

# Psalm 110 / Church of the Open Bible / 09.29.13

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## Introduction

- † **[Slide 1: Title]** How many of you believe the Bible is God's inspired revelation? I'll tell you, I think the problem with many churches today is that most people don't really believe this is God's Word, or at least not that it's directed to them. And I think the problem starts with many pastors not putting much confidence in it either.
- Our church is designed to be different: We tell you right out front on the sign that we believe there is value in the Bible. Article III of our church constitution says that we believe the Bible is inspired by God and therefore authoritative for life. Two weeks ago in the development class, we decided that personal study of the Bible was an integral part of fulfilling both the great commandment and the great commission that Jesus gave us.
  - We should be studying the Bible regularly, right? So now – keeping in mind that lying is a sin! – tell me, how many of you do personal Bible study at least five days a week? When I asked on an interactive card back in July, less than half of the respondents could say they were approaching daily Bible study five times a week.
  - According to the [Association of Religion Data Archives](#), only 14% of Bible-believing Christians study the Bible five times in a month! Is it any wonder that we don't see more of the miraculous character transformation promised in the New Testament? I believe you cannot become what God hopes for you – his image! – unless you regularly make time to listen through his Word.
- † It is an interesting question: if we believe the Bible is God's revelation and we desire the transformation described in it, then why don't we spend enough time studying it? I have a theory. I think most of us have a faith in God that is genuine and that the Bible is his inspired revelation. The problem is that we have a hard time connecting God and the Bible to daily life.
- One aspect of that difficulty is that we never learn some of the most important passages in the Bible, the things that connect it all together and make it make sense.
  - Another issue is that when we engage with our world, we see chaos: we see evil winning, we see wicked people prospering, we see corruption in government and dishonesty in business, we see a culture in which people are laughed at for being honest or generous... and all that erodes our hope. So, we start to think of God as a distant God, certainly not as an intimate God; and we start to think of the Bible as not relevant for today, for our lives.
  - Thus – while we honor God with weekly worship, trust him to take us to Heaven, and teach some Bible stories and principles to our children – we are not willing to invest in reading the Bible for ourselves, we are not willing to invest even fifteen minutes a day to hear what God might want to say. And because of this, we do not become the image of God we were created and saved to be, and we fail in our role to reflect God's character, to represent him well, and to help others become the image of God as well.
- † This is why I want to teach you Psalm 2 and Psalm 110. I want to amaze you with how coordinated and cohesive the Bible is in revealing its themes and I want to inspire you with how well it speaks about and to our day, and what's happening in your heart.
- Psalm 110 is the Old Testament passage most quoted by the New Testament authors: it is tremendously important to understand. So whatever your level of spirituality, and however much you understood last week about Psalm 2, allow me to walk you through Psalm 110. We'll approach it with an attitude of exploration, discovering God's truth together. Let's pray...

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## Adonai is Jesus

† **[Slide 2: Verse 1]** David wrote this psalm about a vision he had of a future event in Heaven.

- Last week our psalm had four different characters talking. This week, David does all the talking, though he does quote God. This week, David talks to different characters, so we have to pay attention to that. In this first verse, he is talking to us, the audience.

To us:       <sup>1</sup> A Psalm of David. The LORD says to my Lord: “Sit at My right hand  
Until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet.”

† If you were here last week, you might remember what it means when you see LORD in all capitals in the Old Testament, like you see here in yellow: It is the way the translators handle the name God gave himself, which we think is pronounced YAHway. It always refers to God.

- On the other hand, when you see Lord with just a single capital in the Old Testament, like you see here in green, it is the translation of the word Adonai, which means “lord” as in master or ruler. Sometimes Adonai refers to God – because God is our master and ruler – but sometimes it refers to someone else; e.g. a slave would have a human master, whom he would call Adonai, or Lord.

† Here in our psalm, we know Adonai – “Lord” with only a capital L – must refer to someone other than God the Father because God is talking to him. The LORD [all in capitals, meaning God] is talking to “my Lord” [Adonai].

- The first thing I want you to see is that when David says “my Lord” or “Adonai” here, he is envisioning Jesus, even though Jesus would not be born for another thousand years. Let me try to prove that to you.

† God is talking to Adonai, David’s lord or master. How can King David have a master other than God?

- Over the past two weeks, we have talked about the Abrahamic Covenant, represented by these three circles. God’s anointed king represents God to Israel and the king with Israel represents God to the other nations. So the anointed king is very important: he is God’s top representative here on Earth, he rules in God’s name. Since David was that anointed king, there was nobody on Earth above him in authority. So whom would David be calling master?
- Over the past two weeks, we also have learned that long after David died, Jesus was born as a human descendent of David and legal heir to the throne of Israel, making Jesus the anointed king. So both David and his descendent Jesus are God’s anointed kings. But since Jesus is not only human but also the divine Son of God, David rightly would call *him* master; so logically it must be Jesus to whom Adonai refers in this psalm.

† **[Slide 3: Matthew 22.41-46]** In case you have any doubts, Jesus himself revealed this was true while playfully stumping some religious leaders of his day with a question.

- Matthew 22.41-46 [NIV]: “While the Pharisees [religious leaders] were gathered together, Jesus asked them, ‘What do you think about the Messiah? Whose son is he?’ ‘The son of David,’ they replied [i.e. a descendent of David; this is a figure of speech]. He said to them, ‘How is it then that David, speaking by the Spirit, calls him “Lord” [Adonai]? For he says [quoting our psalm], “The Lord [God] said to my Lord [Adonai]: ‘Sit at my right hand until I put your enemies under your feet.’” If then David calls him “Lord” [Adonai], how can he be his son?’ No one could say a word in reply, and from that day on no one dared to ask him any more questions.”
- I love that last line: Jesus asked a question that so confused the religious leaders that they didn’t want to play with him anymore; they were not going to pester him anymore with their trick

questions, because Jesus was better at that game than they were. But let's not get distracted by that and miss the point which the Pharisees missed: Jesus revealed that Adonai in Psalm 110 is the Messiah, which means Christ, i.e. Jesus revealed that Adonai in Psalm 110 was himself.

- † **[Slide 4: Matthew 26.63-66]** A little later in time, we see Jesus on trial in Matthew 26:63-66 [NIV]: “But Jesus remained silent. The high priest said to him, ‘I charge you under oath by the living God: Tell us if you are the Messiah, the Son of God.’ [That’s a reference to Psalm 2!] ‘You have said so,’ Jesus replied. ‘But I say to all of you: From now on you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One [That’s a reference to Psalm 110!] and coming on the clouds of heaven.’ Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, ‘He has spoken blasphemy! Why do we need any more witnesses? Look, now you have heard the blasphemy. What do you think?’ ‘He is worthy of death,’ they answered.”
- In v.63, the High Priest asked Jesus if he was the Psalm 2 Messiah and Son of God. In v.64, Jesus answered by quoting Old Testament passages, including Psalm 110, saying he would soon be at God’s right hand. We see in vv.65-66 that his answer is why they declared him guilty of blasphemy, of putting himself equal with God by describing himself as the Son of God and Messiah or Christ. Of course, it was not blasphemy, since Jesus was telling the truth.
- † **[Slide 5: Acts 2.34-36]** A little later still, Peter quoted this first verse of Psalm 110 in Acts 2:34-36 [NIV]. Peter said, “For David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said, ‘The Lord [God] said to my Lord [Adonai]: “Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.”’ Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord [Adonai/master] and Messiah [God’s Anointed].”
- Peter declared to the gathered religious leaders that the Jesus they had just crucified was indeed the Lord [Adonai] and Messiah [Christ] of Psalm 2 and Psalm 110, and was now sitting at the right hand of God!
  - **[Slide 6: Verse 1]** So in our psalm, we could interpret this first line as, “God the Father says to Jesus, who is the Davidic King and Messiah/Christ, ‘Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.’”

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### Jesus is still sitting today

- † **[Slide 7: Ephesians 1.18-20]** I want to talk a little about when the events of this vision are taking place. Let’s look at Ephesians 1.18-20 [NLT]: “I also pray that you will understand the incredible greatness of God’s power for us who believe him. This is the same mighty power that raised Christ from the dead and seated him in the place of honor at God’s right hand in the heavenly realms.”
- This passage refers to the first verse of Psalm 110, and shows that this sitting down took place after Jesus’ death and resurrection, when he ascended to Heaven.
  - Paul also referred to this first verse of our psalm in Colossians 3.1 [NASB]: “Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.” Thus we see that Jesus is still sitting now, during our time period.
  - **[Slide 8: Verse 1 sitting]** Notice that Psalm 110.1 says Jesus will be sitting until God is ready to bring his enemies to submission. So Jesus ascended back to Heaven, sat down at the right hand of God the Father, and is still sitting there today, waiting until it is time to come back.
- † As we looked at Psalm 2 last week, we talked about God’s plan to bring justice to the earth by sending Jesus back to judge and rule. But as we also said last week, Jesus has not yet asked for his inheritance. During this time of sitting, Christ is not yet on his throne ruling, and his enemies are not



- **[Slide 11: Hebrews 8.1]** To make this point, Hebrews 8:1 refers to verse one of Psalm 110 in discussing Jesus as our High Priest: [NIV] “The main point of what we are saying is this: We do have such a high priest, who sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven ...”

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### **Sitting = permanent atonement**

- † **[Slide 12: Dispensation Chart]** Let’s look at this chart that a professor of mine, Charles Baylis, designed. The three circle model, my Psalm 2 teaching and this Psalm 110 teaching all originated with Dr. Baylis. I have fleshed them out and made them my own, but I owe a lot to his insight.
- † The horizontal line in the middle is a time line. David was writing this psalm hundreds of years before Jesus was born. He saw a vision of what was going to take place in the future. Before the events of that vision even started, Jesus would be born, live a holy life, die on the cross, be resurrected, and ascend to Heaven. That ascension is marked on the chart by a cross with an upward arrow over the word atonement.
  - Atonement is an important concept for us to know. It means Jesus made it possible for sinful humans and a holy God to be reconciled to have peace with each other. In his death, Jesus paid the penalty for our sins so we could be reconciled to peace with God, and thus saved from God’s wrath.
- † **[Slide 13: Chart with Hebrews 10.11-14]** Hebrews 10.11-14 [ESV] says it this way: “And every priest stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, waiting from that time until his enemies should be made a footstool for his feet. For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.”
  - Referring to Psalm 110, this passage of Hebrews tells us that Jesus’ death was a sufficient sacrifice for all time. There is no other payment necessary for our sins, Jesus has accomplished it all. That is why as a high priest he can now sit down: there is no more sacrificing to do.
  - Have you ever sinned and then felt guilty? felt like you should do something to make up for the sin? maybe you thought you should suffer for your sin, or do some good things to make up for it, some kind of penance, or sacrifice in some way to make it up to God... Here we learn that to correct for your sins, you don’t need to do any of these things: you just need to accept that Jesus, the Son of God and promised Messiah/Christ, did it for you.
- † Having completed his sacrifice, Jesus right now – right now in our “time of delay” – remains sitting at the right hand of God the Father until the time is right for God to send him back. His work of sacrificing, of atoning is done, and it is not yet time for him to return as king. However, Jesus does have a job right now, so let’s learn a little about that.

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### **Jesus as Mediator**

- † **[Slide 14: Melchizedek highlighted]** According to our psalm, Jesus has a special priesthood, according to the order of Melchizedek. This makes it different from the Levitical priesthood you read about throughout the Old Testament. The Levites used animal sacrifices to make a temporary atonement with God – i.e. to make a temporary appeasement of God’s wrath over sin – foreshadowing the permanent atonement that would come through the sacrifice of Christ.
  - Interestingly, Jesus was the high priest who made this permanently atoning sacrifice, but he sacrificed himself on the cross, not an animal. To be permanently atoning, the sacrifice had to be a pure human to pay the penalty for human sin, but it had to be divine to be able to bear the full burden of the penalty for all our sin, which is why Jesus had to sacrifice himself: only he was both a pure man and God.

- † **[Slide 15: Three circles with mediator]** Now we need to ask who Melchizedek is; he is somewhat of a mystery, but we do know a little.
- Remember our three circles? Beginning with Abraham, God’s anointed leader would represent God to the nation of Israel, and that leader with the nation of Israel would represent God to the other nations. But between God and Abraham, while Abraham was the head of his family that would become Israel, there was for a time in Genesis 14 a mediator named Melchizedek.
  - **[Slide 16: Hebrews 7.1-2]** Hebrews 7:1-2 elaborates on this event: “For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham as he was returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, to whom also Abraham apportioned a tenth part of all the spoils, was first of all, by the translation of his name, king of righteousness, and then also king of Salem, which is king of peace.”
  - Melchizedek came out to bless Abraham after a military victory and received from Abraham a tithe of the spoils. He was not in authority over Abraham, but he acted as God’s mediator, blessing Abraham and receiving his offering. God used other mediators in history, sometimes prophets, sometimes priests.
- † **[Slide 17: Three circles with mediator]** As Hebrews 7 explains, Melchizedek was a priest by God’s command, not by an inherited right as in the case of the Levites later in history. Like Melchizedek, Jesus is appointed to be a priest by God the Father [as we see here in our psalm], a divine oath that lasts forever because – unlike mere human priests – the ascended Jesus is beyond dying when this promise is made.
- † So, when Israel rejected Jesus, they rejected not only their rightful king – as we learned in Psalm 2 last week – but also their Melchizedek-mediator, so it is twice as certain that at that time they were no longer in a right relationship with God.
- In the early church, many believers were Jews who believed in Jesus as the Messiah/Christ. But they suffered terrible persecution for their faith in Christ, and many of them considered converting back to Judaism, because they thought they must be under a curse from God. In the book of Hebrews, the author used Psalm 110 to argue against that idea, warning them that because that generation of Israel had rejected their king and mediator, they were the ones who were about to be judged and punished by God: and in AD70, God allowed Rome, one of the nations, to destroy Jerusalem.
- † Hebrews 7 also teaches that Jesus ushers in the New Covenant, an improvement over the one God had made with Moses for the nation of Israel, and that Jesus can save us completely, because he intercedes for us. Jesus is up in Heaven, reminding God that he paid the penalty for our sin.
- Hebrews 7.25 [NET] says, “So he [Jesus] is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.”
- † During our time of waiting until Jesus returns as King, while he is sitting and acting as High Priest, believers can and likely will suffer in this life as Satan rules the world, but we can always trust that Jesus is acting as our mediator with God, and so no matter how bad things get we can always know God has not forsaken us. This is another cause for hope in a time of crisis.

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### Christ’s return

† **[Slide 18: Vv.5-7]** Let’s finish our psalm. Now David is talking to God the Father.

† To God:     <sup>5</sup> The Lord [Adonai/Jesus] is at Your right hand;

He will shatter kings in the day of His wrath.

<sup>6</sup> He will judge among the nations, He will fill *them* with corpses,  
He will shatter the chief men over a broad country.

<sup>7</sup> He will drink from the brook by the wayside;  
Therefore He will lift up *His* head.

- † Christ is at God the Father's right hand, perhaps implying that he now is no longer sitting, ready to act as God's representative, which is described here also. Christ is returning to judge... and he will be wrathful toward those who oppose God and himself as God's anointed.
  - Who are these nations? Remember Psalm 2 from last week... They are those who do not acknowledge Jesus as God's promised deliverer and anointed king, and so are rebellious against God and have not received righteousness from Jesus!
  - Jesus will judge them. Jesus will judge them when he returns... It is important to remember that today is not the time for judgment or for justice: we are in the time of delay, the time of waiting. Also, we are not the judges! Jesus is the anointed king who will represent God and judge; that is not our job!
- † The last verse, v.7, is a symbol of victory and exaltation. Christ will be victorious and then he will be exalted by all of creation. Ephesians 1 refers to Psalm 110 and says that Christ's kingly rule will be forever.

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### Application

- † **[Slide 19: High Priest]** What does it all mean for us? Some of you might not have understood all of what I taught today, and that is ok. The first time I studied these passages in seminary, they made my head spin. What matters is that we figure out what it means for us and we then let this revelation from God change us to be more like Christ.
- † Jesus is the Messiah, the Christ, the one God promised would bring deliverance from death and Hell by being the sacrifice, by personally paying the penalty for our sins on the cross.
  - Today we learned something that complements that fact: that as our *high priest*, Jesus made the sacrifice that reconciles us with God and spares us God's wrath. His sacrifice paid the penalty for our sin and that sacrifice was good for all time, which is why he can now sit at the right hand of God, there is no more sacrificing to do.
  - All you have to do to be right with God and saved from God's wrath and the penalty of your sin is to put your faith in Jesus and his deliverance.
- † Also as our high priest, Jesus acts as our mediator with God. Jesus is our advocate in Heaven, he understands us and has compassion for us, and he constantly is looking out for us. Because Jesus is our mediator, we have full access to God in prayer and through the Holy Spirit whom Jesus sent to be with us. We should take comfort in knowing this, and be hopeful, because with Jesus on our side, we need never fear we are alone, we need never fear that God has turned his back on us in anger.
- † **[Slide 20: King and Judge]** That should give us hope, and these psalms should give us hope in that they show God is not absent from the world today, nor is he surprised at the state of the world. He put prophecies about the world today in scripture, and the rebellion against him, against his truth, and against his representative in Christ was all foreseen by him and all part of his plan. The world is in

chaos, and it will seem to get worse before Christ comes back, but it is not out of God's control. When the moment is right, Christ will return to bring deliverance and justice.

- † **[Slide 21: Head of Church]** Knowing this should give us hope, and it also should help us understand our purpose. Jesus is king, high priest, judge, deliverer, and Christ, but we also know that Jesus is head over the church. Even though the church does not replace Israel in God's plan, we might stretch our three circle concept to show a chart like this for our time period: Christ represents God the Father to the church and Christ with the church represents God to everyone else.
- Christ represents God the Father, and we obey Christ just as the people of Israel obeyed their king. What does Christ tell us to do? Love our enemies, turn the other cheek, judge not... You ever wonder where such counter-cultural stuff comes from? I don't know about you, but I find these things are hard to implement for real in my life. So I ask, are these commands important and relevant today?
  - We have to remember what time period we are in, the time of delay... of waiting for Christ to return, and the purpose of this waiting is to bring others to saving faith in Christ and to help them grow to reflect God's image. So that is why we love our enemies and turn the other cheek, because our purpose is to be disciples of Christ – images of God! – who help others become disciples of Christ and images of God.
  - That might sound familiar to you: it is the Great Commission! So I ask you to seriously take a look at your life this week and see how you could better focus on your spiritual growth and on helping others find and follow Jesus Christ. This is God's expectation for every believer.
- † Let's Pray