

Following the trail through Psalm 110

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[0:00] Well, good morning and welcome to Calvary Church here on our YouTube broadcast for today's! 17th January 2021. So a very warm welcome to you for those who are regular, those who are just dropping! for the first time. For those of you dropping in for the first time, I say my usual introduction that we are a relatively small independent Baptist church based here in Brighton on the south coast of England and in normal times there are about 70 to 80 of us meeting on a Sunday morning but it's a long time since we've been able to do that. So here we are again on YouTube. My name is Philip Wells, I work for the church and have worked for the church for many many years as a full-time pastor, elder and I'm leading this morning and I'll be speaking a little bit later as we continue our series in Hebrews. And in Hebrews we've been following the trail which leads to this figure Melchizedek, the great high priest. And please don't be put off by that strange name, it's really a way of understanding who Jesus is and understanding what he came to do. And that's not difficult or off-putting but it's actually what everybody needs to know if they want to know what being a Christian is. And that's a wonderful thing and I want to encourage you to not be put off by the title but to continue and bear with us all the way through this morning.

We're also going to say a little bit about the subject of forgiveness. So let me just click through to the order of service as it were, that's what we're going to be doing this morning. We're going to sing and pray and read and I'm going to bring some more thoughts on the subject of forgiveness.

So before we go any further let me pray a brief prayer to start us off. Lord, we need to meet you.

We need to hear from you. We need to be in touch with you. Please come and meet with us as we listen to and engage with the words of this meeting, even though it's done on YouTube.

Please grant those who are in oppression to feel liberty. Grant us who are diseased with sin to find healing. Grant us to find in a genuine measure that it's good to be a Christian and the joy of sins forgiven. And grant us these blessings not as things in themselves but as the part of the riches that are in Jesus Christ himself who is our Saviour. Amen.

Amen. So I said we're going to be thinking about forgiveness and I've chosen to begin with a psalm. This is Psalm 51 and it is a very deep psalm of emotion and contrition and turning to the Lord.

[3:18] This is the psalm of David when the prophet Nathan came to him after David had committed adultery with Bathsheba. And David says, Have mercy, O God, according to your unfailing love, according to your great compassion.

Blot out my transgressions, wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. And the song says, Forgive me, Lord, as you promise. Wash me and cleanse me from my sin.

So we're going to come to the Lord in a humble way. It's the right way for sinners to come. And we'll sing Psalm 51. Psalm 51.

Have mercy, Lord, as you promise.

Wash me and cleanse me from my guilt. For I can see the wrong in my life.

[4:44] Against you, Lord, have I sinned. In judgment your word is blameless.

For I have sinned since my beginning. And Lord, you look for truth in my life.

So give me wisdom today. Lord, wash me from my uncleanness. Fill me with joy where once was sadness.

Give me a heart renewed, O my Lord. A new right spirit within.

Turn me from my sins and destroy them. But let me never be forsaken.

[5:49] Lord, take me from the death I deserve.

Then I will tell what you've done. Lord, take my lips and I'll praise you.

Oh, sacrifice my grace, O sacrifice my grace, redeems me. All you require is my broken heart. A gift you will not refuse.

Lord, give me from my sins and destroy them. Lord, give your peace to your servant. Protect and stay by me forever.

Through your great love accept what I bring. And fill my life with your praise.

[7:13] Lord, give your grace, redeems me. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.
Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

we'll also say together, please, if we may, the Lord's Prayer. So those will come up on the screen. And let's begin then with this general confession, which we say out loud together. Almighty and most merciful Father, we have erred and strayed from your ways like lost sheep. We have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts. We have offended against your holy laws. We have left undone those things which we ought to have done, and we have done those things which we ought not to have done, and there is no health in us. But you, O Lord, have mercy upon us miserable offenders. Spare those, O God, who confess their faults. Restore those who are penitent, according to your promises declared to humanity in Christ Jesus our Lord.

And grant, O most merciful Father, for his sake, that we may hereafter live a godly, righteous, and sober life, to the glory of your holy name. Amen. And as we continue to pray, we come in adoration of our great God. We thank you that you are the God of compassion and the God of all comfort. We thank you that in your compassion you look upon us in our weakness and lostness, in the dysfunctionality of our souls and emotions often going all over the place. And we pray that you would steady us and draw us in wholesomeness and realism into the presence of the living God. We ask for the work of the Holy Spirit to order our disordered hearts. We ask for the work of the Holy Spirit to bring us and lead us into the presence of the

Almighty One. We ask for the work of the Holy Spirit to show us Jesus Christ and to fill us with a sense of who he is and how much he gives us and how great he is. And we pray, Lord, that we would be in your presence and beholding your face. And as we behold your face, we pray that we would be changed from one degree of glory into another, beholding the face of the Lord. And we come this morning in supplication to ask you to have mercy on our country as we are in this grim time of increasing infections and hospitalisations and premature deaths. Please teach our nation and all our nations humility before you. Don't let us waste the opportunity of being humbled before you to draw near to you as you want us to. We pray for our government that they may perhaps even secretly and humbly pray, help me Jesus, in the privacy of their own hearts and homes and that you will have mercy in answer to those prayers. We pray for our country and our countries, we pray for our government and we pray for your kingdom. That at this time your kingdom, which is not bounded by national boundaries and is not flummoxed by disease or the ups and downs of providence, but your kingdom, your church, which Jesus says he will build and the gates of hell will not prevail against it. O Lord, build your kingdom. Change people, bring them to Jesus Christ and enable us in our weakness to be part of that, to be strong in the Lord and in your mighty power. We particularly pray for the people of God and those who grieve. There are funerals this week and we pray for you to be glorified in that. And those Lord who are distressed in any way, lonely, isolated, troubled, please be to them a

God of all comfort. And we pray these prayers in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. And now let us pray the Lord's Prayer together. Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread and forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For yours is the kingdom, the power and the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

[13:00] Amen. So we've prayed confessing our sin and we're going to read from Matthew 18 verse 21 on this subject of forgiveness, which we're going to continue to look at in just a moment. So I'll give you a moment to find Matthew 18 verse 21 and I'll read this out to us.

Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times? Jesus answered, I tell you not seven times, but seventy-seven times.

Therefore the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him. Since he was not able to pay, his master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt. The servant fell on his knees before him. Be patient with me, he begged, and I will pay back everything. The servant's master took pity on him, cancelled the debt and let him go. But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants, who owed him a hundred denarii, and he grabbed him and began to choke him. Pay back what you owe me, he demanded. His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, be patient with me and I will pay you back. But he refused. Instead he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt. When the other servants saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed and went and told their master everything that had happened.

Then the master called the servant in. You wicked servant, he said. I cancelled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. Shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?

[15:08] In anger, his master turned him over to the jailers to be tortured until he should pay back all he owed. This is how my heavenly father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart.

Well, that's a little reading to bring us on to some more thoughts on forgiveness. Remember last time we said this is such an important matter for us in our relationship with God and in our relationship with one another. And the point that I was trying to make last week was that when you forgive somebody you do relinquish the right to use that offence as a weapon against them. You relinquish the right to bring it up again and mention it in that sense. What I wanted to say today is that when you give forgiveness it is a costly gift of mercy. When you give forgiveness it is a costly gift of mercy.

In other words, it's not a transaction where I give you something you give me something. It is entirely one way in the sense that it's a gift and it's a gift of mercy.

Mercy. And I want to say a little bit about mercy. Mercy is when you have no negotiating power. So not like Brexit where the various parties have played their chips and done their brinkmanship and said I'll give you this if you give me that and it's been a negotiation. But mercy is when you say I've got no negotiating power at all. I don't have any chips to play. And the story of this, and I don't know whether it's at all true, is of a French woman who appealed to Napoleon. Her son had been found guilty of desertion, a desertion from the army, and he was about to be executed.

And the woman said to Napoleon, oh please have mercy on my son. Please don't kill him. Please have mercy on him. And Napoleon said, well why should I have mercy? And the woman said, if there was a reason for you to have mercy then it wouldn't be mercy. See, mercy is when you've got no negotiating power. And there is a costliness to this. There is a price to be paid. And you have to be attuned to this. You have to realise this. Because you could say to the person who is seeking your forgiveness, that you are well out of order. You are completely wrong. Totally unfair to me. And there is a debt that this person pays. And if you're going to forgive them, you're going to write off that debt and cancel it. And you could say, well I was hurt. You hurt me. I was really hurt by that. You inflicted pain on me. But if you're forgiving somebody, your emotional state no longer has any sort of leverage.

[18:17] You relinquish the right to retaliate. To get back at them for what they've done for you. You relinquish the right in the Shakespearean term to have your pound of flesh.

Say, okay, that doesn't count anymore. And you could say to the person, you belittled me. I was offended by the way you treated me. And there's a sort of sense of justice.

Yes. I deserve to be treated better. It's amazing how teenagers have this very advanced sense of justice, don't they? That's unfair. And if it was fairness, then you wouldn't be forgiven. But mercy and forgiveness is not to do with being fair. It's to do with compassion. It's to do with mercy. And the person doing the forgiving has to come to terms with the fact that I am owed a debt. But the debt that I am owed is tiny compared with the debt that I've been forgiven by the Lord. And that's the

meaning of that extract that I read from Matthew. That the Master forgives a huge debt. I cancelled all that debt.

And in the light of that, shouldn't you have been prepared to pay the cost, a tiny cost involved in forgiving your brother?

Forgiveness is costly. Please don't think it's a cheap thing to forgive somebody. When you ask for forgiveness, you're not just saying, well, sorry. You're saying, I'm asking for something from you, which is a costly thing for you to give me. You don't have to give it to me.

[20:11] It's freely given if it's going to be given at all. But I am asking you for forgiveness. Forgiveness is costly. And we see this in the way that God himself grants forgiveness. God is in the business of forgiving, but it is at huge cost. He didn't have to forgive. He didn't have to. But he pays the debt. And he pays the whole cost himself through the death of Jesus. A huge price was paid.

And God says, that's the price I paid. And don't you dare belittle that. And because of that huge price paid, I cancelled all your debt. I cancelled all your debt. That's the amazing truth. The good news that comes through Jesus Christ. Forgiveness, a costly gift of mercy.

So having thought about forgiveness, we're going to sing a song about forgiveness. It's number 822. Depth of mercy. Can there be mercy still reserved for me? Can my God his wrath forbear? Me, the chief of sinners, spare? And the third verse says, why to me this waste of love? Why so much mercy shown to me? Ask my advocate above? Somebody stepped in to arrange all this. And it was Jesus.

So there is 822. Let's sing that song. Let's sing that song. Let's sing that song. Let's sing that song. Let's sing that song. Let's sing that song. Let's sing that song. Let's sing that song. Let's sing that song. Let's sing that song.

Let's sing that song. Let's sing that song. Let's sing that song. If the mercy can bear thee, mercy still reserve for me, that my God is wrong for bear, he the chief of sinners stare.

[22:24] I have long withstood his grace, long provoked him to his face, would not listen to his calls, grieved him by a thousand calls.

Hence to me this waste of love, past my advocate above.

See the cause in Jesus' face, there before the throne of grace.

There for me my Savior stands, shows his wounds and spreads his hands.

God is love, I know I feel, Jesus weeps and loves me still.

[23:37] Now, Lord, move me to repent, let me now my sin lament.

Now my proud revolt deplore, we believe and sin no more.

If I rightly read your heart, merciful in every part, as before your throne as bow, pardon and accept me now.

Now let's turn to this trail that we're following through the Bible about Melchizedek.

And Christopher's going to read to us Psalm 110, the one about Melchizedek. This time it's not Genesis, the historical account of Melchizedek, that this is David singing a song, King David looking back and looking forward as he sings a song under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and prophetically sees someone.

[25:02] The Lord says to my Lord, sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet. Christopher, thank you for reading for us. Psalm 110 of David, a psalm.

The Lord says to my Lord, sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.

The Lord will extend your mighty scepter from Zion.

You will rule in the midst of your enemies. Your troops will be willing on your day of battle. Arrayed in holy majesty from the womb of the dawn, you will receive the dew of your youth.

The Lord has sworn and he will not change his mind. You are a priest forever in the order of Melchizedek. The Lord is at your right hand. He will crush kings on the day of his wrath.

He will judge nations heaping up the dead and crushing the rulers of the whole earth. He will drink from the brook beside the way. Therefore, he will lift up his head.

[26:06] And having heard that read, we are now going to sing the psalm.

The Lord said to my Lord, sit at my right hand. It's the version that we sang last time.

And let's sing the psalm again. Psalm 110. Psalm 110. The Lord said to my Lord, sit here at my right hand until your foes before you fall at my cup.

From Zion's throne we gave you power to rule the land.

And when the day of battle comes, your troops will fight and you in holy majesty from day's first light.

With you've anointed as with you will rise in might. The Lord himself hath sworn and none his oath can shake, that you forever in his name should Christ would take.

[28:06] Some seating in the line of peace, Melchizedek. O Christ, beside your Father now, you take your seat, till all the powers of earth lie crushed beneath your feet.

Renown and glory crown your head, your work complete. We're going to come to God's word.

Let's pray again. O Lord, open your holy word to us, that we may see glorious things, and that as we look into your glorious face, we would be transformed from one degree of glory to another.

Amen. Well, my introduction as we come to Psalm 110 is, rightly or wrongly, I feel I need to justify looking at this psalm and spending time looking at it.

Is it a legitimate thing to do? And people might say, well, why not? You'd be better off sort of analysing the politics of these strange days. Or you might say, it would be much more practical and useful to raise money to help the NHS.

[29:52] Or it would be practical and useful to be combating climate change. It would be very practical and useful to say something about mental health, you know, the standard things like getting enough sleep regularly, having good diet, getting exercise and fresh air.

It would be a better use of half an hour to be thinking about that, wouldn't it? And I'm not going to, although there's a lot to be said for all of those in their proper place, I'm not going to take time to be doing any of those things.

Because here we're looking at something which is deeper, which forms the basis for all of those things to hold them in the right way. The deeper basis to make sense of the global world and indeed to make sense of our own personal world.

The global world with its politics and climate change and catastrophe and pandemics. And our personal world, whatever is in our personal world, whether it's stress, anxiety or fear or worry or whatever it may be.

But at this particular time, I'm saying that we should fix our thoughts on Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest whom we confess. And that's what Hebrews tells us to do.

[31:13] And as God helps us, that's what we're going to do just now. So you remember that last time we were following a mysterious trail looking for the key.

Is there a key to life? These mysterious secrets and trails would fascinate us in the style of Indiana Jones looking for treasure, starting with his father's little book and following the signs or the Da Vinci Code, which starts wherever, I'm afraid I can't remember.

Or Sinbad looking for the fountain of eternal youth on the island of Zanubu or wherever it was. And there's the little map across the desert by the Eiffel Tower through the mountains and X marks the spot.

So is there a trail that if we follow it, we get eternal life? And I'm going to say, yes, there is. And the eternal life is not found in an object, but a person.

And the person that we're following through the story of the Bible and through this psalm today. So follow the trail. It will lead us to our destination.

[32:25] May God help us to find that as we look into his word just now. Well, the key person in all of this is M for Melchizedek. Codename M, Melchizedek.

There you go. And the Hebrews sees M as the key to understanding really who Jesus is. And in particular, understanding him as his role as a high priest, a powerful high priest.

The sort of person we need to get our help to get to heaven in this present journey through the wilderness as Hebrews would see it. That's where we are and that's why we need help.

Don't step off the path, you remember. And Melchizedek gives us a key to understanding how great Jesus is. So we were following that trail and we went back right to the beginning in Genesis 14, the

original historical account of Melchizedek.

He was the king priest to whom even Abram gave reverence. Remarkable person. And now we're going to pick up the trail many centuries later as it crops up with David.

[33:34] There's the trail for us. And by this time, Abram has departed this life. But he's become the father, not just of a family, but of a great nation.

And the great nation has become a kingdom. And the kingdom has spread, not to the whole earth as yet, but it has spread. And it's into this context that comes Melchizedek.

Now Melchizedek is found in Psalm 110, which we've read to us. It is a psalm of David. And just in case you're not quite sure, let me just give you a little bit of background here.

David, God's appointed king. So we've gone from a nation to a monarchy, to a kingdom. And God's purposes are sort of gradually filling out and assuming their full form.

And here we find David, God's appointed king. He is in a relationship with God, which is a father-son-like relationship. Today, you are my son.

[34:37] Today I've become your father, it says in Psalm 2. In a real sense, there is this father-son conjunction. But not in the fullest sense that there will be when Jesus comes and a voice from heaven says, this is my son.

With him I am well pleased. David has a geographical location in Zion or Jerusalem. And at this point in God's purposes, God has a geographical headquarters on earth.

It's Zion. And when we have David the king, we have a forever type promise hanging around. And a promise has been made to David that his son will sit on the throne forever.

And there's also a wherever promise hanging around. The idea that all the kingdoms of the earth will bow to the king who rules in Zion's mountain, Zion's hill.

So that's the sort of thing that David brings to mind. That's the sort of connections that David has in the Bible. And I said it's a psalm of David.

[35:43] So a psalm is a song. It's a spiritual song. And the psalms of the Bible have this peculiar quality that they are sung to God and that God the Holy Spirit inspires the word.

So it's almost like God singing to God through us, through human beings. And God himself inspired David to write this song. So it's a prophetic song, a visionary song.

And as David sang it, we too can sing it as we have done. It's not simply a song of adoration, but it is a song of prophetic vision. It shows us something.

Behold, see this. And that's what we're going to do to look and see. And that the psalm, too, is a David-connected psalm.

Very much as David's imprint on it. David, as he looks forward into the future, that prophetic angle, it has something of the close conjunction of the Lord and the King together in the psalm.

[36:47] It mentions something about Zion. Extend your mighty scepter from Zion. So it has that, which is very David-like. It has a forever aspect.

You will be a priest forever. And it has a wherever aspect when it talks about the kings of crushing the rulers of the whole earth. There in verse 6.

So it's a very David-type psalm. It's almost, you could say, the epitome of David. And we're going to look at that. So Psalm 110 about Melchizedek.

It has two halves to it, from verses 1 to 3 and verses 4 to 7. And the two halves, in many ways, mirror each other. Both halves start with something said.

So in verse 1, So that's in verse 1. And the second half, starting in verse 4, the Lord says something there.

[37:58] The Lord has sworn, and will not change his mind, you are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek. So both halves begin with the Lord saying something.

Priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek. And then it continues with something about the rule and reign of this person. So in verses 1 and 2, it's, Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.

The Lord will extend your mighty scepter from Zion. You will rule in the midst of your enemies. And in the second half, well, you don't have it exactly symmetrical, but you do have in verse 5, The Lord

is at your right hand.

He will crush kings on the day of his wrath. He will judge nations, heaping up the dead, crushing the rulers or heads of the whole earth.

So something about an awesome display of power. In the first half, in verse 3, there is this, Your troops will be willing, or your, can't read it, Your people will be willing in the day of battle.

[39:13] So willing people. Now there isn't anything quite like that in the second half, so I'll just put those three dots. The crushing heads I've already mentioned there in verse 6.

At the end of the first half, we get, Erade in holy majesty, from the womb of the dawn, You will receive the dew of your youth.

A very vividly pictured, rather, I don't know, almost surreal, A vivid picture of refreshment.

And I've put there the dawn, And a watery refreshment, the dew of your youth. And the second half ends with a similar sort of thing.

Renewed and lifted in a watery sort of way, verse 7. He will drink from a brook beside the way, Therefore will he lift up his head. So there's the brook, And the person drinking here, And lifting up his head.

[40:12] So there's a sort of symmetry between the first half and the second half. The first half is the one who sits at the right hand of the Lord, And the second half is the Melchizedek person, The priest forever.

So that's the quick overview of the psalm. And it is a remarkable psalm. It's pointless for me to say it's remarkable without giving you reasons for thinking it's remarkable, And that's what I'm going to try and do.

There are questions that come from it. Who is this about? The ancient rabbis surely would have asked this question. Who is this about?

Jesus asked that question of his contemporaries in the temple. How come David can say this? Who is he talking about? I mean, have we got here three people, Or two people, Or even one person?

We've got the king, Who has the people under his feet. We've got the person who receives the dew. We've got the person who drinks and is revived.

[41:17] And we've got the priest. And we've got the Lord. So we have all these people. And how great is the person described here? How great is he?

Just how great? Well, that's a very big question. And then when we've looked at it, We might say, Well, how do we respond to it? What do we make? What do we take away from this prophetic vision? So in order to try and get at those questions, I'm going to describe five amazing features of the figure in the psalm.

And I'll give you what the five are at the end. I don't really expect you to remember them, But they're sort of hooks to hang our thinking on And gain the impression and give it some sort of solidity and content.

So five features. And the first feature is the ultimate power and authority of this person. Ultimate power and authority.

Look at it. Verse 1. Sit at my right hand, says the Lord, To this Lord, to David's Lord, Until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet, All your enemies will bow under your feet.

[42:26] Think of the ultimate power and authority of this person. And these sort of either comments or commands, The Lord will extend your mighty scepter from Zion.

You will rule in the midst of your enemies. There's something absolute, Non-negotiable, Negotiable and descriptably powerful about this rule.

You get it in that second half. These words about crushing, striking, smiting, Smiting kings on the day of his wrath. And crushing rulers of the whole earth.

And judging the nations. Verse 6. Really ultimate power and authority. Crushing the heads of the wide earth. The whole earth. And this authority, you see, As it's depicted from, As David writes it, Of this little kingdom there in Jerusalem.

He foresees prophetically a very, very wide reign. Not just localised in a kingdom the size of Wales, Or whatever it is.

[43:33] But globalised. That's what he sees. And this kingdom is a very destructive kingdom. It has destructive power. And it really is yield or perish.

Yield or perish. And it describes almost a final battle. You remember C.S. Lewis in one of his children's books, The last one I think of the series, Depicted the end of the world as the last battle. And here is this last battle in which the Lord defeats all his enemies. There's a final battle. A sort of final eschatological punctuation mark.

But there's also a process. Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet. Something that's going on and culminates in the enemies being brought under the feet of the king. And my response to this is that there's something quite chilling about this. A chilling threat. I don't know whether you've ever had the sense that you might go to hell.

[44:40] But the sense that you're in such a wrong place that you could tip down the edge and you'd never be seen again in any happy state at all.

Well, it's a chilling thought. And if you get this wrong, there will not be a plan B. And maybe it's a healthy thing to have that chilling thought and that chilling threat.

Because this person is one of ultimate power and authority. And if you cross him, if you're out of kilter with him and you become his enemy, there's no escape from that.

There's a right fear of the Lord. And I hope that you as a listener have got something of this. Who would dare to risk this awful fate to be on the wrong side of the one person who has the ultimate power and authority in the cosmos?

So, first amazing feature. Second amazing feature. The precious union of king and priest. We get this, don't we?

[45:56] There's the king. There's the priest. Forgive me, the funny little hat is meant to describe priest at all. And we have the two halves of this psalm. Now, it's the interpretation that I think forces itself upon us.

That's the interpretation I'm going to get. That the two halves are not two separate people. But two ways of looking at the same person. The king person and the priest person. And to see that there is a union between kingship and priesthood.

And that David's Lord is this person, the king stroke priest. That is to say, this person amazingly. I shall try not to keep using that word, but I can't help it.

This person amazingly combines this ultimate military power with a perfectly aligned closeness to God.

A perfect priest who is totally at home with God and who is compassionate and open towards his people.

[47:09] So, I don't know whether Meghan Markle still spells her name that way. But Harry and Meghan. You know, it's such a long time since I wrote to Meghan.

I've forgotten how to spell her name. You know, the way they wanted to make money in future is to trade on the fact that they're royalty. And I suppose that you might think, well, if it's Harry and Meghan and I advertise my kitchenware with them, they'll tell the Queen because they're like that with the Queen and she'll advertise our kitchenware for us.

Bit of a ludicrous example, isn't it? But the idea of having somebody who is right at home with the person on the throne, that was the idea of monetizing Harry and Meghan.

But we have a priest, a royal priest, who goes to the throne. Same sort of idea.

And in Israel's history, this did not happen. There was always a demarcation between the king and priesthood.

[48:21] And generally speaking, it was forbidden, although you could say that the kings did offer sacrifices. I haven't exactly looked into that, but I think I'm right in saying that.

But it's generally forbidden. But David foresees the future culmination where these two separate lines cross over in the one person who is a king and a priest.

And it's a precious union. And what you have there, you see, is the capacity of the king to be a compassionate advocate. Somebody with power, at the centre of power, who's on our side, who

puts in a word for us.

I mean, if he says, let them go free, we go free. And this is brilliant, isn't it? An all-competent go-between. In our house, we've been hearing a lot about call centres.

I don't know whether you've ever tried to make calls to call centres. I've been trying to get my electricity sorted out or my insurance sorted out. And you ring up the call centre and they tell you, your call is really valuable to us.

[49:31] All our advisors are busy at the moment. All that sort of thing. So here am I stuck here trying to make sense of my electricity bill. And there's somebody feeling impotent and useless.

And at the other end is the person in the call centre. If I could only get through to that person in the call centre. They are there at the switchboard. They can tap the buttons. They can make the entries and sort everything out.

And they have the sort of omnipotence. If only I could get through to them. They could deal with it for me. And here we have, spiritually speaking, the king at the centre of power.

The priest who is open to inquiries and to deal with things on our behalf. A precious union of king and priest, spiritually.

Number three. The seamless closeness of this person and the Lord himself. So you get this right-handedness, verse one. The Lord says to my Lord, sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.

[50:41] So in this connection, the Lord just sits and the Lord, meaning to say that David's Lord, just sits.

And the Lord, Yahweh, does the work. He makes his enemies a footstool for his feet. I will make your enemies a footstool for your feet.

So the Lord God does the work there. Although in verse two, you will rule. The Lord will extend your mighty scepter from Zion. You will rule in the midst of your enemies.

In verse five, it seems to me that the right-handedness is the other way round. The Lord is at your right hand. He will crush kings on the day of his wrath.

So it seems to me that there's another closeness there. Assuming I've got the right end of the stick on that. And the Lord will judge the nations, heaping up the dead, crushing the rulers of the whole earth.

[51:50] So there's a close conjunction between the Lord God and the Lord the King, if you put it that way. They seem to work together very closely.

And here, there seems to be actually a very seamless closeness between this kingly person and the Lord himself.

Here we have a king who is, you might say, God-endorsed. And everything the king does, God signs and says, yeah, that's fine with me. Sort of endorsing this king. The king who is God-enabled. That the power that he exerts is not simply human power, but divine power, as it were, flowing through him. The king who is God-empowered with the authority to speak and act when the king speaks and acts.

It is God who is speaking and acting. This closeness between the person and the Lord himself. And I'm reminded of Peter's resurrection sermon on the day of Pentecost, where he says, Therefore, let all Israel be assured of this.

[53:01] The resurrection and the pouring out of the Spirit assures Israel of this, that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.

That he is Lord in the fullest sense and the Messiah in the fullest sense. And the interesting thing is that just before he says this in Acts 2.36, he says this in Acts 2.34.

The Lord said to my Lord, sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet. Raised to the right hand of the Father.

A seamless closeness between this person and the Lord himself. Number four. The foreverness of this king. Amazing feature, number four.

The foreverness. There was an until. So there's a process going on. And there's a forever. You are a priest forever in the order of Melchizedek.

[54:06] So to say of somebody they will be something forever is really to say something. I've tried to draw an hourglass there to denote time.

Until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet. You are a priest forever. So this is not just somebody with a four-year term of office.

Or an eight-year term of office. Or even like President Putin who has managed to get himself in power for as long as he lives. It sounds like to me.

Not a temporary leader or minister or emperor. But this is something stretching on into eternity. Forever. Forever. And we get a hint here of something which really is super.

Large. Great. We have a cosmic figure here. And somebody of whom it could be written like this. For by him all things were created.

[55:07] So his eternity extends back to before things were made. Before thing. For by him all things were created. Things in heaven and things on earth.

Visible and invisible. All things were created by him. And for him. He is before all things. And in him all things hold together. This cosmic king.

And that is in Colossians 1 verse 16. And it's said about Jesus Christ. Until forever. Number five. Supernaturally revived and renewed. And I'm thinking of those last bits where it says. From the womb of the dawn you will receive the dew of your youth.

There's the womb of the dawn. The dawn having a womb. I can't describe it. It's a very moving image.

[56:06] It's a very moving image isn't it. The womb of the dawn. You receive the dew of your youth. And the end of that second half.

He will drink. He will drink from a brook. And thus lift up his head. So there's the brook. And there's the person who drinks from it. And thus lifts up his head.

It gives a picture of a great expenditure of effort. A depletion of strength. Through the huge effort. And then a vivid and spectacular replenishment of youth and vigour.

And those pictures have got such a combination of connections and echoes. That I can't help but sort of detect some echoes here myself.

And when I think of the dawn. Oh to see the dawn. Well oh what a morning. Gloriously bright.

[57:06] The dawning of hope in Jerusalem. That dawn. Oh that was a day of new life wasn't it. I've moved on in my thinking. Just thinking the dawn of the day of resurrection.

That bringing of new life in that dawn. The entry into deathlessness. Which the Lord made in his resurrection.

Moving out of this sphere of sin, condemnation and death. Into the sphere of righteousness and resurrection and life. And bringing us with him.

And I can't help but also think. And you might say this is a bit far fetched. But these two watery images remind me of the work of the spirit.

Who himself is often depicted in a watery way. I will pour out my spirit. He's given us a spirit to drink.

[58:07] Born of the watery spirit. Or born of water and the spirit. So this just echoes in my mind. And perhaps in yours too. Of the receiving of the spirit.

By our saviour. Who then becomes the one who pours out the spirit. Exalted to the right hand of God. He has poured out that which you now see and hear.

The pouring out of the spirit. And the new life. Which filled him. And revived him. From the grave. Given as a gift to his people. So I'm moving on from the psalm.

And I've moved out into some other thoughts there. But that was number five. There's something I think supernaturally. Reviving and renewing. Depicted in this psalm.

So those are the five features. And let's come back to the questions and answers. And we said who is this about? And I think even as we stand here in Psalm 110.

[59:02] We say well it's about somebody predicted in the Hebrew scriptures. Well that's certainly true because David looks forward. And I think we are also bound to say it's someone who surpasses the Hebrew scriptures.

The prediction bursts out of the bounds of the old covenant. And looks forward to something beyond it.

Someone beyond it. Jesus is beyond it isn't he? And then we're asking is it three people? Or two people? Or one person? So we've got the king with the enemies under his feet. We've got the priest. We've got the one who receives the due of his youth.

And the one who drinks the reviving water. And I am going to say it is about one person. And one person who combines all those things together.

[60:04] Those many dimensions, many aspects. The rabbis wondered whether there were several messiahs coming. But Jesus very deliberately and very specifically combines within himself all the different messianic expectations.

Indeed all the promises are yes and amen in him. And well it's about one person. But this one person is in closest working relationship with the Lord himself.

So it is the Lord and another. But it's almost as if it is describing the, what shall I say, the sort of alter ego of the Lord himself.

That the person described here is so close to the Lord. It is almost the Lord himself. And I don't think there is a satisfactory explanation of this apart from a Trinitarian one.

That this Lord is the son of David and fully divine as shown by his resurrection.

[61:17] How great is this person? Well so great that he is David's Lord. And that's saying pretty great. And as Jesus queried this with his listeners. How can he be David's son and David's Lord?

But here's the resolution of this. He is so great. He is David's Lord. But he is so great that we worship him. And that's what I'm coming to when I ask.

How do we respond to this prophetic vision? As we see this person depicted for us. As we fix our eyes on the person described here. How do we respond to this prophetic vision?

And I say that we give divine honour to Jesus. Whom they crucified. And who was raised as Lord and Christ.

In fulfilment of this psalm. That's who he is. And in addition to.

[62:19] As part of giving divine honour to Jesus. We put ourselves in the place of those people. Those troops in verse 3.

They will willingly offer themselves on your day of battle. Surely no less a response is fitting. That we, just as we are.

With all our hassles and hang-ups. And problems and anxieties. And gifts and abilities and everything. We lay our lives totally. And unreservedly.

At the feet of this Jesus. We willingly lay our lives at his feet. And offer ourselves unconditionally in his service.

Because that's who he is. And that's how we should respond to him. Let me just pause a minute. That you might make that a prayer. Let me just say.

[63:31] Wherever I am Lord. The first and basic thing I want to do. Is offer myself willingly and unreservedly to you.

Whatever else. That's the fundamental thing. And that's my basic response. To you. As you're shown in this psalm. And as we do that.

We also make a confession. It's the confession in Ephesians chapter 1 verse 22. It says. God has placed all things under his feet. And given him to be head over everything.

For the church. As we look out to the world. We don't just see it. As it's visibly obvious. But we see it. As. A system.

Which is under. The feet. Of Jesus. And it's being. Ruled.

[64:29] By Jesus. Perhaps not. In an obvious way. But as we take it by faith. This is who he is. This is how he relates. To the world. And it helps us.

Because as we look at this pandemic. Instead of being scared by it. As if it's the. The thing on its own. We say. This has come. From. The hand. Of the king. On the throne.

This is part of. The present rule. Of. The king who reigns in Zion's hill. This is. From the. The hands of the king.

