

Christ the King Rejected

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[0 : 00] Let us begin our service and we can read from Psalm 110.

Psalm 110, reading from the beginning. The Lord did say unto my Lord, sit thou at my right hand, until I make thy foes a stool whereon thy feet may stand. The Lord shall out of Zion send the rod of thy great power.

In midst of all thine enemies be thou the governor. A willing people in thy day of power shall come to thee. In holy beauties from morn's womb thy youth like dew shall be. The Lord himself hath made an oath and will repent him never. Of the order of Melchizedek thou art a priest for ever.

The glorious and mighty Lord that sits at thy right hand shall in his day of wrath strike through kings that do him withstand. And so on. These verses to God's praise from the beginning of Psalm 110.

Psalm 110, reading from the beginning.

[1 : 46] Psalm 110, reading from the beginning.

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Psalm 110, reading from the beginning. Psalm 110, reading from the beginning. Psalm 110, reading from the beginning. Psalm 110, reading from the beginning. Let us join together in prayer. Let us pray. O Lord our God, as we come before you with prayer and praise, we give thanks that you are the God that we are the same God that we are the same God that we are the same God that hears the prayers and the praises of your people the world over.

[4 : 12] which we are the same God that we are the same God that we are the same God. Whether we are the same God as we come before you forbid, whether we think about ourselves in our God there. congregations whether we are in the open or in seclusion whether we are conscious of the ability to come without interference or whether we are living in fear that our worship will be in some way something that will bring upon our heads the enmity of those who are in the world with us no matter where we are or who we are we give thanks that we can come to the same God at the same time knowing that you will give to us your undivided attention you are a God who is great and your greatness is something that we cannot comprehend we measure you by our own measure and these are simply means by which we think of the measurable things that we can look at its beginning and look at its end and yet when it comes to God we cannot begin at the beginning because you have no beginning and you have no end you are a God who is from everlasting to everlasting

God your role as God has not increased or decreased your power has not been diminished in any way it is not exhausted by the use of that power even by those who would draw upon it we give thanks that your word reminds us that that you are a God who is the same God that has spoken to your people throughout all generations and that those who speak of you speak of you in their experience of your greatness even as they were able to enter into the reality of it in their experience we give thanks that you are a God of mercy and that we can speak of that mercy and those that are able to speak of it and use the words of the psalmist who who know that they have experienced your goodness and your grace like many others you have gathered them out of the lands from north south east and west and they have experienced your mercy and you have experienced your goodness and they are able to praise you for that goodness and you encourage each of us to praise you for your goodness for the works of wonder you have done to the sons of men and nothing is more wonderful in their experience than the work of salvation as they have experienced it personally and as they have encountered the passion of the redeemer christ jesus who is the alone saviour of sinners and they have discovered that for themselves and they are able to speak of it however intimately they have encountered the god of heaven as the redeemer god and their experience is unique to themselves no matter how many points of contact they may have with the experiences of others you have brought us to the one passion even christ you have brought us to experience salvation at his hand and we give thanks for that so we pray that you would encourage us to come with confession with contrition with all humility knowing that we do not deserve the least of your mercies and yet this mercy you have given to us and mercy that we crave for as sinners who have come short of your glory we deserve nothing but your displeasure and that your back would be turned towards us and yet we are receiving again and again invitations to come come to to your god so we pray your blessing upon us as individuals as families as homes as villages as towns as cities as nations thankful that no matter how expansive we are in our declaration of our need and the multitude of need that we may have not only as needs are presented by individuals but as the needs of this nation of ours and other nations are brought

before you pray that you would bless us as a fallen race remembering our need in the face of eternity we give thanks that we can come to you and that you have made provision of Christ whose blood is most precious and who has shed that blood in behalf of his people for his sacrifice was a sacrifice for sin and he gave himself willingly in response to the burden that you placed upon him as the redeemer of lost souls so we pray Lord that you would bless us this day in his name remembering the preaching of the gospel remembering those that you have given that remit true to proclaim Christ we pray that you would bless them in their labours that you would fill their mouths from on high that they would be encouraged in their proclamation to proclaim the truth and nothing else we pray for your people who are under the gospel thankful for the means of grace thankful for those who are able to hear the word whether it is in public or in private we give thanks for those who are able to gather afresh in the house of

God as they were inclined to do before now that it is their delight their pleasure to go up to the house of God just as you have commanded them to do you we pray we pray that you would remember those who are unable to do so because of their own particular circumstances we remember those who are unable to gather because of the effect of the pandemic upon lives we cannot gather as we would but we give thanks that you have appointed means by which we can hear your word read and proclaimed that you have given us the word of God in our own tongue and many are able to hear it who would not otherwise have heard it even today we pray that you would bless every gathering around the throne of grace and that they would know that grace disseminated within their heart that they would be filled from on high that there would be the heartwarming experience of knowing that

Christ is walking with us in the way so we remember before you those who are unwell at this time especially we think of those who have illness to deal with not just those who have been affected in vast numbers by COVID-19 throughout the land and we know throughout all lands that there are many who have succumbed to this illness we pray for all such and we pray for their care for their welfare in whatever way it is being dealt with by doctors doctors and carers of all kinds even loved ones who are caring for them within the homes we pray for the nations that have been greatly affected by this there are many thousands who have suffered death and as a result many are mourning their passing their hearts are rent and their grief is genuine so heal their hearts we pray we remember also those who have at this time illness to contain with of a different sort and maybe many other diseases and ills in the world that have always been there think of those who are suffering from cancers those who are suffering from breakdowns of bodies or minds we pray that you would remember all such and minister to them according to your mercy remember those confined to their beds within their homes or in hospitals pray for families who may be concerned for loved ones and we remember them to you and you have serious illness to deal with and to have no possibility of remedy we still believe that you are a

[14 : 15] God of miracle and when we pray may we pray in faith knowing that you are able to restore life even to those who have given every indication that life is forfeit we ask Lord that you would mercy fully gather in your arms those who are broken heal them we pray so we pray for those who are throughout the world have taken this burden of caring for others encourage them in their labours we pray we ask this day that you would remember those whose hearts are sore we ask that you would uphold them and sustain them we pray for our nation and those who govern us the first minister the prime minister various parliaments represent the queen in our nation we pray that you would guide them and give wisdom to them that the foolishness of man would not be given unbridled access to the excellence of power but that in some way that the wisdom of

God would be sought and that you would give to those who would govern insights into the truth that would guide them so that they can guide us so hear our prayers for all the nations of the earth and all who govern we pray that you would miserably undertake for us bless the preaching of the word today bless all who are under it and may each of us be edified and encouraged may our paths be straight paths and may our feet be kept within them to the glory of thy name for giving sin in Jesus name we ask it amen going to hear the word of God as we have it in the New Testament scriptures going to read from the gospel of John chapter 19 reading from the beginning of the chapter

John chapter 19 we'll read from the beginning to verse 16 then Pilate therefore took Jesus and scourged him and the soldiers plaited a crown of thorns and put it on his head and they put on him a purple robe and said hail king of the Jews and they smoked him with their hands Pilate therefore went forth again and saith unto them behold I bring him forth to you that ye may know that I find no fault in him then came Jesus forth wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe and Pilate saith unto them behold the man when the chief priest therefore and officers saw him they cried out saying crucify him crucify him Pilate saith unto them take ye him and crucify him for

I find no fault in him the Jews answered him we have a law and by our law he ought to die because he made himself the son of God when Pilate therefore heard that saying he was the more afraid and went again into the judgment hall and saith unto Jesus when saith thou but Jesus gave him no answer then saith Pilate unto him speakest thou not unto me knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee and have power to release thee Jesus answered thou couldst have no power at all against me except it were given thee from above therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath a greater sin and from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him but the Jews cried out saying if thou let this man go thou art not

Caesar's friend whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar when Pilate therefore heard that saying he brought Jesus forth and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called the pavement but in the Hebrew Gabbatha and it was the preparation of the Passover and about the sixth hour and he saith unto the Jews behold your king but they cried out away with him away with him crucify him Pilate saith unto them shall I crucify your king the chief priests answered we have no king but Caesar then delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified and they took Jesus and led him away and so on may the

[19 : 46] Lord at his blessing to this reading of his word and to his name be the praise■■ like us now to look at the last few words that we read there focusing in particular on these words behold your king behold your king I was recently listening to a lecture given by Professor David P. Murray which was an adjunct to a book written by him entitled Jesus on Every Page and in this book he describes his own awakening to the sense of Jesus in the Old Testament which he follows in the book with a series of chapters of discovery revealing for example Christ in creation, Christophany, typology, prophecy and poetry among other topics.

Now the passage before us should remind us that God did indeed promise his people a king to reign over them whose reign unlike that of other kings would not end.

He was given the name Messiah which in Hebrew means the anointed one roughly the same as the Christ in Greek both having the sense of being the one sent by God.

At the beginning of Mark's Gospel we have an account of the ministry of John the Baptist who was the forerunner of Christ who bears testimony to that Christ.

And after the arrest of John we are told of the wilderness temptation of Jesus following which his official ministry begins. This he announces with the words the time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand repent and believe the Gospel.

[22 : 04] Now what is truly remarkable is the accuracy of the predictive prophecy while at the same time what is equally remarkable in a sense is the inability to reconcile what is prophesied with the actual fulfilment of it by many.

For example when Jesus was born God told the wise men of his birth when they sought him out as you might expect the question he asked was where is he who has been born King of the Jews?

and yet the circumstances of his birth in obscurity belied the truth that proclaimed his arrival.

We cannot question the accuracy for example if we consider the days leading up to his arrest and execution where we find scripture is again not silent.

In the Old Testament prophecy of Zechariah chapter 9 and verse 9 we read Bejoice greatly O daughter of Siam Shout aloud O daughters of Jerusalem Behold your king is coming to you Righteous and having salvation Is he humble and mounted on a donkey On a court The foal of a donkey In the New Testament When these words come to be fulfilled We find it Extraordinarily Accurate In John chapter 12 and verse 15 we read The next day The large crowd That were come to the feast When they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem Took branches of palm trees And went forth to meet him And cried Blessed is the king of Israel

[24 : 04] That cometh In the name of the Lord However It is but a short time later That there is an unveiling of what is the true content Of man's heart The cry of Hosanna Have only just faded away But they are replaced By the words Crucify Crucify Why is this What lies behind it Well the words of scripture Do indeed unveil The heart of man to us Scripture tells us That they hated him Without a cause Jesus himself says When he was at the feast of tabernacles My time has not yet come But your time is always ready He says The world cannot hate you But it But me it hated Because I testify of it

That the works thereof are evil The preacher left up with the crumacher comments They could not endure The broad daylight Of unvarnished truth It is against our basest instincts To accept The criticisms Even when warranted We find ourselves Reluctant to To yield to them But the Holy One of Israel Unmasked Those who were his enemies He contend Those who were his enemies And they turned against him With a vicious hatred And a consuming desire To destroy him We can hardly Grasp the vitriol That is in the words Of verse 6 They cried out Saying Crucify Crucify

But if we are honest If we are discerning enough We can see it In the heart of man To this day Where any Christian Who bears testimony To Christ Will find The same enmity Displayed against them What God's word says Is People love the darkness Rather than the light Because their deeds Were evil And when God Shines his light On our hearts We do not like What we see How do we respond?

We shout Put that light out As one theologian has it A shameful crown Of thorns Woven by the hands Of men And placed on the Saviour's brow Is man's estimate Of Christ They mock They blaspheme But they cannot alter The fact That the one before them Is God's anointed Here in this passage Even though Even though Pilate is The main Focus Of What is Happening He is the Decision maker As it were That is still All To do With How men See Christ That's the second Thing I want to Highlight here The unraveling Of Pilate's Purposes If you remember Pilate wanted To prove To the Jews To the Romans

To Christ Even To himself That he was In control He challenged The Jews To judge Jesus According to Their law He even Challenged Jesus To respond To him Because he Said Speakest thou Not to me Knowest thou Not that I Have power To crucify thee And have power To release thee But Jesus' Answer creates Doubt in his Mind Read again The words of Verse 11 Jesus answered Thou couldst Have no power At all Against me Except it were Given thee From above Therefore he That delivered Me unto thee Has the Greatest sin And from Thenceforth Pilate Sought to Release him But the Jews cried Out saying If thou Let this Man go Thou art Not Caesar's Friend

[28 : 47] Whosoever Maketh himself A king Speaketh Against Caesar We know That Pilate Is Struggling To Maintain Order Against The truth That he Knows To be Staring Him In the Face I want To highlight For the Purpose Of our Service The part Pilate Plays In placing As it Were The searchlight Of God's Promises On the Scene Being played Out On the Stage Of history He Asked The Question Of Jesus Are You The King Of The Jews And Then He Confirmed The Jews Along With Jesus And The Words Behold Your King Which Is Responded To With The

Words Crucify Crucify An Open Denial Of Christ A Rejection Of Him As Their King Which Incidentally Was To Lead To The Judgment Of God Upon Them And Their Nation We Will Not Have This Man To Reign Over Us Words That From Their Own Mouths Condemn Them If He Is Not Their King They Are Not His Subjects They Neither Know Him Nor His Favor And Forfeit The Right To His Divine Protection Those Of You Who Were Taught The Shorter Catechism Will Remember That In The Office In The Role Of Redeemer Christ Occupied The Offices Of Prophet Of Priest And Of King And In The Role Of King In The Office Of King What We Are Told Is That Christ Jesus Subdues Us To Himself He Rules

And Defends Us And Restrains And Conquers All His And Our Enemies I Wonder If We Really Appreciate What It Means To Enjoy That Privilege Do We Realize What It Means To Be Without It Some Suggest That The Words Of Verse 12 Speak Of A Change Of Heart On The Part Of Pilate Perhaps He Was Seeking To Stir The Sympathy Of The People By Pointing To The Beaten Broken Pathetic And Bloody Figure Of Christ Maybe He Did Not Want Or Maybe He Did Want To Change Their Opinion But Not Willing To Change His Own Shall I Crucify Your King But He Was Never His King He Was Never The One To Whom He Showed Any Measure

Of Allegiance Whatever He Saw Or Whatever They Saw Jesus Was God's Anointed He Is The Messiah The Prince Despised And Rejected Of Men But Destined To Sit On The Throne Of Glory This Is The Third Thing I Would Like To Highlight The Upholding Of God's Plan Of Salvation It Is Mysterious No Doubt That It Is As God Promised And God's Promise And God's Plan Are Inseparable The Crown Of Glory That Awaited Christ Was Preceded By A Crown Of Thorns As One Writer Put It If We Are To Receive The Crown Of Life Christ Must Receive The Crown Of Thorns He Cannot Be The Saviour In Any Other Way Again To Quote

After Bilyuk Krumacher It Is Here is to take away the crown of thorns and give the crown of life and honour.

[33 : 19] Behold, this man is the saviour to deliver from the misery that fills a fallen race. Here is a wonder to behold, adore and break down before.

The Son of God was a man with a bleeding back and a crown of accursed thorns to secure eternal glory for fallen humanity.

No one knew like Christ that the throne of glory was rightfully his, but he was willing to endure the cross and despise the shame.

As Paul says in his letter to the Philippians, he thought it not robbery to be equal with God, yet he humbled himself and became obedient unto death even the death of the cross.

But the one who was once despised and rejected is now at the right hand of glory. He occupies the place of power. He is king forever and ever.

[34 : 23] There is no sign of the Roman Empire, no sign of the pompous officials by which they accepted authority. Pilate has gone to his reward.

John the Apostle in the Revelation wrote, And again in chapter 7, Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night on his temple, and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.

When we began our service, we began with the words of the psalmist that speaks of the priest-king whose enemies will be made as footstone. Those who crowned him with thorns will see him crowned in glory, and they themselves crowned in shame.

That great day will come, and that soon, the day when the King of kings and Lord of all will be revealed in all his glory.

Pilate vacillated. Circumstances were not in his favour. He suspected there was more to Christ than even he was willing to acknowledge.

[36 : 04] But the truth escaped him. If he had understood, even with a grain of faith, that the one before him was indeed who he said he was, he may have behaved differently, but he was not anything other than willing to do what Christ was in the world to do.

We have no king but Caesar, and they delivered him there to be crucified, and crucified he was.

But we give thanks to God that in the mystery of this providence that God will have the glory, and Christ will be lifted up before men throughout all eternity as the one by which God secured salvation to sinners.

Let us pray. O Lord our God, we give thanks for the wonder of your word, for the way in which it directs us to the footstool of Christ, and there to acknowledge him, and to worship him, and to give him the place that belongs to him as the King of glory.

We pray a blessing in his name, cleansing from sin by his hand, and we pray that you continue with us throughout this day. Now may grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit be with you all now and always.

[37 : 43] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.