

## Christ as King

### Psalms 110

1. Psalm 110 is a powerful, important Messianic psalm and was evidently recognized as such by the Jews in Jesus' day.
  - The Synoptic Gospels record the Lord's use of this psalm in confounding and silencing His critics. **Matt. 22:41-46** (cf. Mark 12:35-37; Luke 20:41-44)
  - The point Jesus is making is more evident in Hebrew (notice the LORD vs. Lord in v. 1). If the Messiah is David's descendant, how can the king refer to Him as *Lord* (Adonai)? Of course, the answer is that Messiah was pre-existent. Though physically descended from David as a man, the Christ was also and eternally the Son of God.
2. The significance of this psalm in speaking of Christ is seen in the frequent quotation of or allusion to it in the NT.

"All of Psalm 110 is considered Messianic and is quoted or alluded to in the New Testament more than any other passage of the *Tanakh*, namely, [Matt. 22:44] and at 26:64; Mk 12:36; Lk 20:42; Ac 2:34-35; 1C 15:25; Ep 1:20; Co 3:1; [He] 1:3, 13; 5:6, 10; 6:20; 7:17, 21; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2; [1 Pet] 3:22."

—David H. Stern, *Jewish New Testament Commentary* (Clarksville, MD: Jewish New Testament Publications, 1996), 67.
3. The psalm was written by David as indicated both by the ancient Hebrew heading and Jesus' testimony.
  - Yet perhaps more than any other Messianic psalm (cf. Ps. 16; 22; 41), this psalm speaks exclusively of Messiah.
  - What David describes in the Spirit is not his own experience but the coming reign of Yahweh's Anointed One.
4. Psalm 110 describes the third element (and mentions the second) in Christ's offices as Prophet, Priest, and King.

### Westminster Larger Catechism

#### Q. 45. How doth Christ execute the office of a king?

A. Christ executeth the office of a king, in calling out of the world a people to himself, and giving them officers, laws, and censures, by which he visibly governs them; in bestowing saving grace upon his elect, rewarding their obedience, and correcting them for their sins, preserving and supporting them under all their temptations and sufferings, restraining and overcoming all their enemies, and powerfully ordering all things for his own glory, and their good; and also in taking vengeance on the rest, who know not God, and obey not the gospel.

#### I. THE PROPHETIC REIGN OF THE SON (v. 1)

##### A. An Important Distinction

1. Most English versions will use the term LORD (sometimes GOD) as the signifier for יהוה (Yahweh).
  - This is important because this term, the Tetragrammaton, is the personal/covenant name of God.
  - The Jews do not pronounce this name out of reverence, substituting *Adonai* (Lord) instead.
2. But notice that both LORD (Yahweh) and Lord (Adonai) appear in verse one of our passage.
  - Yahweh is speaking to David's Lord, i.e. the Messiah. The Messiah is greater than David.
  - This is remarkable because in Jewish culture the ancestor was always greater, but the Son is eternal.

##### B. An Important Invitation

1. Yahweh invites the Messiah to sit at His right hand, signifying co-regency and divine authority.

"That he was to be advanced to the highest honour, and entrusted with an absolute sovereign power both in heaven and in earth: *Sit thou at my right hand*. Sitting is a resting posture; after his services and sufferings, he entered into rest from all his labours. It is a ruling posture; he sits to give law, to give judgment. It is a remaining posture; he sits like a king for ever. Sitting at the right hand of God denotes both his dignity and his dominion, the honour put upon him and the trusts reposed in him by the Father. All the favours that come from God to man, and all the service that comes from man to God, pass through his hand."

—Matthew Henry
2. This invitation places Christ far above all other powers and authorities. **He. 1:3-4, 13**
  - He rules at the Father's right hand, exercising complete authority over all of heaven and earth.
  - He sits because His work of redemption is complete; He has secured His kingdom once for all.

##### C. An Important Proclamation

1. The Father invites the Son to reign at His right hand until all enemies have been put down forever.
  - Jesus came to destroy death and the works of the Devil, and He succeeded at the cross. **He. 2:14-15**
  - But in the *already-but not yet* tension of the NT, the consummation of that victory is not yet seen.
2. We do not wait the outcome but the revelation of the victory already won. **Rom. 8:18-25; 1Co. 15:50-57**

## II. THE PRESENT RULE OF THE SON (VV. 2-4)

### A. *The Context of His Power*

1. The Lord Jesus is now reigning at the Father's right hand over His kingdom in the midst of His enemies.
  - Verse two describes a reign *in the midst* of His enemies, not merely after their final expulsion.
  - Moreover the NT describes Jesus' reign as present and actual. **Mt. 28:18; Col. 1:13-14; Rev. 1:4-6**
2. Because Jesus' kingly rule does not fit preconceived notions, many assume He does not yet reign.
  - But Jesus said this would be so; His kingdom is not like this world. **Luke 17:20-21; John 18:36-37**
  - Nevertheless, Jesus *is* reigning already, and we are *in* His kingdom if we are believers. **Dan. 7:13-14**
3. Death and the Devil are still with us, but both have been defeated; Jesus sits on His throne right now.

### B. *The Consent of His Subjects*

1. The kingdom of Christ is characterized in the present day by willing subjects yielding to Him as Lord.
  - They are clothed in holiness, and the blessing of the Lord is upon them. (cf. Isa. 40:27-31)
  - This is the way Jesus Himself characterized the coming kingdom. **Luke 18:15-17; Matt. 11:28-30**
2. One day the Lord's reign will be exercised over those who do not willingly submit to Him. (cf. 2Th. 1:8-9)
  - On that day "every knee will bow" and every person will confess Jesus as Lord, willingly or not.
  - But in this age, believers anticipate that eschatological confession and proclaim Jesus as Lord.

### C. *The Consecration of His Reign*

1. The priestly and kingly offices were sharply and necessarily divided under the Mosaic Law.
  - Kings who exercised priestly rites were disciplined severely by God. (1Sa. 13:8-14; 2Chr. 26:16-21)
  - It was impossible for one person to be King and Priest unless the Law was changed. **He. 7:11-22**
2. The Messiah is both King and Priest following the order of Melchizedek, not Levi/Aaron.
  - This is confirmed by God's unchangeable oath; Christ's priesthood is not temporary as Aaron's was.
  - There is no "separation of powers" in Christ's kingdom; all is located and perfected in Him.

## III. THE PROSPECTIVE WRATH OF THE SON (VV. 5-7)

### A. *Universal Judgment*

1. The already-but not yet tension in the NT will one day be fully consummated at the return of Christ.
  - The already reigning King will come to exercise His authority in judging the nations. **Luke 19:11-27**
  - It will be a day of both judgment and joy, of wrath and relief. **2Thess. 1:6-10; cf. Matt. 13:36-43**
2. The saints endure persecution and patiently await God's judgment rather than avenge ourselves.
  - It is this promise that gives us confidence when evil seems unstoppable and suffering beyond help.
  - The Lord *is* coming again, and He *will* bring justice and restoration to this sin-cursed world.

### B. *Irresistible Victory*

1. Is the day of Christ's wrath a day we look forward to? Is it a day we realistically expect to come?
  - The hope of many believers is a secret rapture that will save them from great tribulation.
  - But the hope of the early Church was Christ's return, and it should be our hope as well! **1Cor. 16:22**
2. We reaffirm our faith in the Lord's coming when we eat the Lord's Supper on the Lord's Day. **1Cor. 11:26**
  - We should remind ourselves that one day the trumpet will sound and the dead arise. **1Cor. 15:20-28**
  - Our hope is *certain*, and it should give us strength each day to remain faithful. **1Cor. 15:50-58**

## PRAYER OF REFLECTION

O Lord, you have appointed Your Son as Priest and King forever. As Prophet He makes known to us Your will, as Priest He makes atonement and intercession for us, and as King He reigns even now over the Church and one day will come again to raise the dead, to bring judgment on this world, and to submit every power to Himself. O Lord, keep us through faith for the salvation we hope and long to see on that great day. Keep us by Your power. Keep us firm in Your love. O Lord Jesus, we pray that you would come. Holy Spirit, strengthen and help us. Father, continue to protect, guide, and bless us. In Jesus' blessed name we pray. Amen