

This is our last week in the Messianic Psalms, though I'm sure we could spend more time in them. We have seen the incarnation in Psalm 40, the rejection of Messiah in 41 and 118, the crucifixion in 22, the resurrection in 16, the ascension in 68, His role as our bridegroom in 45, that He is the King of Glory in 24, and our Eternal King in Psalm two. Today we conclude with Him being the Priest, King and Judge as seen in Psalm 110. It is the most quoted of all Old Testament passages in the New, and each of the 14 times it is applied to Jesus.

We just saw the theme of King and Judge in the twin to 110, which we studied last week, Psalm two. They are quoted side by side in the book of Hebrews. (Hebrews 1:5, 13) It should also remind you of the King of Glory from Psalm 24, the One who will ascend into the hill of the LORD and stand in His holy place, the King Priest. (Psalm 24:3) These repeated themes of a super king who would be priest and judge of the earth should give any honest seeker the insight that the Jewish people were expecting a Messiah that would be the ultimate leader, the perfect man. The Essenes who studied the prophecies thought it would be two men that would arise at the same time, one a king and the other a priest, but these psalms show us that these roles find their fulfillment in one man.

Our English translations do not do justice to the force of the Hebrew expression in the first verse. <sup>1</sup> *The LORD says to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool."* Psalm 110:1 (ESV) Gifford translates it, "The oracle of Jehovah unto my Adonai." The expression is the highest claim to inspiration. (Compare Genesis 22:16) He explains that this is the way the prophets introduced a solemn oracle of Jehovah. It is the only time in the Psalms that it is used. That means that if we were Hebrew readers of the prophets and psalms and came across this expression, we'd sit up and take notice. This is a divine declaration. This is important. We ought to put a few exclamation marks after it. No wonder then that such importance is placed on it in the New Testament.

Three of the gospels give an account of Jesus asking the Pharisees why David would call his son "my Lord" (Matthew 22:44-45). We learn from this that the Jews of Jesus' day saw this as a Messianic Psalm. They knew the Messiah would be a descendant of David (Psalm 89:27-29). They knew David wrote the psalm. And they knew he was calling the Messiah his Lord. King David could only have one Lord, the God of Israel. They had no answer.

Followers of Jesus know the answer. It is because of the virgin birth of the God/man, Jesus of Nazareth. He became a man in the lineage of David but He was conceived by

the Holy Spirit and therefore divine (Luke 1:35). God entered His creation. That is the only way David could call his descendant his Lord.

The first verse of this psalm has JHWH (LORD) saying to Adonai (Lord), or we could say God the Father speaking to God the Son and telling Him to sit at His right hand until His enemies are made His footstool. David overheard the heavenly conversation and wrote it down for all to hear.

The right hand is the place of authority and power. Jesus is co-regent with the Almighty. The author of Hebrews explains to us several benefits we receive from our Savior being at the right hand of the Father. *<sup>3</sup> He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,* Hebrews 1:3 (ESV) He has first made purification of our sins before being seated there. He restored fallen man to a relationship with God. We'll be forever grateful for that!

Secondly, it is from God's right hand that He mediates the New Covenant. *<sup>1</sup> Now the point in what we are saying is this: we have such a high priest, one who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, <sup>2</sup> a minister in the holy places, in the true tent that the Lord set up, not man.* Hebrews 8:1-2 (ESV) He represents us to God like no earthly priest could ever do. He enables us to draw near to God. (Hebrews 7:19)

Thirdly, His own perfect blood on the mercy seat in heaven has perfected forever those who are being sanctified. *<sup>12</sup> But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, <sup>13</sup> waiting from that time until his enemies should be made a footstool for his feet. <sup>14</sup> For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.* Hebrews 10:12-14 (ESV) His sacrifice has made us perfect in the eyes of God, while we are being transformed and sanctified in our daily experience. Our sin debt is paid in full, and that means God will finish the work He started in us. (Philippians 1:6)

Finally, He sits at the right hand of God as our perfect example of how to endure through life's difficulties so that we will not give up. *<sup>2</sup> looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. <sup>3</sup> Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted.* Hebrews 12:2-3 (ESV) There at the right hand of God we have an Advocate (1John 2:1), an intercessor (Hebrews 7:24-25), and a great High Priest who helps us in our time of need (Hebrews 4:14-16).

Jesus is to sit at God's right hand *until* His enemies are made His footstool. That tells us there is some time from Jesus' ascension and return to glory and His reign upon the

earth. This was something that many had missed. They read the prophecies of the Suffering Servant and the glorious King and thought it would all happen at once. In between the two is the time of patiently waiting *until* God puts the enemies of Christ as His footstool. The expression means completely subjugated (Joshua 10:24).

*<sup>2</sup> The LORD sends forth from Zion your mighty scepter. Rule in the midst of your enemies!* Psalm 110:2 (ESV) The scepter is the symbol of authority. You will recall that Jesus said before the ascension that all authority had been given to Him (Matthew 28:18). David is looking into the future and seeing the time come when that authority is sent out of Zion. Two weeks ago we talked about the holy hill of Zion where King David reigned, and that one day that would be the center of Christ's reign on earth as well (Psalm 24:3). In this verse, the time has come for the enemies to be under Jesus' feet. God sends forth the rule of Jesus throughout the earth during the Millennium. For 2000 years He has been sitting and waiting. For 1000 years He will rule (Revelation 20:4).

The world is called His enemies because they didn't want Him before and crucified Him, and they will only tolerate Him then because they have to. At the end of His 1000 years of benevolent reign, they will rise up against Him again, and so they will be without excuse (Revelation 20:7-9). The only ones in hell are those who have insisted on rejecting God's goodness.

*<sup>3</sup> Your people will offer themselves freely on the day of your power, in holy garments; from the womb of the morning, the dew of your youth will be yours.* Psalm 110:3 (ESV) This verse uses the same language as a freewill offering of the Old Testament. Some see this as the day in which all Israel will be saved and they will be clothed in the righteousness of Christ (Romans 11:26). Paul told us all to offer ourselves as freewill offerings, to present our bodies as living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God, which is our reasonable act of worship (Romans 12:1). In the Millennium, there will be those who give themselves entirely to God. We should be doing that now!

**We are constantly offered the choice of doing what we would desire or the will of God.** When we walk with Him more intimately, the two become the same as we increasingly desire the will of God. The flesh is always ready to demand its way, and we must choose (Galatians 5:17). What does God want you to do? How is He inviting you to participate in something He is doing? Will you offer yourself as a freewill offering?

The last half of verse 3 is difficult to translate and we aren't sure exactly what is being said. It sounds like those who offer themselves will be refreshingly young and empowered. Vine suggests that those who offer themselves are like a drop of dew in the morning in which you can see your reflection like a mirror. The idea here being that the Lord's servants have been transformed into His likeness (Revelation 19:14). Max Isaac Reich comments, "They are an army of volunteers, priest-warriors, the weapons

of whose warfare are not carnal, but beautiful as the dew, constantly being rejuvenated, like the fresh dew every morning, each drop reflecting the sun in miniature”.

My own interpretation is that it is speaking of the saints Jesus brings with him to the battle of Armageddon and to reign over the earth during the Millennium. I interpret the womb of the morning as the dawn of a new age, the reign of Christ on earth. And I see the dew of your youth as the new heavenly bodies of the saints, each one in their prime, vigorous and strong.

*<sup>4</sup> The LORD has sworn and will not change his mind, "You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek."* Psalm 110:4 (ESV) This doubly solemn oath is the basis for three chapters in Hebrews (5-7). When YHWH swears to do something and then says He will not change His mind, you can be doubly sure that that is the way it is (Numbers 23:19). Nothing can change it. "You" in this case is "Adonai" of verse one. God is telling Jesus that not only will He reign with authority over the earth, but He is a priest forever for mankind. This matches the prophecy of Zechariah. *<sup>12</sup> And say to him, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, "Behold, the man whose name is the Branch: for he shall branch out from his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD. <sup>13</sup> It is he who shall build the temple of the LORD and shall bear royal honor, and shall sit and rule on his throne. And there shall be a priest on his throne, and the counsel of peace shall be between them both."* Zechariah 6:12-13 (ESV) The Branch, or descendant of David, is king and priest. There will be no conflict between the two for they are one.

Jesus is said to be a priest after the order of Melchizedek, not Levi or Aaron. Melchizedek is a mysterious figure of the Old Testament. He was the king of Salem and a priest of the Most High God (Genesis 14:18). He served wine and bread to Abraham and received Abraham's tithes from a battle. He blessed Abraham. We know nothing else about him. Some believe David inherited the title of King of Salem and Priest of the Most High when he conquered Jerusalem. Thus he could offer sacrifice and bless the people and sit before the Ark of the Covenant. Jesus is then David's heir of that title. The Messiah would be a priest like Melchizedek in the sense that He would be a priest for all nations and rule as king. As Melchizedek met Abraham after the first recorded war (Genesis 14), so we see Christ here at the last war.

*<sup>5</sup> The Lord is at your right hand; he will shatter kings on the day of his wrath. <sup>6</sup> He will execute judgment among the nations, filling them with corpses; he will shatter chiefs over the wide earth.* Psalm 110:5-6 (ESV) The Son was seated peacefully at the Father's right hand in verse one, but now the Father is at the right hand of the Son as He marches into battle against all those who oppose His good and rightful reign. Here the Messiah is seen as the judge who knows those who reject righteousness. They are evil and will not turn from evil. There is no choice but to end their rebellion by force.

The Bible describes the Messiah in numerous places as a warrior. (Psalm 2:12; Exodus 15:3) This offends some who think that everyone is basically good and that anyone can be reformed. There is evil in the world. There are those that would have what they desire regardless of what it costs anyone else. There are those who will refuse the goodness of God even though they know right and wrong. To these right *is* wrong. Godly restraint is seen as bondage instead of love. Holiness is utterly deplorable to them. Selfishness is a lifestyle. A human life is only valuable in that it can be used for their pleasure. These who will not turn will be judged by the Judge, the King -Priest, the Messiah.

The Bible describes this great battle in Zechariah 14:2-5, Matthew 25:31-46, Revelation 19, and Ezekiel 38-39. The nations of the world will gather against Jerusalem. It will appear as though it will be the end of the Jewish question. Then Jesus will appear with all His saints. The anti-Christ and the false prophet will be cast into the lake of fire. The great army from the north will be destroyed in the valley of Megiddo (Revelation 16:16). Jesus will divide believers from those who reject Him (Matthew 25:32-33). That is what is being described in these verses of Psalm 110.

*<sup>7</sup> He will drink from the brook by the way; therefore he will lift up his head.* Psalm 110:7 (ESV) "Chiefs" in the previous verse can be translated "heads". The heads of those who oppose Christ will be shattered, but His head will be lifted up. The reference to drinking by the brook may refer to Gideon's 300 that stayed alert as they drank (Judges 7:5-6). Jesus is alert to all and will not let anything get past Him. He is undefeatable!

All of these Messianic passages in the Psalms come together to give us an overview of the Messiah, His ministry, His sacrifice, His victory, and the final victory that is yet to come. If we are ever to return to Eden, it will not be through the efforts of man. We've had more than enough time to give it our best efforts. We need the Messiah to come and reign over us. Until then, there will be war, crime, abuse and injustice. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming of Jesus is the world's only hope.

He is our only hope *today* as we live in this fallen world. Offering our lives to Him as a freewill offering is to come under His reign today and to represent you as your priest before God forever. When there is ever any doubt of our right to be in heaven, Jesus will be there at the right hand of God to present the scars that purchased our redemption, that enables you to draw near to God, and has perfected you in the sight of God,

Jesus affirmed that David was in the Spirit when he wrote this psalm (Matthew 22:43). **We live in that time period of the "until" of verse one, but at any time God could send the scepter forth** and everything would change. Are you ready for that day now? The best preparation is giving yourself as freewill offering to Him today.

## Questions

- 1 Which other psalms share the same theme?
- 2 What does the English miss in verse 1?
- 3 When did Jesus use this passage?
- 4 What are the four applications in Hebrews of Jesus at God's right hand?
- 5 What is the importance of "until"?
- 6 Have you become a freewill offering?
- 7 What is God's double oath?
- 8 How are Melchizedek and Jesus similar?
- 9 Why the bloody verses 5 and 6?
- 10 What is the final outcome?
- 11 How should we then live?