

Psalms for a Summer Evening

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[0 : 01] Let's read again the first verse. We read a psalm of David. The Lord says to my Lord, sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool.

And for the next few Sunday evening services, God willing, I want to share with you what I've entitled psalms for a summer evening.

I think there's maybe four weeks I go away preaching in Lewis in a few weeks' time. But until then, I want to look at some psalms that we haven't actually looked at yet as a congregation.

Because in the psalms that I pray we're going to look at, to seek to grow in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus, to see how the Lord Jesus is revealed in Scripture, how He's particularly revealed in the book of Psalms, and God willing, we'll maybe take three or four psalms to see Jesus, and to have our faith strengthened in the Lord Jesus, to grow in knowledge of Him, to grow in our love for Him, and to see how the Lord Jesus has been prophetically made known through these divinely inspired portions of Scripture.

As we can see here, the psalm we're going to focus on this evening is Psalm 110. And it was Martin Luther, Martin Luther the great Saxon reformer, who said of this psalm, Psalm 110, he said, it's the high and chief psalm of our dear Lord Jesus Christ, in which His person, His resurrection, His ascension, and His whole kingdom are so clearly and powerfully set forth that nothing of a similar kind is to be found in all the writings of the Old Testament.

[1 : 54] Well, that's true Martin Luther, but there's no doubt that, you know, when we study this psalm, and we see how Psalm 110 is shown, not just in this particular part of the book of Psalms, but elsewhere, there's a lot of truth in what Martin Luther actually says.

I mean, after all, Psalm 110, I think I'm right in saying this, is the most frequently quoted psalm in the New Testament, and verse 1 is the most frequently quoted Old Testament verse in the New Testament.

So, you know, we can't neglect this psalm. And it begs the question, why is it that we rarely sing this psalm? I mean, we have this psalm before us to instruct us, to teach us on the Lord Jesus.

So, let's give it some time this evening. Let's study what we have here as we seek to learn more of the Lord Jesus and grow as Christians. So, several aspects to look at, but first of all, very briefly, the setting of the psalm.

You'll notice in your Bibles that a lot of the psalms have little headings. And there's one there, a psalm of David. When the psalms were written down in the original language, these little headings were included.

[3 : 16] And when we come to this psalm, well, what do we see? We see here a psalm of David, or the way it's worded is literally, of David. Of David a psalm.

Of David a psalm. And in a particular context of the psalm, this is crucial. This is so important.

Because here's a psalm, written by King David, concerning one to come from his family line, one to come from his royal lineage.

He's writing of a great successor who's going to come from that family line. And notice what he calls him. The one to come, my Lord.

So, what we're hearing is the prophetic voice of David. Here's that prophetic voice singing about someone who is, and someone who's to come.

Someone who is, and who is to come, is, as we'll see in the psalm here, king and priest. And in fact, warrior, priest, king, as we'll notice in the latter part of the psalm here.

[4 : 17] So, in the setting of the psalm, we've got words that are not just sung, not just sung by David, but sung and read by all who bow the knee to the one whom David's referring to as the great king and eternal priest.

And we are, as we're singing, as we're reading, we're acknowledging that the one who is my Lord is none other than the king of kings, our great high priest, the Lord Jesus.

So, let's see what David has written prophetically about. He says, my Lord, about the coming Lord Jesus. And we see, first of all, in verse 1, Jesus, as king, the Lord says to my Lord, sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool.

Now, as we said, this verse, this particular verse, is the most frequently quoted Old Testament verse in the New Testament. And, you know, when we start to focus on what's being said here, you know, we're delving deep into the names of God, the names that God has given to reveal His character, His person.

And what we know from these names, what they tell us, even, about the Lord Jesus, how they lead us to the Lord Jesus. And, I think I've mentioned this before, but, you know, most English translations, when you see the word Lord there, as you see right at the start of the psalm there, the word Lord in capital letters, it's always a personal reference to the personal name of God.

[5 : 56] Different languages do it differently. English does it with capital letters. And, this is a reference to the personal name of God, the name, you've heard it, Yahweh, the covenant God of Israel.

So, David, he's writing under inspiration, the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. He's been permitted to hear the word of the Lord, the word of Yahweh. And, the Lord is making a declaration.

In fact, He's saying, the Lord is saying something. The Lord says, to my Lord. And that word says, it's more than just speaking. It's more than just, you know, opening your mouth and saying something.

It's got this force, it's got a force of prophetic declaration. You know, remember, when the prophets were speaking, you read in the Old Testament, of the different prophets, giving God's word.

And, when the prophets spoke God's word, the introduction was, thus says the Lord. Thus saith the Lord. So, David here, he's writing about something that's been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit.

[7 : 03] He's writing of a magnificent person, a magnificent event to come. And then you might ask, well, what is he's writing of? But then, before we can even answer that question, we've got to come to the second word, for Lord, in smaller letters.

And this is a different word. It's a different, yes, it's a different word to the first Lord. As we say, it's now in small letters. It's another Hebrew word.

It's a word that means sort of master or exalted one. Someone who's great in his greatness.

Someone who's full of power. And notice, it's my Lord.

David's master. David's exalted one. And that's important when we come to identify who this Lord is. Well, how do we identify who this Lord is?

Well, what do we do when we need to work things out, scripture? And we use scripture to interpret scripture. Because here's, notice what the psalm is doing.

[8 : 06] Certainly in the first verse, in the first few verses, verse 1, 2, and 3, the psalmist, David, he's referring to someone who's king. King in his power.

You see that verse 2, it refers to a mighty scepter. You know, the kings held the scepter that signified the rule. And then, again, the word rule is there. Rule in the midst of your enemies.

In verse 3, your people. Kings reign, have people under them. Your people offering themselves on the day of your power. All this language speaks of a king.

But then, who is this king? Again, scripture, interpreting scripture, tells us that this king of power is none other than the Messiah and none other than the Lord Jesus Christ.

Again, we're using the scripture to help us to identify who this is. That's why we read from Matthew 22. We can use the New Testament scriptures.

[9 : 11] We can hear the very word of Jesus himself pointing us to who this great Lord and King is that David was referring to. And remember what we read in Matthew 22.

The Pharisees are gathered together around Jesus. Jesus asks them a question. What do you think about the Christ? Whose son is he? And of course, they answer, well, they know from scripture that the Christ to come is the son of David.

Jesus says to them, how is it then that David in the spirit calls him Lord, saying, the Lord said to my Lord, sit at my right hand until I put your enemies under your feet. If then David calls him Lord, how is he his son?

And he put that to the Pharisees and they couldn't answer him. So, here's Jesus. You know, Jesus is affirming what David has said about who this king is.

And, you know, Jesus is showing the greatness of the one whom David refers to as my Lord, the greatness of Jesus. Here's David speaking by the Holy Spirit and he's saying, the Lord God has said to my Lord.

[10:25] So, there's God involved in this word. And notice, the Lord says to my Lord, says to the one who's sitting at his right hand.

And, of course, you know from that expression, the right hand, the right hand of power, the one who's sitting at the right hand of God, and another in the Lord Jesus in his exaltation. This is surely God, the Son, the Lord Jesus.

The Lord Jesus who sat down at the right hand of God after his death, after his resurrection, after his ascension. Paul himself spoke about the Lord Jesus who's at the right hand of God.

So, here we're seeing in Psalm 110 that we're seeing the Lord God showing us, the Lord Jesus in his greatness, in his power.

But, you know, when we're focusing in on David's Lord, my Lord, then, you know, we're seeing Jesus. We're seeing Jesus here in these words as Jesus himself indicated to these Pharisees.

[11:35] They believed that, yes, Messiah would come from the family of David. They were absolutely correct. The son of David. Remember when Bartimaeus, blind Bartimaeus, was crying out to Jesus.

He called Jesus Son of David. Son of David. Jesus, Son of David. Have mercy on me. The Pharisees reckoned that the Messiah to come was going to be a warrior king, someone who would wield political power, someone who would conquer the enemies of the Jews.

But, of course, Jesus was no political Messiah. But Jesus wasn't rejecting this designation of Son of David. But, you know, there, as we read there in Matthew 22, Jesus wanted the Pharisees to see that he's much more than simply Son of David, much more than simply David's son, David's descendant.

Jesus wanted, these Pharisees wants us to see that he is David's Lord, far, far beyond any kind of earthly political figure.

And as Lord, he's been given that position at the right hand of God the Father. This is none other, the one seated at the right hand, none other, than the Lord Jesus Himself, the Son of God.

[12:56] You know, later in Matthew's Gospel, when Jesus was being questioned when He was on trial before the high priest. And Jesus now had to face a question. Jesus was questioned about His identity as Christ, as Jesus claimed to be, the Christ, the Messiah, the Son of God.

And being questioned, are you the Christ? Jesus said to the high priest, you have said so, says Matthew 26. But I tell you, from now on, you will see the Son of Man, and notice what Jesus says, seated at the right hand of power and coming on the clouds of heaven.

And Jesus utters these words about seated at the right hand of power, the high priest says that Jesus is blaspheming. What Jesus was doing, even before these people who were putting on trial, Jesus was echoing the words of Psalm 110.

He was self-identifying as the Lord seated at the right hand of Yahweh, of the Lord God. Jesus telling of his power, of his authority.

You read in other parts of the Old Testament, that expression about the right hand of power. So, Jesus, seated at the right hand of power, this is the Lord Jesus. He is the fulfillment of these words that we've read here in Psalm 110.

[14:17] He is, yes, David's Lord. He's none other than the promised Messiah. He is the promised Christ. He's the Lord Jesus in His glory and majesty and authority as the Son of Man, as the Son of God.

So, even when we're singing, even the very first verse of this Psalm, we're going to do this at the end of the service, the Lord would say unto my Lord, we can be absolutely confident we're singing about the Lord Jesus.

We're singing about God's Son. We're singing about the Messiah. We're singing about Jesus the Christ. And we're singing then of that great enthronement of Jesus Himself.

And that enthronement by the will of God Most High. So, don't ever think that the Psalms somehow miss out mentioning the Lord Jesus.

As Mark Luther said, this Psalm shows the person of Christ clearly set forth. So, when we sing this Psalm, sing it with intelligence, sing it with understanding, sing, yes, of the Lord Jesus, our King. [15:25] When we sing, and something really struck me as I was preparing this the other day, you know, when we're singing this Psalm, other Psalms, this Psalm, let's just take this Psalm, we're joining our voices with that of King David.

And in fact, we're joining our voices with countless billions through the millennia, who also have sung these words. Now, of course, before the Lord Jesus came, when these words were sung, these words were sung in anticipation of the great divine King to come.

And of course, after Jesus has come again, the same words sung, and we continue to sing and to join with the fellow believers, because we're now singing of the King who has come. We're singing of King Jesus.

And surely that's one of the great joys. yes, in our praise. When we think of the collective voices of God's people, yes, through the centuries, through the land, through the world, and yes, in the days to come, as we're singing of the Lord of Lords, even in the words that we've been given here.

And if we're singing in this Psalm of the Lord Jesus Christ as our King, we're also singing of the Lord Jesus Christ as our priest.

[16:43] You see that? In verse 4, Jesus as priest. The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind, you are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

A couple of things to say in this. I mean, again, we know from Scripture that God has made it known to us that Jesus is our priest, our great high priest.

God has given that information to us in his word. I mean, God has declared Jesus as king. And there's also, even in this Psalm, a declaration from God as Jesus our priest.

You see that in verse 4, the Lord has sworn and will not change his mind. That word sworn, it really means making a promise, a sure promise, an oath, if you like, what God has decided will come to pass.

So, God has made this promise. God, that promise, you are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. Then, we've got to pay close attention to what God has decided and what God decided in all eternity.

[17:50] Because God's uttering something that's very, very special about the one who's already been made to sit at his right hand. He's already been enthroned as king.

God has decided something wonderful about this king. We're told here, a priest forever in the order of Melchizedek. Now, to, I suppose, most years nowadays, this really means not a lot.

But, when we start to delve into scripture, then this, what might appear to be a very obscure statement, has so much meaning to help you understand the more about the Lord Jesus.

So, we search the scriptures. We're not to be passive, we're not to be, you know, lazy believers who only open the Bible once or twice a week and then it's closed for the other days of the week.

No, we probe God's word. And, yes, when we start to probe God's word, we find out that, yes, there really was a priest king called Melchizedek who lived some 2,000 years before Jesus.

[18:52] You read in Genesis 14, 18 to 20, you read there of a priest king, the king of Salem. It just appears on the pages of scripture, this priest king whose ancestry is never mentioned, his birth is never mentioned, even his death is never mentioned.

It's as if, as if he appears as one eternal. And that priest king, the word Melchizedek, it's actually two Hebrew words joined together, it means king of righteousness.

And so God, God the Lord, God Yahweh, he's declaring that David's Lord is priest forever in this order, in this order of Melchizedek.

So, what's God saying then? He's saying the one who's already king in power, the one who's all majestic, the all majestic one, is also a priest for his people.

And a priest who has the qualities that Melchizedek symbolized, eternal priesthood, all righteous, all righteous forever in his work as priest.

[20:01] priest. And his priest, of course, he's a mediator, a go-between between God and man. He represents man before God. He offers up sacrifices. He offers up prayers on behalf of his people.

Who is this? None other than the Lord Jesus Christ. Again, you go to the book of Hebrews and the writer there tells us in chapter 8, tells us that Jesus is the fulfillment of these words.

Hebrews 8, verse 1, he is our great high priest, our eternal high priest, whoever makes intercession for us at the right hand of God in heaven. That's that high priest offering up himself as that once for all sacrifice for sin.

So, this expression of priest forever from the order of Melchizedek, it's not a remote, obscure concept. Jesus made a priest forever in the order of Melchizedek, it's got such relevance for us because Jesus is still that eternal priest.

He's still pleading your case before God the Father. He's still bringing you to the very throne of God himself. He's still pleading, pleading with the Father that you are covered by his righteousness, you who know him as saviour, that righteousness that was credited to you when Jesus died for your sins.

[21 : 28] So, again, when we sing these words, sing them with meaning, sing them with understanding, sing them with praise to our Lord and Saviour, sing them in thankfulness to God the Father, God who's made the Son priest forever in this manner, this order of Melchizedek.

So, Jesus is the great King who's enthroned in heaven, if he's priest forever in that work of offering up himself, yes, he's done that on earth and as he's priest in heaven interceding for his people there, well, you might think, well, surely that's enough for us to be getting on with, surely this is enough for us to praise God for and it's certainly, that is much to praise God for.

We've joined with King David in praising our Lord, we've seen that, yes, we've actually seen beyond what King David saw, which we now see in these words, the very Lord Jesus Christ, but there's more to this psalm, yes, there's this word of assurance that Jesus is our priest king forever, that he's for us and always is for his people, he's for his church, yes, in that struggle against the forces of evil, and when we think of the victory that Jesus has won by his death and resurrection, then we realize he's, he is the victor, he's the victor over all that would challenge his power, all that would challenge him as king, all that would seek to destroy his work as eternal priest.

So there is that spiritual warfare, that warfare against the forces of evil that's going to continue until the day that Jesus returns, and therefore as the psalm assures us, the psalm goes from verse 5 to verse 7, we've got this assurance that Jesus is our warrior king, if you like, our warrior priest king, with this assurance, yes, that Jesus is with us.

That's why we see there in verse 5, the Lord is at your right hand, the Lord is near. So that's just a few thoughts on this final passage of this psalm, Jesus as the warrior priest king.

[23 : 47] And you know, when we were reading there from verse 5 about shattering kings on the day of his wrath, executing judgment, filling them with corpses, shattering chiefs, you know, the language might sound quite harsh, but this is exactly the language that God had inspired David to write, and for a purpose.

And the reason surely being that the battle is serious, because the battle that we're involved in, yes, involves the Lord and his people, against Satan and his forces.

It's a battle that's waged, yes, in the unseen world, and a battle that's waged on earth. It's a battle that we can't deny, we can't ignore. Don't ever consider that battle lightly.

It's a battle that concerns your very soul. And it's a battle that's ongoing until the end of time. And yet we know that God is in control, that he is the victor.

And this strange, well, a pure strange verse at the end of the psalm, verse 7, I think assures us of God's sovereign control in that battle with Jesus, our warrior priest, the victor.

[25 : 02] Look at verse 7, there's the warrior priest king drinking water at the brook. Well, isn't this a picture of, you know, there's a battle in progress, and the forces of the Lord are so confident of victory, that as they're pursuing the enemy, they're actually, you know, refreshing themselves, drinking from that pure water before going on to total victory.

I think that's the picture that we see here, the picture that gives us confidence of victory in the Lord.

And so, you know, we're left here with this imagery of our warrior priest king, Jesus, the victor.

Yes, Jesus, the judge. Jesus, who will have that final word against his enemies. So, because of that truth, we don't lose heart.

Rather, we're to be encouraged and refreshed and assured that, yes, the battle is the Lord's. The victory is his. It's already assured. And if it's his victory, it's his victory, then it's your victory as well if you are on the Lord's side.

And so, I pray that as we've been reading this psalm, considering this psalm, as we've been contemplating the words before us, as we're about to sing these words, that we'll be, you know, assured again and refreshed in the knowledge that Jesus is our Lord, our Saviour, our King, our

great High Priest.

[26 : 36] But if he's not your King, if he's not your priest, if you can't say that you're on the Lord's side, that you can't say that you're in that battle against the forces of the evil one, then where is your soul tonight?

Because, again, if we go back to these last words of the psalm here, these words speak of a terrible day. They speak of a day of God's wrath. They speak of a day when God will unleash his fury against all who have rejected him as Lord and King.

And on that day we're assured in Scripture, as Scripture again tells us, God will crush his enemies, those who crushed the Lord Jesus.

You know, when Jesus was crushed, when he was broken, when he was put to death, death couldn't hold Jesus. He didn't remain crushed. But for the enemies of the Lord Jesus, we're told in Scripture, there will be that once for all crushing, never to rise, but only to know that perpetual judgment of God.

And as we're told elsewhere that Jesus' enemies will be, as it were, under his feet, the footstool of Jesus, trampled underfoot, never again to rise to challenge God.

[28 : 03] And therefore the atheist who mocks God now, and the rulers who seek to and have put to death the Lord's people, were told that God's wrath will come upon them.

And anyone who couldn't care less about their souls, we're told in Scripture, the day when the Lord Jesus returns, are going to cry out for mercy and call even on the rocks to cover them and hide them.

But no mercy will be shown because God's Son was rejected, while he was on earth. So, what does this psalm tell you this evening?

Are you worshipping the Lord Jesus? Are you with Him and His people? Are you with the one who is king and priest and warrior? Or are you with those who oppose the Lord Jesus?

Well, I pray that you'll be able to say that you're with Jesus tonight, that you can sing these words of Psalm 110 and you sing them from the heart and you're praising the Lord Jesus. Yes, for who He is, for what He's done and He's still doing as king, as priest, as warrior, priest and king.

[29 : 17] Amen. Let us pray. Our Heavenly Father, we praise Your name for Your word, for Your word of promise, for Your word of assurance.

We praise You, Lord, that Jesus truly is King, that He is our great high priest, that He is our warrior king, our warrior priest, that He has won the victory.

And may we then be encouraged by Your word as we sing from it to know that Jesus is the one even now seated at Your right hand, ever making intercession for His people.

Lord, may we rejoice in that knowledge, may we rejoice in that truth, may we go on our way rejoicing, knowing that we have met with our Savior even through His word.

Continue with us, Lord, as we sing from that psalm. Help us to sing from the heart and with understanding as we glorify Your name. We pray these things in Jesus' name.

[30 : 17] Amen. Well, let's sing part of the psalm, Psalm 110.