hailstorm, and our King knows it.

Isaiah said of him, “*A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out*” (Isaiah 42:3).

Jesus said, “*Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest*” (Matthew 11:28). Notice whom he invites: not the strong, not the polished, not the people who have it together, but the weary. **He comes to the mown. Take a listen!**” VS.12–14

“For he will deliver the needy who cry out, the afflicted who have no one to help. He will take pity on the weak and the needy and save the needy from death. He will rescue them from oppression and violence, for precious is their blood in his sight

Third, notice the timing. The timing is an illustration, **not a promise that relief will arrive according to our timetable.**

And here is the wonder that should stop us in our tracks: the King who refreshes the needy is no stranger to suffering. Isaiah says that He *was “cut off from the land of the living”* He was despised and rejected of men. (Isaiah 53:8) Lord laid on him.

On a Friday afternoon outside Jerusalem, Jesus suffered at Calvary. He bore our sins upon the cross. He did not watch human pain from a safe distance; **He entered it and gave Himself for our salvation. And on the third day He rose again.**

Because He lives, suffering and death will not have the final word for those who belong to Him. **The King who comes like rain is also the Saviour who died and rose again.**

III. The Field Will Flourish

Third, look at what the rain is for. Verse 7 tells us: “*In his days may the righteous flourish and prosperity abound.*”

Rain is never given just to make a field feel better. **It’s given so the field will grow.** God’s purpose in coming down to the mown is not only comfort, **but flourishing.**

A word about how that happens, because this is where we can get discouraged. **Growth after rain is almost never instant.** In the first days, nothing seems to change.

The rain soaks down into the soil, and the roots drink in the dark. Only later does the green appear.

Some of you may be in the drinking stage. You’re praying, reading, showing up, and you don’t see much yet. Don’t read the quiet as the absence of rain. **The roots are taking it in.**

Flourishing in Christ does not necessarily mean restored health, a larger bank account, or the removal of every hardship.

Sometimes our deepest spiritual growth is patience in a long illness, trust in an unanswered prayer, or kindness in a season of grief.

His grace may be at work in us even when outward circumstances have not changed.

Growth is often gradual, but the Lord is faithful.

And don't be surprised if the mower comes again to you. Seasons turn, and fields get cut more than once. **But so does the rain.** (Lamentations 3:22–23)

“His mercies are new every morning,” Jeremiah's Lamentations declares.

There is one more thing to notice. Look at how the psalm describes the flourishing in verse 16.

“Let grain abound throughout the land; on the tops of the hills may it sway. Let its fruit flourish like Lebanon; let it thrive like the grass of the field.” **Psalm 72:16**

Did you catch that? Elsewhere in Scripture, “the grass of the field” is the picture of fragility, here today and gone tomorrow.

But in this psalm, under this King, the grass of the field thrives.

What was a symbol of weakness becomes a symbol of abundance. That is what Jesus does with frail people. **He takes the ones the world has cut down and makes them green.**

And this rain doesn't stop with us. The psalm says that through this King all nations will be blessed (v. 17). **A field that has been rained on becomes pasture and harvest for others.**

Paul says that God comforts us in all our *troubles* “so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God” (2 Corinthians 1:4).

Though we cannot literally become the grace of God to another person, we can become instruments of His kindness, bringing practical comfort to someone who needs it.

People who have been rained on make good rain. Is there someone you know who this week has been mown: a brother or sister running on empty, a neighbour who just got hard news, someone sitting in this very room?

You can't send a storm, **but you can be a shower.** A phone call. A meal. A note. Your presence. **That is what rain looks like when it has hands and feet.**

So where does that leave us?

Let me offer three invitations, not another sermon, just three ways to respond to this King.

Bring your stubble. Tell God, and tell someone you trust where you have been cut.

Receive the rain. A field cannot make rain, but it can lie open beneath the sky.

Rest. Pray. Open the Word. Stay close to God's people and let them carry you.

Receiving is not weakness. **It's how fields grow.**

Become rain yourself. **You have been given mercy, so give it.** Find the mown field next to you this week and let the King's kindness fall through you.

And above all, come to the King Himself. He still comes like rain on a mown field

For those who have walked with Him for many years, lift your eyes again. When you feel cut down, **always remember: a mown field is not necessarily a dead field.**

When you cannot see new growth, **don't mistake the quiet for His absence.** Keep trusting the King whose compassion never fails.

If you have never entrusted your life to Jesus Christ, turn to Him in repentance and faith. **Forgiveness and new life are found in Him.**

A Closing Word of Praise

The Psalm does not end with the field. **It ends with the glory of God. Listen to its magnificent doxology:**

"Praise be to the LORD God, the God of Israel, who alone does marvelous deeds. Praise be to his glorious name forever; may the whole earth be filled with his glory. : Amen and Amen." **Psalm 72:18–19 (NIV)**

The King who brings justice to the oppressed and mercy to the needy directs our hearts toward the God whose glory will fill the earth.

So bring Him your weariness. Receive His mercy. Share His kindness.

And worship the King who came near, gave His life, rose again, and will reign forever.

The field may have been mown. But the King has not forgotten it.

His grace is sufficient, His mercy is sure, and His name will endure forever.

Those fields of my childhood have long since passed from my daily view, but the truth they illustrate remains: **the King still comes like rain upon the mown field.**

Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus, we bring You our weariness, our losses, and the places where life has cut us down. Thank You that You are a righteous and compassionate King, and that You came near to save us through Your cross and resurrection.

Refresh us by Your grace. Strengthen the roots of our faith when we cannot yet see new growth. Make us attentive to those who need kindness and practical help.

Draw those who do not yet know You to repentance and faith.

And may Your glorious name be praised in our lives, in our church, and throughout the earth.

Amen.