

Psalm 110

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Preacher: Dave Bott

[0 : 00] The reading today is from Psalm 110. The reading today is from Psalm 110.

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It required the cooperation of scientists all over the world, 20 different countries, using their satellite dishes, basically using the whole planet as a satellite dish just to get a capture of this black hole.

[2 : 45] The reason I'm telling you this is the lead scientist made this interesting comment. He said this, With respect of this global team, we effortlessly sidestep some of the issues that divide us.

And as scientists, we naturally come together to do something like this. Can you hear it? We can have a worldwide peace and unity and cooperation, removing what divides us, controlling the world we live in so that we can all thrive and achieve what we want.

Now, the main problem with this comment is what's not said. We can have all this without God. We don't need him.

Our world wants the kingdom of God with all its blessing. We want the peace. We want the joy. We want the unity. We want the prosperity.

We just don't want the king. We want the joy. We want the joy. We want the joy. We want the joy.

We want the joy. We want the joy. We want the joy. I think I saw it again this week on Anzac Day.

[4 : 00] Outside Kmart, there was a small crowd gathering, waiting for the doors to open at 1pm.

Now, Kmart is an amazing wonderland, isn't it?

Everything is so cheap. Everything you need for your house, new clothes. The one near us is open 24 hours a day.

Why do we love this shop? That it needs to be open 24 hours a day. And people can't wait, even on a public holiday, to get in.

Do we really need new towels at 3am? I think this is a taste of what we believe. That having an abundance of possessions will make us safe and peaceful and comfortable, prosperous.

And we get it at a bargain at Kmart. The belief that more possessions gives you more life is another attempt to have the kingdom just without the king.

[5 : 10] And I think we see it at an attitude and values level as well. We're living in a time where an individual's unrestricted right to have personal choice is what we think will give us peace and unity and prosperity.

I can have what I want. You can have what I want. You can have what you want. And we agree and we're unified in that we won't tell each other what's right and wrong. We'll just do what we want.

Now, these are just some of the ways, I think, that our world tries to build the kingdom with all its blessings just without a king. But for those of us who are Christians, we believe that Jesus, God's son, has been raised from the dead and he is enthroned right now as king over heaven and earth. That in him and through him and restored relationship with God the father, we have true and abundant and lasting life and peace.

If we belong to him and follow his ways, that's what we believe. But our everyday experience can sometimes make us feel like we're not experiencing the blessings of this kingdom.

[6 : 46] We look at the bombings in Sri Lanka. How awful. The massacre in New Zealand. How can such evil and opposition to God still exist?

We feel maybe like Christianity is becoming more of a minority. At work and at school, we feel so isolated. Is Jesus really king?

When sickness hits us left field. Or maybe it's just the tough grind of everyday life. Or maybe there's something we really want.

And it's a good thing. And we just really want it. But God doesn't give it to us. And I think I feel it maybe the most when Christians, of all people, were arguing. All these things can make us feel like, yes, we believe the king is enthroned. But is he ruling? This is a serious question.

[7 : 54] Because if we're disillusioned with whether Jesus rules and is bringing in his kingdom. If we're disillusioned with Jesus, we will turn to whatever our world says will give us the kingdom.

So is God still committed to his plan to create his kingdom of righteousness?

An abundant life and peace on earth. In me. In our church. Is he still committed? So both for the nation of ancient Israel when this psalm was first written.

And now for us as followers of Jesus Christ. When all appearances seem out of control. Or even when the world seems to be thriving without God.

Psalms 110 speaks a certain and unchanging word for us to stand firm on. To stay the course. So let's hear what God has to say to us in Psalm 110.

[9 : 03] There's two clear parts to this song. Each part has a promise given by God to his chosen king.

We hear them in verse 1 and then in verse 4. Two promises which leaves you and me with two options. We can either gladly and freely give ourselves to serve this king.

Or we can keep trying to have the kingdom without the king. But then we'll face God as a warrior. So two promises to the king which leaves us with two options.

So the first promise. Verse 1. A psalm of David. What's unusual about this song is that David, the king of ancient Israel, is calling someone else, my master, my lord.

It raises the question, who is this lord? Kids, I wonder if you're listening. Who is this lord? Can anyone call it out?

[10 : 29] Who is this king? Ah, you know it. It is a bit scared. And God says to this king.

And that word says is actually a bit of a different word. Utterance. Which the prophets used all the time. Basically it means this is a direct quotation from God.

It's a certain promise. This is what he promises and instructs the king. Sit at my right hand. So imagine.

Imagine you entered heaven and then entered the throne room in heaven. What would you see? When Isaiah the prophet had a vision of the heavenly throne room, he saw the lord sitting upon a throne high and lifted up with all his servants standing around him.

Only one person is seated. To be seated is to represent that this one has the power. He has the authority. He is in the highest place of honour.

[11 : 46] Everyone else stands in service to this one. And I'm sorry for all the left-handed people in the room. But biblically, the right hand is symbolic of a person's strength and the use of their force.

So to be at God's right hand is to have the ability to exercise all God's force, all his authority, even heaven and earth. No political king or government, not even King David, has ever had this authority. And thank God for that. And what else does God promise? In the book of Joshua, in chapter 10, when God's chosen people were entering the land God had set aside for them, after defeating some of the kings in battle, Joshua has these kings brought out and the leaders of the people put their feet on top of their necks.

God promises this seated king that all his enemies will be made his footstool.

Whatever, whoever is against God's king will be totally defeated. They will be made to serve him.

So in verses 2 and 3, we've got some poetic images of what the impact of this king is on the world.

[13 : 33] Let me read them for us. From God's city and capital, the place of his presence, which brings blessing, he commissions the king to go and conquer.

He's not just given power to protect his own people, he's given power to overpower his enemies. So as the wave of conquest goes out from God's presence, what happens?

People offer themselves gladly and freely. They aren't forced. They offer themselves freely to serve this king.

His people are far from conscripted to war. No one is drafted. No one is shot for treason. But like someone coming to God's temple with a sacrifice that God hasn't commanded, it's just a free offering.

People are offering themselves freely. These people aren't the footstool. They share in the splendor and the rule of the king.

[15 : 08] And the rest of verse 3 is difficult to translate. So we can't be precisely sure what's going on. But the overall gist is still clear, that the king and his people are fresh and full of energy and life, like the dew that comes at the first morning light, at the birth of a new day.

This is a bright and fresh life that comes. As the wave of this king's rule radiates out, people offer themselves willingly to share in this king's fresh life and radiance.

So, you and me, are you gladly and freely giving yourself to serve this king?

Let me show you a man who did. As Jesus walked closer to Jerusalem, he passed through the nearby town of Jericho.

And a crowd of people were trying to get near to him, but a blind man who spent his life begging for food, called out over the top of the noisy crowd, Son of David, have mercy on me.

[16 : 26] People around him told him to be quiet. And he cries out even louder, Son of David, have mercy on me. Jesus commands the man to be brought to him, and the king asks what he wants.

The man begs, Lord, let me recover my sight. The king replies, recover your sight. Your faith has made you well.

And immediately he recovered his sight and followed Jesus, glorifying God. So, are you gladly and freely giving yourself to serve this king?

We see this again in Acts chapter 2. After Jesus rose from the dead and ascended into heaven, the first sermon preached in Acts 2, Peter quotes this psalm and says that Jesus is this king.

And how do some of the people respond? They're baptized for the forgiveness of their sins, and they come under the rule of this king. They devote themselves to the apostles' teaching.

[17 : 40] They share in fellowship together. They eat and drink together. They pray together. They sell their possessions and share in common. As Jesus' gospel word went out, people gladly and willingly come under Jesus' instruction, and the blessings of peace and unity follow.

Jesus' rule brings life. He promises that when he returns, he will destroy all evil in the world, all sickness, all injustice, all death.

Everything that threatens us, everything that divides us from God and divides us from one another, will be gone. Can you imagine a world where there's no more threats?

Can you imagine a world where there is true peace and unity with God and each other? Can you imagine your own thought patterns not revolving around yourself?

It's difficult to imagine, but it's coming. The king will conquer it all. So will you gladly and freely give yourself to serve this king?

[19 : 21] But as I've just implied, what if I'm one of the enemies? What if I'm part of the problem?

Even as someone whose heart genuinely wants to give my whole life to follow Jesus, there's still plenty of days, there's still plenty of aspects of my life that I just don't really want Jesus to touch. I don't want him to speak into it. Although I've tasted the goodness of God's presence, I'm way too satisfied with what I've experienced of God.

There's so much more to know and experience. And there's sinful patterns that are just hard to break. Where does this leave me?

Where does this leave us? This is why Jesus, being not only our king, but also our priest, is such good news.

[20 : 26] Verse 4. The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind. You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. This promise could not be said in any more certain terms.

God isn't saying a swear word, but he's putting himself under a binding promise. God doesn't lie. And he's not like you and me who change their minds, depending on our mood.

He never changes his mind. He's speaking again to this Lord who sits at his right hand, but this time he's making him a priest, whose job it is to bring God and his sinful people together.

So here's why it's good news that Jesus is made high priest. First of all, he rose from the dead never to die again, which means he can permanently connect us to God.

He is a priest forever. Second, Jesus is the only sinless, obedient person who has ever lived. The main significance of Jesus being like Melchizedek is that the name Melchizedek means king of righteousness.

[21 : 46] He's both king and priest of righteousness. He's the only one who can remain close to God.

So if we come to God through him, we can share in that righteousness. And third, because he is perfect, because he represents all his people, because he shed his own blood and died on the

cross, justice for our sin is fully carried out and dealt with once and for all.

Here's what all that means for you and me. Hebrews chapter 7 verse 25 says this, He is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him.

Because the one who died to bring you to God also has the power seated at God's right hand.

Nothing, nothing can separate you from the love of God in Christ Jesus.

He is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him. But if you don't want Jesus to bring you to God, then the picture in verses 5 to 7 shows you what you can expect.

[23 : 28] Verses 5 to 7, The Lord is at your right hand. He will shatter kings on the day of his wrath. He will execute judgment among the nations, filling them with corpses.

He will shatter chiefs over the wide earth. He will drink from the brook by the way, therefore he will lift up his head. The previous picture was the king at God's right hand.

This time it's God at the priest's right hand. God is pictured here as a warrior who fights all those who don't belong to the priest.

God goes out into all the nations, shattering kings. This is not an out-of-control rage. It's controlled, but it's anger-filled judgment.

Instead of life and peace, he will fill the nations with corpses. Every opponent will be shattered. This is violent. The day of God's wrath will be terrible.

[24 : 34] When Jesus returns to this world, all God's wrath will be unleashed. And verse 7 is such a terrifying and also comforting picture.

It's the picture that stuck with me the most this week. At first it seemed strange. Marty helped us understand it. But at first it's like, why is God drinking from a stream and lifting up his head? What's that mean? I think it's kind of like The Matrix. The Matrix is one of my most favourite movies. It's okay if it's not yours.

At the end of the first movie, after Neo appears to be defeated, he comes back to life. And then he faces the previously menacing enemies who no one was powerful enough to stop.

He faces them. And then Neo effortlessly overpowers Agent Smith and he shatters him to pieces.

Literally. And then afterwards, Neo stands there, breathes in deeply, and then lifts up his head and opens his eyes, staring at you.

[25 : 53] It's a scary image. God the warrior will one day unleash his wrath on all his enemies, anyone not covered by the blood of the priests.

And he drinks the water. He always has energy. He will not be tired. And he lifts up his head against all remaining enemies.

He will not back down. It's terrifying. And it's comforting. Will you keep trying to have the kingdom without the king?

If you do, you will face God the warrior. If you do, you will stand alone when you face God.

But today, today God invites you to come willingly and gladly to Jesus. He is the king whose rule gives you life and peace.

[27 : 09] He is the priest who shed his own blood to save you, to give you a permanent and perfect relationship with God. Will you face God as a warrior or will you freely offer yourself to the priest king who died for you?

The choice is up to you. But this is primarily a song for those who already belong to this priest king. Jesus' enemies are also our enemies. And at any given moment they can feel very strong. Our daily sinful habits can just dominate us.

They can entangle us again and again. sickness plagues us and our loved ones. Our relationships are often under threat from our own self-seeking stubbornness.

Our good intentions for serving Jesus sometimes just are frustrated by things outside our control.

And sometimes we just struggle to see any fruit. We so often keep being tempted and lured by the fleeting pleasures of this world rather than eternal treasure.

[28 : 40] And we've been hit hard this week by our biggest enemy with the sudden death of our brother Greg. the enemies are strong.

But there is no uncertainty in God's word to us this morning. Our God has sworn he will not change his mind.

He has set up his priest king our Lord Jesus Christ who will save us to the uttermost. All our sin all our temptation even death itself will one day be slaughtered when Jesus returns it will be gone.

That is the day we look forward to. Our God will lift up his head he will not back down. he is committed to setting up his kingdom with his king.

So we're called to keep offering ourselves freely and gladly in serving him. Will you pray with me?

Let's pray. now Father in heaven we so want the full blessings of your kingdom right now.

[30 : 18] Lord we want to know you we want to know your love fully we want to know your protection fully Lord we want the joy of being in your presence we don't want to struggle with wanting to obey you and wanting to do our own thing Lord that that struggle is painful and tiring we want to live for you fully now we want the joy of that we want the unity that brings to your people we want the peace we want death to be gone Satan to be defeated sin to be no more God we pray your kingdom come bring it today bring it in a bigger measure now Lord also be patient please bring people to your priest to be saved from the coming wrath please save

God help us to trust you that your word is sure that this day is coming when you will establish your kingdom help us to live for that day may that give us strength to keep going in Jesus name Amen we'll invite the musos back up we're going to sing the next song joy to the world Jesus rule brings joy so one of the lines says he rules the world with truth and grace and makes the nations prove the light of his righteousness and wonders of his love so let's sing joy to the world fire because you have Hua when you and holy Baham for let's have you welcome to a chapter brother
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