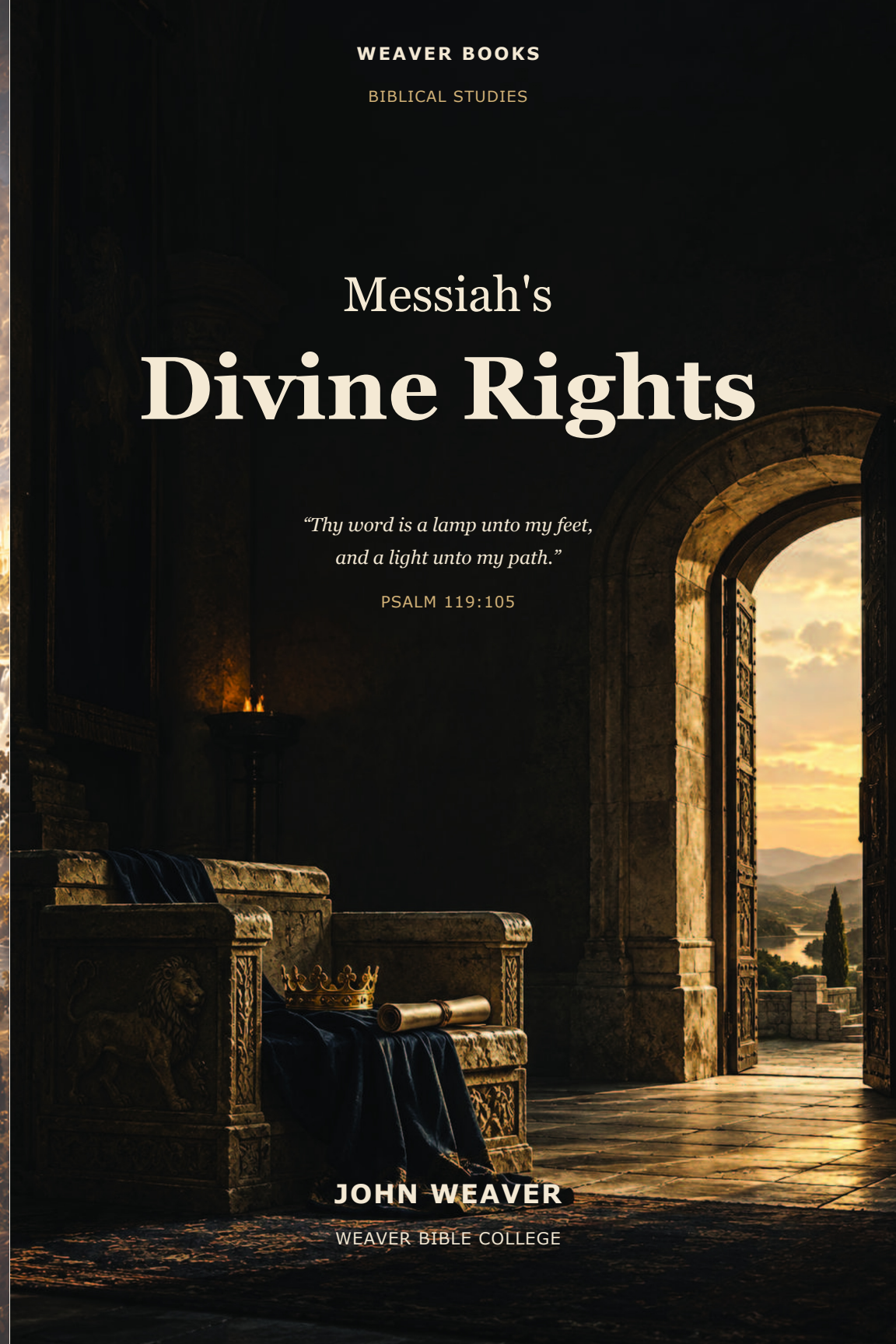
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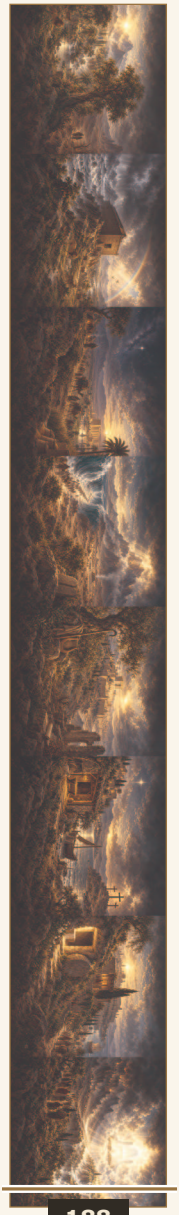
"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet,
and a light unto my path."

PSALM 119:105



JOHN WEAVER

WEAVER BIBLE COLLEGE



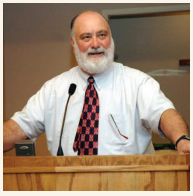
Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.

PSALM 110:1, EXCERPT

Christ's authority is inseparable from His person and completed work. John Weaver examines His kingship, exaltation, priesthood, intercession, and victory, relating these truths to the believer's assurance. These messages ask what it means to live under the rightful rule of the Messiah and to rest in the security of His mediation.

"If you understand the priesthood of Christ, it will give you the greatest assurance and the greatest security, beyond imagination and beyond all question."

JOHN WEAVER



John Weaver

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CHAPTER 1

Messiah's Divine Rights

Part One

SCRIPTURE READING - Psalm 110:1-7 (KJV)

Psalm 110 has only seven verses, so we are going to read the entire psalm. Today is part one. How many messages will there be on the psalm? I do not really know. I am only going to be dealing with one phrase out of the first verse today, so it may end up being three or four, or it may end up being seven or eight.

"The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth. The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek. The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath. He shall judge among the heathen, he shall fill the places with the dead bodies; he shall wound the heads over

many countries. He shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall he lift up the head."

Introduction to Psalm 110 as a Messianic Psalm

Psalm 110 is clearly and decisively a psalm of the Messiah and his divine rights. Liberals, unbelievers, and Jewish leaders have all endeavored relentlessly to destroy this psalm. They have given it every twisted and perverted interpretation imaginable. The reason they seek to overthrow this particular psalm is that they are seeking, in reality, to overthrow the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ. As they have failed to overthrow the clear and plain meaning of this psalm, likewise they have certainly failed to overthrow the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ. In fact, all you have to do is read this psalm, and the very sense of it overthrows and destroys their useless and senseless attempts. This is a messianic psalm, that is, a psalm of the Messiah and his divine rights.

Historical Testimony to the Messianic Nature of Psalm 110

I'm not making that up. I'm simply showing you how historically scholars have always believed that this is what the psalm teaches. Martin Luther, the reformer, said concerning this psalm, “This is a peculiar and glorious prophecy concerning the kingdom of Christ. There is not a psalm like it in the whole scripture, and it ought to be very dear unto the church, seeing that it confirms the great articles of faith, Christ sitting at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.”

John Calvin said, “Beyond all controversy, the psalm is a very clear prediction of the divinity, priesthood, victories, and triumph of the Messiah.” J. A. Alexander said, “This is the counterpart of the second psalm, completing the prophetic picture of the conquering Messiah. Any other application is ridiculous.”

The Threefold Office of Christ in Psalm 110

Certainly that is true. If you look momentarily at Psalm 110, you cannot help but see certain things concerning Christ. His prophetic office is mentioned in verse 2: “The Lord shall send the rod of thy

strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies." Verse 4 presents His priestly office: "The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek." His kingly office appears in verse 3: "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." Verses 5 and 6 say, "The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath. He shall judge among the heathen, he shall fill the places with dead bodies; he shall wound the heads over many countries."

Very clearly, this psalm presents the prophetic ministry, the priestly ministry, and the kingly ministry of the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ. Psalm 110 is quoted in reference to Christ in the New Testament more than any other psalm. If I asked you on a quiz which psalm is quoted most often in the New Testament in reference to the deity of Christ, I would expect the answer to be Psalm 110.

This is not only a prophetic psalm but also a very important one, because it demonstrates the divine rights of Jesus Christ. He has a right to royal honor, a right to rule the heathen, a right to reverent homage, a right to perpetual priesthood, and the right of divine vengeance. Today, I am going to cover one short subpoint: the right to royal honor.

The Phrase 'The Lord Said unto My Lord' and David's Confession

In fact, if you look in verse one, I am going to demonstrate simply His royal honor by using only one phrase out of verse one: "The Lord said unto my Lord."

When you read that, you should automatically ask yourself what in the world is implied by this simple statement. The very first thing to note is that David refers to Jesus Christ as his Lord. Thus, in this psalm you have someone who is greater than David. If you hold Psalm 110 and look in your Bibles to Matthew chapter 12, you will also find this in Luke chapter 11. In Matthew 12, verse 40, Jesus said, "For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here."

He continued, “The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here.” As you go through Scripture, for instance, in Hebrews 3, you find that Jesus Christ is greater than Moses. He is not only greater than Jonah, greater than Solomon, and greater than Moses; He also is greater than David.

In Matthew 22:43, our Lord asked the Pharisees, “How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, The Lord said to my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool?” Note the question: “How then doth David in spirit call him Lord?”

The apostle in Hebrews proves the dignity of Melchizedek, and in him the dignity of Christ, by this simple method: so great a man as Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek. You will find that in Hebrews 7 and verse 4. If the dignity of Melchizedek and the dignity of Christ can be proved by Abraham paying tithes to Melchizedek, then certainly we can demonstrate the dignity of Jesus Christ by David referring to Him as Lord. He is King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

Names and titles have a certain significance in Scripture. We do not think that much about names today. You have heard the old saying, “You can call me anything you want to call me, just so you call me to dinner.” That is the average idea about a name. But names and titles had meanings in Bible times.

Look in your Bibles to Luke chapter 1, verse 47. In the Song of Mary, known as the Magnificat, Mary says, “My soul doth magnify the Lord,” and, “My spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.” What in the world is Mary saying when she says, “My soul doth magnify the Lord and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour”?

Remember that she is at the house of Elizabeth and Zacharias. When Mary greeted Elizabeth, Elizabeth, who was carrying John the Baptist, said that the babe leapt in her womb and gave a blessing to Mary. Then Mary answered, “My soul,” or “my spirit, doth rejoice in God my Saviour.” Mary is acknowledging, first of all, that the baby she is carrying is God incarnate. The second thing she is acknowledging is that the baby she is carrying is her Saviour. That

means Mary was a sinner. Only sinners need saviours. So when the Roman Catholic Church tries to teach the sinlessness of Mary, it is flying in the face of her confession, because she is confessing not only that Jesus Christ is God, but that Jesus Christ is her Saviour as well.

Very obviously, titles as well as names have true meanings. Go back in your Bibles to Matthew chapter 22. This is where our Lord first applies Psalm 110 and verse 1 to Himself. The phrase we are looking at is simply, “The Lord said unto my Lord.”

In Matthew 22, verses 41 through 46, we read: “While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, saying, What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, The Son of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David then call him Lord, how is he his son?”

Jesus' Use of Psalm 110 to Confound the Pharisees

“And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions.” Keep in mind the context, because in Matthew chapter 22, our Lord does his enemies in in a very definite manner. In verses 1 through 14, He speaks about the kingdom of heaven and how the king has sent the servants out. He has invited people to come to his dinner, but they make light of it, go their way, and tend their own business. Verse 6 says, “And the remnant took his servants, and entreated them spitefully, and slew them. But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth: and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city. Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy.

“Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage.” In verse 11, “And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment: and he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast

him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are called, but few are chosen."

The Pharisees understood that our Lord had spoken this directly against them. Verse 15 says, "Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle him in his talk." They sent the Herodians in verses 16 through 22, and they showed Him the coin and asked, "Is it right to render unto Caesar?" They were not interested in truth; all they wanted was to entrap Christ. If Christ said, Yes, pay Caesar his due, He would be against the people. If He did not say to pay Caesar, they would report Him to the Romans, and the Romans would take care of Him. It was simply a trap. So He slammed the Herodians and said, "You show me the coin." Then He told them, "Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's."

They could not get a hold against him. Then, of course, he slams the Sadducees in verses 23 through 24. They came to him and said, "All right, master, here is a man who had a wife and died. Then he had six other brothers, and his brothers married her one after the other. Finally, she died after all the brothers had died. Now whose wife is she going to be in heaven?" Of course, they did not believe in the resurrection or in angels. These were the liberals.

Our Lord said, "Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage." He said, "You don't know what you're talking about." He puts them down; he literally slapped them down. They had been asking him questions, trying to trap him. After he went through the Herodians, the Pharisees, and the Sadducees, he said, "Look, I have a question for you. You've been asking me questions, but I want to ask you a question." In Matthew chapter 22, he says, "What think ye of Christ? whose son is he?" Note the Pharisees' answer in verse 42: "The Son of David." "What think ye of Christ?" What do you think of the anointed one? The Greek word Christos is equal to the Hebrew word Messiah, the anointed one. He is asking, "What think you of the Messiah? What think you of the anointed one? What think you of Christ?"

They answer, “He’s David’s son.” They are willing to acknowledge the lineal descent from David, but they are not willing to acknowledge His deity.

Now, understand what Christ has done. He has taken this phrase from Psalm 110 and applied it to them. After they answer, “He’s David’s son,” He says, “How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, The Lord said to my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool?” If the Messiah is David’s son, how can He be David’s Lord?

Our Lord has asked them an unanswerable question in two parts. When He asked, “What think you of Christ?” they answered, “He is the son of David.” Then He asked the second part: “How then does David in spirit call him Lord, saying, The Lord said to my Lord, Sit on my right hand?” The question is answerable, and easily answerable, if one is willing to acknowledge the deity and divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Pharisees were unable to refute our Lord’s logic, His exposition, or His application of Scripture. They had been trying to trap Christ, and now they themselves were trapped. The only scriptural answer required them to confess and acknowledge not only His pre-existence, but also His divinity—that He is indeed the Son of God.

Look at verse 45: “If David then call him Lord, how is he his son?” You have told Me He is the son of David, but you have not explained how David calls Him Lord. If He is in reality David’s Lord, how can He be his son?

Christ is not negating the lineal descent from David. He is David’s lineal descendant and is in David’s lineage. That is true. But the Messiah is more than a descendant of David. He is what the Bible calls the root and the offspring.

What does that mean? Look in your Bibles, first of all, to Revelation 22 and verse 16. Our Lord says, “I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.” So when He is the root and the offspring of David, He is not only

claiming lineal descent from David; He is claiming to be the promised Messiah who is God incarnate.

Now, if you look back in your Bibles to Isaiah chapter 11, you will see how that is prophesied. Isaiah 11, verse 1 says, “And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots.” Remember, He has already said, “I am the root and the offspring of David.” Verse 2 tells you that “the spirit of the Lord” shall rest upon Him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, counsel and might, knowledge and the fear of the Lord. And, of course, we are talking about Christ as we come down to verse 10: “And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious.” This is none other than Jesus Christ Himself.

Now let me tell you what has happened. In Matthew chapter 22, those Pharisees were trying to trap Christ. Instead, Christ traps the Pharisees. So the whole body of Judaism embodied in the Pharisees therefore stands confuted, convicted, confounded, and condemned by the Old Testament Scriptures which they claim to believe. Christ takes Psalm 110, makes the proper application, and demonstrates that He is indeed more than a lineal descendant of David. He is the Son of God.

Now, I want you to understand that, in reality, it was not just their ignorance, but their unbelief that caused them to decline to answer. That is why Matthew 22:46 says, “And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions.”

Prejudice has ever been the enemy of the truth. I find it amazing that there are some people who will not listen to some preachers simply because they do not like them, or do not like the way they talk or sound. Does it matter whether they are teaching truth or not? The Pharisees simply did not like Jesus Christ, and they were not going to acknowledge the truth because they hated Christ.

Psalm 110:1 begins, “The Lord said unto my Lord.” The first word “Lord” is in all capitals. Anytime you see the word Lord in all capitals, it is the sacred name of God. Literally, it says, “And Yahweh said unto my Lord.” The second title has a capital L with a little

O-R-D. Usually, that is the Hebrew word Adonai. Thus, the verse says, “And Yahweh said unto my Adonai.”

Here you have the great I AM speaking to His Son, the Messiah, and addressing Him as Lord, Adonai. Psalm 110:1 gives a revelation of the Godhead: God the Father is addressing the second person of the Godhead, God the Son, while acknowledging that the second person is indeed God, because He calls Him Adonai. The word Adonai simply means Lord, Potentate, or Sovereign.

If you think that because Yahweh is used first and Adonai second the Father thinks poorly of Christ, oh no. The Father Himself is referred to as Adonai in many places in the Bible. For instance, look at Psalm 2:4. Here the Father is speaking, and the Father is referred to as Adonai. Verse 1 says, “Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord,” their Yahweh, “and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord,” Adonai, “shall have them in derision.” Whoever is Yahweh in verse 2 is Adonai in verse 4, one and the same person. Thus the Father Himself is referred to as Adonai. The same truth and principle appears in Matthew chapter one, verse 20. That is Greek, and it will be explained in a moment, but it is the same truth and the same principle.

In Matthew, notice the word Lord in these passages concerning Joseph: “But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.” Then verse 22: “Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying,” and verse 24: “Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife.” In each instance, it is the word kurios.

Look back to Matthew chapter 22. Jesus Christ is quoting Psalm 110 and verse 1: “The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool?” In the Greek, both words are kurios: “the kurios said unto my kurios.”

What does the word kurios mean? It is the Greek equivalent of Adonai. It means boss, sovereign, owner, master. Thus, in Matthew 22, the two are placed on an equal level, on an equal footing. Why? Because Jesus Christ is God.

New Testament Quotations of Psalm 110 Prove Christ's Deity

In each instance where Psalm 110 is quoted in the New Testament in reference to Jesus Christ, it proves our Lord's divinity and demonstrates His Godhood. We saw that in Matthew 22. Now turn to Acts chapter 2, where Psalm 110 is quoted again. Peter is preaching: "This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thy foes thy footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." Acts 2:32–36 tells us that Christ is exalted at the right hand of God.

That is the same truth in Psalm 110. If Christ is exalted to the right hand of God, is not Christ therefore God? Yes. He is seated on the throne with God the Father. If the third person in the divine Godhead, the Holy Spirit, is shed abroad through Jesus Christ, is not Jesus Christ God? Look at Acts 2:33: "Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear."

Do you not remember that in John 14, John 15, and John 16, Jesus Christ promised that He would send the Holy Ghost? The very fact that the Holy Spirit is present is proof positive that Jesus Christ is God, because He sent the Holy Spirit exactly the way He said He would. That is one of the arguments being given here in Acts chapter 2. If He was raised bodily from the grave, is He not God Himself?

Look in verse 32: "This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses." Do you know the importance of the bodily

resurrection of Jesus Christ? Romans chapter 1 explains it: “Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God, (which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures,) concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh;” that is, He is a lineal descendant of David. It continues, “and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.”

Jesus Christ said that He was God, and the very fact that He was raised bodily from the dead demonstrates His Godhood. Had He not been God, He would never have been raised from the dead; He would have been found to be a liar and a fraud. But the fact that He was raised bodily demonstrates that He is indeed God incarnate. That is one of the arguments Peter is giving in Acts chapter 2. If He has been declared to be the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead, is He not therefore God? Yes, He is God.

SCRIPTURE READING - Hebrews 1:1-6, 13 (KJV)

Every time Psalm 110 is referred to in reference to Christ in the New Testament, it proves His deity. Hebrews chapter 1, beginning with verse 1:

"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son? And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him."

Verse 13: "But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool?"

> Now, if Christ is above the angels, and if Christ is better than the angels, is He not God? If Christ upholds and sustains this universe by the word of His power, is He not God? If Jesus Christ is the express image of God's person, if Jesus Christ is indeed the brightness of His glory, is He not God? And the answer is yes, he is God. God has not invited any of the angels to sit at his right hand.

He invited the Son to sit at His right hand. Unless you are a Gnostic, there is no one above the angels but God. Hebrews chapter one is showing us very clearly that Jesus Christ, who is the Creator of this universe, the Preserver and Sustainer of this universe, the One who is higher than the angels, the One who is the brightness of God's glory and the express image of His person, is God incarnate.

Finally, look in your Bibles to Hebrews chapter 10. In verse 13, and in fact beginning with verse 12, we see the context: “But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool.”

This passage teaches us the fullness, completeness, and satisfaction of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. If Jesus Christ was capable of, and did indeed, satisfy all the demands of the sovereign God of heaven and earth, is He not God? Only God can satisfy God. That is why the Bible says in Romans 3:25, “For God the Father has set forth Him, God the Son, to be a propitiation for our sins.”

The word propitiate means to placate; it means to satisfy. Jesus Christ satisfied the wrath and justice of God as the sinless Substitute in our place. In every instance where any of Psalm 110 is quoted in the New Testament, it proves the deity of Jesus Christ.

Now look in your Bible to John 14. Some have seized upon this passage and tried to use it to say that Jesus Christ never claimed to be God. Certainly He made that claim. Notice what our Lord said in John 14:28 to His disciples: “Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I.”

Addressing Objections: John 14:28 and Christ's Servant Role

Someone takes that passage and says, “There it is. Jesus Christ does not claim to be God. He does not even claim to be God's equal. He says that the Father is greater than He is.” Those who hold that view totally ignore not only the context of Scripture and the analogy of faith, but also other plain Scriptures that conclusively teach that Jesus Christ is God incarnate. How, then, do we explain verse 28 when He says, “For my Father is greater than I”?

If you understand the context, go back to John chapter 13. Our Lord took a basin of water and a towel, girded Himself, and washed the feet of His disciples. In verse 16 He said, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him.” The servant is not greater than the lord, neither is he that is sent greater than he that sent him.

Luke 22:27 gives the same context: “For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth.”

Was the Father sent by Christ, or was Christ sent by the Father? Christ was sent by the Father. When He spoke of the Father being greater than Himself, He was speaking of Himself in the position of a servant. He came to do the Father's will. The term Christ applies to Himself most often in the New Testament is that He is the sent one. Over and over we read how the Father sent the Son. Jesus Christ came to do the will of the Father, and in that sense, the one that sent is greater than the one that was sent. Christ is the Mediator, the Reconciler, the Substitute, and the Servant.

In that capacity He could truthfully say in John 8:29, “And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him.” He was saying, “I came as a servant.” Is not he that sent greater than he that was sent in that sense? Yes. The Father did not become the servant; the Son became the servant.

Thus, in John 14:28, our Lord was speaking positionally. The Father was greater because Christ humbled Himself, took upon Himself the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men.

He humbled Himself, the Bible says, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

The same Lord who said in John 14:28, “my Father is greater than I,” is the one who said in John 10:30, “I and my Father are one.” John 10:30 says, “I and my Father are one.” What is He claiming? He is claiming equality with the Father, oneness with the Father. “I and my Father are one.”

If Jesus Christ is equal with the Father, then He is God. Scripture teaches us very plainly that there are three persons in the Godhead: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. Yet there is only one God. Not three gods, but one God. That one God has revealed Himself in Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

You may say, “Brother Weaver, I don’t understand that.” It may be inscrutable, yet it is not self-contradictory. The truth of the matter is that no one alive can explain God. You cannot explain God. There is no analogy to God. Nevertheless, the truth remains: there is only one God.

I would love to have brought a copy of the Athanasian Creed and read it this morning. It is such a beautiful confession of the oneness of the Godhead and, at the same time, a trinity in unity. Athanasius, I believe it was in the fourth century, was fighting against Arius, who denied the deity of Christ. In the Athanasian Creed, he declares that there is one God, the Father; one God, the Son; and one God, the Holy Spirit. Yet there are not three gods, but one God. God the Father is Lord, Jesus Christ is Lord, and God the Holy Ghost is Lord. Yet there are not three lords, but one Lord. It is wonderful and beautiful how he sets forth that there are not three gods, but one God.

Jesus Christ is God. He claims equality with the Father: “I and the Father are one.” John chapter five contains one of the clearest passages demonstrating the deity of Jesus Christ. This passage is irrefutable. The first ten verses show its impact. John 5:1 begins, “After this there was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches.”

"In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water. For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had. And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years. When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time in that case, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole? The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me. Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk. And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the sabbath. The Jews therefore said unto him that was cured, It is the sabbath day: it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed. He answered them, He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk." They found out that it was Jesus Christ. Now, I want you to understand what Christ has done.

Christ's Equality with the Father Demonstrated in John 5

Look at verses 16 through 26: "And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the sabbath day. But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath," that is their interpretation of the sabbath, "but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God. Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth:

"And he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel. For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent

him. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself."

Now, in this passage, Jesus Christ claims equality with the Father. The Jews understood exactly what our Lord meant when He said in verse 17, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." How do you know they understood? Because they went about to kill Him, not only because He had broken their interpretation of the sabbath, but because He said that God was His Father. Notice what they say: "Making himself equal with God."

In verse 19, our Lord reaffirms this: "Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise." What is our Lord doing? He is identifying Himself with God the Father. He works, I work. He does, I do. Why? Because we are one. I am God.

Now, you say, "Brother Weaver, why did you read the first 10 verses? Why did you read where our Lord walked into these five porches where there lay a great multitude of impotent folk? And He healed only one man?" Because you cannot understand the latter part of this chapter without understanding what happened in those first 10 verses.

I could ask you some leading questions. How many of those people needed to be healed? What's the answer? All of them. How many of them wanted to be healed? All of them. Did not Jesus Christ have the power to heal all of them? Yes. Well, let me ask you a question. Why did He heal only one of them? Why? He could have just as easily healed every single individual. But He only healed one. Why? Here's why. Look in verse 21.

"For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will." What is the one attribute of God that proves that God is God beyond a shadow of a doubt? And

that is He's sovereign. God does as He pleases, only as He pleases, and always as He pleases. He is absolutely independent. There is no pressure, no coercion, and no influence. God is God. To demonstrate His sovereignty, what does He do? He quickeneth whom He will. He said, "I walk through that porch. I heal one man. Because I'm God."

“And I can do what I want to do, and you have no right to question Me.” Now look at verse 22: “For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son.”

Vengeance belongs to God, and Scripture says so repeatedly: “Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.” Yet God the Father has committed all judgment to the Son. What is the clear implication? God the Son is God. Jesus Christ is God, and He will be the Judge. Why did the Father commit all judgment to the Son? Because the Son is equally God, like the Father.

We have answered why our Lord walked through that crowd and healed only one person: it was to demonstrate His sovereignty. Now why did the Father commit all judgment to the Son? Look at verse 23: “That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father.” The word “even” literally means equal to: all men should honour the Son equally as they honour the Father.

Scripture teaches that if Jesus Christ deserves honor equal to the Father, He must be God. Do you remember what God said in Isaiah 42:8? “I am the Lord: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images.” If God will not give His glory to another, yet will have Jesus Christ honored equally with Himself, what does that tell you? Jesus Christ is God.

Jesus says, “That all men should honour the Son, even as” or equally as “they honour the Father.” Then He says, “He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.” To dishonor the Son of God, to dishonor Jesus Christ, is to dishonor the Father. The one who does not reverence Jesus Christ does not reverence the Father. A denial of the Godhood of Christ is likewise a denial of the Godhood of the Father. “He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.”

Then verse 26 says, “For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself.” If Christ has the same

attributes as the Father, if He is sovereign as the Father, if He is to be honored as the Father, and if He has life in Himself as the Father has life in Himself, the only conclusion that you can come to is that Jesus Christ is God.

Additional Scriptural Proofs of Christ's Deity

John 1:1-3 says, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.” Verse 14 says, “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.” Jesus Christ was made flesh. Jesus Christ is God incarnate. Verse 18 says that no man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him. First Timothy 3:16 says, “And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh.”

How can you deny that? God was manifest in the flesh. Romans 9:5 tells us that Jesus Christ is "God blessed for ever." He is God. Therefore, he is blessed forever. I want you to turn to the book of Titus chapter two. I could show you many places of this, but this is one of the clearest illustrations. Titus chapter two, and if you would please, let's begin reading there with—let's say verse 12. Titus 2, verse 12, "Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." Now, "looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." Now, I had three years of Greek. And I still read and write Greek, I still look in my Greek Testament on a regular basis. But there is one thing that I remember distinctly learning in the Greek class, it was called the Granville Sharp rule.

Let me tell you what the Granville Sharp rule is, and I could prove it to you over and over in scripture. But Granville Sharp discovered this as they were studying and it's just called the Granville Sharp rule. Here it is. Anytime you have a definite article and a proper noun or a noun and a conjunction like an "and" and another noun or

proper noun, they're one and the same. In other words, if it was different, I could say "the Roy Craps and the Henry Klingler went somewhere," you know. But if you look in verse 13, here's what the Granville Sharp Rule is all about. Verse 13, "looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of" what? "the"—there's that definite article—"great God and"—there's the conjunction—"our Saviour Jesus Christ." Now what does that rule mean? It means our Saviour Jesus Christ is the great God. They're one and the same. I could show you that over and over in the Greek New Testament. I could show it to you over and over in our King James Bibles.

Jesus Christ is God. When David said in Psalm 110 and verse 1, "The Lord said unto my Lord," he was not only confessing that Jesus Christ was His Saviour and Lord, He was also confessing the deity of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is God. Since Jesus Christ is God, He deserves royal honor, worship, praise, and glory. And we, like David, are to bow before Him.

Applications

Applications: Acknowledging Christ's Lordship and Deity

It is not enough to acknowledge Jesus Christ as the Son of Man. The Pharisees were willing to go that far. They were willing to say, "Oh, He's the Son of David." We must also acknowledge Jesus Christ as the Son of God. He is the God-man. He is God incarnate. Without all controversy, said Scripture, great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh.

Secondly, what think ye of Christ? Your answer demonstrates whether or not you're a genuine Christian. You may admire Him as a model, exalt Him as a martyr, or believe that He was a good man or historical figure. But unless you bow to Him and acknowledge Him as Lord, God, and Saviour, you're not a Christian. It's not just having good thoughts of Christ that counts. It's knowing who He is. True, He is a model, but He is a model only because He is the perfect man and perfect God. He is the God-man.

Thirdly, Matthew 22 makes it exceedingly clear that no matter how much sinners hate each other, they will always unite together

against Christ, against His kingdom, and against His people. The Herodians were despised by the Pharisees and Sadducees, and the Sadducees despised the Pharisees and vice versa. But although they hated each other, they were willing to get together to destroy Christ. People have not changed.

You remember how there was enmity between Pilate and Herod in Luke 23? When Pilate sent Christ to Herod, and they both got together in condemning Christ, the Bible tells us that Herod and Pilate were made friends. They sealed their friendship with their hatred of Jesus Christ. It doesn't matter how many factions you have in a country that hate each other; they will unite together to destroy Christ, His kingdom, and His people. It's just like that bumper sticker I told you about this morning that I saw: "I have nothing against God, it's just his fan club that I hate."

You cannot hate His people without hating Him. The most practical application of our Lord's Lordship and deity is given by Himself in Luke 6:46: “Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?” Remember, the word Lord, Kurios, means boss, owner, master, sovereign. Jesus Christ is asking, “Why are you calling me boss if you are not going to obey me? Why are you calling me master and sovereign and Lord if you are not going to obey me? If I am truly, genuinely your Lord, you will obey me.” The very fact that people disobey Christ demonstrates that they do not really believe He is Lord. The only real evidence that we genuinely believe in the Lordship of Christ is that we obey Him and bring our lives into conformity to His Word.

There are tremendous implications in what God the Father said to God the Son: “Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.” But first of all, David said, “The Lord said unto my Lord.” You must understand that Jesus Christ is God. He is the only God; there are no others. He is not on a par or footing with anyone else. He is unique—Monogenes, the only begotten One. He is God, and beside Him there are no others.

Father, we thank You today for the truth of the Deity of Jesus Christ. We know that He is indeed perfect man, but we also know that He is perfect God. He is the God-man, our Lord, our Saviour, and our Redeemer. He deserves royal honor. May we worship Him

as God, bow before Him as God, and obey Him as God. Give us grace, Lord, to bring our lives into conformity to Your Word. Help us to live for Thee. In the name of Jesus Christ we pray, Amen.

CHAPTER 2

Messiah's Divine Rights

Part Two

Psalm 110: "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth. The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek. The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath. He shall judge among the heathen, he shall fill the places with the dead bodies; he shall wound the heads over many countries. He shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall he lift up the head."

Review of Part 1

Let me review some of the material that I covered last week. I gave you quotes from Martin Luther, John Calvin, and J. A. Alexander concerning Psalm 110. It simply said: "This is the counterpart of the second Psalm, completing the prophetic picture of the conquering

Messiah. Any other application is ridiculous." That is certainly true. Psalm 110 deals with the conquering Messiah.

If you read the Psalm, you cannot help but notice the prophetical office, the priestly office, and the kingly office of the Messiah. Psalm 110 is the most frequently quoted Psalm in the New Testament. In each instance in the New Testament where it appears, it demonstrates and proves the deity of Jesus Christ. So Psalm 110 is a very important psalm as well as a prophetic psalm. This psalm demonstrates our Lord's divine rights.

He has a right to royal honor. He has a right to rule the heathen. He has a right to reverent homage. He has a right to a perpetual priesthood, and certainly he has the right of eternal vengeance.

Christ's Right to Royal Honor Because of His Person

Last week I began covering the first point: He has a right to royal honor. I demonstrated that he has a right to royal honor because of his person. Under this point, I demonstrated the deity of Jesus Christ. I looked with you in Psalm 22, Acts 2, Hebrews 1, and Hebrews 10 and showed you where Psalm 110 was quoted in the New Testament in those passages. In each instance, it proved the deity of Jesus Christ.

In John 14:28, our Lord said, "My Father is greater than I." Jesus Christ was saying that based upon the fact that He was the sent one. He came as the servant. He came to do the Father's will. In John 10:30, the same Jesus Christ who said, "My Father is greater than I," also said, "I and my Father are one."

The difference between what is known as the ontological Trinity and the economical Trinity helps clarify this. The word ontological is based upon the Greek word ontos, which simply means being. When we talk about the ontological Trinity, we are talking about the logical order of being: Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. God the Father has always been God. God the Son has always been God. God the Spirit has always been God. There has never been a time when God the Father was not. There has never been a time when God the Son was not. There has never been a time when God the Holy Spirit was not.

The truth is, we do not have three Gods. We have one God, one God who has revealed Himself in three distinct persons. When we talk about the ontological Trinity, we are saying that here is the logical order of being: Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Each one of these has particular properties. The Father is neither begotten nor does He proceed. He is always represented as the eternal God. God the Son is known by His property as the eternally begotten Son of God. Then God the Holy Spirit proceeds from God the Father and God the Son. Here, then, you have what is known as the ontological Trinity: the logical order of being, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Then you also have what is known as the economical Trinity. All the economical Trinity does is demonstrate how God moves. It demonstrates how God works. Everything is always out of the Father, through the Son, in the Spirit. It does not matter what subject you are discussing, whether you are discussing creation, redemption, or providence. Everything is out of the Father, through the Son, and in the Spirit. It is out of the Father initially, through the Son mediatorially, and in the Spirit providentially.

So Jesus Christ has a right to royal honor because of His person. He is indeed God. Secondly, He is entitled to royal honor because of His position. Look in verse 1: "The Lord said unto my Lord"—which I covered last week—"Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." Today, I only want to discuss the second phrase: "Sit thou at my right hand."

Christ's Right to Royal Honor Because of His Position

Our Lord sitting at the Father's right hand, in theological terms, is referred to as His heavenly session. The word session refers not only to His priestly work, but is an all-encompassing term which describes the totality of His mediatorial work. The very fact that He is seated at the Father's right hand identifies that work as His session.

Anthropomorphic Language in Scripture

Before explaining this, let me begin with a word of caution. Follow me very carefully, because this does get sticky. When we discuss the Godhead, we are limited to what the Scripture teaches us and what

the Scripture reveals. I cannot explain God. God is inexplicable. If I could explain God, I would be God. I cannot give you an analogy, because God is unique; there is nothing that you can compare God to. In fact, that is what He asked in the book of Isaiah: "To whom will ye liken me, or to what will ye liken me? saith the Lord of hosts." So we are limited to what the Word of God says.

The writers of the Bible, and especially the authors of the Old Testament, often used metaphorical language in referring to God. This is especially true in the poetical books, such as Psalms and Job. God is not a physical being. The Bible says in John 4:24, "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." When the Bible says that God is spirit, it means that He is incorporeal. That is, He does not have a body; He is a spirit being.

Why, then, are bodily parts often used in the Bible to express an attribute of God? The answer is that this is the only way we can comprehend what is being discussed. It is a metaphorical expression known as an anthropomorphism.

Let me explain that word. It is a long word, but it is easily explained. Anthropos is the Greek word for man, and morphe is the Greek word for form. Thus, anthropomorphic simply means man-form speaking. It is putting things in our language in which you and I can relate to, understand, and comprehend, so that we may identify with what is being said. For instance, when the Bible says that God looks down from heaven, or says, as in Proverbs 15:3, “The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, beholding the evil and the good,” God does not literally have an eyeball.

What is that referring to? It is referring to God’s omniscience. God is spirit; He is incorporeal. When David says that God’s hand lifts him up, he is using metaphorical language to describe the omnipotence of God, the all-powerfulness of God. The eye of God refers to His omniscience. The Bible says in Isaiah 40:22 that God sits above the circle of the earth. God does not literally sit, since He is incorporeal, nor is He limited in space. God is infinite; He fills all space. He is everywhere at once in the totality of His being. He is omnipresent.

These are metaphorical expressions, like David's words in Psalm 23:4: "Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." God does not necessarily have a literal rod and a literal staff. What this shows us is that, as a shepherd provides for and protects his sheep, likewise the Lord provides for and protects His people.

When the Bible speaks of God's hand, foot, finger, or eye, those are anthropomorphisms. They put truth in human expressions so that we may comprehend and identify with it. Therefore, when the Bible says in Psalm 110, "Sit thou at my right hand," it is an anthropomorphic expression, because God does not literally have a right hand; God is spirit.

The Right Hand as a Position of Honor

Before explaining what that means, consider a human application from this point. Hold Psalm 110, and turn back in your Bibles to 2 Chronicles 29. The kings of Israel were to rule for God; they were to be God's kings. Their throne was specifically designated as the throne of God. Look in 2 Chronicles 29 and verse 23. That is not the verse I want. I am looking at it, and it is not the verse. It must be 1 Chronicles.

In 1 Chronicles 29:23, we read: "Then Solomon sat on the throne of the Lord as king instead of David his father, and prospered; and all Israel obeyed him." Notice what that Scripture says: "Then Solomon sat on the throne of the Lord as king instead of David." Everybody talks about David's throne. Whose throne was it? It was God's throne. What about Solomon's throne? It was not Solomon's throne; it was God's throne. The throne, then, was to be God's and not necessarily man's. Why was the throne of Israel referred to as God's throne?

Look at 1 Chronicles 28:5. David says, "And of all my sons, (for the Lord hath given me many sons,) he hath chosen Solomon my son to sit upon the throne of the kingdom of the Lord over Israel." Notice that it is called the throne of the kingdom of the Lord. In other words, the king was to rule for God, under God, unto God, and, as he enforced God's law, he was to be the visible representative of the invisible God. Therefore, it was called God's throne and the throne of God's kingdom.

Since the throne represented honor, dignity, and power, anyone associated with it was in a position of honor, dignity, and power—especially at the right hand of the king's throne, because the right hand was considered the highest position of honor and dignity. First Kings 2:19 says of Solomon's mother, "Bathsheba therefore went unto king Solomon, to speak unto him for Adonijah. And the king rose up to meet her, and bowed himself unto her, and sat down on his throne, and caused a seat to be set for the king's mother; and she sat on his right hand." Solomon had great regard for his mother and put her at his right hand. It was a place of honor, dignity, and power. Certainly, the king's mother did have some power.

If this is true in reference to man, and it is, how much truer is it in reference to God? When the Bible says that Jesus Christ is seated at the Father's right hand, it means this: David's Lord, the Lord Jesus Christ, is inducted to the highest honor, regal and sacerdotal—or regal and priestly—with the promise of a most flourishing kingdom founded in Zion and extended everywhere until his enemies be made his footstool. The right hand, then, is a position of honor and power. To understand what is implied in sitting at the Father's right hand, you must understand that Christ's seating there is not only a position of honor, power, and dignity; it is part and parcel of His exaltation. To comprehend His exaltation, you must contrast it with His humility, or humiliation.

Christ's Humiliation and Exaltation

Christ's Exaltation Contrasted with His Humiliation

In Philippians 2:5-8 we see first of all the humiliation of Jesus Christ:

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

What are the steps in our Lord's humiliation? First of all, He voluntarily laid aside His eternal splendor, glory, and majesty.

Secondly, He assumed a body; He was born on this earth. Thirdly, He came as a servant. Fourthly, He was obedient even unto death, the death on the cross. Fifthly, He was buried. Those are the steps of His humiliation.

But beginning in verse 9, here are the steps in His exaltation: “Wherefore”—that is, because of His humiliation—“God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

Our Lord’s exaltation began with His resurrection, His ascension, and His heavenly session—that is, His being seated at the Father’s right hand—and will culminate in His return in ultimate victory and glory, overthrowing all His enemies. Here is His exaltation contrasted with His humiliation. When the Bible speaks of Christ being seated at the Father’s right hand, remember that this is an anthropomorphic expression.

The Meaning of Sitting at the Right Hand

When the Bible speaks about Christ being seated at the Father's right hand, it does not refer to His posture. I could say George is seated on the back row; that refers to his posture. I could say Roy is standing in the rear; that also refers to his posture. But when we read about Christ being seated at the Father's right hand, it has nothing to do with His posture.

For instance, Acts 2:33 says, "Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted..." The Bible does not necessarily say that Christ is seated at the Father's right hand. It simply says He is at the Father's right hand and is exalted. In Romans 8:34, the Apostle said, "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."

Peter said that Christ was at the right hand of God, and the Apostle Paul said Christ is at the right hand of God. If you remember the passage in Acts 7:55-56 concerning the stoning of Stephen,

Stephen, the first martyr, as he was being stoned to death, said, "But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God."

If sitting at the right hand of God does not indicate posture, then what does it imply? What does it indicate? The Bible says, "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand." Before showing what the Bible teaches concerning the seating at the Father's right hand, let us consider the Father's right hand. Please remember once again: this is indeed an anthropomorphic expression. The truth of God's right hand is variously stated in Scripture.

In Mark 16:19, the Bible says, “So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.” In Luke 22:69, it says, “Hereafter shall the Son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God.” Hebrews 1:3 calls it “the right hand of the Majesty on high.” Hebrews 8:1 says, “We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens.” Hebrews 12:2 says, “Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.” Thus we find various expressions: the right hand of God, the right hand of the power of God, the right hand of the majesty of God, and the throne of the majesty of the heavens.

God's Right Hand as a Symbol of Power

God’s right hand is a symbol of power, majesty, and dominion. In Exodus 15, Miriam and the children of Israel sang a psalm of praise after God delivered Israel from Egypt and overthrew Pharaoh and his armies. They said, “The Lord is a man of war: the Lord is his name. Pharaoh's chariots and his host hath he cast into the sea: his chosen captains also are drowned in the Red sea. The depths have covered them: they sank into the bottom as a stone. Thy right hand, O Lord, is become glorious in power: thy right hand, O Lord, hath dashed in pieces the enemy.”

What does God’s right hand indicate? The power of God, his strength, his omnipotence, and his dominion. He has authority over

everyone. Psalm 118, verses 15 and 16, continues this testimony concerning the right hand of the Lord.

"The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tabernacles of the righteous: the right hand of the Lord doeth valiantly. The right hand of the Lord is exalted: the right hand of the Lord doeth valiantly." What is the psalmist talking about? You must remember that God does not have a literal right hand the way you and I have, because God is spirit. It is once again talking about God's omnipotence—God's power.

Do you also remember that it is with the right hand that blessings are bestowed? In Genesis 48, when Jacob got ready to bless Manasseh and Ephraim, what did Joseph do? Joseph put his eldest there. And what did Jacob do? Blind, he guided his hands wittingly, and he blessed Ephraim with the right hand. Joseph did not want that. Joseph started to take his father's hand and said, "Not so, my father, because this is the eldest." He said, "I know it, my son. I know it. But God is going to bless Ephraim and put the right hand upon Ephraim." So the right hand, then, is a symbol of honor, majesty, dominion, and power.

Jesus Christ is God's divine Benjamin. What in the world does that mean? In Genesis 35:18, Rachel is giving birth to Benjamin, and as she gives birth to the child, she dies: "And it came to pass, as her soul was in departing, (for she died) that she called his name Benoni: but his father called him Benjamin." Rachel called her son Benoni. Why? Because she died in childbirth, and the word Benoni simply means "son of my sorrow." But the Bible says, "but his father called him Benjamin." The word Benjamin means "son of my right hand."

This is where you and I get the expression, "He's my right-hand man." When you talk about someone being the right-hand man, you are talking about someone you cannot possibly live without or do without. It is a position of honor and dignity, power and dominion.

Psalm 80:17 says, "Let thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand, upon the son of man whom thou madest strong for thyself." Jesus Christ is called the man of God's right hand, the Son of Man whom the Father made strong for Himself. This is why Jesus Christ

is God’s divine Benjamin. He is God’s right hand, the Son of Man whom God the Father made strong for Himself.

Eight Implications of Christ's Session

“The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand.” What does the right hand indicate? Power, majesty, honor, and dominion. We will see that last aspect more when we consider the words, “until I make thine enemies thy footstool.”

But what is implied by sitting at the Father’s right hand? What is God teaching us concerning Jesus Christ? There are about eight things to consider. Christ’s being seated at the Father’s right hand implies, first and foremost, the perfecting and completion of the work for which He came into the world. When He sat down, it referred to the fact that He had completed and finished the work. Hebrews 4:10 says, “For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his.” Thus, when our Lord is said to be seated at the right hand of the Father, it indicates that everything He came to do was finished and completed.

Do you know what our Lord prayed in John 17:4? In His high priestly prayer, He said, “I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.” There is nothing left to do on this earth as far as our salvation is concerned. Do you remember John 19:30? When Jesus Christ was giving His life on the cross, He said three very important words: “It is finished.” It is finished. It is over; it is done. He completed the work that the Father had given Him to do.

I never will forget reading about Dwight L. Moody one time—not that I necessarily endorse his theology, but it was an excellent illustration. He was riding on a train and sat by a man who believed that you had to work to earn your salvation. The man was trying to convince Moody that something had to be done in addition to what Christ had done. As Moody listened, he said, "You know, we're really not so far apart in our theology." The man smiled, thinking he was making headway with Moody, and asked, "Really?" "Oh, yes," said Moody. "There's only two letters different between our theology." When the man asked what they were, Moody replied, "Well, you spell yours D-O. I spell mine D-O-N-E."

And that's a fact. The salvation that we have in Jesus Christ is done. It is an accomplished reality, an accomplished fact. So the very first thing that sitting at the right hand of the Father implies is that the work of Jesus Christ on earth is finished.

The second thing it demonstrates is the high satisfaction that God the Father had in Christ and in His work. God the Father raised Him from the dead and welcomed Him into heaven—with His people. Hebrews 9:22-28 shows not only the completed work of God the Son, but also how God the Father would welcome Him into heaven: "And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission. It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ..."

SCRIPTURE READING - Hebrews 9:24-28 (KJV)

> “For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands”—He didn't go into the physical temple or tabernacle—“For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; for then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.”

The Father's Satisfaction and Christ's Highest Honor

If He was seated at the Father's right hand, it indicates that the Father was satisfied totally and completely with what He had done. Ephesians 1:20 speaks of the great power of God the Father, “Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead.” Had God the Father not been satisfied with the work of Christ, He would never have raised Him from the dead. The very fact that He raised Him from the dead and set Him at His right hand demonstrates His

perfect satisfaction: “Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places.”

He is “far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church.”

You may say, “I understand that it is a position of honor, and the Father is perfectly satisfied with the redemption of Jesus Christ, but you said that even we were seated with him.” Yes. Ephesians 2:4-7 says, “But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.”

The Lord's being seated at the Father's right hand not only implies that He has ceased from His redemptive work, but also implies and demonstrates the Father's perfect satisfaction with that work. Thirdly, it shows the advancement of Christ's human nature to the highest honor.

Remember Philippians 2: He took upon Himself the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of men. Hebrews 2:14 shows why this was done and shows us the advancement of Christ's human nature to the highest honor.

“Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood”—that is what we are—“he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham.”

“Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in

things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." What nature did Satan defeat and conquer in the Garden of Eden? Human nature. Where the first Adam failed, the second Adam succeeded. Jesus Christ assumed human nature, was very man of very man, and in that human nature defeated Satan and destroyed him. Jesus Christ is called the Theanthropos, the God-man. He is perfect God and perfect man. The first Adam failed, but the second Adam, Jesus Christ, is victorious.

Fourthly, this implies the sovereignty and supremacy of Jesus Christ over both worlds. "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." Jesus Christ is now on the throne and is ruling now; He is seated at the Father's right hand, on the throne of power, honor, majesty, and dominion. Acts 5:31 says, "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince"—a ruler, a sovereign—"and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." God exalted Him so that He might rule.

When we read of Christ sitting at the Father's right hand, it demonstrates that He ceased from His labors and that the Father is perfectly satisfied with Him. It shows the advancement of His human nature to the highest honor, His sovereignty and supremacy over everything. Fifthly, it presents Christ as conqueror. To have all of your enemies under your feet means complete victory. Jesus Christ is called the divine Joshua in Hebrews chapter 4; the name Jesus is connected to Joshua.

Both of them mean Savior.

In the book of Joshua, chapter 10, Joshua was leading the people against the Canaanites, and, of course, he defeated them. Joshua 10:24 says, "And it came to pass, when they brought out those kings unto Joshua, that Joshua called for all the men of Israel, and said unto the captains of the men of war which went with him, Come near, put your feet upon the necks of these kings. And they came near, and put their feet upon the necks of them. And Joshua said unto them, Fear not, nor be dismayed. Be strong and of a good courage: for thus shall the Lord do to all your enemies against whom ye fight."

If you have your foot on your enemy's neck, it means he is defeated. He is at your mercy; his life is in your hands.

Now, in 2 Samuel chapter 22, look in verse 41. This is a psalm of David that is quoted here. David says, "Thou hast also given me the necks of mine enemies, that I might destroy them that hate me." That is what God has done to the greater David. He has given Him their necks. So, sitting at the Father's right hand means that Jesus Christ is conqueror. The enemies are to be His footstool. I will cover more of this next week.

Sixthly, our Lord sitting at the Father's right hand implies the advancement of all believers to the highest honor. For where He sits, we sit. What did the Bible say in Ephesians 2? We are seated with Him in heavenly places.

Now let me show you something that is very important. Look in your Bibles to Romans chapter 16. Here is a passage you may have wondered about. Romans 16:20 says, "And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen."

Our Lord's being seated at the Father's right hand demonstrates and implies the advancement of all believers to the highest honor, because we are seated with Him at the Father's right hand. Paul wrote, "And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly." Let me ask you a question: How is it that the believer has power over Satan? Satan is a very powerful adversary. How?

Because we are in Jesus Christ, we are seated with Him in heavenly places. What was put under the feet of Jesus? Every principality, every power, every dominion. There is nothing left out, which means that in Christ we have power over every one of our enemies.

Now do you see why the Apostle Paul wrote in Romans 8:37, "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us"? How can we be more than conquerors? Because we are in Christ, and everything is put under our feet.

Seventhly, sitting is expressive of our Lord's government and dominion overall. As a royal honor, He sits because He is in sovereign control. Nothing ever baffles Him, upsets Him, amazes

Him, or disturbs Him. As Brother McCurry likes to say, "Has it ever occurred to you that nothing has ever occurred to God?"

You cannot slip up on His blind side because He does not have one. He is omniscient; He knows all. Colossians 1:16 says, "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him." And, "he is before all things, and by him all things consist." That is, they have their being; they are held in place.

What do men do when they are out of control and things are not going right? They jump up, run around, rant, rave, and do everything imaginable. But when things are going just right, what do you do? You sit and smile because you have everything under control. When the Bible speaks about our Lord sitting, it means that He is on the throne of this universe, working everything out according to the counsel of His own will. He is in absolute control. Though everything may look as if it is going wrong, everything is going wrong just right, because He is in control.

Some of you have had the unique blessing of being in a courtroom. What does the judge do? He sits. The very fact that Jesus Christ is seated means that He is sitting as the Judge of all the earth, and all judgment is committed to Him.

Eighthly and lastly, sitting implies permanency of possession.

In Philippians chapter 2, our Lord laid aside His glory and majesty and took upon Himself the form of a servant, made in the likeness of men. As He walked this earth, His divine majesty and glories were so hidden that men reviled Him, persecuted Him, hated Him, and crucified Him. But no more. Our Lord is no longer a servant; He is now the Lord of Glory. Yea, He is King of the reigning kings and Lord of the reigning and ruling lords.

Nothing will ever change that fact. Jesus Christ is now the exalted Son of God. He cannot be overthrown, outwitted, or outdone. You may persecute Him, hate Him, or refuse to acknowledge His Lordship, but it will not affect Him in the least. He is still on the throne.

Applications

He willingly laid aside His glory, majesty, and rule one time. Never will He do it again. When He comes back, Scripture tells us, He will come back in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who know not God and obey not the gospel of Jesus Christ, when He shall come to be admired and worshipped by His saints. Our Lord is in permanent possession of exalted honor, majesty, glory, and power because He is King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

One application is this: if you ever realize your position in Jesus Christ, it will change your life. We are seated in heavenly places in Christ. What does that mean? We share in His rule, His work, and His power. As all things are put under His feet, so likewise they are under our feet. We are in Him. As the Apostle Paul said, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." If we realize our position and standing in Christ, it will empower and embolden us to serve Him more effectively. Christ, secondly, is exalted to the highest honor.

He's King of kings and Lord of lords. We're to bow down and worship. He deserves all our honor, praise, and worship. Let us make sure that daily, not merely weekly, we worship Him whom the Father has seated at His own right hand.

Father, thank You for the glory, honor, dignity, majesty, and power of Jesus Christ our Lord. Thank You for His exaltation and greatness. May we determine in our lives to serve Him and worship Him and Him alone. Give us grace that we may serve Thee effectively with reverence and godly fear, and in everything we do bring honor to Him. In Jesus Christ's name, Amen.

CHAPTER 3

Messiah's Divine Rights

Part Three

Introduction and Review

Psalm 110, verse 1: "The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. The LORD shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth. The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek. The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath. He shall judge among the heathen, he shall fill the places with the dead bodies; he shall wound the heads over many countries. He shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall he lift up the head."

J. A. Alexander said concerning this Psalm, “This is the counterpart to the second Psalm, completing the prophetic picture of the conquering Messiah; any other application is ridiculous.” As you read Psalm 110, you see our Lord’s prophetical office, His priestly office, and His kingly office. Psalm 110 is quoted in relationship to

Jesus Christ more than any other psalm, and in each instance, when it is quoted in the New Testament, it proves His deity and, of course, His Lordship.

This psalm not only teaches the deity and the Lordship of Christ, but that He is now in the place of honor because He is the Son of God. I dealt first with this expression, “the LORD said unto my Lord,” and went through the Bible to demonstrate that it teaches our Lord’s deity. He said, “I and the Father are one.” Jesus Christ is God.

Secondly, I dealt with the phrase, “Sit thou at my right hand.” This is an anthropomorphic expression. Anthropos is the Greek word for man, and morphe is the Greek word for form. Anthropomorphic simply means man-form speaking. When we say that He is sitting at the Father’s right hand, you must understand that God is spirit. Since God is spirit, He does not have bodily parts. He is incorporeal, is the way to say it, I suppose. John 4:24 says, “God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.”

Until I Make Thine Enemies Thy Footstool

When you read in the Bible about the eyes of the Lord being in every place, or God's hand, God's finger, or His feet riding upon the clouds, those are all anthropomorphisms. They are putting things in human form in order that we might understand them. So God does not have a literal right hand, so to speak. But throughout the Bible, the right hand speaks of power, dominion, honor, and victory.

Our Lord's sitting at the right hand of the Father implies eight things. First of all, it implies the perfecting and the completing of His work. He finished the work that He came into this world to do. Secondly, it showed the high satisfaction that God the Father had in Him and that He raised Him from the dead. Thirdly, it showed the advancement of Christ's human nature to the highest honor. Fourthly, it implies the sovereignty and the supremacy of Christ over both worlds.

Fifthly, it presents Jesus Christ as conqueror, because to have all enemies under His feet designates a complete victory. Sixthly, it implies also the advancement of all believers to the highest honor. For the Bible tells us that we were raised from the dead in Him and

that we sit at the right hand with Him. Seventhly, sitting was expressive of His government and dominion over all. Lastly, sitting implies possession.

That is, He is now honored by God the Father. He is now full of majesty and power. Never again will that be laid aside.

A Divine Act

Today we come to the third expression found in Psalm 110 in verse 1: "The LORD said to my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." Today we are looking at this expression, "until I make thine enemies thy footstool." What is meant by that expression, and how should the truth of that statement impact our lives? Let me try to answer those questions. First of all, I want you to understand that this statement implies and demonstrates a divine act. God said, "Sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool." Here in this verse, God the Father is speaking to God the Son. God the Father tells the Son that this is something He Himself is going to accomplish.

God has uttered His voice, declared His intentions, and undertaken to bring them to pass. The very fact that God the Father said this to God the Son ensures its accomplishment. God is a God who cannot lie. Scripture tells us in Numbers 23:19, speaking of God, that "God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent. Hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?" Whatever God speaks, He accomplishes. He makes it good.

Isaiah 46:10-11 declares, "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it. I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it."

God says, whatever I purpose, I do. Humanly speaking, there are only two things that really hinder us from accomplishing our purposes. The first is a lack of foresight. You and I cannot foresee everything that is coming to pass. I intended to be home very early

yesterday afternoon, but sitting on that bridge for an hour and a half was something that I did not foresee. Lack of foresight hinders us from accomplishing our purposes.

Secondly, a lack of power hinders us. We may purpose to do certain things, but we do not have the ability to bring them to pass. God does not have those problems. He does not have a lack of foresight because He is omniscient, and He does not have a lack of power because He is omnipotent. In Psalm 62:11, the Word of God says, "God hath spoken once. Twice have I heard this; that power belongeth unto God." All power is God's.

Certainly no one can thwart God's plan, hinder His purpose, or overthrow His will. The Bible says in Proverbs 21:30, "There is no wisdom nor understanding nor counsel against the LORD."

Now just stop and think about that. There is no wisdom or understanding or counsel against the LORD. Who could succeed against the omnipotent God of the universe? Who could sneak up on God who knows everything? You see, the truth of the matter is this: it's useless and vain even to try to resist God. What was his attitude when Moses said, "Thus saith the LORD, Let my people go"? Pharaoh arrogantly said, "I know not the LORD, neither will I let Israel go. Who is the LORD that I should obey him?" Pharaoh, in all of his power and glory, discovered he was no match for God. Balaam, in all of his worldly wisdom, failed to outsmart God.

Herod, that old fox, as Jesus called him, could not outfox the Father. Nero could not escape His anger, and Haman could not outmaneuver Him. It's just simply useless and vain to fight against God. Now, what did God say? God said, "Sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool." God said, I want to do this. Mark it down, there is absolute surety and absolute certainty that God will make all of His enemies His footstool. Now, let me just try to show you the impact that this should have upon the enemies of God. First of all, they should understand their absolute and certain defeat. They can't win. They will not win. They may rage until their boiler boils over, but they cannot succeed.

Let me give you something to think about. I want you to look in your Bibles to two passages. The first one is James 4:6. James 4:6,

and then we're going to be looking in 1 Peter chapter 5. So we'll go to James 4:6. And look at what the Bible says, James 4:6: "But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble." Now, I want you to pay close attention to the little word "resisteth." God resisteth the proud. Now look in your Bibles to 1 Peter 5:5. 1 Peter 5:5. Once again, you're going to see that same word. 1 Peter 5:5: "Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble." Now, I read those two passages for one simple reason.

I wanted you to see the word "resisteth." God resisteth the proud. The word "resisteth" in both instances is the Greek word antitassō. You say, what in the world does that mean? The word literally means to oppose, to resist.

To array and arrange oneself in battle against means to array oneself in battle. Stop and think about this. If God merely left His enemies to themselves, they would be destroyed. They cannot even breathe without God. They cannot eat without God. They cannot do one thing without Him. If God did nothing but leave them alone, they would destroy themselves. If God did nothing to us but leave us alone, we would die. If all God has to do is nothing to destroy His enemies, what do you think it will be like when God arrays Himself in battle gear against them? Is there any doubt as to the outcome? Of course not.

I am a very optimistic individual because I believe the Bible teaches a biblical optimism. People ask, “What about this antichrist? What about that antichrist? What about this chip? What about that chip?” Everything that the wicked do will ultimately fail. That does not mean that we will not have to fight. That does not mean that we will not have to stand. That does not mean that we will get out of suffering. No, we are going to suffer in this world of sin. That is true. But the truth of the matter is this: those who are against Christ will not win, and they cannot win.

God the Father said to God the Son, “Sit thou at my right hand,” how long? “Until I make thine enemies thy footstool.” Here is a divine act. God is sovereignly going to subdue and conquer all of the

enemies of Jesus Christ. Mark it down. It is a done deal. We might not see it just yet, but it is a done deal.

A Determined Act

Secondly, when God said, “Sit thou on my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool,” it is a determined act. First of all, it is a divine act; secondly, it is a determined act. I could say it like this: it is a predetermined act. By that simple statement, I mean that the victory of Jesus Christ and the defeat of all His enemies were preordained and predetermined before the world ever began. In fact, everything about Jesus Christ was predetermined before the world ever began.

SCRIPTURE READING - Acts 2:22-24 (KJV)

> Look in your Bibles to the book of Acts chapter 2. The book of Acts chapter 2, and then we'll go to Acts 4. Acts chapter 2, beginning there with verse 23. Look at this. And by the way, I want you to note that even all of the rage of His enemies was included in this. Now watch. Acts chapter 2, beginning there with verse 23. Acts 2:23. In fact, let's read verse 22 just so that you can see that Jesus Christ is in the context.
>
> "Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know."
>
> Now watch: "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it."

Acts 2:23 says that Christ was delivered “by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God.” Not one finger could have been lifted against Jesus Christ had God the Father not determined before the world began that it should be done.

Acts 4:25 says, “Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things?” The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord and against his Christ.

Herod, Pontius Pilate, the Gentiles, and the people of Israel were gathered together "for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." The enemies of Christ could not have done one thing against Him apart from the express, predetermined, ordained will of the sovereign God of the universe.

The rage of those enemies against Christ, everything to the last detail, was determined before the foundation of the world. In the mind and purpose of God, there is nothing left to chance, fate, luck, or fortune. You have none of those things in a world that is ruled by God. Acts 15:18 says, "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world." God knows the end from the beginning because He ordained the end as well as the beginning. Nothing can come to pass apart from God.

What does our Lord teach us? A sparrow cannot fall apart from your heavenly Father, and the very hairs of your head are numbered. A hair cannot fall apart from His will. If God is so meticulous and particular in our lives, would He leave everything concerning His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, to luck, chance, fate, fortune, or haphazard happenings? Oh, no. Everything is ordained concerning Jesus Christ—not just His sufferings, but His ultimate victory as well. Look back in your Bibles to Genesis 3:15.

Genesis 3:15 is known as the Protevangelium. Prote means first, and Evangelium is for evangelism or the gospel. Thus, the Protevangelium is the first promise of the Messiah, or the first promise of salvation. Genesis 3:15 is the very first time in the Bible that salvation is promised: "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman. And between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."

In the Protevangelium, God is announcing to the serpent—who had beguiled and deceived Adam and Eve—a sovereign and solemn announcement. In verse 14, "And the LORD God said unto the serpent." God says, "I'm going to put enmity between thee and the woman and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." What is God doing? He is making an announcement and giving us three very important truths.

First, Christ will be the seed of a woman. This is the implied teaching of our Lord's first coming: He is going to take upon Himself the nature of Abraham, take upon Himself the form of a servant, and be made in the likeness of man. So, first of all, Christ will be the seed of a woman.

Second, there will be a constant and continual enmity between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent—between the godly and the ungodly, between the children of light and the children of darkness. Expect it. It is there. That is what He said at the very beginning.

Third, Satan and his cohorts would be defeated by Christ, because He said, "And it shall bruise thy head"—that is, the woman's seed shall bruise thy head—"and thou shalt bruise his heel." If I had a two-by-four about six feet long, whittled down at one end to fit my hands like a baseball bat, and hit you as hard as I could, would you rather I hit you in the heel or in the head? You understand that a heel wound is not a death wound, but a head wound is a death wound.

What did the serpent do to the seed of the woman, the Messiah? He wounded His heel. It was not a death blow. But what did the seed of the woman, the Messiah, do to the serpent? He wounded his head. It was a death blow. In the very first promise of the Messiah, in the very first promise of salvation, God teaches us the defeat of our Lord's enemies.

Hebrews 2:14 says, "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he"—that is Christ—"also himself likewise took part of the same." Why was He born of woman? "That through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." What did our Lord do? He destroyed the power of the devil. He destroyed sin. He delivered us from sin and death and the devil.

J. A. Alexander said that Psalm 110 is the counterpart to Psalm 2. Psalm 2:1 is quoted in the New Testament in reference to Christ. It begins: "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?" In other words, why are they fighting and fuming? "The

kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us."

They don't want to be in submission to Christ. They don't want to be in submission to the Father. They want to be in rebellion. Well, what's the answer? "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision." They're not going to overthrow God. They're not going to thwart His plans. "Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure." He can do whatever He wants to them whenever He wants to. God says, "Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son."

"This day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." And what will Christ do? "Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him."

Can you not see in this passage the absolute determination of God the Father to honor and glorify His Son in spite of the rebellion and wickedness of man? What does God do? God laughs at them. How silly they think they are, that they're going to overthrow the purpose and the counsel and the will of the sovereign God of the universe. God said, I got some advice for you folks. You better kiss the Son. You better humble yourself. You better make friends with Him, lest He be angry with you and you perish from the way when His wrath is kindled but a little.

Psalm 22:27 says, "All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the LORD: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee. For the kingdom is the LORD's: and he is the governor among the nations." Isn't that amazing? What does God say? God says ultimately everybody is going to bow to Him.

Psalm 72:11 says, "Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him." How many kings are going to fall down before Him? Every stinking one of them. All nations are going to serve Him. The Bible says in Isaiah 9, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder." He is going to rule in power and majesty. The ultimate victory of Jesus Christ has been determined before the world ever began. The victory of Jesus Christ over His enemies has been predetermined and ordained by God the Father. Isaiah 11:1 says, "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots."

SCRIPTURE READING - Isaiah 11:2-12; Daniel 2:31 (KJV)

> And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD; and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the LORD: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.
>
> The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.
>
> And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and

from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.

What is this teaching us? It is teaching us that Jesus Christ is going to be ultimately fully and finally victorious over all of His enemies. Can you not see if the lion and the lamb are lying down together? If a child is playing with a poisonous asp, something has been conquered. Something has been changed. Look in your Bibles to the book of Daniel chapter 2. Very quickly, I'm trying to just show you all through the Bible, this is clearly taught. Daniel chapter 2, verse 31. Daniel is telling Nebuchadnezzar his dream and the interpretation of it. Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible.

SCRIPTURE READING - Daniel 2:31-35 (KJV)

"This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces."

Note that stone cut without hands. It smote the image. Verse 35: "Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors."

"And the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image"—that is Christ—"became a great mountain"—that is His kingdom—"and filled the whole earth. This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king. Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold. And after

thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth."

"And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise. And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay."

"And in the days of these kings"—that is, these kingdoms that he is prophesying—"shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever."

What is he saying? The kingdom that God the Father sets up through Jesus Christ will destroy all the other kingdoms, and His kingdom will rule forever. Look in Daniel 7:13-14: "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." What is he saying? Jesus Christ is going to rule supremely.

A Destructive Act

Philippians 2, beginning with verse 9, says: "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." It is a done deal. It is not if men will acknowledge Him as Lord. It is when they will acknowledge Him as Lord. Men

will acknowledge Him either in salvation or damnation, but they will acknowledge Him. Jesus Christ will have an ultimate and final victory.

"The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." It is a divine act. It is a determined act. And thirdly, it is a destructive act. Away from the shame and suffering of the earth, Jehovah God the Father calls Adonai our Lord to repose and honor on His celestial throne. His work is done. He may sit. His work is done well; He may sit at the Father's right hand, and there He will have the grand results. He will sit patiently for the complete and ultimate victory which is certain to follow.

The glorious Jehovah addresses the Messiah: "Sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool." Jesus Christ is in the place of power, dominion, and dignity, and He sits there by divine appointment while Jehovah fights for Him and lays every rebel beneath His feet. He sits there at the Father's ordinance and call and will sit there despite the raging of His adversaries. No one will overthrow Him. No one will dethrone Him. "Sit thou until I make thine enemies thy footstool."

The Hebrew word for footstool is from a root word which means to stamp upon. Hence, a footstool. Joshua Arndt, who lived from 1626 to 1685, said in reference to the footstool: "Thy footstool. As this our king has a glorious throne, so has he also a wondrous footstool. And as his royal throne imparts to us comfort to the highest degree, so his footstool also imparts to us joy. How joyful shall his poor subjects be when they hear that their prince and king has slain their enemies and delivered them out of their hands. How did these poor subjects go forward and meet Saul and Jonathan when those kings had slain the Philistines? Moreover, because our king has his enemies under his feet, thus shall he also bring all our enemies under our feet."

"For his victory is ours. God be thanked who has given us the victory through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Our Lord's victory over His enemies implies also our victories over our enemies. Our Lord was told, "Sit thou at my right hand until

I make thine enemies thy footstool." Notice the easiness with which God subdues the enemies of Christ. It is as easy as moving a footstool. I have taken my bare feet—in fact, just my big toe—hooked it under the footstool, and pulled it to myself. I did not even have to get up. No energy, no work, no sweat. Our Lord said, "Sit down here at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool." It is no big deal for God. He can destroy them with His breath. All He has to do is speak the word.

The putting of our Lord's enemies under His feet as a footstool implies order as well as beauty. When Christ's enemies are put under His feet, then things will have a right order in this life. I get so upset, and I know that you do too, when we hear of the injustices in this life, especially those done to God's people.

But I have news for you. When our Lord's enemies are all totally subdued, there will be perfect justice, and rightly so. That is why in Acts 3:21 this is called the restitution of all things, when all things are made right under Jesus Christ. The putting away of our Lord's enemies is indeed an act of justice.

It is easy to sit, and even easier to sit with your feet on the footstool. Our Lord will be most comfortable in subduing His enemies. There will be no discomfort to Him.

The footstool clearly implies the extreme shame and confusion which our Lord's enemies shall everlastingly suffer, for our Lord shall bring them down. You know what the Bible says: "Whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased." I read to you last week how Joshua told those people, "Come near and put your feet upon these kings' necks." You remember that?

When you have your foot upon someone's neck, they are under your control and power. Those of us old enough to remember when we had to do without, and had to eat whatever we could, may remember such things. I would certainly not do it today, but as a boy I had no choice. Did you ever have to eat possum? I did. You know how you kill a possum? You catch him by the tail, put your foot on his neck, and jerk. You break his neck. What's our Lord saying? It is going to be that easy and that simple for Me. I will have My feet upon

the necks of My enemies, and they will be brought to everlasting confusion.

Secondly, here is the burden that wicked men must bear. When you put your feet on the footstool, it is the footstool that bears the weight of the body. So the enemies of Christ will bear their burden of shame everlastingly. They were the ones who fought against Christ; they thought they were so smart and then found out they were so stupid. They will bear the weight of their rebellion against Christ.

Thirdly, note the justice of God's recompense to ungodly men. In this world, what do the ungodly do? They trample upon the name of Jesus Christ and stamp upon His word. They have no regard for His people. They run over us and trample us. It does not matter about our Christian character, convictions, or what is right and wrong. If we do not conform to what they think and want, they harass us. They steal our substance, put us in prison, kill us, and do whatever they please. In the justice of God, as they tried to tread us under their feet, He treads them under His feet.

Do you remember that king in Judges chapter 1 by the name of Adoni-bezek? He was a great warrior. He had conquered 70 kings, cut off their big toes and thumbs, and made them gather meat under his table like dogs.

Do you realize that without a thumb you cannot grasp? How can you hold a sword without a thumb? You cannot. Without your big toes, you cannot run; your big toes balance your body. Basically, what Adoni-bezek did was humiliate those kings. When Joshua and the men conquered him, they cut off his great toes and his thumbs. Here is what Adoni-bezek said: “As I have done, so God hath requited me.” Perfect justice.

As they trampled under their feet the name, glory, dignity, and servants of Jesus Christ, so shall they be trampled upon. Before making the applications, consider one last thing: the great power and wisdom that God has in turning the mischief and sin of Christ’s enemies to His own advantage. Do you realize that the enemies of Christ intend nothing but the ruin of Christ and His kingdom? Yet God turns it around and uses it for our good and His glory.

God's Wisdom in Using Enemies

Psalm 76:10 explains why I am so optimistic. I could quote this verse, but I want you to see what the Scripture says, and I wish I had time today to expound upon this one verse: “Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain.” Surely the wrath of man will praise Thee. Let me ask you a question: How much sin, wickedness, and rebellion is there going to be in this world? I’ll tell you how much: just enough that will redound to God’s honor and God’s glory. That which will not redound to His honor and glory, He will restrain. He will not allow it to happen.

Do you remember how Joseph’s brethren hated him and sold him into slavery? Is it not against the revealed word of God to hate your brother? Is it not against the revealed word of God to kidnap your brother and sell him into slavery? Yes. But Joseph said to his brethren, “You meant it for evil, but God meant it for good.” In their rebellion against Joseph, all they did was work out God’s perfect will, so that Joseph could be second in command of all Egypt.

See, the wrath of man shall praise the Lord, and the remainder of wrath shall He restrain. The only reason we have the New World Order today, the Bilderbergers, the secret societies, and all this kind of junk, is so that God can destroy them and give greater glory. Do you not remember what He said to Pharaoh? "For this very cause have I raised thee up, that I might destroy him." Read it in Romans 9. That way we understand the perfect justice of God.

Paul said in every house there are vessels of honor and vessels of dishonor. Some of those vessels of dishonor may not necessarily be beautiful, but they are useful. I do not remember, as a boy, my mother ever saying to her company, "Will you come into my bedroom and allow me to show you my bedpan?" Nor do we say, "I have the most beautiful toilet; you just need to see it." We do not say, "Come, let me show you my wash pan." But those things which are dishonorable are sometimes very useful. All God does is use His enemies to work out His perfect will. Then He executes perfect justice upon them and destroys them. His name is honored and glorified because everything He did was right, holy, just, and perfect: "The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool."

Christ's Enemies and Their Defeat

Applications: Christ's Enemies and Ongoing Victory

First, by way of application: Does it surprise you to find out that Jesus Christ has enemies? Do you ever think about that? All Jesus Christ ever did was good, and yet He has enemies. Look at Psalm 21:8: “Thine hand shall find out all thine enemies: thy right hand shall find out those that hate thee.” Remember, Jesus Christ is God's right hand. He is God's divine Benjamin.

Christ has enemies, and He knows who they are. We may be deceived and fooled, but He is not fooled. These enemies cannot run from Him, hide from Him, or get away. He will find them and destroy them.

Secondly, the subduing of Christ's enemies is an ongoing process. It was not done instantly, in the sense that all His enemies were brought under immediately. Why was it not? You will have to ask God. The answer is that God will ultimately receive more honor by doing it this way than if He had done so instantly. Hebrews 2:8 declares, “We see not yet all things put under him.” It is not yet true that all things are under Him.

It is true positionally, but it is certainly not true practically. Christ Himself sits and waits until the Father puts all His enemies under His feet. Remember what God told the people when He gave them Canaan land. He said He would drive the Canaanites out, but He did it little by little. Likewise, He is conquering Christ's enemies slowly but surely, little by little, as they become His footstool.

That is what He said in Exodus 23:30: “By little and little I will drive them out from before thee, until thou be increased, and inherit the land.” So, little by little, slowly but surely, He will drive them out before Christ.

Someone said it like this: all of Christ's enemies are already defeated; they are just now in a chain. Their defeat is certain. All you have to do is pull the chain at any time. That is all God has to do. He already has them, and their defeat remains an ongoing process.

How long is Christ going to sit at the Father's right hand? Until God finishes making His enemies His footstool. Christ never sat at the Father's right hand, humanly speaking, until He ascended. That was part of the honor God gave Him for His obedience and perfect work. Now God says, “You're going to sit here until I make your enemies your footstool.” He will sit there until His second coming, when all His enemies are ultimately, totally, completely destroyed.

What benefit should this give us? First of all, we should understand that His victory is our victory. If Christ is sitting there waiting for God the Father to subdue His enemies, in subduing the enemies of Christ, He is subduing our enemies. This ought to give us joy. It ought to make us victorious, optimistic, and not defeated, dismayed, discouraged, or depressed. We are the victors; we're not defeated. There is no new world order that can overthrow the Son of God. The Bilderbergers can't. No one can overthrow the Son of God.

He is on the throne. Jesus Christ has been constituted Lord by the sovereign decree of God Himself. He is the rightful Lord, and His claim is incontestable. Matthew 28:18 says, “All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.” Whatever God says cannot be gainsaid. Whatever God does cannot be undone. Whatever God wills, He brings to pass.

If you're an enemy of Jesus Christ, look out, because God the Father will make you His footstool. You trample under your feet His Son; God will see that His Son tramples you under His feet. That's perfect justice: “Sit thou at my right hand till I make thine enemies thy footstool.” My prayer is, O Lord, the sooner the better. God grant it.

Father, we ask You in the name of Jesus Christ to give us a heart that adores Thee and worships Thee. Give us, Lord, an attitude of disposition, of victory, of optimism, of dominion. May we march for Jesus Christ and be indeed soldiers for Jesus Christ. We are so thankful that His victory and our victory are totally assured. Give us grace to serve Thee acceptably with reverence and godly fear. In Thy name we pray. Amen.

CHAPTER 4

Messiah's Divine Rights

Part Four

SCRIPTURE READING - Psalm 110:1-7 (KJV)

Psalm 110, verse 1: “The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion. Rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power. In the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning thou hast the dew of thy youth. The Lord hath sworn and will not repent. Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath. He shall judge among the heathen. He shall fill the places with the dead bodies. He shall wound the heads over many countries. He shall drink of the brook in the way. Therefore, shall he lift up the head.”

Introduction and Review of Psalm 110:1

We have been dealing with this psalm under the general heading “Messiah’s Divine Rights.” We looked at verse 1 and saw that our Lord deserves royal honor because of his

person—“the Lord said unto my Lord”—and because of his position—“sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.” We examined what “the Lord said unto my Lord” means, what the right hand of God implied, and what sitting implied. “Footstool” means literally to trample upon, or to have something under your feet.

Christ's Right to Rule the Heathen

Now we come to verse 2: “The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion, rule thou in the midst of thine enemies.” Not only does our Lord have the right to royal honor; he has the right to rule the heathen. “The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion. Rule thou in the midst of thine enemies.”

J. A. Alexander said that Psalm 110 is the counterpart to Psalm 2. In Psalm 2:7, God the Father, speaking to God the Son, says, "I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee." Then God says, "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance. The Father promises the Son the heathen for His inheritance, together with the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession. The promise reaches beyond Israel to the heathen and to the uttermost parts of the earth.

Now notice Psalm 110:2: "The Lord shall send the rod of his strength out of Zion. Rule thou in the midst of thine enemies." Psalm 46:10 gives another passage concerning God ruling in the midst of His enemies: "Be still and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the heathen. I will be exalted in the earth." God, then, will be exalted even among the heathen. Psalm 110:2 joins the promise concerning the heathen to the command to rule in the midst of enemies.

Psalm 110:2 says, "The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion. Rule thou in the midst of thine enemies." The first question we need to ask and answer is, What is the rod of thy strength? The Bible says, "The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion." What is the rod of thy strength? What in the world is the rod of thy strength?

The Hebrew word for rod is matteh, which literally means a rod, a staff, or a shaft. It is one of the Hebrew words most frequently used in Scripture for the word rod. I very quickly looked through my Bible and found several very pertinent and very easy illustrations concerning the use of the word rod.

The Rod of Thy Strength

For instance, “matteh” designated the rod that Moses and Aaron used before Pharaoh. It was also the word used for Aaron’s rod that budded, and for the rod Moses held upward while Joshua fought the Amalekites in the plain. When the rod was held up, Joshua prevailed; when Moses’s arms drooped, the Amalekites prevailed. Therefore, they placed stones beneath him and held up his arms. The Bible says the Amalekites were discomfited with the edge of the sword. The same word, “rod,” is used in each case. Very obviously, if “matteh” refers to the rod Moses and Aaron took into Egypt, Aaron’s rod that blossomed, showing that he was God’s chosen, and the rod Moses held up, then the rod clearly implies authority, power, and dominion.

Now look again at Psalm 110:2: “The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion. Rule thou in the midst of thine enemies.” Very clearly, the word “rod” here refers not only to power, authority, and dominion, but also to a scepter. Psalm 45:6 concerns the Lord Jesus Christ: “Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever. The scepter of thy kingdom is a right scepter.” When a king has a scepter, what does it imply? It implies power, authority, and dominion.

Some of you have seen the scepter belonging to the Queen of England. It is a very interesting scepter. If you have never seen it up close, and ever have the opportunity, you should do so, because it is not only a rod, but on top there is an orb, and on top of the orb there is a cross. Why? The orb symbolizes the world, and the cross on top teaches the ruler that Christ is really the true ruler of the world. Even the Queen of England usually has her scepter when you see her. Every king, or every person of regal power, always had a scepter. Do you remember back in the book of Esther, when Esther had to go in to see the king?

Esther was telling Mordecai that no one could go in without being sent for. If someone approached the king without being sent for, the penalty was death, with one exception: whomever the king held out his scepter to, then that individual lived. Of course, the scepter indicates power, authority, and dominion.

To show that this word “rod” does indeed imply a scepter, or a right to rule, consider Ezekiel 19:14, where the same Hebrew word is used. Here is what God says concerning Israel, the nation: “And fire is gone out of a rod of her branches, which hath devoured her fruit.” Then God says concerning the nation, “so that she hath no strong rod to be a scepter to rule.” “This is a lamentation and shall be for a lamentation.”

The word “rod” in verse 14 is exactly the same word for “rod” used in Psalm 110:2. God says Israel no longer has a strong rod to be a scepter to rule. In other words, her power, her might, and her dominion had been broken. Therefore, the word “rod” used in Psalm 110:2 can indeed imply a scepter.

God says that He is going to send the rod of thy strength out of Zion. The rod of His strength, then, is His power, His might, His authority, and His dominion. To understand the impact and implications of verse 2, we must understand the location of Zion. “The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion.” The word “Zion” occurs 152 times in the Bible.

The Meaning of Zion

Now that does not count the New Testament rendition of it spelling S-I-O-N. But "Zion" itself occurs 152 times in the Bible. Did you know that that word basically is used four different ways? First and foremost, it refers to Jerusalem, the city of David. If you look in your Bibles, 2 Samuel chapter 5 and verse 7. 2 Samuel 5 and verse 7. Note if you would, and you will see it used here in reference to Jerusalem. 2 Samuel 5 and verse 7. The Bible says, "Nevertheless, David took the stronghold of Zion. The same is the city of David." So Jerusalem then is known as Zion, which is indeed the city of David. Now, if you look in 1 Kings chapter 8 and verse 1. 1 Kings 8 and verse 1. You'll see these words, 1 Kings 8 verse 1: "Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel and all the heads of the tribes, the chief of the fathers of the

children of Israel unto King Solomon in Jerusalem, that they might bring up the ark of the covenant of the Lord out of the city of David, which is Zion."

So once again, Jerusalem, or the city of David, is known as Zion. So sometimes when you read the word "Zion" in the Bible, it's just simply another word for Jerusalem. Secondly, sometimes it refers to the entire mount or the hill surrounding Jerusalem. Look in your Bible to Psalm 48 and verse 2. This is a very difficult passage for me to read without singing, but I certainly will restrain myself today because years ago I learned a song based upon Psalm 48 and it's a very catchy tune, I might add. But you will see here it refers to the entire mountain. Let's read verse 1: "Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised in the city of our God and the mountain of his holiness. Beautiful for situation. The joy of the whole earth is Mount Zion on the sides of the north, the city of the great king." So it can also refer to the hill. Look in verse 11: "Let Mount Zion rejoice."

"Let the daughters of Judah be glad because of thy judgments." And then if you look in Psalm 125, beginning there with verse 1, Psalm 125 verse 1, here's a very plain passage showing you it refers to the entire hill around Jerusalem: "They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth forever. As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his people from henceforth even forever." So sometimes the word "Zion" then refers to Jerusalem, the city. Sometimes it refers to the mountain surrounding the city. Thirdly, sometimes in your Bible, the word "Zion" refers to the true believers.

Zion also refers to the true believers, as opposed to those who are not the children of God by faith. Psalm 149:2 says, “Let Israel rejoice in him that made him. Let the children of Zion be joyful in their King.” Well, who are the children of Zion? They are the true believers. The passage distinguishes them from those who are not the children of God by faith.

Isaiah 35:10 says, “And the ransom of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads. They shall obtain joy and gladness and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.” The ransom of the Lord shall return and come to Zion. Who are the ransom of the Lord? They are the children, the ones who

were saved by the grace of God, and they are returning to Zion. They are known as Zion.

Isaiah 51:11 likewise says, “Therefore, the redeemed of the Lord shall return and come with singing unto Zion, and everlasting joy shall be upon their head, and they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and mourning shall flee away.” The passage again speaks of the redeemed of the Lord returning to Zion with singing, gladness, and joy.

Isaiah 60:14 speaks of the redeemed: “The sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee, and all they that despise thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet, and they shall call thee, the city of the Lord, the Zion of the Holy One of Israel.” Here he is talking about true believers, the redeemed of the Lord, and they shall call them the city of the Lord, the Zion of the Holy One of Israel.

Thus, the word Zion sometimes refers to the literal city of Jerusalem; sometimes to the mountains surrounding it; sometimes to true, ransomed, redeemed believers; and, fourthly and finally, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the heavenly Zion, the abode of God himself.

Consider three passages. Psalm 2:6 says, “Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.” Where did God enthrone the Lord Jesus Christ? Not in physical Jerusalem, nor on the mountain around Jerusalem, but in His heavenly abode, the heavenly Jerusalem.

Isaiah 2:3 says, “And many people shall go and say, Come ye and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us of his ways and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion.” That is the place where God dwells. The passage continues, “…shall go forth the law and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.” Thus Zion refers to the place where God dwells. The third passage is found in Hebrews 12:22.

Now I am showing you this for a specific reason. I want you to think something through with me. Look in Hebrews 12:22: “But ye are come unto Mount Zion, unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels.”

Note the words, “But ye are come unto Mount Zion, unto the city of the living God.”

Now, what did Psalm 110:2 say? It simply said, “The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion.” Clearly, then, it does not refer to the physical city of Jerusalem. It does not refer to the mountains surrounding Jerusalem, nor to the redeemed of the Lord. It does refer to the heavenly Jerusalem.

If Zion is the abode of God Himself, and if Christ is seated at the right hand of the Father, it should be obvious that Christ is now ruling from the heavenly Zion, not the physical one. What did our Lord say in Matthew 28:18? “All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.” Do you realize that it is not necessary for Christ to be physically on earth in order to rule? He has all power in heaven and in earth. That is why the Bible says that God will send forth the rod of His strength out of Zion. From where He is now, seated at the right hand of the Father, He is ruling.

Five Teachings of Psalm 110:2

“Rule thou,” He said, “in the midst of thine enemies.” Psalm 110:2 teaches us five things. First, Christ has all power and all authority, symbolically shown in the phrase “the rod of thy strength.” Secondly, Christ has enemies. All you have to do is read the Bible or look around. Thirdly, Christ’s kingdom is set up in the midst of His enemies: “Rule thou in the midst of thine enemies.” Fourthly, His enemies are unable to thwart Him, overthrow Him, defeat Him, or dethrone Him. This does not mean that they will not try, but it does teach us that they are unable to do those things. Fifthly, Christ will most certainly and definitely conquer all His enemies. Then they shall be put under His feet, for God said, “Rule thou in the midst of thine enemies.”

Answering the Objection of Appearances

Now, let me cover an objection. I get this objection, I think, 40 times a week. You try to explain that Jesus Christ now has all power and authority, that He is seated at the right hand of God the Father, in sovereign control, working everything out after the counsel of His own will. Inevitably, someone says, “Well, preacher, it surely doesn’t

look like it." They say, "I don't see Christ conquering. I don't see Christ winning. I don't see Christians getting stronger and stronger. It looks to me like the whole world is falling apart, Christians are getting weaker and weaker, and the enemies of Christ are winning. Look at the one-world government, the one-world power, all the chips they want to implant in everybody, and the one number they want to give everybody. It looks to me like everybody is losing ground and the enemy is gaining ground. That's the way it appears to me." Well, that is usually the objection you get.

Now, let me tell you something so absolutely simple it should boggle your mind: our theology is not based upon appearances, circumstances, opinions, what we think, or what others think. Our theology is based upon the Word of God.

Secondly, remember this: Scripture teaches us that we walk by faith and not by sight. We do not look at appearances, circumstances, or situations; we look at the Word of God. It is by faith that we believe, know, and conquer. All you have to do is read Hebrews 11 once again.

Everything was against Abraham, but he conquered. Everything was against Jacob, but he conquered. Everything was against Joseph, but he conquered. What happened when God came to Abraham and said, "I know you're 100 years old and Sarah's 90, but you're going to have a baby"? Can you imagine Abraham saying, "God, look at me; look at my wife. She's past the age of childbearing. There's no way"? Did Abraham say that? What does the Bible say? "He staggered not at the promises of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God." He did not look at circumstances, situations, or appearances. He believed the Word of God.

The problem that we have today is this: we want to judge everything by appearances rather than by Scripture. We look around and say, "Oh, how disheartening it is because, my soul, they're winning." No, they are not winning. I don't care what appearances give us or what circumstances look like. The Scripture says that Christ is sending the rod of His strength out of Zion and that He is ruling in the midst of His enemies.

Thirdly, just because you and I cannot discern God's work, just because we cannot see God working, does not mean that He is not working. God has been gracious to Alice and me and has allowed us to travel around and preach to many people. Usually, someone comes up and says, "Brother Weaver, I just wish there were so many more of us. We're just so few."

I think, "Lord, have mercy. You have been preaching to the people I've been preaching to. Do you realize there are people who believe exactly as we do in every state, community, and area of this country? You might not conceive of them, and you might think you are the only one who believes what you believe, but that's not so, folks. They're everywhere." Just because you cannot see and discern does not mean that they are not there, and just because you cannot discern God's working does not mean that God is not working.

In Matthew 13:33, our Lord says: "Another parable spake he unto them. The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened."

Can you see leaven working? No. You might later see its effects, but you cannot see it when it is working. You cannot look at the bread and say, "Well, it's risen another centimeter since the last time." No, you cannot see it, but the truth is that leaven works. It works silently and secretly, but it does work. God said the kingdom of heaven is like that. You are not necessarily able to see it, but it is still true.

Now, let me tell you what our problem is. What we want is for God to work openly, immediately, and supernaturally. We want to see God do something! Condemn the Jews, all you want to, who were alive when our Lord was alive. But we're just like they are. You know what they wanted Christ to do? They wanted Christ to come on a white charger and overthrow the Roman Empire. That's what they wanted. And that's what we want. We want him to come and just wipe everybody out instantaneously, supernaturally. Do you know why they would not believe that Jesus Christ is Messiah? Because he did not fit their expectations. He did not fit their own personal interpretation of Scripture, besides being wicked and depraved.

And what we do is sit back and say, "Well, it can't be God working because we don't see anything. Nothing's happening." Folks, let me tell you something. It's not that God is not working. What we want is for God to work according to our will and our desires and in the way that we want him to. If he does not conquer the way we think he ought to conquer, then we sit back and say, "Well, he's not conquering." He is, because Scripture says so. I can assure you. The truth is that God rules over the heathen, whether they like it or not, and whether they acknowledge it or not.

You say, "How can you say that?" Look in your Bibles to Psalm 47. I can multiply these passages, but Psalm 47:8 says, "God reigneth over the heathen. God sits upon the throne of his holiness." Did you hear that? God reigneth where? Over the heathen. Who is on the throne over the heathen? God is, whether they like it or not. He sits upon the throne of His holiness. Look in Psalm 96:10: "Say among the heathen that the Lord reigneth." What are we supposed to tell the heathen? The Lord reigneth.

"The world also shall be established and it shall not be moved. He shall judge the people righteously." The psalmist says, "Say among the heathen that the Lord reigneth." What is God doing over the heathen right now? He is ruling over them. He is ruling over them. They may not like it, they may not acknowledge it, and it may not appear to be so to you or to me, but He is ruling over them.

Let me show you three ways that you may be able to discern the rule of God over the heathen. Please remember that God does not have to rule over them the way that we think He ought to or the way that He should. His rule may be manifested in at least three ways. I am going to say this is an irreducible minimum. There may be more ways, but here are at least the minimum three.

Three Ways God Rules Over the Heathen

First of all, He may exercise His rule over them in destroying them. Look in your Bibles, first of all, to Numbers 24 and verse 19: "Out of Jacob shall come he that shall have dominion." Of course, that is Christ. "And shall destroy him that remaineth of the city." Out of Jacob shall come He that shall have dominion, and He shall destroy.

Now turn your Bibles to Psalm 59 and verse 5. I could multiply the Scriptures, but these few should prove the point. "Thou therefore, O Lord God of hosts"—and the word "hosts" refers to armies. So literally it says, "Thou therefore, O Lord God of the armies, the God of Israel, awake to visit all the heathen. Be not merciful to any wicked transgressor." God can, if He so chooses, destroy all of His enemies or any part of His enemies.

Without asking you to turn back to Psalm 110, verse 7, let me read it to you: "He shall judge among the heathen. He shall fill the places with dead bodies. He shall wound the heads over many countries." How does God manifest His rule over the heathen? One of the ways is by destroying them. This is very important. God may either destroy His enemies supernaturally or naturally, or by a combination of both.

You and I both know it was a supernatural act of God that destroyed Pharaoh and his armies. It was a supernatural act of God combined with a natural act that destroyed King Herod in Acts chapter 12, when God smote him with worms so that he died. It was a supernatural act of God when God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah. It was a natural act that God used to finish off Haman.

He was hanged on his own gallows. God is not confined to a supernatural act. He may use what we would call natural acts, or a combination of natural acts.

Remember what happened in Mark chapter 4. The disciples were in the boat; the wind was boisterous and the waves were up, while our Lord was asleep. Storms do not bother the Son of God. When they finally got to Him, they said, “Master, awake, lest we perish.” He woke and said, “O ye of little faith.” Then He said, “Wind, be still, and waves be calm.” They said, “What manner of man is this that even the wind and the sea obey his voice?”

Tsunamis, hurricanes, tornadoes, wind, sleet, hail, snow, ice, floods, plagues, drought, disease, and a host of other natural phenomena are in His arsenal.

He does not have to send fire from heaven to destroy everyone. Many times in the Bible, God simply brought an east wind, and the east wind took care of everything. The point is this: do not limit God

to supernatural acts. Yes, God may act supernaturally. He is a supernatural being, but He is in control of all the natural occurrences that happen in this world.

Deuteronomy 32:34 asks, “Is not this laid up in store with me and sealed up among my treasures?” What is sealed up among God’s treasures? “To me belongeth vengeance and recompence.” “Their foot shall slide in due time: for the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste.” That is what is sealed up in God’s treasures: His divine vengeance. That vengeance may be exercised in several ways.

In Job 38:22, God asks Job, “Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow? Or hast thou seen the treasures of the hail?” Then He says, “Which I have reserved against the time of trouble, against the day of battle and war.” God can send a hailstorm and crush all our crops. He can send snow or an avalanche. He may do whatever He pleases.

Amos 4 shows a series of things God has used in times past. In verse 6 He says, “I also have given you cleanness of teeth in all your cities and want of bread in all your places. Yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord.” What did God use there? Famine—a lack of food.

Then He says, “I also have withholden the rain from you, when there was yet three months to the harvest, and I caused it to rain upon one city, and caused it not to rain upon another city. One piece was rained upon, and the piece whereupon it rained not withered. So two or three cities wandered into the one city to drink water, but they were not satisfied. Yet have ye not returned to me, saith the Lord.” What did the Lord use there? Drought.

"I have smitten you with blasting and mildew. When your gardens and your vineyards and your fig trees and your olive trees were increased, the palmerworm devoured them. Yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord." What did God use there? Worms, mold, and mildew. "I have sent among you the pestilence after the manner of Egypt. Your young men have I slain with a sword, and have taken away your horses, and I have made the stink of your camps to come up into your nostrils. Yet have ye not returned to me, saith the Lord."

What did the Lord use? He used war, pestilence, plague, and disease. "I've overthrown some of you as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and ye were as a firebrand plucked out of the burning. Yet have ye not returned to me, saith the Lord." God said, "I've even used supernatural acts, and it still didn't get your attention."

"Therefore, thus will I do unto thee, O Israel, and because I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, O Israel." "For lo, he that formeth the mountains, and createth the wind, and declareth unto man what is his thought, that maketh the morning darkness, and treadeth upon the high places of the earth, the Lord, the God of hosts, is his name." God did all of that.

Old Ralph Barnard, who has been dead many years, was an evangelist, and a tough one. He had a sermon titled "The God of Scripture Kills People." Who sent the tsunami to Southeast Asia? God did. Who brought the hurricanes to Florida? God did. Who sends the tornadoes through the land? God does.

Look in your Bibles to Amos 3 and verse 6. "Shall a trumpet be blown in the city and the people not be afraid? Shall there be evil in a city and the Lord hath not done it?" God said, "I'm the one that brings those catastrophes. It's not Mother Nature. It's Father God. It's not Gaia, the goddess of the earth who is mad at us. It's the sovereign God of heaven and earth who rules among the heathen. And one thing he does is he destroys them."

As long as we attribute these acts of nature to Mother Nature, there is no need for us to repent. We can keep going because everything happens by luck, chance, fate, or fortune. But if you understand that God does this, then you understand you had better repent, because God is angry with the wicked. How does God rule over the heathen?

Number one, He can, if He so chooses, destroy them—all of them or any part of them. Half a million people is a lot of people to be wiped out at one time. People ask, “When is God going to do something?” Do you realize there is a flesh-eating virus that, if you just get a paper cut on your finger, makes you basically a dead man if that virus gets in you? God does not have to send supernatural acts to wipe out His enemies.

He sent emerods to the Philistines—or hemorrhoids—and they were begging to have that ark gone.

Secondly, God can subdue His enemies without destroying them. He does not necessarily have to destroy His enemies; He may, if He pleases, but He can also subdue them. What did He do to the Canaanites who were not destroyed? He subdued them to the extent that they were not a threat to His kingdom, His people, or His work. They had absolutely no power to resist.

Look at Psalm 47, verse 3. In fact, let us read verse 2 so you can see the context: "For the Lord Most High is terrible. He is the Great King over all the earth. He shall subdue the people under us and the nations under our feet."

Let me read Philippians 3:21: "Who shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body according to the working whereby He is able to subdue all things to Himself." God is able to subdue His enemies. He is quite capable of making His enemies be at peace with Him and with His people. He can fix it so they will not want to rebel, fuss, or fight.

When God says in Psalm 110:2, "Rule thou in the midst of thine enemies," the word "rule" is the Hebrew word "radah," which means to rule, to have dominion over, to dominate, to tread down, or to crumble off. Literally, it says, "Tread down your enemies."

Now let me show you the power of God in subduing His enemies. Turn in your Bibles to Exodus chapter 34, beginning with verse 23. God demanded that all the males in Israel appear before Him three times a year for those seven annual feasts.

The women and children went many times and were encouraged to go, but the men had to go; it was mandatory. Let me ask you: Here, the Israelites have gone into the land of the Canaanites, killed a lot of them—murdered them, according to their eyes. It was not murder; it was really an execution, because God sent them in there. The ones they did not kill, they enslaved.

Now, what would keep those Canaanites from rising up in rebellion, killing the women and children, and reclaiming the land if all the Hebrew males were up in Jerusalem worshiping God? What would stop them? Exodus 34:23 says, "Thrice," that is, three times in

the year, “shall all your men children appear before the Lord God, the God of Israel.” Three times a year, they had to come there. The next verse gives the reason: “For I will cast out the nations before thee, and enlarge thy borders. Neither shall any man desire thy land, when thou shalt go up to appear before the Lord thy God thrice in the year.”

God said there would be no rebellions, uprisings, or reprisals. They would not even desire to have their land back. He has such control over the heathen that He controls not only their acts but also their desires. Proverbs 21:1 says, “The king’s heart is in the hand of the Lord, and as rivers of water, he turneth it whithersoever he willeth.” If God can turn the king’s heart wherever He wants, He can turn the average man’s heart anywhere He wants. God can subdue His enemies without destroying them, if He so chooses.

Thirdly, there is another way: He may save them or convert them. Then they are no longer His enemies but His friends. We must remember that at one time we were enemies as well. If, in the first century, we had taken a poll concerning the man most likely—using good South Georgia language—to bust hell wide open, who would have won hands down? Saul of Tarsus. He hated Christ, took Christians, men, women, and children, and threw them into dungeons and prisons. He did everything he could against Christ and consented to the death of Stephen.

And yet, what did God do in Acts chapter 9? He knocked Saul to his feet, or to his face, and saved him. Saul of Tarsus became the Apostle Paul, one of the greatest apostles in the New Testament. God has no problem converting sinners. Most commentators say that verse 2 refers mainly to the power of the gospel. Matthew Henry says concerning Psalm 110, verse 2:

"The Messiah, when he sits on the right hand of the majesty in the heavens, will have a church on earth and will have an eye to it. For he is king upon the holy hill of Zion, in opposition of Mount Zion, that frightful mountain on which the law was given. The kingdom of Christ took rise from Zion, the city of David, for he was the son of David, and was to have the throne of his father David. By the rod of his strength, or his strong rod, is meant his everlasting gospel and the power of the Holy Ghost going along with it.

"The report of the word and the arm of the Lord accompanying it. The gospel coming in word and power and in the Holy Ghost. By the Word and Spirit of God, souls were to be reduced first and brought into obedience to God, and then ruled and governed according to the will of God. This strong rod God sent forth. He poured out the Spirit and gave both commissions and qualifications to those that preached the Word and ministered the Spirit. It was sent out of Zion, for there the Spirit was given, and there the preaching of the gospel among all nations must begin. Out of Zion must go forth the law of faith. Note, the gospel of Christ being sent of God is mighty through God to do wonders. It is the rod of Christ's strength.

"Some make it to allude not only to the scepter of a prince, denoting the glory of Christ shining in the gospel, but to a shepherd's crook, his rod and staff, denoting the tender care Christ takes over his church, for he is both the great and the good shepherd."

Thus Matthew Henry, along with practically all commentators, says that this refers to the power of Christ in the gospel as well.

SCRIPTURE READING - Isaiah 40:9-11; Isaiah 52:7 (KJV)

Look in your Bibles to Isaiah 40. Isaiah 40. And let's begin reading there with verse 9. You'll see what I'm talking about. Isaiah 40, verse 9. And we'll read through verse 11. Isaiah 40, verse 9. Isaiah 40, verse 9: "O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain, O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength, lift it up, be not afraid, say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God. Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand and his arm shall rule for him. Behold, his reward is with him and his work before him." Note what this strong arm, this strong hand shall do: "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd and shall gather the lambs with his arm and carry them in his bosom and shall gently lead those that are with young." Then if you look at Isaiah 52 verses 7 through 10, Isaiah 52 verses 7 through 10. Isaiah 52, verse 7: "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation, that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth."

"The watchmen shall lift up a voice, and the voice together shall they sing. For they shall see eye to eye when the Lord shall bring again Zion. Break forth in the joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem. For the Lord hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem. The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations. And all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God." Thus, if He so chooses, God may convert His enemies.

Usually, the rule of Christ is made manifest in one of three ways, or in some combination of them. He does not have to destroy everybody, save everybody, or subdue everybody. He can do anything that He pleases. He is Sovereign and in control, ruling and reigning with authority, power, and dominion, whether we see or acknowledge it or not.

Conclusion and Application

He shall bring all things under His feet, not in our time or way, but in His time and way. Is Christ now ruling? Yes. Is He ruling over the heathen? Yes. Does He have everything under control? Yes. Does it necessarily have to appear that way to us? No. Scripture teaches it, and we bow to Scripture.

His kingdom is of God the Father. Therefore, His kingdom stands, and the crown sits solidly upon His head; no one can remove it. He is King of Kings and Lord of Lords. One commentator applied it this way: "He shall rule in the midst of his enemies. He sits in heaven in the midst of his friends. His throne of glory there is surrounded with none but faithful worshipers. He rules on earth in the midst of his enemies. And his throne of government here is surrounded with those that hate and fight against him."

Christ's church is a lily among thorns, and His disciples are sent forth as sheep in the midst of wolves. Yet He reigns. He shall bring everything out for our good and His glory. He will send the rod of His strength out of Zion. He will either destroy, subdue, or save His enemies. He is reigning and on the throne. We are not the losers; we are the victors.

We need to learn to emulate our Father. In Psalm 2, when the kings of the earth gathered against Him and said, “Let us break His bands asunder. Let us burst His cords from us,” what did God do? “Then he that sitteth in heaven shall laugh.” Why? Because of the uselessness of their rebellion.

Let men be proud, arrogant, haughty, heady, high-minded, say whatever they want, and proclaim what they want to do. We know they can go only as far as God allows and do only what God allows, for He sits on the throne.

Father, speak to our hearts. Help us, Lord, to live for Thee. Give us grace to serve Thee acceptably with reverence and godly fear. Teach us to walk by faith and not by sight, and give us grace to be obedient in every area of our life. In Thy name we pray, Amen.

CHAPTER 5

Messiah's Divine Rights

Part Five

Introduction and Review of Psalm 110:1-2

Psalm 110, beginning with verse 1: "The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. The LORD shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth. The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek. The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath. He shall judge among the heathen, he shall fill the places with the dead bodies; he shall wound the heads over many countries. He shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall he lift up the head."

We have been looking at Psalm 110 for the last four weeks. In verse 1, we saw that our Lord deserves royal honor, not only because of his person—he is God—but also because of his position: he is seated at the right hand of God.

We considered these three phrases: "The LORD said unto my Lord," "Sit thou at my right hand," and "until I make thine enemies thy footstool." Then we looked at verse 2: "The LORD shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies." Our Lord has the right to rule the heathen. He possesses divine authority and power and rules with a rod. That rod may be either a threatening rod or a friendly rod.

Our Lord can take care of his enemies in one of three ways: he may destroy them, subjugate them, or convert them. Either way, it is totally, absolutely up to him. Whatever he does is right. He is sovereign, and whatever he does will be right. Some will praise the honor of his justice, and others will praise the honor of his grace.

Today we come to verse 3: "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." That is the phrase we will deal with. Verse 3 is a very powerful and telling verse, and it can also be a further explanation of verse 2.

One of the ways that God takes care of His enemies is that He converts them, and therefore they become His friends. “Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power,” so He can demonstrate His grace and make His enemies His friends through an act of grace. He deserves reverent homage. He not only deserves royal honor and the right to rule the heathen, but He also deserves reverent homage.

The Difference Between Enemies and Willing People

While our Lord’s enemies may serve Him reluctantly and unwillingly, the truth is that His people eagerly and willingly serve Him. All are going to serve, but His enemies serve reluctantly and unwillingly, whereas His people serve Him willingly and eagerly. What is the difference? The answer is grace, pure and simple. The only reason we serve Him willingly is because of His grace.

We must remember that we, too, were once the enemies of Christ. The Bible says in Romans 5:10 that we were once enemies. In Colossians 1:21, the Bible tells us that we were enemies in our minds. Ephesians 2:1–3 tells us that we were dead in trespasses and sins and that we, too, were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. At one time we walked in disobedience. We walked according

to the prince of the power of the air. We fulfilled the lusts of our flesh and the desires of our minds. But now we serve Christ, and we serve Him willingly. So we have to ask the question: Who or what made the difference?

Who Makes You to Differ?

A very important question is asked in 1 Corinthians 4:7, and the answer will most certainly reveal whether or not we understand salvation by grace. The Apostle Paul asks the Corinthians, “For who maketh thee to differ from another? And what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?” Look at the first part: “For who maketh thee to differ from another?” The second part is this: “What hast thou that thou didst not receive?” And then there is a third part: “If thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory or boast as if thou didst not receive it?” Why is it that you are saved and others are lost? Why is it that you understand truth while a multitude of others are wallowing in abysmal ignorance?

Who receives the credit and honor for your conversion? Who made you to differ? What do you have that you did not receive from God? Have you ever wondered why you were born in a land of comparative freedom while others struggle daily to avoid tyrannical imprisonment and death? Why were you born with intelligence, physical strength, and a healthy body while others are mentally and physically handicapped? Who made you to differ? Was it your will, your decision, your education? Were you simply smarter than everyone else?

If you ascribe any of your salvation to yourself—your intellect, your will, your works, your merit, or your deeds—you do not understand the salvation that Scripture declares and Christ bestows. God's salvation is a work of God, not a work of man. It is a supernatural work, and man does not cooperate in that salvation in any way whatsoever. Man does not save himself; man does not help save himself.

Monergism vs. Synergism

The Bible does not teach synergism; it teaches monergism. Mono means one or alone, and ergo means I work. Monergism is the teaching that God works alone in salvation. Synergism—syn means to bring together, or two, or pulling together—teaches that God and man cooperate, that they work together in saving man. The Bible does not teach synergism. It teaches monergism, plain and simple: God works alone in salvation.

Consider Mark chapter 10, the rich young ruler who came to Christ and asked, "Good Master, what good thing must I do that I may inherit eternal life?" Our Lord told him to keep the commandments. The young man answered, "Well, all these have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet?" Our Lord then said, "Well, if you want to really be perfect, you go and sell everything that you have and you give to the poor and you take up your cross and follow me."

You and I both understand that when we were converted, we never sold everything we had and gave to the poor. Why did our Lord tell this young man that? The answer is very simple. He was applying the law of God. Here was a young man who was exceedingly covetous because he was very rich, and our Lord was putting His finger upon the very spot of his sin and rebellion against God. This young man thought that he had kept all of God's commandments, but he had not even kept the first commandment, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me," because his money was his god.

Our Lord's words remain in the same context of salvation. In Mark chapter 10, beginning at verse 23, He says: "And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God! And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." Then, in verse 26: "And they were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves, Who then can be saved?" What is the subject? Salvation. Jesus answers in verse 27: "And Jesus looking

upon them saith, With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible."

Salvation as Divine Revelation

What did our Lord just say? It is impossible for man to save himself. It is impossible for man to help save himself. Man can do absolutely nothing toward his salvation.

Salvation is, in one sense of the word, a revelation of God as well as a work of God. In Matthew 11:27, our Lord says, "All things are delivered unto me of my Father. And no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." No man knows the Father except the Son and the one to whom the Son will reveal Him.

Now, based upon the Word of God, here is my question: How many can know the Father or the Son apart from divine revelation? None. Not one. Only God can reveal God.

Let me ask you a question. Since salvation is basically divine revelation—“no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son”—that means this: If the Father does not reveal the Son, then no one knows Him. And if the Son does not reveal the Father, then no one knows Him.

Now let me show you an illustration. Look in Matthew chapter 16, and let us begin reading there at verse 13 of Peter’s confession. Let me show you the application of Matthew 11 and verse 27. Matthew chapter 16, verse 13: “When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?”

Here is the question: “Who do men say that I am?” Verse 14 says, “Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets.” That is who they say He is. But watch the next question: “But whom say ye that I am?” The question is no longer who men say that He is, but who they themselves say that He is.

Verse 16: “And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” Others were saying that Christ was John the Baptist, Elijah, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets. But Peter

comes back and says, “I will tell you who you are. You are the Christ. You are the anointed one. You are the Messiah. You are God in the flesh. You are the Son of God. That is who you are.” Now here is my question: How did Peter know that?

Was he smarter than everyone else, more intellectual while others were plain dumb? Did he exercise his will more than anyone else? Did he make a decision to know that? How did Peter know that Jesus Christ was God in the flesh, the Messiah, the anointed One of God?

In verse 17, our Lord tells us, “And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.”

How did Peter know who Jesus Christ was? The answer is that the Father revealed Him. It was not that Peter was smarter, exercised his will, or was more intellectual. The Father revealed the Son to Peter, and Peter understood that Jesus Christ was indeed the Son of God. That is why the Bible says in Matthew 11:27 that only the Father can reveal the Son, and only the Son can reveal the Father. It takes God to reveal God.

The Willingness of God's People

That is why Jonah, in Jonah 2:9, said, “Salvation is of the LORD.” It is a work of God and an act of God. You say, “But wait a minute, Pastor. I know the Bible teaches what you just said because you just read it to me. But when I came to Christ, I willed to come to Christ. I wanted to come to Christ.” Let me tell you up front, I do not doubt that for one minute. When I came to Christ, I willed to come to Christ, and I wanted to come to Christ. The question is not whether you willed to come to Christ. The question is, who made you willing to come to Christ? What made you willing to come to Christ?

The very fact that there were times in our lives when we were unwilling to come to Christ and did not want to come to Christ demonstrates that something had to happen to our wills and our thinking. For all our lives, we were unwilling to come and did not want to come; then, one day, all of a sudden, we willed to come and wanted to come. This demonstrates the absolute necessity of the supernatural power of God in salvation. All of us lived in rebellion

for years before we came to Christ. We constantly and continually refused to come until the time we did come. So the question is, what made us come to Christ?

What does the Bible say in Psalm 110:3? “Thy people shall be willing.” Tell me when? “In the day of thy power.” Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power. In other words, Scripture teaches us that the power of God is absolutely necessary to bring us savingly to Jesus Christ. I want you to turn in your Bibles to John chapter 1, because one of the main passages that deals with salvation is the passage that denies salvation is based upon the will of man. Look in John 1, and let us begin reading at verse 11. Everyone knows this passage.

John 1:12-13 and the Denial of Human Will in Salvation

The amazing thing is that we know it, yet we do not ever think about it in the light that we should. Look carefully at John 1:11–13: "He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

When we came to Christ, we received Him. As many as received Him, to them gave He what? Power, or authority, to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name. Now why did we believe on His name? Why did we receive Him?

The Bible says in verse 13, "which were born"—and here are the negatives—"not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." The Bible is denying that our salvation is based upon our ancestry. We were not saved because of blood, nor are we saved because of works, nor of the will of man. We are not saved because of our own will. We were born not of blood—ancestry had nothing to do with it—nor of the will of the flesh—works had nothing to do with it—nor of the will of man—our wills had nothing to do with it. What did have to do with it? "Of God."

So go back to verse 12, put the negatives in parentheses, and read it this way: "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to

become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name, which were born of God." The positive is that we were born of God.

I have dealt with this truth many times over the years, but because of the context of Psalm 110, I am going to deal with it again: "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." Besides that, in the last two weeks, two or three individuals have asked me the same question, usually phrased this way: "Well, I understand that God is sovereign and I understand that salvation is of the Lord, but what about the will of man?"

Free Will vs. Freedom of Will

"What about man's free will?" I want to make a statement about free will right now and prove it, hopefully, from Scripture and from common reason. But listen carefully, because I do not want to be misunderstood. Here's my statement about free will: There ain't no such animal. Free will does not exist. The Bible does not teach free will. What it does teach is freedom of will.

There are two totally different concepts, two totally different positions. I am going to explain free will a little bit later. Free will is a theological concept that teaches that man can save himself. Free will teaches that man can will himself into the kingdom of God, or at least take the first step toward his salvation. After he takes the first step toward his salvation, God is obligated to save him and finish the salvation process.

Now, Erasmus, a Roman Catholic scholar and a humanist who attacked Martin Luther, the reformer, attacked Luther on the basis of free will because Erasmus believed in free will. The Roman Catholic Church taught free will, and Erasmus wrote a scathing diatribe against Luther. In response to Erasmus's diatribe, Luther wrote back a treatise. It is now a book, just about this thick, and the name of the book is The Bondage of the Will. It is a wonderful book, and I want you to listen to what Luther said to Erasmus in thanking him for bringing up the subject of free will. Here's what Luther said to Erasmus:

"You alone have attacked the real thing. That is the essential issue. You have not worried me with those extraneous issues about the

papacy, purgatory, indulgences and such like, trifles rather than issues, in respect of which almost all to date have sought my blood. You and you alone have seen the hinge on which all turns and aimed for the vital spot. For that I heartily thank you, for it is more gratifying to me to deal with the real issue."

What did he say to Erasmus? “You and you alone have seen the hinge on which all turns and have aimed for the vital spot.” Is salvation based upon the will of man or the will of God? The official position of the Roman Catholic Church is that man has a free will, and that man uses that free will to enter into salvation. According to the doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church, salvation is partly the work of man and partly the work of God.

In fact, in the Council of Trent in the 1500s, the Roman Catholic Church came out with certain anathemas. Anathema is a Greek word meaning to be cursed, condemned, or set apart for certain and sure destruction. One of the anathemas in the Council of Trent was this: “If any man denies the doctrine of free will, let him be anathema.” Let him be doomed, damned, and set apart for certain destruction.

Luther said this once again to Erasmus: “Others who have lived before me have attacked the Pope’s evil and scandalous life. But I have attacked him in his doctrine.” There is a difference. I wish it were possible today for me to quote extensively from the book The Bondage of the Will, but time would not allow me to do so. Let me encourage you to purchase, rent, or borrow the book and read it. It is a very excellent dissertation, easily read, and most helpful. Martin Luther nails Erasmus, and he nails down this concept, showing that the will is not free, but rather the will is in bondage.

Shortly, I am going to show you the distinction between free will and freedom of will. I hope you are going to see the absolute necessity for maintaining that distinction. I am going to give you a definition of free will. This is not my definition; I did not make it up. You can look in any systematic theology book and come up with this definition. Here is how the Arminians, those who hold free will, define free will: “That concept of the will whereby the will of man is regarded as autonomous, that is, independent, and undetermined, and therefore capable of volition, that is, willing, either good or bad, apart from any conditioning by a moral and religious character.”

To explain this definition, listen to the words of Erasmus, who believed in free will: “Free will is the power of the human will by which a man may apply himself to those things that lead to eternal salvation, or turn away from the same.” What did Erasmus say? Will yourself to be saved, or will yourself to turn away from it. It is just that simple. That is free will.

The definition of free will is that concept of a will whereby the will of man is regarded as autonomous and independent, and therefore capable of volition, either good or bad, apart from any conditioning by moral or religious character.

First of all, understand that this definition denies the biblical doctrine of total depravity and total inability. It views man as autonomous and undetermined. According to that definition, man is not totally depraved; he is still capable of willing either good or evil. I once asked a Free Will Baptist preacher, “Do you believe in total depravity?” He said, “Well, of course I do.” I said, “You do?” He said, “Yes, I believe that man is totally depraved everywhere except his will.” I said, “Sir, if you exclude one area, it is not total. What you believe in is partial depravity, not total depravity.” If you follow that definition, it is an outright denial of total depravity. No one who holds to the doctrine of free will can believe in total depravity.

Isaiah says, “From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it.” Paul the apostle says we are all gone out of the way; there is none righteous, no, not one, and there is none that doeth good. We are totally and completely depraved.

Secondly, notice that this definition does away with the absolute necessity of conviction by the Holy Spirit. It says that the will of man is autonomous and undetermined, and therefore capable of willing either good or bad apart from any conditioning by a moral and religious character. In other words, man does not need to be convicted by the Holy Spirit; he is quite capable of turning to the good by himself. Thus, the definition not only denies total depravity, but also does away with the necessity of Holy Spirit conviction.

Thirdly, it views the will of man in abstraction from the whole man. The will of man is not supreme or sovereign. What I am going

to show you from Scripture is that the will of man is in bondage. It is in captivity to his sins, his lusts, his desires, and his thoughts.

So what is free will? Free will is a theological concept that teaches that man can will himself into heaven, initiate his salvation, save himself, help save himself, or, if he so chooses, turn away from it. Before I explain freedom of will, I want to demonstrate the absolute impossibility of the concept of free will.

The Impossibility of Free Will

I am going to give you four simple thoughts to show why there cannot be free will. If free will exists, then, for that will to be free, there must be at least a minimum of four things. First of all, there must be an awareness of the alternatives to be chosen. If your will is actually free, there must be an awareness of the alternatives available; in other words, it must be able to discern between them.

Let us talk about the sinner. What does free will say? It says he is able to turn to God or turn away from God. For free will to be free, there must be a discernment of the alternatives available. Right at the very beginning, however, we have a problem: there is a vast difference between intellectual knowledge and spiritual saving knowledge. Here is the sinner, and we say he has free will.

"Do you want to go to heaven? You want to go to hell? You want to love God? You want to love the devil? Tell me which one you choose right now." For his will to be free, he must be able to distinguish between the alternatives. Here we have a problem. First Corinthians 2:14 says, "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Fallen man does not have the ability to discern spiritual things. Second Corinthians 4:4 talks about his eyes being blinded. Do you remember what our Lord said in John 3:6? "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." How can you choose something that you do not see or understand, that you are not even aware of? You cannot possibly be aware of it unless you have been regenerated.

So, for free will to be free, there must be an awareness of the alternatives to be chosen. This problem is insurmountable because

you cannot choose that which you do not know, understand, or see. The second truth is this: For free will to be free, there must not only be an awareness of the alternatives to be chosen; there must also be a reliable criterion to distinguish the best alternative.

As Christians, what is our criterion for everything? The Word of God. For the unsaved, what is their criterion? Their own corrupt minds.

Ephesians 4:17 says, "This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind." The word vanity means the uselessness, the worthlessness of their mind. He then tells you why it is so useless and worthless: "Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart."

That shows you very clearly that man has a problem: there is no reliable criterion. Colossians 1:21 says, "And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works." Titus 1:15 says, "Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled." Can an unsaved man have a reliable criterion? No. He has his own corrupt, depraved reasoning. He is ignorant of God. So there is no reliable criterion.

For free will to be free, there must be an awareness of the alternatives. There must be a reliable criterion. But, thirdly, there must be an actual will to choose and to seek the best. Let us return to our illustration. Here is a sinner. Suppose I tell him about heaven and tell him about hell. Suppose I even give him a reliable criterion, the Bible, and show it to him: there it is; choose one or the other. But the third thing is that he must actually have the will to choose and to seek the best alternative.

Will a sinner by nature choose that which is right, holy, and godly? Or will he choose that which satisfies his own wicked thoughts, his own lustful desires, and his own evil propensities? Let me illustrate it. Here is the sinner whom we say has a free will. I tell him about the alternatives, but you have to remember that there is a difference between saving knowledge and intellectual knowledge. I

give him a reliable criterion and show it to him right out of the Bible. Then I say to him, “Sir, you have been a drunk over the last forty years. I tell you what I am going to do.

“I have right here in my hand—and in one of my hands—an Oxford wide-margin, leather-bound King James Bible that cost me 140 bucks. I will give you this King James Bible, or I will give you this fifth of whiskey, whichever one you want.” Would you please tell me which one that drunk is going to choose? He is going to choose the whiskey. I do not care if the whiskey is five bucks. I do not care if the whiskey was twenty bucks. Why will he choose the whiskey?

Because of the way he thinks and because of his evil desires, man's will is controlled by his thoughts, his sins, his desires, and his lust. The will of man is not some little abstract thing floating around somewhere in the universe. It is tied to his desires and to his thinking. The will never acts first. As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he.

We think, we desire, and then we do. Man's will cannot be viewed in abstraction; it is bound to everything that he is. For free will to be free, there must be an awareness of the alternatives. There must be a reliable criterion. You must have the will actually to seek and choose the best alternative. But, fourthly, for the will to be truly free, it must have the power to achieve that which it chooses.

Keep in mind that there is a difference between saving knowledge and intellectual knowledge. Suppose I give a man the alternatives, give him a reliable criterion, and show it to him from the Bible. Suppose he says, “Well, yea, I do want to be saved. I do want to go to heaven. I don't want to go to hell.” What is the fourth thing absolutely necessary for free will to be free? You must have the power to achieve or accomplish that which you choose.

Our Lord says in John 6:44, “No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.” No man can come unto Christ. Suppose I give a man an awareness of the alternative, show it to him from the Bible, and he says, “I want it.” Does he have the power in and of himself to come to Jesus Christ? No. How can you have a free will if you cannot accomplish that which you choose?

I hope you understand that “can” is a term of ability, while “may” is a term of permission. You could say to me, “Pastor, can I play that piano?” I would respond, “You have my permission if you have the ability.” There is a difference between those two things. Men are invited to Christ, and men may have that invitation to come to Christ. But that does not mean they have the ability and power in and of themselves to come to Christ. What does the Bible say in Romans 8 and verse 7? “For the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.” Very obviously, man cannot accomplish that which he chooses. He does not have the power to do so.

It is almost impossible for me to comprehend how anyone could hold the concept of free will in light of the Scriptures. Nowhere does the Bible teach free will—that man can initiate his own salvation or cooperate in his own salvation. The Scriptures do indeed teach freedom of will, which is a vastly different concept. Freedom of will is simply the truth that everything is free to act out its nature within certain limitations.

A bird is free to be a bird. A bird is free to fly in the air, but he is not free to fly under the earth. There is a limitation on him. A fish is free to be a fish. A fish is free to swim in the water, but he is not free to swim in the air.

A sinner is free to sin. He is free to act out his nature, to do that which his nature is made of, and that is sinfulness. The nature of the entity is the limiting factor. A sinner is free to sin, but he is not free to do that which is holy and right, because he is limited by his nature. He can only do that which his nature allows him to do.

If you want a good picture of man, picture a man in a small dungeon, with four walls. He is chained and shackled by his hands, his neck, and his feet. That man is free to move as far as his chains, shackles, and dungeon walls will allow him to move, but no further. That is a sinner. He is free to move, act, and do whatever his nature allows him to do, but no further.

Why? Because his will is bound to his lusts. A sinner is not going to do anything other than what his lusts and desires dictate to him.

The Fourfold State of Man

Many years ago, a Puritan pastor named Thomas Boston wrote a book entitled "The Fourfold State of Man." That book is still available, and I would certainly encourage you to get it and read it. Boston points out the problem most of us have in understanding this concept, because those who believe in free will still postulate a Garden of Eden type scenario for man throughout history. The only problem is that we have not been in the Garden of Eden for over 6000 years.

Boston shows in this book the fourfold state of man. If you understand anthropology, the doctrine of man, you must consider man in four different states. Man is totally different in each one. He considers man in the Garden of Eden, which we would probably call innocence; fallen man, that is, man in nature; man in grace, that is, converted and regenerated; and man in glory, or in heaven. Man is different in each of those four states.

For instance, in the garden, Adam did have free will in the sense that he was mutable. Adam was created with original righteousness, original holiness, and knowledge. Although he was a perfect man in that sense, he was mutable. Adam could please God; he had the ability to please God, but he also had the ability to displease God. That is what mutable means: he could change.

You must remember that Adam was in a perfect environment. There was no sin, no rebellion, and no peer pressure. Yet in that perfect environment Adam used his will to sin against God. If he sinned against God in a perfect environment, what fault do we have in an imperfect environment, with sin in our nature and sin on our mind? The point I am trying to make is this, folks: it is not free will we need; it is free grace. Adam was totally different from any man who ever lived. He could please God or he could displease God.

What did Adam do with his will? He sinned against God. When Adam sinned, he became a fallen creature, a man in the state of nature. He was no longer perfect; he no longer had original righteousness, holiness, and knowledge. God drove him from the garden and put a curse upon him. What did Adam lose? He lost his ability. He no longer had the ability to please God.

He not only doomed and damned himself; he doomed and damned his posterity. Romans 5:12 says, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." When did all sin? We all sinned in Adam. Adam is no longer mutable; he is fallen. He no longer has the ability to please God. He is a sinner, wicked, and possessed of a sin nature. Sin is imputed to him, and the evidence that he is a sinner is that he died. Romans 6:23 says, "For the wages of sin is death."

What happened to all Adam's posterity? We were born into sin, with a sinful nature. We were not born with a blank tablet—tabula rasa. No, we did not start out in this world innocent.

We are not our own Adam, as Pelagius taught. The Bible says in Psalm 58:3, “The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies.” We were born with a sinful nature. This is man in nature. This is not man in the garden. We are no longer in the garden. We have fallen. We have sinned. We have rebelled.

We are under the curse and the wrath of God. Romans 8:7–8 says, “Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.” What can fallen man do? Nothing. Zilch. We have lost our ability. There is not one thing we can do to please God. You say, “Well, we can turn to Him.” We cannot even do that. We do not have the will to turn to Him.

Here is man in the garden, and now man in nature. Man in nature is totally different from man in the garden. Thirdly, there is man in grace. What does God do? God sovereignly and mercifully comes along and saves us. He regenerates us. He converts us. He renews our minds. He restores our knowledge. He gives us holiness and righteousness.

Now, in the state of grace, we can please God. Isn’t that wonderful? The Bible says in 2 Timothy, “no man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.” Now, in Christ Jesus, we have the ability to please God again. I am thankful for that. But there

is still a problem, although we have been saved by grace through faith. We not only have the ability to please God; we also have the ability to displease Him by disobeying Him. Man in grace is not the same as he is in nature. In nature, man cannot please God. In grace, man can please God, but he can still displease Him as well. Then, when you get to the fourth state, glory, our wills are fixed.

We will never, ever sin again, nor will we ever desire to sin. Nor will we ever will ourselves out of glory. No. Man is totally different in those four states. What most people want to do is say, "Well, man today is just like Adam." No, he is not just like Adam. There is nothing about us that is like Adam. We are all sinners, and we now have a sinful nature and therefore sin. We are not born our own Adam.

Now, fallen man always wishes to think that he has free will in spiritual things, even though he knows that he does not have free will in natural things. To me, this kind of blows my mind. You can see it on the one hand, that you do not have free will over here, but when you talk about salvation, oh yes, there is free will over there. Can anybody in this room will himself to be fat? No, you cannot—not just by willing.

Can you will yourself to be thin? Can you will yourself to have a head full of curly, wavy hair? Can you will yourself to be handsome or pretty? Can you will yourself to be rich? The answer is no.

Now, it is true that our wills may be involved in some of those things. If I want to be thin, yes, I must will and determine that I am going to go on a diet and stay on that diet. But I cannot, by a simple act of my will, will myself handsome, rich, or thin. You know you cannot do that. And yet people think that somehow they can just will themselves to be Christians and be in heaven. No, it just does not work like that.

John 5:40 and the Bondage of the Will

Now, I want you to turn in your Bibles to John 5:40. Here is the standard verse that most people interpret as meaning free will. Our Lord looked at these unbelievers and said, "And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life."

Most will take this text to mean that you could come if you will to come, and therefore that man has the ability to come. But that flies straight in the face of what our Lord said in John 6:44: “No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him.” It is true that our Lord looked at these unbelievers and said, “Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.” But let me show you what He is saying in the context. The context does not teach free will; it teaches bondage of the will.

For instance, look in verse 32. Our Lord begins by giving witnesses concerning Himself: “There is another that beareth witness of me; and I know that the witness which he witnesseth of me is true.” Then He says, “Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth. But I receive not testimony from man: but these things I say, that ye might be saved.” He was a burning and a shining light, and they were willing for a season to rejoice in his light. John the Baptist testified of Christ, saying, “There's the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.” They were willing for a time to listen to John, but not for long.

Then, in verse 36, our Lord gives a greater witness than that of John: “For the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me.” He went about doing good, and all of His works testified that He is the Son of God. Thus Christ had the witness of John the Baptist and the witness of His works.

In verse 37 He says, “And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape. And ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not.” The Father had testified of Christ. Finally, in verse 39: “Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.” The Scriptures teach who He is. He has the testimony of John the Baptist, His works, His Father, and the Scriptures.

Now he says in John 5:40, “And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.” What is he saying? He is not saying that you have free will to come. He is saying, Look how you are bound in light of clear, plentiful evidence—in light of the testimony of John the Baptist, the testimony of my works, the testimony of the Father, and

the testimony of the Scriptures—your will is still locked in rebellion, and you will not come even though you have the truth. That is what he is saying. This is not a verse for free will; this is a verse against free will.

What God does in salvation is work against our nature. What is the most natural thing for a sinner to do? Sin.

Suppose my phone rang at two o'clock in the morning, and you were excited, saying, "Pastor, Pastor, you have to get out of bed and come over to my house. I have something you have to see."

"And what is it?"

"Water is running down the hill in front of my house."

I would say, "You woke me up to tell me to come see water running down the hill? I have seen water run downhill hundreds of times. I am not interested." I would probably be upset that you woke me at two o'clock in the morning just to tell me that.

But if you said, "Pastor, please come to my house. I have something I bet you have never seen in your entire life," and then told me, "Water is running uphill—and it is running uphill without a generator, without a power source, running uphill on its own," I would be ready to go see it. It is the nature of water to go downhill. It takes a miracle of God for water to run uphill on its own.

How God Makes Us Willing

Consider a man who has been beating his wife, getting drunk, cussing, swearing, and living in rebellion. You have seen enough of that. But suppose he used to be a drunkard, used to beat his wife, cuss, swear, and be rebellious, and now he has been cleaned up and changed. He worships Jesus Christ and rejoices. Do you see the difference? There is a difference in the nature. It was natural for him to be a drunk, to cuss, beat his wife, and be rebellious. Now, all of a sudden, something supernatural has happened. He has changed; he is acting contrary to his nature. That is the work of God. That is a miracle.

Now, watch this. Our text says, "My people shall be willing" when? "In the day of my power." It takes the power of God to make us

willing. You came to Christ; you willed to come to Christ. But who made you willing? God did.

How does God make us willing to come to Christ? That is a whole different sermon, but let me answer momentarily. God makes us willing by changing our thinking, our desires, and our wants, and by releasing our wills from the bondage of sin, that they may come savingly to Jesus Christ.

What God does is exercise such power over our minds that He changes our way of thinking. We see sin for its wickedness and awfulness, and we see sin for its just deserts. Then He shows us the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the only answer to our sin. He releases our wills from the bondage of sin so that we desire and want Jesus Christ. We want to come to Him; we will to come to Him. Yea, we run to Him.

You know what God does? God does what every parent wishes he had the ability to do. Wouldn't it be wonderful to have the power to change your children's way of thinking and thus change their desires, so that they would look at a candy bar and a bowl of ice cream and say, "Yuck, sugar, fat. What I want me is some cauliflower and broccoli"? That is what God does. God makes us want the cauliflower and the broccoli.

In the life of Jesus Christ, God changes our wants. God is the one who makes us willing to come to Christ. Yes, we all will to come to Christ, but it was God who made us willing: “Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power.”

The best illustration I can give is that of two mothers, next-door neighbors, sitting on the porch visiting. Shortly, a teenage son walks out of one mother’s house. His shoes are shining. He is in a suit, shirt, and tie; his hair is neatly combed, his fingernails are clean and neatly trimmed, and he has aftershave lotion on. He is a perfect picture of a handsome young man. He leans over, kisses his mother, and says, “Mother, I’ll be back by 11.” Then he walks down the stairs, gets in the car, and drives off.

His mother looks at her neighbor and says, “Isn’t that absolutely disgusting?” Shocked and horrified, the other neighbor says, “I’d give anything for my son to dress like that and be clean and neat like

that. What do you mean, 'Isn't that disgusting'?" "Oh, no, no, no," she says. "I'm thankful he's clean and neat. But what disgusts me is simply this: a little five-foot-two, blue-eyed, blond-haired girl got him to do in a week what I couldn't get him to do for seventeen years." What happened? His wants got changed. What God does is this: He changes our wants, renews our mind, opens our eyes, shows us the awfulness of our sin, the wickedness and just deserts of our sin, and then shows us

Jesus Christ in His beauty, splendor, and glory makes us want Him more than anything in the world. When we come willingly, eagerly, and readily, we bow to Him, giving Him the reverent homage due Him. We need not free will but free grace—the grace of God that works in our lives and changes us so that we may come willingly to Jesus Christ.

"Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power."

Father, speak to our hearts. Help us, teach us, and build us up in the most holy faith. Make us, Lord, all that we can and should be by Thy grace, for Thy glory. Enable us to give Thee reverent homage and recognize that we are what we are only by the grace of God. Help us to give Thee praise in Christ's name. Amen.

CHAPTER 6

Messiah's Divine Rights

Part Six

Introduction and Review of Psalm 110:1-3

Psalm 110, verse 1: “The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth. The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek. The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath. He shall judge among the heathen, he shall fill the places with the dead bodies; he shall wound the heads over many countries. He shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall he lift up the head.”

Last time I dealt particularly with verse 3: “Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power.” I brought a distinction that is vital, important, and biblical: the distinction between free will and freedom of will. I will not develop it today, but free will is totally and completely unbiblical, while freedom of the will is biblical. If you are

not aware of the difference, I encourage you to listen to the previous message again.

Transition from Kingship to Priesthood

That was number five on Messiah's divine rights. To take a quick overview and pick up where we have been, understand that there must be a transition between verses 1 through 3 and verse 4. The first three verses deal with the kingship of Christ; verse 4 deals with the priesthood of Christ. How, then, do we transition from Christ's kingship to His priesthood? Based upon the first three verses, we know that God has instituted Jesus Christ, both Lord and Christ, by His sovereign will.

In that position, Christ rules over His enemies with a rod of iron. In ruling over them, He may destroy them, subjugate them, or save them. They are in His hands; they are His enemies, and He may do with them as He wills. The Bible also tells us in verse 3 that He will make His people willing in the day of His power.

When I taught previously on the difference between free will and the freedom of the will, I told you that the question is not whether you were willing to come to Christ when you came to Christ. Very obviously, those who come to Christ willingly come to Him. The question is, who made you willing? There were several verses I did not get to when I preached last time, but let me give them to you now.

For instance, Philippians 2:13 says, "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." It is God who worketh in you both to will and to do His good pleasure. God not only puts the "to do" in us; He also puts the will in us. That is why Hebrews 12:2 tells us that He is the author and the finisher of our faith. He is the one who began it, and He is also the one who ends it. Philippians 1:6 says, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." God is the one who begins, and God is the one who finishes. He is the Alpha and the Omega in salvation.

All of this is brought out in the first three verses. The transition from the kingship of Christ to the priesthood of Christ is found in the

latter part of verse 3, where the Bible says, "in the beauties of holiness, from the womb of the morning, thou hast the dew of thy youth."

Interpretations of 'the dew of thy youth'

We must ask ourselves what the meaning of that phrase is. Let me give you very quickly two broad overviews of the latter part of verse 3. I am going to give you two quotes. One is from the old Puritan John Trapp. Concerning the latter part of verse 3, he said: "In the beauties of holiness"—in other words, in church assemblies, and the beauty of holy ordinances, at the administration of Christ's birth-dew, that is, the influence of His Spirit and His presence in those ordinances, is "from the womb of the morning"—in other words, is of that generating and enlivening virtue that the dew of the teeming morning is to the seeds and plants of the earth.

John Trapp called the latter part of verse 3 “an apt similitude both to express the multitude of Christ's converts and the manner of their heavenly generation.” All he is saying is that the latter part of verse 3 is a similitude expressing both the multitude of Christ's converts and the manner of their heavenly generation.

Adam Clarke said, “From the womb of the morning, as the dew flows from the womb of the morning, so shall all the godly flow from thee. They are the dew of thy youth. They are the offspring of thine own nativity. As the human nature of our Lord was begotten by the creative energy of God in the womb of the Virgin, so the followers of God are born, not of blood, nor the will of flesh, but by the Divine Spirit.”

Both Adam Clarke and John Trapp have said essentially the same thing: the latter part of verse 3 speaks not only of the multitude of the converts of Jesus Christ, but also of the manner of their heavenly conversion. Each commentator hit upon the right thought, but neither developed it. Verse 3, in its latter part, does indeed represent the offspring of Jesus Christ. But there is a little more to it than that, and I want to enlarge upon the latter part of verse 3.

When we read “in the beauties of holiness,” that is not difficult to comprehend. We understand it because we know that God is holy.

Revelation 15:4 says, “Thou only art holy.” Everything that God is and everything that God does is holy. Did you realize that God is more often styled the Holy One in Scripture than by any other title? So we understand the holiness of God. The phrase that gives us a little problem is this: “from the womb of the morning thou hast the dew of thy youth.”

What in the world does that mean? Let me give you an old translation of that verse. This is from the Bible printed by Barker, the King’s printer in London, England, in 1615: “Thy people shall come willingly at the time of assembling thine army in the holy beauty. The youth of thy womb shall be as the morning dew.”

Now he adds another thing: not just the multitude of Christ’s converts, nor simply the manner in which they are converted, but also the fact that they are indeed a holy army. I wish I had time to deal with the biblical teaching concerning dew. Yet we know that even today men are struck with astonishment at seeing the earth moistened and refreshed with dew, although its descent is imperceptible.

David is saying that, likewise, an innumerable offspring will be born to Christ and spread over the whole earth, although that may be imperceptible to us. I run into this everywhere I go. I hear people saying, “Brother Weaver, there are just so few of us. We’re just a small group.” That is called tunnel vision. We have an Elijah complex: “Lord, I only am left.” But what did God tell Elijah? “That’s not true. I’ve got 7,000.” It is never about the need to bail or kiss his ring. Do you realize there are people all over this country, in every state, who believe and know the truth?

They may be in small groups, but they are everywhere. This is exactly what God is saying: the dew falls imperceptibly. The word “youth” in verse 3, in the phrase, “from the womb of the morning thou hast the dew of thy youth,” could also be translated “young men” or “soldiers.” It refers to persons who are courageous, heroic, strong, active, and vigorous, much like the apostles, the first preachers of the gospel in the first century.

They are fitly compared to dew for several reasons. Like dew, they have their origin from heaven: God regenerated and saved them.

Like dew, they fructify the earth; fruit was produced upon the earth. Like dew, they were innumerable and diffused over the entire earth. Like dew, they came from the morning—from the dawn, from the beginning of the gospel day of salvation. Thus he says, “from the womb of the morning, thou hast the dew of thy youth.”

The Beauties of Holiness and Warrior Priests

The latter part of verse 3 shows that the Messiah is leading his people. He is represented as continually in the vigor of his youth, producing soldier saints who will follow him in his grace and mercy.

Now, let's stop just for a moment. The scripture says, "in the beauties of holiness," that is, we are to be adorned with the beautiful robes of righteousness and true holiness. I can quote this verse, but I want you to turn in your Bibles to the book of Ephesians chapter 4 and look at verse 24. Ephesians 4 and verse 24. I want you to note what the scripture says. You will remember that when Adam was created, he was created with original righteousness, holiness, knowledge, and dominion.

Well, the Bible tells us that, of course, we get back all of that and more in Jesus Christ. But the Bible says in Ephesians 4 and verse 24, "And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." So the saints of God, once again, are to be adorned in righteousness and true holiness. Now, the Bible tells us in Revelation 19 and verse 14, that the saints were adorned with the fine linen which represent purity and righteousness. So the Bible then is telling us that Jesus Christ as the God-man, as the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, as he is ruling in the midst of his people, he is producing a soldier sainthood that will have righteousness and holiness. Now, look in your Bibles, if you would please, to the book of Revelation, chapter one, and then the first Peter, chapter two. Let me show you. Revelation, chapter one, and look, if you would please, at verse six. Revelation one, verse six.

In fact, let's read verse five, just so you can see the context. Revelation 1 verse 5. Revelation 1 verse 5, note the Bible says, "And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that

loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father."

"To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

Now, what has Jesus Christ made us? He's made us kings and what? Priests.

Now, look in your Bibles, if you would please, to 1 Peter chapter 2. 1 Peter chapter 2. And notice, if you would please, verse 5. 1 Peter 2 and verse 5. Once again, the Word of God has this to say. First Peter 2 verse five. Note carefully, "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." Now look in verse nine, "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light."

The Bible is talking in Psalm 110 and verse 3 about the beauties of holiness. That could refer, number one, to the beautiful and glorious garments of the Levitical priesthood. Think of all those beautiful garments that Aaron, the high priest, had: the linen ephod, the crown, the mitre, and the stones that were on the breastplate. These were garments of beauty, garments displaying his righteousness. Do you remember what was on the crown, on the mitre that he wore? “Holiness to the Lord.”

The second thing this could refer to is the military robes with which soldiers are furnished and adorned. Do you realize that we as Christians are to be Christian soldiers involved in the Christian warfare? If you watch the History Channel and see any of the ancient battles, you will find that many of the soldiers were indeed adorned in many glorious and beautiful uniforms.

Old Testament Evidence for Warrior Priests

Usually, soldiers were dressed basically alike, and there was a reason: so that they could recognize their own and not fight against their own man. They were also very proud of their uniforms. The Apostle Paul describes the armor of the Christian in Ephesians chapter 6. We are not going to turn there right now, but we will get to it shortly.

If you study Exodus 28, where the robes and garments of the high priest are described, and then read Isaiah 59:17–21 and Isaiah 61:10, let me tell you what I think based upon those passages. I believe that the armor the Apostle Paul describes in Ephesians chapter 6 comes from the garments worn by the high priest. Why? Because Christ is supposedly producing soldier saints—the youth, the young men who are courageous, heroic, bold, and brave. You know what we have forgotten? Christ is coming back leading a large army.

We have lost the concept and forgotten the truth that God's people are to be warrior priests. Let me tell you about one of the most neglected and forgotten hymns in our time. You can go into any church, and hardly ever will you hear this hymn sung: "Onward, Christian Soldiers." Are you listening? Let me read the stanzas: "Onward, Christian soldiers, marching as to war."

With the cross of Jesus going on before. Christ, the royal master, leads against the foe. Forward in the battle, see his banners go." And then, of course, you'd have the refrain. Here's the next stanza. "At the sign of triumph, Satan's host doth flee. On then, Christian soldiers, on to victory. Hell's foundations quiver at the shout of praise. Brothers, lift your voices, loud your anthems raise." Listen, "Like a mighty army moves the church of God. Brothers, we are treading where the saints have trod."

"We are not divided, all one body, we, one in hope and doctrine, one in charity. What the saints establish, that I hold for true. What the saints believe, that I believe too. Long as earth endureth, men the faith will hold. Kingdoms, nations, empires in destruction rolled. Crowns and thrones may perish. Kingdoms rise and wane, but the church of Jesus constant will remain. Gates of hell can never against that church prevail."

"We have Christ's own promise, and that cannot fail. Onward then, ye people! Join our happy throng! Blend with our dear voices in the triumph song. Glory, laud, and honor unto Christ the King! This through countless ages, men and angels sing." Did you hear that? "Like a mighty army moves the Church of God." That's not so in this day and age, is it? You know why? We have lost the concept of warrior priesthood. It's a beautiful hymn. And it is an accurate, biblical hymn.

Yet what we do is when we think of priests, we normally think of intercession, sacrifice, and worship. And we just simply limit our understanding to those things.

According to 1 Peter 2:5, as priests we are to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable unto God through Jesus Christ. That is part of our priestly duty. We are also called upon, according to 1 Peter 2:9, to show forth the praises of Him who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light. That is equally true. Hebrews 13:15 commands us to offer up the sacrifice of praise continually, the fruit of our lips giving thanks unto His name. That is priestly work.

When you read Romans 12:1–2, you find this exhortation: “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.” Did you hear what was quoted? “That ye present your bodies” what? “A living sacrifice.” That is part of our priestly duties.

If I were to ask you what the duties of Old Testament priests were, most of you could tell me ninety-nine percent of them. They offered sacrifices, prayed, sang, and offered praise.

Let us look in our Bibles at First Chronicles 23, beginning with verse 27. Here the duties of the Levites are spelled out: "For by the last words of David the Levites were numbered from twenty years old and above. Because their office was to wait on the sons of Aaron for the service of the house of the Lord, in the courts, and in the chambers, and in the purifying of all holy things, and the work of the service of the house of God." This passage shows how limited we are in our understanding of the priesthood. The Levites waited upon Aaron, served in the courts and chambers, assisted in the purifying of holy things, and generally performed the work of the tabernacle and the temple.

He goes further in verse 29: “Both for the shewbread, and for the fine flour for meat offering, and for the unleavened cakes, and for that which is baked in the pan, and for that which is fried, and for all manner of measure and size.” In other words, they did the cooking

and baking, including the shewbread that was continually before the Lord. They took care of that.

Verse 30 says, “And to stand every morning to thank and praise the Lord, and likewise at even.” Thus, they were engaged in private, personal, and public praise. Verse 31 says, “And to offer all burnt sacrifices unto the Lord in the sabbaths, in the new moons, and on the set feasts, by number, according to the order commanded unto them, continually before the Lord.” We understand that.

Then, continuing the description of their priestly duties, verse 32 says, “And that they should keep the charge of the tabernacle of the congregation, and the charge of the holy place, and the charge of the sons of Aaron their brethren, in the service of the house of the Lord.”

Now, wait a minute. Verses 27 through 31 are simple to understand. But what does it mean to keep the charge of the tabernacle? What does it mean to keep the charge of the holy place? What does it mean to keep the charge of the sons of Aaron and their brethren? Look at the word “keep.”

Underline this point, without going into it in great detail: the word “keep” in practically every one of these places is the Hebrew word shamar, S-H-A-M-A-R, meaning to guard, protect, or keep. Thus, “And they shall guard and protect the charge of the tabernacle of the congregation. And they shall guard and protect the charge of the holy place and guard and protect the charge of the sons of Aaron.”

Now consider the word “charge.” The Hebrew word is Mishmereth, M-I-S-H-M-E-R-E-T-H, referring to a watch, a sentry duty, or an act of protection. Go back to verse 32: “And they shall keep”—guard and protect—“their sentry post, their sentry duty of the tabernacle of the congregation, and the sentry post and the sentry duty of the holy place, and the sentry post and the sentry duty of the sons of Aaron.”

In other words, First Chronicles 23:32 describes a military duty—a warrior-priest duty of the Levitical priests.

Now I could show you this 100 times in Scripture, but go in your Bibles if you would to the Book of Numbers chapter one. Numbers chapter one. Numbers one. And let's begin reading there with verse

53. The book of Numbers is so full of these terms. Numbers 1 verse 53, Numbers chapter 1 verse 53. "But the Levites shall pitch round about the tabernacle of testimony, that there be no wrath upon the congregation of the children of Israel: and the Levites shall keep"—guard, protect—"the charge"—the sentry duty—"of the tabernacle of testimony."

Now, let me spell something out for you. There were Levitical priests who were armed guards around the tabernacle and later on around the temple as well. Look at Numbers chapter three and verse 32. Numbers 3 verse 32. "And Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest shall be chief over the chief of the Levites, and have the oversight of them that keep the charge of the sanctuary." That is, that guard and protect the sanctuary. So they had a hierarchy in their priesthood, especially in relationship to this warrior priest.

Now, let me show you how serious this was. Now, go back to Numbers chapter three and let's begin reading there verse five.

They were charged to keep the charge of the tabernacle, the holy place, and the sons of Aaron. Numbers 3:5 says, “And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Bring the tribe of Levi near, and present them before Aaron the priest, that they may minister unto him. And they shall keep his charge, and the charge of the whole congregation before the tabernacle of the congregation, to do the service of the tabernacle. And they shall keep all the instruments of the tabernacle of the congregation, and the charge of the children of Israel, to do the service of the tabernacle. And thou shalt give the Levites unto Aaron and to his sons: they are wholly given unto him out of the children of Israel.” Then, “And thou shalt appoint Aaron and his sons, and they shall wait on their priest's office: and the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death.” If a stranger comes near Aaron, the holy place, or the tabernacle, who is not supposed to be there, what is the penalty? Death. Here is my question: Who is going to put him to death? Levitical priests. Why? They were given a charge. They were obligated to protect, guard, and keep their sentry post. It is a military command.

You’ll find the same thing in Numbers chapter 18, verses 1 through 7. Any stranger that came near was to be automatically put to death. Those priests did not say, “Oh wait, we’ve got to get the

local sheriff down here. We've got to get the police down here, or we've got to call the army." No, no, no. They dispatched them themselves. They took care of it.

Weapons in the House of God

Now I want you to look carefully in your Bibles to 2 Kings chapter 12 and 2 Chronicles chapter 34. Let me show you something that's probably been overlooked by most people in their Bible study. We're going to 2 Kings first. Find 2 Kings 12, then go to 2 Chronicles 34. We will read 2 Kings 12 first, then go to 2 Chronicles 34. Now, 2 Kings chapter 12, verse 9. Look what the Bible says.

"But Jehoiada the priest took a chest, and bored a hole in the lid of it, and set it beside the altar, on the right side as one cometh into the house of the Lord: and the priests that kept the door put therein all the money that was brought into the house of the Lord."

In 2 Chronicles 34:9, we read: "And when they came to Hilkiah the high priest, they delivered the money that was brought into the house of God, which the Levites that kept the doors had gathered of the hand of Manasseh and Ephraim, and of all the remnant of Israel, and of all Judah and Benjamin; and they returned to Jerusalem." Did you notice anything peculiar about that verse? Twice it is said that certain Levites kept the doors.

The word "keep" is the Hebrew word shamar, which means to guard and protect. You remember I told you the word "keep" was the Hebrew word shamar, which means to guard and protect. It is the same word here. There were Levitical priests then who kept, or guarded, the doors. You did not simply waltz into the tabernacle or the temple. There were guards at the door. If you were a stranger or were not allowed there, they executed you. It is just that simple.

Now let me show you how this was understood throughout the Bible. Look at Psalm 84:10. I have heard this verse quoted many times, but people do not know what they are saying when they quote it. "For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand." David said, "I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness."

Someone may say, “Isn’t that mighty humble of David?” Yes, it teaches humility. David said, “I’d rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God.” But the word “doorkeeper” is there. The Hebrew word means one who stands guard, one who keeps and protects the threshold. David said, “I’d rather be that guard sitting there executing the people who come in who aren’t supposed to be there, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.”

Let us look at Numbers chapter 4, beginning with verse 3: “From thirty years old and upward even until fifty years old, all that enter into the host, to do the work in the tabernacle of the congregation.” We are still talking about the Levites. Consider the phrase “to do the work.” Verse 23 says, “From thirty years old and upward until fifty years old shalt thou number them; all that enter in to perform the service, to do the work in the tabernacle of the congregation.” Verse 30 says, “From thirty years old and upward even unto fifty years old shalt thou number them, every one that entereth into the service, to do the work of the tabernacle of the congregation.”

Three times in this one chapter we read, “to do the work.” Numbers chapter 8, verse 24, uses the expression somewhat differently, but it is the same thing: “This is it that belongeth unto the Levites: from twenty and five years old and upward they shall go in to wait upon the service of the tabernacle of the congregation.” Thus, “to wait upon the service” means “to do the work.”

Does anyone have a marginal reading in the Bible giving an alternate translation? You may have it. It literally is, “to war the warfare.” When you read Numbers 4:3, it could say, “From thirty years old and upward even until fifty years old, all that enter into the host to war the warfare in the tabernacle of the congregation.” Every time, it can be translated, “to war the warfare.” It is the same Hebrew word. The expression is not merely service in a general sense; the wording itself carries the thought of warfare.

The point is that in the Old Testament—and, without going into the New Testament, in New Testament times—there was the concept of a warrior priesthood. “To war the warfare.” Brother Ernie, do you have it in your Bible there? Yes, “to war the warfare.” There was a concept then of a warrior priesthood.

Now let me tell you what has happened in our day and time. We have not only lost the concept of being a warrior priesthood; we have turned completely and totally in the opposite direction. By the way, when we use the word warrior, we think of someone heroic, brave, courageous, willing to fight, and willing to stand.

Today, many think the real Christian simply lets everybody run all over him and wipe their feet all over him because he is displaying such humility and submissiveness. The thing that concerns me is that this is among professing Christians. I can understand it with the world, but so many, even professing Christians, somehow, when you talk about weaponry, view weaponry as somehow being unethical, unholy, and unrighteous. You will hear Christians say, “Oh, guns. I’d never let my kids have a gun.” Or knives. “No! No!”

Now let me ask you a question. Is a rifle sinful in and of itself? No. How about a sword? I remember when my oldest grandson was about five or six years old. He was into karate and wanted to be a ninja. Granny Alice made him a ninja uniform, and he sent me this little book in which he had seen a sword.

He wrote me a letter: “Papa, please get this sword for me.” It was a real sword. His mother had gotten hold of the letter and the book and wrote a little note: “Papa, not the real one, the wooden one.” Casey, unknowing to her, had seen what she had written, so he wrote under that, “No Papa, the real one.” So I got him the real one. Of course, he had to keep it on his wall until he got big enough to play with it, and he could only hold it supervised.

I understand that; it is no problem. But we tend to think that somehow a sword or weapon is evil in and of itself. That is not true. If weaponry is something inherently evil, then I want you to explain something to me. Turn in your Bibles to Second Chronicles, chapter 23. Look in 2 Chronicles, chapter 23.

Let's begin there with verse 2, 2 Chronicles 23. Jehoiada is the high priest, and in this context they are protecting the young king. The Bible says, “And they went about in Judah, and gathered the Levites out of all the cities of Judah, and the chief of the fathers of Israel, and they came to Jerusalem. And all the congregation made a covenant with the king in the house of God.”

“And he said unto them, Behold, the king's son shall reign, as the Lord hath said of the sons of David. This is the thing that ye shall do.” Remember, he is talking to the Levites: “This is the thing that ye shall do; A third part of you entering on the sabbath, of the priests and of the Levites, shall be porters of the doors”—that is, you are going to keep or guard the doors. “And a third part shall be at the king's house; and a third part at the gate of the foundation: and all the people shall be in the courts of the house of the Lord. But let none come into the house of the Lord, save the priests, and they that minister of the Levites; they shall go in, for they are holy: but all the people shall keep the watch of the Lord.”

“And the Levites”—those Levitical priests—“shall compass the king round about, every man with his weapons in his hand; and whosoever else cometh into the house, he shall be put to death: but be ye with the king when he cometh in, and when he goeth out.” Now who was guarding the king? The Levites. They had weapons.

“So the Levites and all Judah did according to all things that Jehoiada the priest had commanded,” taking their men who came in and went out on the sabbath. Jehoiada, the high priest, “delivered to the captains of hundreds spears, and bucklers, and shields, that had been king David's,” which were in the house of God. They kept those swords, spears, and offensive and defensive weapons in the house of God. You will find the same thing in 2 Kings chapter 11.

Most people have heard of the battle of Lexington and Concord, the shot heard around the world, at Lexington Green. Most people do not know that it was the church green, or that the pastor of that church taught his people to fight and stand against wickedness and tyranny.

He stood there and watched some of his men die. One of those men was Caleb Harrington, an old man who died on the steps of the church house. Why was he not in the green with the other men? Because he was running back into the church house that Jonas Clark pastored to get more powder for the men. The ammunition was kept in the church building.

David and the Call to Fight

We would think today, “Oh, how horrible.” No. It was not horrible in 2 Chronicles. It was not horrible in 2 Kings. It was not horrible in 1776. It is only horrible enough today because we have lost the concept of fighting and standing for truth and righteousness, holiness, liberty and freedom, and justice. We have lost the concept that some things are worth standing for and defending.

Those Levites were not just keepers of the doors and gates. The Bible tells us something else as well. First Chronicles 9:19 says, “And Shallum the son of Kore, the son of Ebiasaph, the son of Korah, and his brethren, of the house of his father, the Korahites, were over the work of the service, keepers of the gates of the tabernacle: and their fathers, being over the host of the Lord, were keepers of the entry.” Notice the words, “their fathers, being over the host of the Lord.” What does the word “host” refer to? The army. These Levites were keepers of the gates and the entry, but they were also over the host of the Lord.

In 1 Chronicles 12, verses 6 through 8, some of them are listed among David’s mighty men: “Elkanah, and Jesiah, and Azareel, and Joezer, and Jashobeam, the Korhites,” the same ones. Then verse 8 says, “And of the Gadites there separated themselves unto David into the hold to the wilderness men of might, and men of war fit for the battle, that could handle shield and buckler, whose faces were like the faces of lions, and were as swift as the roes upon the mountains.” Here is a listing of David’s mighty men, and here are some of the Levites. They were not merely keepers of the gates. They were fighters. Do you understand?

We may never be called upon to fight with physical weapons, and truthfully, I hope we are not. But the fact is, we are called to be warrior priests and fighters. It is certainly no disgrace to be involved in a righteous fight with physical weapons if it comes to that. David was one of the greatest warriors of all times, and yet he was a man after God's own heart. You remember how they sang, "Saul has killed his thousands and David his tens of thousands." I want you to see what David confessed in Psalm 144, verses 1 and 2: "Blessed be the Lord my strength, which teacheth my hands to war, and my fingers to fight; my goodness, and my fortress; my high tower, and my

deliverer; my shield, and he in whom I trust; who subdueth my people under me."

What did David say? It was God who taught his hands to fight and his fingers to war. One of the names and titles of God in Scripture is "the Lord is a man of war." Whether or not we are ever called upon, or ever find it necessary, to fight with physical weapons, Scripture does teach that there is indeed a war between good and evil, a war between right and wrong, and a war between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of darkness.

New Testament Armor and the Soldier's Mindset

Therefore, we must be warrior priests. We are in a war, whether we like it or not. That is why, "from the womb of the morning, thou hast the dew of thy youth." In other words, here God is sovereignly, in His grace, producing these heroic, strong, courageous soldier saints. Look in your Bibles to Ephesians chapter 6. I encourage you to look at those Old Testament passages. In regard to the high priest and his accoutrements, his attire, think about this, but look what the Apostle Paul wrote: Ephesians 6, beginning with verse 10, demonstrating the fact that we are in a war, whether we want to admit it or not.

“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.” Be strong in the Lord and the power of his might, not your own. “Put on the whole armour of God,” that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

What is he saying? You need this armor if you’re going to fight. You need this armor if you’re going to be a soldier saint. You need this armor if you’re going to be a warrior priest.

Verse 14 tells you how: “Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all

the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints."

Here is the armor that we need. Why in the world would you need armor if you are not in a battle? Why would you need armor if you are not in a war? The fact is, we are in a war. God has called us to be warrior-priests. The kingship of Christ and the priesthood of Christ produce a people who are kings and priests unto our God, but they are a certain kind of priest. They are a warrior priest.

Application: Recovering the Warrior Priesthood

One reason we are in such dire straits in our country is that Christians have lost the concept of warrior priesthood. Instead of standing, fighting, and holding the standard high, we have back-pedaled, compromised, negotiated, and surrendered. We do not act like warriors, nor do we act like priests. We have lost our biblical attitude and therefore our biblical actions. We will never regain biblical actions until we regain a biblical attitude. We cannot act right until we think right. One thing wrong with modern-day Christendom is that we do not think biblically or scripturally; we think humanistically.

We say, "Man, I don't want to get into a controversy." I do if it is a right one. If it is for truth and righteousness, I do not want to fight just to be fighting, but I want to fight for that which is true, right, holy, and just. There is nothing to be ashamed of.

Secondly, Scripture reveals another truth: the reason why we get so entangled and involved in this life. Turn in your Bibles to 2 Timothy chapter 2 and look at verse 4: "No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier." Wow! "No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life." Why? "That he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier." God says that if you are fighting the battle, you do not have time to get involved and entangled with things in this life. You are fighting for survival, for your children, your grandchildren, and your great-grandchildren.

Where is the average Christian today? He is caught up in comfort, consolation, and prosperity above everything else. His desire is not to please his commander-in-chief by being a good soldier. His desire is to be as comfortable as he possibly can be. And that is it.

"Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." Why should we endure hardness? Because hardness keeps us going, keeps us fit, and keeps us fighting. If we are concerned for our Lord and His kingdom, hardness will not bother us. We will be so busily engaged in the conflict that we will not become entangled in the affairs of this life.

You will be a warrior. Let me give you the words to another hymn we have forgotten: "Am I a soldier of the cross, a follower of the Lamb, And shall I fear to own his cause, or blush to speak his name? Must I be carried to the skies on flowery beds of ease, while others fought to win the prize, and sailed through bloody seas?"

Closing Hymn and Prayer

"Are there no foes for me to face? Must I not stem the flood? Is this vile world a friend to grace, to help me on to God? Sure I must fight if I would reign; increase my courage, Lord. I'll bear the toil, endure the pain, supported by thy word." Must I be carried to the skies on flowery beds of ease, while others fought to win the prize, and sailed through bloody seas?

That condemns our lethargy, apathy, and indolence. My prayer is that we learn to fight for righteousness and truth and stand, remembering that our Lord has commanded us to occupy, do business, and hold the fort till He comes. Are you one of Christ's soldier saints? We get from the kingship to the priesthood by understanding that our Lord produces warrior priests.

Father, speak to our hearts. Help us to live for Thee. Help us to be holy and godly. May we learn to fight biblically and scripturally, and stand for that which is right. Give us grace to serve Thee acceptably, with reverence and godly fear. In Thy name we pray, Amen.

CHAPTER 7

Messiah's Divine Rights

Part Seven

The Priesthood of Jesus Christ

Psalm 110:1-7 says: “The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion. Rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth. The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek. The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath. He shall judge among the heathen, he shall fill the places with the dead bodies; he shall wound the heads over many countries. He shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall he lift up the head.”

Introduction and Review of Psalm 110:1-3

In recent weeks we have looked primarily at verses 1 through 3. Verse 1 teaches that Christ has a right to royal honor; verse 2, that Christ has the right to rule the heathen; and verse 3, that Christ has

the right to reverend homage. The first three verses deal basically with the kingship of Christ, while verse 4 begins the priesthood of Christ.

There must be a transition, and that transition is in the latter part of verse 3: “in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth.” This refers basically to the offspring of Christ, especially what we would call the soldier saints. The Bible tells us that He has made us kings and priests unto God. We considered the warrior aspect of the priesthood in the Old Testament; it is also present in the New Testament.

Verse 4 says, “The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.” It very clearly and emphatically teaches the priesthood of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ has a right to a perpetual priesthood. All through the Bible He is referred to as our great high priest. From the outset, it should be understood that our Lord is not an ordinary priest, nor is He after the order of Levi.

Christ's Priesthood is Not After the Order of Levi

Hold Psalm 110, and turn first to Hebrews chapter 7. There is so much in this book that we need to look at. Let us begin with verse 11, to show that our Lord is not an ordinary priest:

“If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchizedek, and not be called after the order of Aaron? For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law.

“For he of whom these things are spoken pertaineth to another tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the altar. For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood. And it is yet far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest, Who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life. For he testifieth, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.”

Notice how Scripture emphasizes that Christ is not after the Levitical order.

Now notice Hebrews chapter 8, beginning with verse 4:

“For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law: Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount. But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second.”

The Bible teaches very clearly that Christ is not a priest after the order of Levi.

Every one of us here confesses and believes in the priesthood of Jesus Christ. But the problem is not merely that we confess and believe; the problem is that we do not really understand what is involved in the priesthood of Jesus Christ. In fact, most of us do not really understand why a priest is even necessary.

Everyone is familiar with the fact that Job was suffering, and he did not know why he was suffering. It was a mystery. Job wanted to talk with God, yet Job understood that he was incapable of talking with God. Job was offering a complaint, and it was a legitimate complaint. Concerning God, he said, "For he is not a man, as I am, that I should answer him, and we should come together in judgment."

The Necessity of a Mediator: Job's Cry

That is the problem: God is not a man. Then Job said, "Neither is there any daysman betwixt us, that might lay his hand upon us both." He said there was not a daysman betwixt, or between, them who might lay his hand upon both.

What was Job asking for when he asked for a daysman? He was literally asking for what we would call a mediator, a go-between. He needed someone capable not only of representing man to God, but

also of representing God to man. Job understood that God was infinite, eternal, and holy, while he himself was finite, unholy, and temporal. What he needed was someone who could represent both man and God.

God initiated the Levitical priesthood for this reason. Hebrews 5:1 says, "For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins: Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity. And by reason hereof he ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins. And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron."

For every high priest is taken from among men. He is ordained for men, that is, to be their representative, their mediator, their daysman, their go-between, to offer for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins.

The Bible is telling us that the Levitical priesthood, basically speaking, was a mediatorial priesthood. It represented man unto God, in that the priesthood offered the sacrifices, the offerings, and the worship that God demanded. But when the priest turned around and declared to the people the word and the will of God, he was representing God to the people.

Although the Levitical priesthood was a mediatorial priesthood, it was also a temporary priesthood. It was a mere shadow, a picture of that which was to come. There was no perfection in the Levitical priesthood. Hebrews 8:5 says, "Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount."

"But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and

with the house of Judah." Very clearly, he is talking about this new covenant.

Hebrews 9:9-12 speaks of the tabernacle, the temple, and the Levitical priesthood: "Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation. But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us."

So very clearly then, Jesus Christ is the God-man, Theanthropos. He is perfect and he is capable then of representing God and man. He has the divine nature since he is God. He also has man's nature since he is man. Therefore he alone is the true and only Mediator. That's why the Bible says in 1 Timothy 2 and verse 5, "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." So that which Job cried out for in Job chapter 9 is now fulfilled and personified in Jesus Christ.

Now, there are three things I want you to see in Psalm 110, followed by the applications. First of all, look at verse 4: "The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek." The very first thing you have here is a holy asseveration.

The Holy Asseveration: 'The Lord Hath Sworn'

A-S-S-E-V-E-R-A-T-I-O-N. Do you know what an asseveration is? Probably you do not, so I shall tell you. Look at this phrase, "The Lord hath sworn." An asseveration is a positive affirmation or assertion. It is a solemn declaration. It is a declaration accompanied with great solemnity. "The Lord hath sworn." That is a holy asseveration.

Now, note something, and this will be dealt with more next week. The Levitical priesthood was not begun with an oath, but the

priesthood of Christ was begun with an oath: "The Lord hath sworn." This is a different sermon, but there are two things that are very intimately connected, though we never think about this: swearing and worship. Swearing and worship are intimately connected.

In fact, while studying for this message, I came across another message I want to preach in the future entitled "Preaching Profanity." Most preachers are preaching profanity because we do not even know what profanity is. We think profanity is simply using curse words, but that is not true. You can be profane and never ever utter a curse word. Now, let me show you what I am talking about.

Swearing and worship are intimately connected. Deuteronomy 6:13 says, “Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and serve him, and shalt swear by his name.” Thou shalt swear by His name. Why? Because swearing and worship are intimately connected. Deuteronomy 10:20 likewise says, “Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God; him shalt thou serve, and to him shalt thou cleave, and swear by his name.” These passages are sufficient to establish the connection between fearing God, serving Him, cleaving to Him, and swearing by His name.

Do you realize that we are forbidden to swear by false gods? Why? Because we do not worship false gods. We worship the One True and the Living God. Therefore, swearing by His name belongs with the worship and service that are due to Him.

Now, the Bible says, “The Lord hath sworn.” God has given an oath, and when God gives an oath, He can only swear by Himself. Isaiah 45:23 says, “I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear.” What did God just say? “I have sworn by myself.”

Why did God swear by Himself? Hebrews 6:13 gives the answer: “For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself.” Who is the greatest being? God. There is none greater than God. God could swear by no greater, so He swore by Himself. Thus God said, basically, “As I live, saith the Lord,” which is an oath.

He swears by Himself. So the Lord swore by Himself. By the way, the oath in the Bible puts an end to all strife, all agitation, and all disagreement. Hebrews 6:17 says, “Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath:” Verse 16 says, “For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife.” So God confirmed the priesthood of Christ with an oath, just as He confirmed the promise to Abraham with an oath. The Bible says that God has sworn: “The Lord hath sworn, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.”

Now we must ask a question: What are the implications of God's swearing? Have you ever thought about that? When God says, “As I live, saith the Lord,” or, “The Lord hath sworn,” what does that imply? We read it in the Bible all the time. Let me give you a minimum of four things that are implied. First and foremost, when God swears, it implies His veracity, that is, His truthfulness. God will not and cannot lie.

If you are taking down the Scriptures, jot down Psalm 89:35. God says, “Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David.” So when God swears, it is an indication of His veracity. He is telling the absolute truth. He cannot and will not lie. You find the same thing in Psalm 132:11. The Word of God says, “The Lord hath sworn in truth unto David; he will not turn from it.” When the Lord swears, first and foremost, it implies His veracity—that is, His truthfulness. It is absolutely, totally, and completely true.

Secondly, when the Lord swears, it implies the determination and the accomplishment of that which is sworn to. God is not like man. Men swear a lot of times and do not understand what they are doing, even when they are swearing. Derek could do me wrong, and I could say, “I swear I'll get you back.” I might have a plan to get him back, which would be evil and wicked in and of itself, but I do not necessarily have the power to accomplish that which I swear to. However, God does. So it implies not just veracity and truthfulness, but also the determination and accomplishment of that which is sworn to. Write this Scripture down.

Isaiah 14:24 says, "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so

shall it stand." God says that He has sworn, and it will come to pass. As He has thought, it will be accomplished. It is just that simple.

First, when God swears, it implies His veracity and truthfulness. Secondly, it implies His determination and the accomplishment of that which is sworn to. Thirdly, it implies that what God has sworn to is right, holy, and just. Whatever God swears to is right, holy, and just.

Amos 4:2 says, "The Lord God hath sworn by his holiness, that, lo, the days shall come upon you, that he will take you away with hooks, and your posterity with fishhooks." The Lord has sworn in His holiness. What is He saying? He is saying, I want to judge you. God will do that which is just and right.

Amos 8:7 says, "The Lord hath sworn by the excellency of Jacob, Surely I will never forget any of their works." What is He swearing to? Justice, judgment, that which is holy and right. In Psalm 60:6, "God hath spoken in his holiness; I will rejoice, I will divide Shechem, and mete out the valley of Succoth." He is saying, I am going to judge and destroy the wicked.

When God swears, it implies not only His veracity, and not only His determination and accomplishment of that which is sworn to, but also righteous judgment and holiness. Fourthly, it implies God's power and might in accomplishing that which He swears to. Jeremiah 44:26-27 says, "Now look carefully at what God says."

Jeremiah 44:26 says, “Therefore hear ye the word of the Lord, all Judah that dwell in the land of Egypt; Behold, I have sworn by my great name, saith the Lord, that my name shall no more be named in the mouth of any man of Judah in all the land of Egypt, saying, The Lord God liveth. Behold, I will watch over them for evil, and not for good: and all the men of Judah that are in the land of Egypt shall be consumed by the sword and by the famine, until there be an end of them.” What is God saying? God says, I am going to exercise my power, and I am going to kill every one of them that I said I would kill.

Isaiah 62:8 says, “The Lord hath sworn by his right hand, and by the arm of his strength. Surely I will no more give thy corn to be meat for thine enemies; and the sons of the stranger shall not drink

thy wine, for the which thou hast laboured." The Lord hath sworn by his right hand, and by the arm of his strength. Here we see God's power.

Now put these things together with Psalm 110:4: "The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek." When God swears concerning the priesthood of Christ, He is giving an oath to its veracity and truthfulness, as well as to the rightness, holiness, and justice of establishing Christ in a perpetual priesthood. Moreover, He is dedicating His might and power to the establishment and accomplishment of that priesthood. God's oath was His pledge to bring His eternal power and Godhead for the fulfillment and establishment of the priesthood of Jesus Christ.

Stop and think about this. Do you realize that the only possible way for Christ to fail, and the only possible way for the priesthood of Jesus Christ to fail, is for God Himself to fail? What do you think the chances are of that? Psalm 138:2 says that He has glorified His Word above all His name.

When God said to Christ, "The Lord hath sworn, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek," Christ could fail only if God Himself failed. That is absolutely and totally impossible. Therefore, the perpetual priesthood of Jesus Christ is guaranteed. The Lord has sworn.

Secondly, look in verse four of Psalm 110. You have a holy attitude. The Bible says, "The Lord hath sworn"—there is the holy asseveration—"and will not repent." There is the holy attitude.

The Holy Attitude: 'And Will Not Repent'

When is it right to fail to repent? The answer is when you have not sinned, when you have only done that which is right and holy and just and true. God the Father says there is no necessity to repent. Why should He repent? He has done that which was right concerning Jesus Christ.

Repentance involves a change of mind which produces a change of conduct. When Scripture affirms that God will not repent, all it is saying is that God is not going to change His mind concerning the

establishment of the priesthood of Jesus Christ. The Word of God says in Numbers 23:19, “God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?” Of course He is going to make it good.

The phrase “and will not repent” indicates that God will never change His purpose concerning Christ. It is a done deal, so to speak. There are no contingencies, conditions, or reservations. Nothing is left to the will of man—not to man, nor to angels. It is an irreversible decree of God, and God will not change His mind.

Stop and think for a moment what the alternative would be. If God repented, it would mean that God changed His mind. That would be a denial of His omniscience. He would have to change His conduct, which would be a denial of God. God is immutable and unchangeable. He is the most perfect, holy being; He is omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent. He is the one true and living God. There is no need for Him to repent.

The Holy Action: 'Thou Art a Priest for Ever'

Here is a holy asseveration: “The Lord has sworn”; a holy attitude: “and will not repent”; and, thirdly, a holy action: “Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.” The Hebrew word for priest is Cohen, which literally means not only a priest but a prince. Jesus Christ is not only a priest; He is also a prince. The first three verses refer to His kingship, so we know that He is a prince and a priest as well.

In patriarchal times, during the time of Abraham and Job, men like them—the heads of families—usually exercised both political and sacerdotal, or priestly, authority. Each head of the family or tribe was considered a priest. He did basically three things. First, he was an instructor of the family and tribe; that is, he taught them what was right.

Second, he offered sacrifices for the sins of the people to reconcile them to God and give them access to His presence. Don't you remember how Job not only instructed his children, but got up and sacrificed every day in case they had sinned? Thirdly, he was their

mediator; he interceded and prayed for them. Christ is the fulfillment of all these Old Testament types.

What was true in patriarchal times was true in Levitical times. Now Jesus Christ, as the great High Priest, is the grand and universal instructor of His Word through His Spirit. Moreover, He is the Lamb of God who has taken away the sin of the world. He is our Passover, sacrificed for us. Moreover, He is now our Mediator, our great High Priest who sits upon the throne and intercedes for us.

Melchizedek—“Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.” Melchizedek was a king and a priest. Jesus Christ is more: He is Prophet, Priest, and King. Certain men in the Bible had some of these offices doubled up in their lives. Samuel was a priest and a prophet; David was a king and a prophet. But only Christ is Prophet, Priest, and King.

Our Lord Jesus Christ is a priest. That should be obvious. He was appointed to that office and faithfully executes it. The Bible says in Hebrews 5:1, which we read, that He was ordained of God to offer sacrifices in things pertaining to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sin.

That's exactly what he does. He made atonement for his people. He is our minister, our advocate, and our mediator. So Jesus Christ is a priest. Secondly, he is a priest forever. He was designed a priest in God's eternal counsel. We never think about this, but he was actually a priest in the Old Testament as well. How can we say that? Everyone here can quote Hebrews 13:8: "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever." All those Old Testament priests were nothing more than pictures, types, shadows, and emblems of the one true priest, Jesus Christ. There will never ever be another priest. Jesus Christ has now been made the priest forever, so we need not look for any other to come.

I get so tickled at professing Christians who become excited about everything happening in the land of Israel, where people hate and despise Jesus Christ. They say, "They're going to reestablish the priesthood. They've already got the Sanhedrin going now." Hogwash. There is never, ever going to be another priesthood, because Jesus Christ is God's great High Priest. You're not going to replace Him. If

you're going to get excited about a priesthood, get excited about the priesthood of Jesus Christ, because the fruits of His ministry and priesthood will continue forever. Thirdly, He was made a priest with an oath: "The Lord has sworn," and, as we read in Hebrews 7, the apostle demonstrates the superiority of Jesus Christ's priesthood over Aaron's: "The Lord has sworn and will not repent. Jesus Christ is the priest forever."

This should be the comfort and consolation of believers. When you understand the ramifications, it ought to make you exceedingly happy. Fourthly, He is a priest, not after the order of Aaron or Levi, but after the order of Melchizedek.

You are going to ask me what all that means. You will have to wait until next week, because I cannot develop all of that this week. It means this: the Melchizedek priesthood was prior to the Levitical priesthood; therefore, it was superior. Melchizedek had no successor, and Jesus Christ is not going to have a successor. Jesus Christ is the Alpha and the Omega. He is the culmination of both the Old and the New Testament. God said, "The Lord has sworn, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek."

Today I have established one real thought: Jesus Christ is our priest.

Application: The Priesthood as the Heart of Our Faith

I want to spend the rest of my time this morning on the applications. My first application is a quotation from Charles Haddon Spurgeon on verse four of Psalm 110. Listen to what Spurgeon said concerning the priesthood of Christ:

"We have now reached the heart of the Psalm, which is also the very center and soul of our faith. Our Lord Jesus is a priest king by the ancient oath of Jehovah. He glorified not himself to be made a high priest, but was ordained thereunto from of old and was called of God an high priest after the order of Melchizedek. It must be a solemn and sure matter which leads the eternal to swear, and with him an oath fixes and settles the decree forever. But in this case, as if to make assurance a thousand times sure, it is added, 'and will not repent.' It is done and done forever and ever. Jesus is sworn in to be

the priest of His people, and He must abide so even to the end because His commission is sealed by the unchanging oath of the immutable Jehovah. If His priesthood could be revoked and His authority removed, it would be the end of all hope and life for the people whom He loves. But this sure rock is the basis of our security. The oath of God establishes our glorious Lord both in His priesthood and in His throne."

It is the Lord who has constituted him a priest forever. He has done it by oath, and that oath is without repentance, taking effect now and standing throughout all ages. Hence, our security in Him is placed beyond all question.

Application: Salvation Tied to Christ's Intercessory Work

Spurgeon said that verse 4, the priesthood of Christ, was the heart and soul of our faith. If you understand the priesthood of Christ, it will give you the greatest assurance and the greatest security, beyond imagination and beyond all question.

How could Spurgeon make such a statement? Our salvation is intimately tied up in the priesthood of Jesus Christ. Hebrews 7:21 says, "For those priests were made without an oath; but this with an oath by him that said unto him, The Lord sware and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec: By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament."

"And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death:" What happened to Aaron? He died. What happened to Eleazar? He died. What happened to all of those priests? Every single one of them are dead. "But this man," talking about Christ, "but this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood."

Do you see the significance of the fact that Christ lives forever? Christ has an unchangeable priesthood. Verse 25 says, "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." He is able to save to the uttermost because He ever liveth to make intercession for us. Jesus Christ can never die. Jesus Christ has a perpetual

priesthood because Jesus Christ triumphed over and conquered death, and He will never ever die again.

The priestly work of Christ has two parts: His satisfaction and His intercession. His satisfaction also has two parts: His active obedience and His passive obedience. When we speak of Christ's satisfaction, we are speaking of the death of Christ, the suffering of Christ, and the sacrifice of Christ. By His active obedience, He kept the law of God personally, perfectly, and perpetually. That is why He could say in John 8:29, "I do always those things that please the Father." Jesus Christ actively obeyed God in every instance and in every detail. He never sinned at all. That is called His active obedience.

His passive obedience was when He hung upon the cross, our sins were imputed to Him, and He suffered there in our stead as our substitute. That is referred to as His passive obedience.

The priesthood of Christ included two parts: His satisfaction and His intercession. When we think of intercession, we normally think of someone praying for another individual. Certainly, the word intercede means to make requests on behalf of another, and Christ is indeed the great intercessor and the great master of requests in heaven. If you genuinely believe that Jesus Christ is the Great High Priest and the One who makes intercession for us, you will not be praying to Mary or to any of the saints. You will pray only to Jesus Christ. The intercessory work of Jesus Christ involves at least three things.

Number one, He presents His blood, or the merit of His blood, to the Father in virtue of that price paid, and He pleads for mercy. Without turning you back to the book of Leviticus, do you not remember that it was Aaron, the high priest, who sacrificed the offering? It was Aaron who carried the blood into the Holy of Holies. It was Aaron who sprinkled the blood on the mercy seat. But that blood was the blood of bulls and goats. Look in Hebrews 9.

In Hebrews 9:11–12 we read: "But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands," not the fleshly, carnal one on earth, "that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of

goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place," that is, in heaven, "having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh:" that is all it was, carnal, "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"

Jesus Christ, then, as our intercessor, presents the merits of his blood to the Father.

Secondly, consider the second part of our Lord's intercessory work in Romans 8:33–34. Christ by his intercession answers all bills of indictments against us, against his people: "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."

What does that mean? Do you not remember how Satan is the accuser of the brethren? Do you not remember how, in Zechariah—I believe it is chapter 3—Joshua the high priest was praying, and there stood Satan at his right hand to resist him? What happens when charges are laid against God's elect? What happens when Satan accuses us? What happens when the justice of God arises and demands an answer?

Christ handles all bills of indictments, pleads the merits of His blood, and takes care of every legal, judicial problem that might exist or ever come up. It is Christ who pleads our cause. In 1 John 2:1, the Bible says, "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins." Christ is our advocate.

The Greek word for advocate is parakletos. Para is a preposition meaning alongside, and kaleo means I call. Parakletos means literally one who is called alongside to help. This is also one of the titles given to the Holy Spirit in the New Testament. He is called the divine Paraclete because He came in the place of Christ. He is one

who is called alongside to help as well. But here the Bible tells us that Christ is our advocate.

He is the true lawyer, if you want to use that term. He is the One who knows the law—God's law. He authored it; He should know it. When Satan accuses the brethren and presents a bill of indictment, when we sin and the justice of God arises and demands judgment, our Advocate stands and says, "I acknowledge it. Yes, he did sin. Yes, there was wickedness. But Father, the law cannot demand payment twice. To exact payment twice for the same sin would be unjust. And Father, here is My blood. Here are My sufferings that I suffered in his stead."

Therefore, God's justice says we are free, because Christ paid the penalty. He continues to plead the merits of His blood. He answers all our indictments. He is our Advocate. He intercedes for us and prays for us. He has never lost a case.

We can have confidence in that kind of lawyer—One who knows the law perfectly, and whose Father is the Judge. We are bound to be winners. One more thing shows the constancy of Christ's love for His own, demonstrated in His priesthood. Go back in your Bible to John 13:1. This passage shows the constancy of our Lord's love, which is even demonstrated in His priesthood.

"Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end." He loved them unto the end. When our Lord knew that it was time for Him to give His life a ransom for His people, He loved them to the very end—that is, until He died.

It is true that our Lord graciously and marvelously loved us until the end of His life. But His love did not stop there. Christ has now done dying, never to die again, but He is not done loving. The very fact that He intercedes for us demonstrates the constancy of His love.

In the Old Testament, the high priest had on the breastplate twelve stones, and each stone was engraved with the name of the tribe in Israel. So the priest always carried the people on his breast. Jesus Christ carries more than the tribes; He carries us as

individuals. Aaron was a man and finite, but our Lord is the God-man. If He knows all the names of the stars, I can assure you, He knows the names of His people.

In fact, the Bible says very plainly in 2 Timothy—I think it's chapter 2, verse 19—"Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." He carries our names upon His heart, and He prays for us. He's done dying, but He's not done loving. If you understand the priesthood of Christ, it will produce assurance and faith and comfort and consolation like nothing else. "The Lord hath sworn, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek."

"The Lord has sworn and will not repent." Nothing will ever change in relation to Jesus Christ. His kingship, His prophetship, and His priesthood are settled and sure. If we're in Him, we have the utmost confidence because He is our salvation. Let's pray. Father, we thank you today for the greatness and mercy of Jesus Christ. We're so thankful that He is not only our King, but our Priest.

And to think that He intercedes for each of us. He answers all bills of indictments against us and presents the merits of His blood. What greater confidence and consolation could we have? We bow to Him, worship Him, and give Him honor and glory, for He is King of Kings, Lord of Lords, and the Great High Priest. May we worship Him in spirit and in truth. In Thy name we pray, Amen.

CHAPTER 8

Messiah's Divine Rights

Part Eight

Introduction and Review of Psalm 110

Psalm 110 declares, “The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion, rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, and the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning thou hast the dew of thy youth. The Lord hath sworn and will not repent, thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings on the day of his wrath. He shall judge among the heathen. He shall fill the places with the dead bodies. He shall wound the heads over many countries. He shall drink of the brook in the way, therefore shall he lift up the head.” Psalm 110, and we have gotten down to verse 4: “The Lord has sworn and will not repent, thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.”

In this psalm, verse one shows that our Lord has the right to royal honor; verse two, the right to rule the heathen; and verse three, the

right to reverend homage. Since He is not only King but also a priest, He produces and sires warrior priests. This is the transition from verse 3 to verse 4, because the first three verses basically deal with His kingship, and verse 4 with His priesthood.

His priesthood basically consisted of two parts. First, His satisfaction, that is, His actual sacrifice. That satisfaction involved two parts: His active and passive obedience. His active obedience is where He kept the law of God perfectly. In John 8:29 He said, “I do always those things which please the Father.” He was the only one who ever obeyed the law of God personally, perfectly, and perpetually. Then there is His passive obedience, where the wrath and justice of God was poured upon Him. He suffered in our stead. So that is His satisfaction. He calls them for our acquittal. He is always there interceding for us.

Today I am going to deal with what everyone has a question about in verse 4: “The Lord has sworn and will not repent. Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.” Everyone wonders about the statement that Christ was made a priest after the order of Melchizedek. The question automatically arises: Who was Melchizedek, and why is everything about him basically clothed in mystery?

There have been numerous suggestions, some absolutely heretical, in trying to identify Melchizedek. Some of the old heretics said that Melchizedek was none other than the Holy Ghost. Some say he was an angel. Others teach that he was Shem, the son of Noah. Still others say that he was Ham, Job, or Enoch, or some Canaanite priest miraculously and extraordinarily raised up by God to be a priest of the Gentiles. Some have said that Melchizedek was Christ himself, who manifested himself by special dispensation during the time of Abraham in the flesh. They would take John 8:56, where Christ said, “Abraham rejoiced to see my day and was glad.” That verse can simply mean that Abraham saw Christ by faith, and I believe that is exactly what it means.

The Question of Melchizedek's Identity

One of the most logical explanations of who Melchizedek was was given by John Brown of Edinburgh, Scotland, who died in 1858:

“The most probable opinion is that he was one of the descendants of Japheth who possessed the supreme authority over a small tribe of which Salem was the chief town, among whom the true primitive religion was preserved and who was invested with priestly as well as regal office.” Thus, he probably was a descendant of Japheth, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. The importance of Melchizedek is seen in the fact that Christ is said to be a priest after his order. Christ is called a priest after the order of Melchizedek one time in the Old Testament and seven times in the New Testament. Eight times specifically, God mentions this fact. How many times does God have to say something to make it true?

The answer is only once. So if God says something eight particular times, it means, therefore, that it is exceedingly important. The number eight signifies always a new beginning. The priesthood of Christ does indeed mark a new beginning. Hebrews 8:6 says, “But now hath he,” Christ, “obtained a more excellent ministry by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant which was established upon better promises.” So we have a new beginning; we have the new covenant.

Hebrews 9:15 says, “And for this cause he,” that is Christ, “is the mediator of the New Testament,” or the new covenant, “that by means of death for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament,” or covenant, “they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.” Over and over in the book of Hebrews, Christ is spoken of as being the mediator of the new covenant.

Psalm 110 is connected with this truth, and the book of Hebrews develops it several times. Now, if you go back in your Bible to Genesis chapter 14, you will find the stage being set for the appearance of Melchizedek. Lot and a number of other people were taken captive. Abram found out that his nephew had been taken captive, so he armed his trained men and went to recover Lot and those individuals who were taken captive. Genesis 14:17 begins this account.

The king of Sodom went out to meet Abram after his return from the slaughter of Chedorlaomer and the kings that were with him in the valley of Shaveh, which is the king's dale. “And Melchizedek,

king of Salem, brought forth bread and wine, and he was the priest of the Most High God. And he blessed him and said, Blessed be Abram of the Most High God, possessor of heaven and earth. And he blessed the Most High God, who had delivered thine enemies into thine hand, and he gave him tithes of all. And the king of Sodom said unto Abram, Give me the persons, and take the goods thyself. And Abram said to the king of Sodom, I have lifted up mine hand unto the Lord, the Most High God, the Possessor of heaven and earth, that I will not take from a thread even to a shoelatchet, and that I will not take anything that is thine, lest thou shouldst say, I have made Abram rich. Save only that which the young men have eaten, and the portion of the men which went with me, Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre, let them take their portion."

Abraham returns triumphantly with Lot and all the people who had been captured. At this point, the king of Sodom and Melchizedek go out to meet Abram. This is the first and last time Melchizedek appears in the Old Testament. The only other time he is mentioned is in Psalm 110:4, where God says concerning Christ that He was a priest after the order of Melchizedek.

Melchizedek as a Man and Priest

Let me lay out at least five things. First, Melchizedek was a man. The Bible says that Melchizedek went out to meet Abram. How do we know he was a man? There are a number of other passages, but hold Genesis 14 and look in Hebrews 5, particularly verses 1 and 4, concerning the priesthood. "For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sin." How do we know Melchizedek was a man? Because he was a priest, and every priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God. Then verse 4 says, "And no man taketh his honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron."

Every priest was taken from among men in order that he might offer sacrifices unto God. First and foremost, Melchizedek was a man. Secondly, Genesis 14:18 explicitly tells us that Melchizedek was a priest of the Most High God: "And Melchizedek king of Salem

brought forth bread and wine; and he was the priest of the most high God."

Thirdly, Melchizedek, as a man and as a priest of the Most High God, did exactly what priests were ordained to do. "And he," that is, Melchizedek, "blessed him," that is, Abram, "and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth." What do priests do? They not only offer sacrifices, but also give blessings. Here Melchizedek was blessing Abram.

Note also the generosity of Melchizedek. The Bible says, "And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine." How does that indicate his generosity? Genesis 14:13 says, "And there came one that escaped, and told Abram the Hebrew; for he dwelt in the plain of Mamre, the Amorite, brother of Eshcol, and brother of Aner: and these were confederate with Abram." When Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, "he armed his trained servants, born in his own house, three hundred and eighteen, and pursued them unto Dan."

Abram therefore had 318 trained fighting men born in his own house, not counting those who were not born there. If Melchizedek brought forth bread and wine to feed these hungry, weary warriors, that was generosity. Moreover, the 318 did not include the men who were with Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre. Since they were confederate with Abram, there may have been seven or eight hundred warriors.

And here comes Melchizedek with bread and wine. Anyone who knows anything about the New Testament would automatically think of communion, of a spiritual act and a spiritual feast. But here he is, a man who is a priest, who blesses Abram and demonstrates his generosity by giving bread and wine to those who were with him. Then, in verse 20, he also received tithes from Abram: "And he blessed the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand," and Abram "gave him tithes of all." Abram then paid tithes to Melchizedek.

When tithes are given and received, it is evident that there is a divine priesthood. This significance is not lost upon the writers of the New Testament, because the very fact that Abram paid tithes to

Melchizedek indicates that here was a greater priest and a greater priesthood than that of Levi.

The Superiority of Melchizedek's Priesthood

How can we say that? Hebrews 7: “For this Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him; to whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace; without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually.”

“Now consider how great this man was,” on whom even the patriarch Abraham gave a tenth of the spoils. The sons of Levi, who receive the office of the priesthood, have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law, that is, of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abraham. But Melchizedek, whose descent is not counted from them, received tithes of Abraham and blessed him that had the promises. “And without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better.” Here men that die receive tithes, but there he receiveth them, of whom it is witnessed that he liveth. Levi also, who receiveth tithes, paid tithes in Abraham, for he was yet in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him. If perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchizedek and not be called after the order of Aaron?

This whole passage is pointing out the fact that Melchizedek received tithes from Abraham. Levi was yet in the loins of Abraham. In that sense, the Scripture is saying that even Levi paid tithes and recognized the greater priesthood of Melchizedek. So it is very obvious, then, that the very fact Abram paid tithes to Melchizedek had a great significance, and the apostle is certainly outlining that here.

Here is the point to be learned from Genesis chapter 14: there has always been a priesthood prior to and superior to that of Aaron and Levi, even though they sprang from the loins of Abraham. Let me say that again: there has always been a priesthood prior to and superior

to that of Aaron and Levi. The superior priesthood is where the priest was both king and priest. Christ would never ever be made a priest after the order of an inferior priesthood, one that was merely symbolical and emblematical and a shadow of the real thing, which the Levitical priesthood was. This is the point that this passage establishes.

Melchizedek as a Type of Christ

The Bible specifically tells us that Melchizedek was king of Salem. Genesis 14:18 says, “He was the king of Salem.” Where in the world is Salem? What is Salem? Psalm 76:1–2 tells us, “In Judah is God known. His name is great in Israel. In Salem also is his tabernacle and his dwelling place in Zion.” Salem is short for Jerusalem. “In Salem also is his tabernacle,” and the tabernacle was in Jerusalem. Thus he is counted as King of Salem, or King of Jerusalem. The word Salem means peace, so he is King of Salem, King of Jerusalem, or King of Peace.

The word Melchizedek is also made up of another Hebrew word, Melchi, which is the Hebrew word for righteousness. The very name Melchizedek literally means “My Righteous King,” or “the King of Righteousness.” Hebrews 7:1–2 says, “For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, to whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all, first being by interpretation the King of Righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is King of Peace.”

Melchizedek, in his person, was a representative type of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ alone is the true King of Peace and the true King of Righteousness. In all probability, Melchizedek received his name from the pure and righteous administration of his government, which exemplified one of the attributes of our Lord, a character essential in our Lord. If I were to take the time, I could go all through the Bible and show you where he is called the Branch, the righteous Branch, and the righteous One. He is the King of Peace. Isaiah 9:6 and many, many other passages bear this out. Thus, we have here Melchizedek, who was a type and representative of Jesus Christ.

I hope you are putting together this one thought: Melchizedek is a man and only a man, although he is a type and a representative of Jesus Christ. I am going to show you that other Scriptures teach undeniably that Melchizedek was merely a man. Yet, other Scriptures most certainly have to be explained in light of this. For instance, Hebrews 7:15 says, "And it is yet far more evident for that after the similitude of Melchizedek, there ariseth another priest," speaking of Christ, "who is made not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of the endless life."

Notice again: "And it is yet far more evident for that after the similitude of Melchizedek, there ariseth another priest." First, look at the word similitude. The Greek word is homoiōtēs, which is literally translated as likeness or similitude. What is a similitude? A similitude means that something is like something else, but it is not the same thing. The Bible therefore says plainly that there arises another priest after the similitude of Melchizedek. Here is Melchizedek, and here is Christ. Melchizedek was a similitude, and Christ is like him in certain ways, while he is like Christ in certain ways, but they are not one and the same.

Now look at verse 15 again: "And it is yet far more evident for that after the similitude of Melchizedek there ariseth another priest." The second obvious point in this verse is the word another: A-N-O-T-H-E-R, another priest.

You and I have a great disadvantage in our English language. I could give Gene a billfold, and he could say, "I don't want to take your billfold." I could respond, "I have another one just like it at home. Go ahead." When I say I have another one, I mean that I have one just like it at home; I do not need two, so I am giving him one of them. In the Greek language, however, there are two distinct words for another, and they mean totally different things.

The first word is allos, A-L-L-O-S. When you see it, it means another of the same kind. If I gave him my billfold and told him I had an allos back at home, I would be saying that I had another one just like it. But the word heteros, which is also translated another in the Bible, means another of a different kind.

That is why we talk about a heterosexual marriage, a marriage between a man and a woman. We may be alike in some ways, but we are certainly unalike in a multitude of other ways. Look carefully now. The Bible says in verse 15, “and yet it is far more evident for that after the similitude, after the likeness of Melchizedek, there ariseth a heteros, a different kind of priest, a priest of a different kind.” In other words, Christ is not like Levi in some ways, and He is not like Melchizedek in some ways either. Another priest has risen, even Jesus Christ, the Son of David, of the tribe of Judah, totally different from the Aaronic priesthood of the tribe of Levi. Christ is not a priest after the order of Levi; He is a priest after the order of Melchizedek. Yet they are not one and the same persons. He is another of a different kind. There was a similitude and a likeness, but they are not one and the same thing.

So the Bible is teaching us, I believe very clearly here, that the order and the similitude of Melchizedek implies that there are some things like him, and there is a resemblance between them, but they are totally different individuals. The context demands that we differentiate not only between the Levitical priesthood and the priesthood of Christ, but also between Christ and Melchizedek. Why? "If, therefore, perfection were by the Levitical priesthood," it was not. "If, therefore, perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, for under it the people receive the law, what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchizedek and not be called after the order of Aaron?"

In other words, here is the argument of the apostle. If the Levitical priesthood was perfect, if it could do what needed to be done, why change? But what he is pointing out is that perfection could never be under the Levitical priesthood. Why could it not be under the Levitical priesthood? Hebrews 8: "Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt. Because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people."

God says here is a new covenant, and this new covenant is not going to be written in stone; it is going to be written in our hearts and in our minds. Hebrews 10: "For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never, with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually, make the comers thereunto perfect." No man was ever saved by those bulls and goats that were sacrificed. They could not make the comers thereunto perfect. "For then would they not have ceased to be offered, because that the worshippers, once purged, should have no more conscience of sins." But in those sacrifices, there is a remembrance made of sins every year.

What is his argument? Very obviously, the argument is this: everything was tied in shadow. You came with a bull or a goat to offer sacrifice. You had to do it again the next year, the year after that, and the year after that. Why? Because it was not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sin. Everything there was a type and shadow.

Perfection was not under the Levitical priesthood. So there must necessarily be a change in that priesthood. Hebrews chapter 7, verse 16, says that Jesus Christ was made a priest not after the order of Levi, but after the order of Melchizedek, “who is made not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life.” Verses 24 and 25 say, “But this man,” speaking of Christ, “because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood, wherefore he is able to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by him.” Why? “Seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.”

Christ needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice first for his own sins and then for the people's. For this he did once when he offered up himself. The law maketh men high priests which have an infirmity, but the word of the oath which was since the law maketh the Son who is consecrated forevermore. So we have been perfection in Jesus Christ.

Where is Melchizedek? The answer is that he is dead. Only Christ is the eternal Son of God. Melchizedek is a man; he has a similitude to Christ and is a representative of Christ.

Explaining the Mysterious Phrases in Hebrews 7:3

You may say, “Brother Weaver, I understand all of that, but wait until you come to some other Scriptures; they are going to make you change your mind.” No, let us look at those other Scriptures, because here is the passage that throws most people. Look in Hebrews 7, verse 3. In fact, we are talking about Melchizedek. Look in verse 1: “For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, to whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all, who being by interpretation king of righteousness, and after that also king of Salem, which is king of peace, without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like unto the Son of God, abideth a priest continually.” How are we to explain those passages? First, I want to call your attention to verse 3 and look at these phrases one at a time.

He says, “without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days nor end of life.” That is where we normally stop. But look at it: “But made”—what is the next word?—“like unto the Son of God.” Made like unto the Son of God. If he was made like unto the Son of God, very obviously they are two different people, two different persons. They are not one and the same.

The Greek word is aphomoioō, which literally translated means to cause a model to pass off into an image, to express oneself as, or a facsimile, or to be made like, or to render similar. The word means that Melchizedek was a facsimile. He was made like—not the real thing, but like Him. This indicates once again that Melchizedek was a picture, a type, a shadow, a semblance of what was actually going to be in Jesus Christ. Melchizedek was the shadow; Christ would be the substance. The apostle is illustrating the nature and perpetuity of Messiah’s office by comparing it to Melchizedek.

Hence he is pressing the idea of resemblance. He is saying that Melchizedek was made like unto the Son of God. Isn't it interesting that the Bible says Melchizedek was made like unto the Son of God? The Son of God was not made like unto Melchizedek. There is a difference. If Melchizedek was made like unto the Son of God, what does that mean? It means the Son of God is the original and Melchizedek is the copy. In other words, not only was there a

priesthood before Aaron and Levi, there was also a priesthood before Melchizedek, and that great original was the priesthood of Jesus Christ. The Bible tells us in Colossians 1:18 that in all things Jesus Christ might have the preeminence. Jesus Christ was the great high priest ordained from eternity. He was the true high priest, and Melchizedek was made like unto Him.

How do we explain these phrases: "without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days nor end of life"? How are we to understand that if Melchizedek is nothing but a man? Do not refer them to his person, but rather to his priesthood. What does it mean, "without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days nor end of life"?

Now you and I know there is one God, one eternal being. The father of Melchizedek was not a priest. His mother did not descend from any in the priestly office. Neither did he have a predecessor or a successor, as appears from the biblical accounts. Melchizedek was a man. He did have a father, a mother, and a natural lineage.

But no account of that is given to us in Scripture. Therefore, he is said to be without them. The Syriac version renders it, "whose father and mother are not written in the genealogies." In other words, there is no genealogical account of his father and mother. It has to do with his priesthood, not with his person. "Without descent" literally means without pedigree. His descent is unknown. He cannot go back and prove that his father was a priest, his grandfather was a priest, or his great-grandfather was a priest. He is without pedigree. It has nothing to do with his person; it has to do with his priesthood. And when the Bible says, "having neither beginning of days nor end of life," all that means is this.

There is no record of Melchizedek's birth. There is no record of his death. There is not even a record of when he began his priesthood or when he ended it. By the way, somebody else in the Bible was without father and without mother, and we know nothing of his beginning or his end. That was Adam. This phrase does not necessarily refer to Melchizedek's person, but to his priesthood.

Here is why Christ is made after the order of Melchizedek: Christ, as to His priesthood, had no predecessor, and Christ will have no

successor. Hebrews 7:16 says, “Who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life.” Verse 24 adds, “But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.”

It was very important to the Jews, in both the Old Testament and the New Testament, to have their genealogical records down pat. They knew who was a priest and who was not a priest, because a person had to be of a priestly family, of the line of Aaron or of the tribe of Levi. Otherwise, he could not be a priest.

Ezra 2:62 records those who wanted to participate in the priesthood: “These sought their register among those that were reckoned by genealogy, but they were not found, therefore they, as polluted, were put from the priesthood.” In other words, they were kicked out because they could not prove genealogical descent from Levi and Aaron. They were excluded from the priesthood. You will find the same account in Nehemiah 7:63–64. Once again, they were polluted and put from the priesthood. Under the Mosaic dispensation, everything had to come through Levi. There were regulations saying when a priest could work, when he had to cease work, what he could do, and what he could not do.

Originally, priests began their service at thirty years of age. By the time they were fifty, they were retired, or at least retired from the more arduous tasks. Later, according to 1 Chronicles 23, that was reduced, and they began their priestly work at twenty years of age. Everything had to be established by genealogy, and everything had to be carefully outlined. Here is the Apostle’s argument in Hebrews chapter 7.

He is simply saying there is no genealogical table in regard to Melchizedek. As far as the record and his priesthood are concerned, he was without father and without mother. He had no pedigree or descent. There is nothing about his birth or his death, and in that sense he was made like unto Christ. Here is the whole emphasis the Apostle is laying down: Melchizedek stood alone. Jesus Christ stands alone. As far as we know, Genesis 14 is the first and last that we hear of Melchizedek. The only thing we have in the New Testament is that

which is basically repeated from Genesis 14, with the exception of Hebrews 7. No one knows anything about Melchizedek outside of that. The important point is that in his priesthood he stood alone. He did not come from a great line of priests, nor was his family a priestly family.

Hebrews 7:13-14 says, “For he of whom these things are spoken,” that is Christ, “pertaineth to another tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the altar, for it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah, of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning the priesthood.” Let that sink in for a moment. Our Lord was not of Levi; He was of Judah. Just like Melchizedek stood alone, Jesus Christ stands alone. He had no predecessors. He will have no successors.

Differences Between Melchizedekal and Levitical Priesthoods

Although we have the genealogy of Christ as far as His birth in Matthew 1 and Luke 3, we do not have a genealogy of His priesthood. There is no record given of Christ’s priesthood. In that, like Melchizedek, He stands alone.

There are differences between the Melchizedekal priesthood and the Levitical priesthood. First, there is no account of Melchizedek’s ancestry as a priest; neither his father nor his mother is mentioned, and that was indispensable to the Levitical priesthood. You had to have it in order to be a priest. Secondly, there is no account of any descendants in his office, and no reason to believe that he had any; thus he stood alone. No Levitical priest ever stood alone.

There were always people before him and after him. Thirdly, there was no account of the commencement or the close of his office as a priest. As far as the biblical record goes, it is just as if his priesthood had neither beginning nor ending. This is how the Melchizedekal priesthood differs from the Levitical priesthood: every Levitical priest had a definite beginning and a definite ending to his priesthood.

Points of Similarity Between Christ and Melchizedek

Now let me give you the points of similarity between Christ and Melchizedek. How was Melchizedek made like Christ? First of all, in name, because his name means King of Righteousness and King of Peace. Jesus Christ is the true King of Righteousness and the true King of Peace.

Secondly, he was made like Christ in that he had no predecessors and no successors in his priestly office. Thirdly, he was made like Christ in that he evidently had a perpetual priesthood, in the sense that no record is given of its beginning or ending. Fourthly, he was made like Christ in that he united kingship and priesthood in himself. That is the whole point of Psalm 110: Jesus Christ is not only King of kings; He is indeed the great High Priest.

When the Bible says that Melchizedek abideth a priest continually, all that means is that, as far as the Genesis record and the Word of God record go, he had no beginning or ending. That is the only thing that you could say.

Now look in your Bibles at Hebrews 7:23: “And they truly were many priests.” Why were there so many Levitical priests? “Because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death.” What is the argument in the rest of Hebrews 7? Jesus Christ does not die, so He is a priest after the order of Melchizedek.

You and I know that if Melchizedek was a man, there was a time when he was born and a time when he died. We do not know when or where. There was a time when he ceased to be priest. I could show you in the Bible where, in one sense of the word, there is a time when Jesus Christ will cease to be a priest. You say, “When is that?” Well, let me show you.

When all of our Lord's elect, when all of his church is redeemed and safely with him, Christ must reign till he has put all enemies under his feet: "For he must reign till he has put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet, but when he saith, All things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then

shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all."

So in the end, our Lord renders everything unto the Father. Jesus Christ is the true Melchizedek. Jesus Christ was the great high priest in the eternal covenant. Hebrews 13:20 says, "Now the God of peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the everlasting covenant." Before the world ever began, God the Father gave God the Son to be the mediator, the great high priest, the substitute, and the Lord. It was an eternal government. If it is eternal, it had no beginning. It had no ending. So Jesus Christ was the true Melchizedek. That is why the Bible says this earthly Melchizedek was made like unto him. Jesus Christ is the only one who was ever ordained priest before the world began. He had no predecessor. He will have no successor. He is all.

Applications: Christ Our Only High Priest

This truth has at least three applications. It should be exceedingly obvious to everyone that Jesus Christ is not only the great high priest, but he is the only high priest that we will ever need. Jesus Christ is perfect man and Jesus Christ is perfect God. Therefore, he is the perfect mediator. He represents man, and he also represents God. He is perfectly suited then to be the divine daysman, to be the divine mediator. Scripture emphasizes this truth.

Why did Christ assume our nature? Here is why. Hebrews 2:17 explains it: "Wherefore, in all things, it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren. That he might be a merciful and faithful high priest, in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people."

“For in that he himself has suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted.” This shows that Jesus Christ understands. Hebrews 4:14-15 says, “Seeing that we have a great high priest that is passed into the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God. Let us hold fast our confession. For we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feelings of our infirmities.” Watch what was “in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us,

therefore, come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need."

We have not a high priest who cannot be touched with the feelings of our infirmities, but he was tempted in all points such as we are, yet without sin. What does that mean? You say, "I'm hungry." Our Lord hungered. "I'm thirsty." Our Lord thirsted. "I'm tired." The Lord, being weary with his journey, sat thus on the well. You say, "You don't understand, Brother Weaver. My friends betrayed me." Our Lord understands that. His friends betrayed him. "I don't have anything in this world. I'm penniless. I'm broke." What did our Lord say? "The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head."

He understands everything that we go through because he's been through it. And yet, he did not sin. Many times we're the ones who sin in our tests and trials, but he went through everything we did without murmuring, without complaining, and without sinning. So Jesus Christ is the only high priest that we will ever need.

Secondly, if we grasp the reality of the priesthood of Jesus Christ and understand that He is a priest after the order of Melchizedek—which means that He will never die and will always be capable of fulfilling His office—it should give us extreme boldness. Hebrews 4:14 says, "Seeing then that we have a great high priest that is passed into the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession," or our confession.

The word hold fast is krateō in the Greek, from kratos, the word for power. It is translated forty-seven times in our Bible, and means to be powerful, to have power, to exercise dominion, to get possession over, and to take hold of. If we understand the priesthood of Christ, it ought to enable us to hold fast powerfully to our confession that Jesus Christ is God incarnate, that He is the one true and living God, and that He is always interceding for us. He is always successful. How can we do anything less than hold fast? Why would we turn from Him or from our confession? Like Timothy, we are to hold fast that good confession we have made before many witnesses. One last application: look at Hebrews 6 and verse 20.

Christ as Forerunner and Our Anchor

I have wanted for some time to preach an entire message on this, and maybe I will in the future. But I want you to know this is in line with the order of Melchizedek. Hebrews 6:20—whether, in fact, let us read verse 19—says, “Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, which entereth into that within the veil, whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.”

Let us set the stage. “Which hope,” speaking of Christ, “we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, which entereth into that within the veil.” What does “within the veil” mean? It means within the Holy of Holies, in the very presence of God. “Whither the forerunner is for us entered.” Note that the forerunnership of Jesus Christ is connected with His priesthood: “Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus made a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.”

Do you know what a forerunner is? The Greek word is prodromos, which literally means a forerunner or a scout. That is someone who has been sent on ahead to clear the way. It also refers to someone who goes in advance to take possession of something for the others who are following.

What is he saying? Our Lord has preceded us. He has scouted the way, cleared the enemies, and is occupying and holding our place in the very presence of God for us. If He is there, we are going to be there as well. No wonder the Bible says we have an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast. Christ, the great I Am, the great High Priest, and the great Redeemer, has gone before us and secured our place in the presence of God.

Now, one last Scripture. Look in your Bibles to John 17. Everyone knows that John 17 is the high priestly prayer of our Lord.

Does God the Father always answer the prayers of God the Son? Yes. Has He ever had a prayer that was not answered? No. What did our Lord say? "Father, thou hearest me always." In John 17:24, one of the requests that our Lord makes in His high priestly prayer to the Father is this: "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which

thou hast given me, for thou lovest me before the foundation of the world."

If Jesus Christ is our forerunner, if He is our Great High Priest, and He is in the very presence of God holding our place for us, and if He prays to the Father, "I will that they who thou hast given me be with me where I am," is there any possibility for us to fail? No, because the Father always hears the prayers of His Son. No wonder Scripture says we have an anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast.

Father, help us to behold the glory of Jesus Christ, the greatness of His priesthood, the wonders of His person, and help us to rejoice in thy so great salvation. He stands alone. He is the God-man, the Redeemer, the Savior. And we give Him honor and glory. We rejoice in the fact that one day, by His grace and by His merits, we will be with Him where He is and behold His glory and worship and serve Him alone. Give us grace to be faithful and true. In the name of Jesus Christ we pray, amen.

CHAPTER 9

Messiah's Divine Rights

Part Nine

Psalm 110 concludes the message on the Messiah's divine rights in verses 5 through 7. The entire psalm reads:

"The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. The LORD shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth. The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek. The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath. He shall judge among the heathen, he shall fill the places with the dead bodies. He shall wound the heads over many countries. He shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall he lift up the head."

Introduction and Review of Psalm 110:1-4

This is the ninth message on Psalm 110. In verse 1, Christ, as the Messiah, has the right to royal honor. Three messages examined the

phrases, “The LORD said unto my Lord,” “Sit thou at my right hand,” and “Until I make thine enemies thy footstool.” In verse 2, the Lord has the right to rule the heathen: “The LORD shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies.” In verse 3, He has the right to reverent homage, because “Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power.”

The difference between free will and freedom of will was explained. The latter part of verse 3 concerns warrior priests and, in its interpretation, teaches about the offspring of Christ. That passage also transitions from the kingship of Christ to the priesthood of Christ. Verse 4 then establishes the priesthood of Christ.

Verses 5-7 as Application of Doctrine

Verses 5 through 7 of Psalm 110 are, in reality, the application of the doctrine taught in verses 1 through 4. If Jesus Christ is indeed the God-man, the Lord and Redeemer, and the warrior-priest, it should be exceedingly obvious that He shall succeed in destroying all of His enemies. Thus, the last verses of this psalm refer to the ultimate victories of this warrior-priest King. He shall conquer all of His enemies in time and in history.

History will end with His complete and total victory, for Scripture says in 1 Corinthians 15:25, “For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.” What the Scripture is telling us in verses 5 through 7 is that our Lord will not always sit in a waiting posture. In verse 1, we read, “The LORD said to my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand.” Our Lord is not always going to be simply sitting. No, He shall come to fight and to end the war by His own victorious presence. As Psalm 68:1 says, when He does arise, His enemies shall be scattered. Verses 5 through 7 teach us that He will actively engage His enemies and destroy them by His almighty power.

In reality, verses 5 through 7 should be a comfort and a consolation for all the people of God. Stop and think. We have waited, cried, prayed, and longed for the destruction of those who harass, persecute, and torment us; who mock our God, reject Jesus Christ, and trample His law under their feet. At last, according to Psalm 110:5–7, their day has come.

The Righteous Rejoice in Vengeance

When He executes His fierce wrath and anger, we shall not only be vindicated, but our Lord shall be vindicated as well. Before looking at these verses, turn in your Bibles to Psalm 58 and then to Revelation chapter 19. I want you to see this passage at the beginning, and I will quote it at the close today as well. Psalm 58 is one of those imprecatory psalms.

Psalm 58 is where the psalmist prays for the destruction of his enemies. Verse 6 says, "Break their teeth, O God, in their mouth: break out the great teeth of the young lions, O LORD."

Once someone's teeth are broken, his power is broken. He cannot eat or receive sustenance. The psalmist continues, "Let them melt away as waters which run continually: when he bendeth his bow to shoot his arrows, let them be as cut in pieces." In other words, Lord, use them for target practice; literally, cut them in pieces. Then he says, "As a snail which melteth, let every one of them pass away. Like the untimely birth of a woman, that they may not see the sun."

As a snail melts before heat, and as a woman with a miscarriage, he says, let them simply pass away. Verse 9 says, "Before your pots can feel the thorns, he shall take them away as with a whirlwind, both living, and in his wrath." Then observe this: "The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance. He shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked. So that a man shall say, Verily there is a reward for the righteous: verily he is a God that judgeth in the earth."

The Scripture says, "The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance." This appears again in Revelation 19:1-6, describing the destruction of God's enemies and especially what the saints do: "After these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God. For true and righteous are his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand. And again they said, Alleluia."

"And her smoke rose up for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that

sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia. And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great. And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." When the enemies of God are destroyed, the saints rejoice.

His Retribution

Psalm 110 presents two points, the first being His retribution, found in verses 5 through 6. This latter part of the psalm is the application of the doctrine taught in its former portion. Verse 5 declares, “The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath.” Verse 6 continues, “He shall judge among the heathen, he shall fill the places with the dead bodies; he shall wound the heads over many countries.”

His Retribution: Striking Through Kings (Verse 5)

Our Lord shall arise for the consolation of His people and for the consternation of His enemies. Over and over as you read in the Scriptures, you will find the saints using terminology such as, “Arise, O LORD,” “Stand, O LORD,” “Lift up thyself,” “Make bare thine arm,” and “Keep not silence, and hold not thy peace.” Every one of these phrases, and a multitude of others, is a request for God to arise and judge the wicked.

Psalm 68 gives another example. This is an imprecatory prayer, but it is also a war cry and a war prayer. You will remember from the Old Testament that when the priest held the ark and they stepped into the waters of the river, the first thing they said was, “Arise, O LORD, and let thine enemies be scattered.” It was a war prayer and a war cry, and thus Psalm 68:1 declares, “Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered: let them also that hate him flee before him.”

Notice how easily it is for God to make His enemies flee. The psalm illustrates this in verse 2: “As smoke is driven away, so drive them away: as wax melteth before the fire, so let the wicked perish at the presence of God.” Do you realize how simple it is to drive smoke away? All you need is a breeze or a little wind; you can drive smoke

away with a fan. Therefore, “Arise, O God, let thine enemies be scattered: let them also that hate him flee before him. As smoke is driven away, so drive them away: as wax melteth before the fire.” It is amazing how quickly and easily wax melts in front of heat. So let the wicked perish at the presence of God. And then in verse 3, what will happen?

“But let the righteous be glad; let them rejoice before God: yea, let them exceedingly rejoice.” This is a prayer for judgment and vengeance: “Let God arise.”

Psalm 83 gives a further explanation of this imprecatory praying, because God’s retribution is seen in these prayers. Verse 1 says, “Keep not thou silent, O God: hold not thy peace.” Once again, it is an imprecatory prayer: God, do not be still. Arise and do something. The psalmist then speaks of the enemies of God, who have taken crafty counsel against His people and plotted their destruction.

In verse 9 he says, “Do unto them as unto the Midianites; as to Sisera, as to Jabin, at the brook of Kishon.” Read your Bible and you can find how these enemies of God were destroyed, “which perished at Endor: they became as dung for the earth. Make their nobles like Oreb, and like Zeeb: yea, all their princes as Zebah, and as Zalmunna: Who said?”

Look at what they were planning: “Let us take to ourselves the houses of God in possession.” They intended to capture and confiscate the people of God. Then the psalmist says, “O my God, make them like a wheel; as the stubble before the wind. As the fire burneth a wood, and as the flame setteth the mountains on fire; so persecute them with thy tempest, and make them afraid with thy storm.”

“Fill their faces with shame; that they may seek thy name, O LORD. Let them be confounded and troubled for ever; yea, let them be put to shame, and perish: That men may know that thou, whose name alone is JEHOVAH, art the most high over all the earth.” Once again, the psalmist is saying, God, it is time for You to arise.

In Psalm 110, verse 5, Scripture says, "The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath." In verse 1, "The LORD said to my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand." In verse 1, Jesus

Christ is seated at the right hand of God the Father; here in verse 5, the Father is said to be seated at the right hand of the Son. This demonstrates the equality of the Father and the Son. That is why Christ said, "I and my Father are one."

In other words, the omnipotent power of the sovereign God of the universe will be displayed in the destruction of His enemies. When David says, "The Lord at thy right hand," he is celebrating the dreadful nature of the power of God which Christ possesses for the dispersion and destruction of His enemies. It does not matter how many enemies unite against Him, or how powerful, strong, and determined they are; they shall surely be destroyed.

"At thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath." The Hebrew word translated "strike through" is makash. It is often translated as wound, pierce, smite, strike, or pierce through. In all of its power, the word literally means to smite through, to shatter, and to wound severely. He will strike through kings in the day of His wrath. He will not merely strike at them; He will strike them. He will not merely strike them; He will strike through them, utterly destroying them. It is not that they are merely downed.

SCRIPTURE READING - Genesis 14:1-13 (KJV)

You were smitten through and through. The allusion, of course, is to Genesis 14, because He said in verse 4, "Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek." Genesis 14 is the first time Melchizedek comes out to meet Abraham, and the first and only occurrence we really have of Melchizedek in the Old Testament. Note what happened in Genesis 14 so that you can understand the application of Psalm 110 and verse 5.

"And it came to pass in the days of Amraphel king of Shinar, Arioch king of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of nations; That these made war with Bera king of Sodom, and with Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, and Shemeber king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela, which is Zoar. And these were joined together in the vale of Siddim, which is the salt sea."

"Twelve years they served Chedorlaomer, and in the thirteenth year they rebelled. And in the fourteenth year came

> Chedorlaomer, and the kings that were with him, and smote the Rephaims in Ashteroth Karnaim, and the Zuzims in Ham, and the Emims in Shaveh Kiriathaim, and the Horites in their mount Seir, unto Elparan, which is by the wilderness. And they returned, and came to Enmishpat, which is Kadesh, and smote all the country of the Amalekites, and also the Amorites, that dwelt in Hazezontamar."
>
> "And there went out the king of Sodom, and the king of Gomorrah, and the king of Admah, and the king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela (the same is Zoar;) and they joined battle with them in the vale of Siddim; With Chedorlaomer the king of Elam, and with Tidal king of nations, and Amraphel king of Shinar, and Arioch king of Ellasar; four kings with five. And the vale of Siddim was full of slimepits; and the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, and fell there; and they that remained fled to the mountain. And they took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their victuals, and went their way. And they took Lot, Abram's brother's son, who dwelt in Sodom, and his goods, and departed. And there came one that had escaped, and told Abram the Hebrew."

"For he dwelt in the plain of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eshcol, and brother of Aner: and these were confederate with Abram. And when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he armed his trained servants, born in his own house, three hundred and eighteen, and pursued them unto Dan. And he divided himself against them, he and his servants, by night, and smote them, and pursued them unto Hobah, which is on the left hand of Damascus. And he brought back all the goods, and also brought again his brother Lot, and his goods, and the women also, and the people."

What did Abram do? He got his trained men and fought against these four great kings, who had just defeated five great kings, and destroyed them. He brought back everything they had captured—all the people and all the goods.

Now, when you look in Psalm 110, after He says, "Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek," He says, "The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath." What did Abraham do when he found out that Lot, his nephew, was taken?

He armed those 318 trained men and went after the wicked individuals, the wicked rulers.

The Temporary Victory of the Wicked

Now listen to the principle. The wicked endure but for a season. Let me put it another way: in the end, all of the wicked will be destroyed. Any victory that the wicked have is always a temporary victory. Those four kings enjoyed a temporary victory, but Abraham destroyed them and brought back everything they had captured. All of the wicked of this earth who fight against Christ, who think they are successful and victorious, have only a temporary success and a temporary victory.

Look in your Bibles to Psalm 37. I could show you this in a multitude of passages, but this one should be sufficient. “Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass.” God says, do not fret yourself because the wicked prosper, because someone is bringing wicked devices to pass. “Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to do evil.” Why? “For evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the LORD, they shall inherit the earth. For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be. But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.”

God says, do not get upset because the wicked have temporary success. In a little while you will consider his place, and he will not be there. He will be cut off. Psalm 37:34 says, "Wait on the LORD, and keep his way, and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land: when the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see it." David continues, "I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay tree. Yet he passed away, and, lo, he was not: yea, I sought him, but he could not be found. Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace. But the transgressors shall be destroyed together: the end of the wicked shall be cut off. But the salvation of the righteous is of the LORD: he is their strength in the time of trouble. And the LORD shall help them, and deliver them: he

shall deliver them from the wicked, and save them, because they trust in him."

The Bible says that God will destroy the wicked. It does not matter that they prosper, succeed, or are temporarily victorious. The only victory they have is temporary. In the end, God shall destroy them.

Psalm 110:5 says, "The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath." Those kings whom God strikes through are the same kings who rise up in rebellion against Him. Psalm 2:2 says, "The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us."

What are the kings of the earth and the rulers—that is, those princes, presidents, and people in power—intent on? They are intent on breaking the bands that God has placed upon them. They do not want the restraints or the limitations God has placed upon them. Instead of obeying God, they want to do what they want to do. They take counsel together against the LORD and against His anointed. They are setting themselves against God.

Interestingly, this is the same language used to describe the rebellion of Herod and Pontius Pilate. Acts 4:26-27 quotes Psalm 2 and applies it to them: "The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together." That is, they consulted, confederated, and stood up against the Lord.

Acts 12 records what happened to Herod. He "stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the church," and "he killed James the brother of John with the sword." Later, "upon a set day Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat upon his throne, and made an oration unto them." The people shouted, "It is the voice of a god, and not of a man." Immediately "the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost."

Both Herod and Pontius Pilate, who set themselves against Christ, came to an ignominious end and a very shameful death. All

throughout history, those who have set themselves against Christ have died. They never prospered. Whether we look at Nero, Diocletian, Maximilian, or the great infidels, all of them are dead and gone. Their little victory and their success, according to their own eyes, were merely temporary.

What does the Bible say? "The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath." When Jesus Christ literally comes on the scene, when He comes on the field of action, He brings the omnipotent power of God with Him, and the eternal power of God will destroy any and all earthly power that is against Him.

That is why Revelation 6 says that in the day of His wrath, the kings, princes, captains, and mighty men shall flee to the mountains and cry to the rocks, "Fall on us, and hide us." Why? "For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?"

The wicked are brave and bold when they are in power and in prosperity. When they are in power and prospering, they laugh at Christ, mock His people, and trample His law under their feet. They erroneously think that somehow God does not see them or will not take notice of their wickedness, and that, if He does, He will not judge them. They are proud, arrogant, and haughty.

Look in your Bibles to Psalm 10. Let me show you the mentality of the wicked. Psalm 10—not Psalm 100, just Psalm 10—beginning with verse 1. The wicked are brave when they are in positions of power, when they are prospering: “Why standest thou afar off, O LORD? why hidest thou thyself in times of trouble?”

“The wicked in his pride doth persecute the poor: let them be taken in the devices that they have imagined. For the wicked boasteth of his heart’s desire, and blesseth the covetous, whom the LORD abhorreth.” Or hated. “The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts. His ways are always grievous; thy judgments are far above out of his sight.”

“As for all his enemies, he puffeth at them.” And then he says, “He hath said in his heart, I shall not be moved: for I shall never be in adversity.” I am in power. I am prospering. “His mouth is full of cursing and deceit and fraud: under his tongue is mischief and

vanity. He sitteth in the lurking places of the villages: in the secret places doth he murder the innocent."

"His eyes are privily set against the poor. He lieth in wait secretly as a lion in his den: he lieth in wait to catch the poor: he doth catch the poor, when he draweth him into his net. He croucheth, and humbleth himself, that the poor may fall by his strong ones. He hath said in his heart, God hath forgotten: he hideth his face; he will never see it."

How can the wicked be so brave? Because they vainly deceive themselves, thinking that God will never see their sin, or that, if He does see it, He certainly will not call them into account for it. Look in verse 13: "Wherefore doth the wicked contemn God? he hath said in his heart, Thou wilt not require it." God will not judge me.

Now listen carefully. All cowards are brave until they face their enemies. All cowards are brave until they actually face their enemy. The wicked can blaspheme God, take their tongue and walk through the earth, curse and despise, act rebelliously, and pretend to be brave and powerful. But let them face Jesus Christ.

He shall strike through kings in the day of His wrath. The Scripture does not simply say that He shall strike through kings, but that He shall strike through kings "in the day of His wrath." Just as there is a time for patience and grace, there is also an appointed time for wrath and vengeance. Over and over, Scripture tells us that the wicked will not go unpunished.

The Appointed Day of Wrath

He will not be left alone. The wicked may contemn God, and they may provoke Him to anger, and they may abuse His longsuffering. But the Bible does teach there is coming a time when there will be a day of wrath. In fact, let me put it to you: the day of wrath is set. A year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion is set. The year of redeemed is set. And when the time comes for the destruction of His particular enemies, that time shall certainly not pass without it being done. No one can delay the day of destruction. No one can hinder it, thwart it, bypass it, or overthrow it. It shall come. God says it very plainly. We are going to look at several passages.

"To me belongeth vengeance, and recompence." Vengeance is His, and recompense is His. He also says, "Their foot shall slide in due time: for the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste." Their foot shall slide in due time.

Look in your Bible to Psalm 7, verse 11. I am being very selective because there are so many passages; I am simply showing you that there is indeed a day of wrath. "God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry with the wicked every day." Sinners may have many feast days, but they never have any safe days. There is not an hour, minute, or second when the anger and wrath of God is not burning hot against them. God is angry with the wicked every day. "If he turn not, he will whet his sword."

"He hath bent his bow, and made it ready. He hath also prepared for him the instruments of death; he ordaineth his arrows against the persecutors." God has their destruction planned and His arsenal supplied. It is not that He is ill-prepared or unprepared. God says, "I'm ready." But there is an appointed time.

Look in Isaiah 34. "Come near, ye nations, to hear; and hearken, ye people: let the earth hear, and all that is therein; the world, and all things that come forth of it." In other words, everybody must pay attention to this: "For the indignation of the LORD is upon all nations, and his fury upon all their armies."

"He hath utterly destroyed them, he hath delivered them to the slaughter. Their slain also shall be cast out, and their stink shall come up out of their carcases, and the mountains shall be melted with their blood. And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll: and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig tree." Look what God says: "For my sword shall be bathed in heaven: behold, it shall come down upon Idumea, and upon the people of my curse, to judgment. The sword of the LORD is filled with blood, it is made fat with fatness, and with the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams: for the LORD hath a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Idumea. And the unicorns shall come down with them, and the

bullocks with the bulls; and their land shall be soaked with blood, and their dust made fat with fatness."

"For it is the day of the LORD's vengeance, and the year of recompences for the controversy of Zion. And the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch. It shall not be quenched night nor day; the smoke thereof shall go up for ever: from generation to generation it shall lie waste; none shall pass through it for ever and ever. But the cormorant and the bittern shall possess it; the owl also and the raven shall dwell in it: and he shall stretch out upon it the line of confusion, and the stones of emptiness." It is the day of the LORD's vengeance, he said, and the year of recompences for the controversy of Zion. Look at Isaiah 63.

I am just trying to show you that God is exceedingly serious when He talks about His retribution. Look at Isaiah 63, beginning there with verse 1. This passage has reference to Christ, but look what it says: "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save." Now look at the question that is asked of Christ: "Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat?" Why are your garments so red? Here is the answer.

"I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment. For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come. And I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me; and my fury, it upheld me." Look what our Lord says: "And I will tread down the people in mine anger, and make them drunk in my fury, and I will bring down their strength to the earth."

"I will mention the lovingkindnesses of the LORD, and the praises of the LORD, according to all that the LORD hath bestowed on us, and the great goodness toward the house of Israel, which he hath bestowed on them according to his mercies, and according to the

multitude of his lovingkindnesses." What did He say? You ask Me why My garments are red? I've trodden the winepress alone. He says I'll stain all My garments with their blood.

One last look in Jeremiah 46 at verse 10. There is a day, there is a time set for the wrath and the vengeance of God. "For this is the day of the Lord GOD of hosts, a day of vengeance, that he may avenge him of his adversaries: and the sword shall devour, and it shall be satiate and made drunk with their blood: for the Lord GOD of hosts hath a sacrifice in the north country by the river Euphrates." Note: "For this is the day of the Lord GOD of hosts, a day of vengeance, that he may avenge him of his adversaries."

It is absolutely true that our Lord is patient. It is absolutely true that our Lord is longsuffering. But the Scripture teaches that there will be a time when His patience and His longsuffering comes to an end. This thought does not really affect the heathen. But imagine what a horrifying thought will one day enter the minds of the heathen when they realize their rebellion, their Christ-denying, God-rejecting, law-breaking attitude, and realize there is a day of wrath. God will reward me as I have dealt with Him. Just the thought should be enough to bring us to our knees.

Psalm 110:5 says, “The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath.” Now look at verse 6: “He shall judge among the heathen, he shall fill the places with the dead bodies; he shall wound the heads over many countries.”

His Retribution: Judging and Filling with Dead Bodies (Verse 6)

Verse 6 is not a redundancy, but rather an emphasis based upon verse 5. Note the first words: “He shall judge among the heathen.” Simply stated, here is what God is going to do: that which is absolutely just and right. His day of vengeance, His day of anger, His day of wrath will be a day of just vengeance and just wrath and just anger. God never loses control. Everything God does is in justice, and He measures it exactly.

He shall judge among the heathen; that is, He will give them an absolutely just judgment. Psalm 33:5 says, “He,” that is the LORD,

“loveth righteousness and judgment.” In Psalm 9:16, the Word of God says, “The LORD is known by the judgment which he executeth: the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands.” Psalm 89 tells us that judgment and justice are the habitation of His throne. What is God going to give to the wicked? Justice. He is going to give them exactly what they deserve. The reason God's judgments are called righteous judgments is because they are done in righteousness.

Now look at verse 6 again: “He shall judge among the heathen.” “He shall fill the places with dead bodies.” Some have interpreted the word “places” as nations. It is not that He is merely filling pits, holes, and vales with dead bodies, but filling nations with dead bodies. “He shall judge among the heathen.” The word “heathen” is usually translated as nations. Therefore, verse 6 may accurately be understood: He shall judge among the nations, or He shall fill the nations with dead bodies.

The wicked are not going to escape. No wicked man shall escape. This is the day of His wrath. He says, “He shall judge among the heathen,” or among the nations. “He shall fill the nations with dead bodies. He shall wound the heads over many countries.” When He says He shall wound the heads over many countries, it means absolutely no one shall escape.

You look at our land today and let me ask you a question: Who gets away with murder? The powerful, the rich, the rulers, the politicians. I've got news for you: there is blood on the hands of all our rulers, because an unjust war is still nothing less than murder. If there is no righteous basis for a war, it is murder.

If He says, “He shall wound the heads over many countries,” you have to understand that those who hold offices of power and authority, those who are rich, and those who normally escape and do not pay for their wicked deeds in this life, will not escape God. God says, “I have news for you: all those rulers I’ll break their necks. I’ll give them the death blow to the head.” He shall wound the heads over many countries. The great men, the princes, and the rulers shall experience the wrath of the righteous God of heaven and earth.

Now turn back to Psalm 2. You are able to understand this verse. In verse 2, “The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take

counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us." In other words, they do not want anything to do with Christ, His law, or His righteousness. They are going to do what they want and rebel.

God goes on to say that He laughs at them. They are not going to overthrow Christ. In verse 9, concerning Christ, He says, "Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." Then He says, "Be wise now therefore, O ye kings. Be instructed, ye judges of the earth."

What had they better do? "Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him." The psalmist says to the kings and rulers of this earth: instead of rebelling, you had better submit; instead of doing your own thing, you had better obey; instead of fighting, you had better kiss the Son. When His wrath is kindled but a little, you shall perish in the way.

His Repression: Drinking of the Brook (Verse 7)

Psalm 110:5-7 completes the picture of Messiah's divine rights. The Lord at His right hand shall strike through kings in the day of His wrath and judge among the heathen. He shall fill the places with the dead bodies and wound the heads over many countries. That is His retribution. Verse 7 describes His repression: He shall drink of the brook in the way; therefore shall He lift up the head.

Verses 5 and 6 tell us that God is going to destroy His enemies in battle. Those who flee, turn, and run shall be chased down and destroyed; they shall be pursued unto death. Verse 7 says, "He shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall he lift up the head." The interpretation of verse 7 is quite simple. Scripture tells us that He shall drink of the brook in the way. Therefore, He shall lift up the head.

Now, what does a victorious conqueror do in the midst of battle? He is fighting. He is destroying His enemies. He is winning. Let me ask you a question. When the victorious conqueror gets thirsty in the

midst of a battle, does he stop and say, "Set up my tent and pour me some goblets of wine and let me have some other drinks"? Is that what he does? No. What does he do? If he gets thirsty, he reaches down to the brook and takes whatever he can get. Then, when he is refreshed, he chases his enemies until he has destroyed them.

That is all verse 7 is saying: Christ will be refreshed in the middle of the battle by the brook. He will not be deterred or distracted. He will chase His enemies to the end until He destroys every one of them. Can you imagine what it must be like to be chased by the sovereign God of heaven and earth? You cannot outrun Him.

Our Lord bowed His head in humiliation and in death. John 19:30: He bowed His head and gave up the ghost. Now, in the end, He lifts up His head in victory over His enemies. Those who would destroy Him shall be destroyed by Him. Someone wrote this stanza in light of verses 5 through 7:

“The sinfullest heathen he shall slay, and fill with carcasses his way, till he hath struck earth’s tyrants dead. But in the highway brooks shall first, like a poor pilgrim, slake his thirst, and then in triumph lift his head.”

That is Jesus Christ, the victor. An extremely comforting truth is that Christ and every believer in Him have God the Father ready at all times to defend and protect them. We have the eternal power of God to defend and protect us. “The Lord at thy right hand”—all of the omnipotent power of God is at our Lord’s disposal to defend and protect His people and to destroy and punish His enemies.

Applications and Conclusion

A second application is that the Lord is indeed patient and longsuffering, but there comes an end to His patience and longsuffering. Romans 2:4 says, “Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?” When someone despises God’s goodness, His forbearance comes into play. When they despise His forbearance, His longsuffering comes into play. When His longsuffering is at an end, verse 5 says, “But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath

against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; Who will render to every man according to his deeds." When God's longsuffering is over, the day of His wrath begins, and He will render to every man according to his deeds.

Thirdly, I do not know if this is any consolation to you—it is to me—but usually it is the rulers of the earth who are the great enemies of Jesus Christ. I get so sick and tired of hearing our politicians talk about how much they believe in Christ and what kind of faith they have, while living lives that are absolutely contrary to the Word of God and passing laws that mock the Word of God and the truth of God.

They deceive a lot of people. It is amazing: a man can profess to be a Christian in politics today, almost do anything, and get away with it. But I have got news for you. The Bible says, "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." In the day of His wrath He shall strike through kings. He will nail them; He will destroy them. What a consolation to know they shall not escape. Psalm 110:1 tells us that God will make the enemies of Christ His footstool. Psalm 110:5–7 demonstrates how that shall be done. He will destroy them down to the last man. The Bible says in Psalm 21, "Thy right hand shall find out all thine enemies." Not one shall escape.

John Calvin said concerning Psalm 110:5–6: "Should anyone be disposed to ask, where is that spirit of meekness and gentleness with which the Scripture elsewhere informs us that he," that is Christ, "shall be endued? I answer, that as the shepherd is gentle toward his flock, but fierce and formidable toward wolves and thieves, in like manner, Christ is kind and gentle toward those who commit themselves to his care, while they who willfully and obstinately reject his yoke shall feel what awful and terrible power with which he is armed."

Here is the difficult application, and I confess it is difficult for me: we, like our Lord, must have patience. The Bible says in Hebrews 2:8, "We see not yet all things put under him," but they shall be put under him. Our Lord is seated at the Father's right hand, patiently awaiting the day of His wrath. When He answers our imprecatory prayers, when He does arise, when He does lift up Himself, and

when He makes bare His mighty arm, He will destroy all of His enemies. Psalm 58:11 says that when He destroys His enemies, “so that a man shall say, Verily there is a reward for the righteous: verily he is a God that judgeth in the earth.”

We will not have obeyed in vain. We will not have served and worshipped needlessly. He will vindicate us. When we see His judgment upon the wicked, we will say, "Verily, there is a God that judgeth in the earth." There is a song with a stanza that goes like this: "I want to see Israel marching. I want to hear that battle call. I want to see Israel marching. I want to see old Babylon fall." One day it shall fall totally and completely, and Jesus Christ will be absolutely victorious. What a wonderful, gracious, merciful, just, and righteous God we have.

Father, we do ask in the name of Jesus Christ that You would help us, give us grace, and give us mercy. Lord, we lift up our voices unto Thee. The psalmist said, "How long, O Lord?" The psalmist said, "Arise, O Lord. Lift up Thyself, Thou Judge of all the earth." Father, we pray for victory in time and in history. We ask You to vindicate Your Word, Your Christ, and Your people; for the overthrow and destruction of the wicked; and for the elevation and promotion of the righteous. We pray that righteousness may rule in our land and that we might serve Thee with reverence and godly fear. Give us grace, O Lord. We know that Thou art God, and we bow to Thee and ask for Thy mercy in our lives. We ask it in the name of Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray, Amen.

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