



God’s Messiah

The Messiah will reign forever.

PSALM 110:1-7

We live in a fallen world. Both internationally and locally there is constant poverty, strife, injustice, immorality, bloodshed, war, godlessness, and the never-ending foreboding of an escalation of all these things. It seems as if everything is out of control; but it is not. God is in control. The day is coming when the Jesus will come again, defeat His enemies, and establish His eternal kingdom with those who belong to Him.

- Why is hope important? What can cause a person to lose hope?
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UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT

PSALM 110

Psalm 110 is a royal psalm. The language utilizes royal imagery, including references to a footstool, a scepter, rule, splendor, battle, kings, judging, nations, and leaders. The superscription to the psalm indicates it was written by David, and both Jesus and Peter attest to this (Matt. 22:43-45; Acts 2:33-34). Focusing on the coming Messiah, the main idea is the Messiah’s exaltation as the Priest-King. Verses 1-3 indicate the Messiah will be exalted to the right hand of God and rule as the divine King over all the world. Verse 4 reveals the Messiah will be more than a king; He will also be an eternal High Priest. Verses 5-7 describe how the Messiah will defeat all of His enemies, establish justice and peace, and reign in holy splendor.

Psalm 110 is quoted by the New Testament writers nine times (Matt. 22:43-45; Mark 12:36-37; Luke 20:42-44; Acts 2:34-36; 1 Cor. 15:25-27; Heb. 1:3-13; 5:6-10; 7:17-21; 10:13). Psalm 118 is the only psalm quoted more in the New Testament with eleven citations. Jesus quoted verses 1-2 to show that He is greater than David, proving His deity and authority. When Peter preached on the Day of Pentecost, he quoted Psalm 110:1 to prove that God had made Jesus “both Lord and Messiah” (Acts 2:36). Paul alluded to verse 1, emphasizing how Jesus ultimately will defeat all of His enemies, the last being death (see 1 Cor. 15:25-27). Using Psalm 110, the writer of Hebrews demonstrated that Jesus is our eternal high priest.

Psalm 110 is a source of hope and a cause for worship. First, no matter how bad this world gets, the future is sure. Jesus will establish peace, righteousness, and justice on the earth. Second, with the assurance of Jesus’s return, let us be found faithful in His service and ready for His appearing. Third, in Jesus we have a High Priest who has made atonement for our sin and is both our intercessor and advocate to our heavenly Father. Let us be both comforted and joyful because our High Priest enables us to “approach the throne of grace with boldness, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in time of need” (Heb. 4:16).

 **Read Psalm 110 in your Bible, noting words or phrases that describe Jesus.**

EXPLORE THE TEXT

JESUS AS KING (PS. 110:1-3)

¹ This is the declaration of the LORD to my Lord: “Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool.” ² The LORD will extend your mighty scepter from Zion. Rule over your surrounding enemies. ³ Your people will volunteer on your day of battle. In holy splendor, from the womb of the dawn, the dew of your youth belongs to you.

VERSE 1

In our English translations, **LORD** in all capital letters is a way of indicating that the word is *Yahweh* in Hebrew—God’s personal, covenant name. When we see **Lord** in lower case letters, it means the word is a translation of the Hebrew word that actually means “lord” or “master.” Therefore, the psalm begins with the LORD’s or Yahweh’s declaration to David’s “Lord,” meaning someone who is greater than David. This is a reference to the Messiah. Furthermore, in the Old Testament, the Hebrew word translated **declaration** in verse 1 almost always refers to a prophetic word from God to one of His prophets.

What was Yahweh’s declaration to David’s Lord, the Messiah? It begins with ***sit at my right hand***. In the Old Testament, “sitting” is often associated with the place of honor and respect reserved for kings (Deut. 17:18; 1 Kings 2:19; Isa. 10:13) and judges (Ex. 18:14; Mal. 3:3). For David’s Lord to *sit* at the right hand of Yahweh means He would be given unapproachable preeminence, the greatest power, and the foremost position. David foresaw his Lord being co-ruler with Yahweh. What’s more, Yahweh would make the enemies of David’s Lord His ***footstool***, meaning He would defeat and subjugate them under His feet (Josh. 10:24; Ps. 47:3). This was a common motif in the ancient Near East, as wall reliefs of kings depict them using their defeated enemies as footstools.

The New Testament writers understood this verse to be prophetic, anticipating Jesus the Messiah. Jesus and Peter used the first phrase in this verse to point to Jesus’s deity (Matt. 22:43-45; Luke 20:42-44; Acts 2:33-34). Elsewhere, the writers of the New Testament recognized that upon Jesus’s resurrection from the dead, He ascended to heaven and was seated at the right hand of the Father, the place of sovereign rule and authority (Acts 2:33; 5:30-31; Rom. 8:34; Eph. 1:20; Heb. 1:3; 10:11-13). They also recognized that Jesus will reign until He has put all of His enemies under His feet (Eph. 1:22; 1 Cor. 15:25; Heb. 10:13).

VERSE 2

Verse 2 contains two statements. The first reveals what Yahweh will do, and the second is Yahweh's imperative to the Messiah, instructing Him what He is to do. **Your mighty scepter** is a symbol of kingship, authority, and power. Also, *scepter* and "rod" are often used interchangeably in the Old Testament. Jacob prophesied that "the scepter will not depart from Judah" (Gen. 49:10). Numbers 24:17 prophesies, "A star will come from Jacob, and a scepter will arise from Israel" to defeat her enemies. King David literally fulfilled this prophecy (2 Sam. 8:2). Nevertheless, David did in part as a forerunner of what Jesus the Messiah will do in full when He defeats His enemies, as described in Revelation 19:11-21. Psalm 2:9 declares the Messiah will "break" His enemies "with an iron scepter." John repeated this in Revelation 19:15. In Psalm 2:6, Yahweh declared, "I have installed my King on Zion, my holy mountain." So here in verse 2, Yahweh declared He would extend the Messiah's rule, authority, and power from **•Zion**. Jesus attested to having received this authority in Matthew 28:18. It is based on this authority that Jesus has given His disciples the Great Commission to go into all the world and make disciples.

David prophesied how Yahweh will extend the Messiah's *mighty scepter*. Jesus will have the authority and power to defeat His enemies and establish His **rule over** all of the nations. His enemies will be unable to resist Him.


VERSE 3

Verse 3 turns the focus away from the enemies the Messiah will defeat to His own people who will join their King on His day of battle. The actual wording is "Your people will be freewill offerings." This means they will willingly give their lives to the Lord to serve Him in His kingdom. They will present their bodies as a "living sacrifice," as Paul called believers to be in Romans 12:1. In David's day, the people of God were the people of Israel. However, as this is prophetic, here it refers to both Jewish and Gentile believers who have come to saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Speaking of Jesus's enemies and this day of battle, John wrote, "These will make war against the Lamb, but the Lamb will conquer them because he is the Lord of lords and King of kings. Those with him are called, chosen, and faithful" (Rev. 17:14). Also, Revelation 19:6-8 indicates that the bride of Christ, His Church, will be clothed in "fine linen . . . bright and pure." Those wearing these robes will join Jesus as He comes to earth to strike His enemies and rule with an "iron rod"

clothed in a robe adorning His name: “KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS” (Rev. 19:15-16).

His majesty, beauty, and splendor are beyond human comprehension.

Next, David described what the Lord will look like as He goes to battle. He will go forth in ***holy splendor***. The Lord’s holiness displays both His transcendence and immanence. When He returns, all will see how His majesty, beauty, and splendor are beyond human comprehension. Nothing can compare to what it will be. Nevertheless, when these things happen, it also will be a display of His immanence as He returns to earth with His people. The ***womb of the dawn*** refers to the break of day as the sun rises and dispels the darkness. It will be the dawning of a new day when His enemies are defeated once and for all. ***The dew of your youth*** poetically describes how—just as God uses the dew to refresh the earth—a refreshing dew will come when Jesus establishes His kingdom on earth. It is a picture of God’s blessing (see Gen. 27:28; Isa. 26:19; Zech. 8:12).

 **How does God’s authority shape the way we approach Him?**

JESUS AS PRIEST (PS. 110:4)

⁴ The LORD has sworn an oath and will not take it back: “You are a priest forever according to the pattern of Melchizedek.”

VERSE 4

In the Old Testament, God demonstrated His authority to appoint kings and priests. So, just as Yahweh had made an oath to David that one of David’s descendants would sit on the throne of Israel forever (Pss. 89:3-4; 132:11-12), here He obligated Himself by swearing an irrevocable oath to David’s Lord, the Lord Jesus Christ, that He also has appointed Jesus to be ***a priest forever***. No greater guarantee could be made as Yahweh communicates that nothing can thwart the certainty of His promise. The writer of Hebrews stated that Jesus, who is the eternal Son of God, will fulfill the priestly role for His people for all time:

“Therefore, he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, since he always lives to intercede for them” (Heb. 7:24-25).

Jesus is the sinless High Priest who offered Himself as the sacrifice for our sins.

Verse 4 reveals important truths about Jesus’s priesthood. First, Jesus’s priesthood would not be handed down to Him through the levitical priesthood established in the Sinai Covenant. This old covenant would be replaced with a new covenant established by the blood of Christ (Jer. 31:31-34; Matt. 26:28; 1 Cor. 11:25). Hebrews 10:1-18 explains how Jesus was our sacrificial substitute, obtaining for believers an eternal redemption. At the same time, Jesus is the sinless High Priest who offered Himself as the sacrifice for our sins (Heb. 2:9-18; 4:14-15; 9:11-14).

Second, this verse indicates that the Messiah’s priesthood will be ***according to the pattern of •Melchizedek***. *Melchizedek* means “my king is righteousness” or “my king of righteousness.” He is first mentioned in Genesis 14:18-20 in an encounter with Abram (Abraham), just after Abram defeated a coalition of Canaanite kings. He was the king of Salem, which means “peace.” Salem was ancient Jerusalem, the city in which God chose to dwell with His people (Ps. 132:13-14). Also, Melchizedek was a priest. He blessed Abram, and Abram gave a tithe to him. Because he was both a king and priest, his throne was in ancient Jerusalem, and his priesthood was established long before that of the levitical priesthood, Melchizedek was the perfect type to anticipate the coming of Jesus, who would come as both the righteous king and priest. Hebrews 5 and 7 reveal Jesus is the fulfillment of this prophecy.



What makes Jesus uniquely qualified to be our priest?

KEY DOCTRINE: *God the Son*

Christ ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where He is the One Mediator, fully God, fully man, in whose Person is effected the reconciliation between God and man. (See Hebrews 4:14-15; 7:14-28.)

JESUS AS VICTOR (PS. 110:5-7)

⁵ The Lord is at your right hand; he will crush kings on the day of his anger. ⁶ He will judge the nations, heaping up corpses; he will crush leaders over the entire world. ⁷ He will drink from the brook by the road; therefore, he will lift up his head.

VERSE 5

The spelling of the Hebrew word translated “Lord” in verse 5 (*adonai*) is reserved for instances in the Old Testament only referencing God. It echoes verse 2. Just as Yahweh invited David’s Lord to sit at His right hand, Yahweh will be at His right hand also. God the Father will empower His Son as He defeats His enemies. This also echoes the promise of Yahweh in verse 1: I will “make your enemies your footstool.” Together they ***will crush kings on the day of his anger***. Psalm 2:8-9 indicates this. The Father said to the Son, “Ask of me and I will make the nations your inheritance and the ends of the earth your possession. You will break them with an iron scepter; You will shatter them like pottery.”

This is a stark description of the truth that for unbelievers “the wages of sin is death” (Rom. 6:23).

VERSES 6

The description in verse 6 naturally follows “the day of anger” mentioned in verse 5. It is the picture of the total victory of the Lord over His enemies, ***he will crush leaders over the entire world*** (see Rev. 19:11-21). Psalm 2:1-3 describes these leaders. It is interesting to note that *leaders* in verse 6 and “head” (v. 7) are translations of the same Hebrew word. When understood this way, this echoes the promise in Genesis 3:15 that the offspring of the woman (the Messiah) will strike the serpent’s head. What’s more, God the Father will judge the nations through His Son (Matt. 25:31-33; Acts 17:31; 2 Tim. 4:1). None of His enemies will be able to escape His righteous judgment (Matt. 16:27). The picture of ***heaping up corpses*** is an accurate description of what was done in the ancient Near East after a battle had been fought. As believers, the debt of our sin has been paid in full in Christ. However, this is a stark description of the truth that for unbelievers “the wages of sin is death” (Rom. 6:23).

VERSE 7

The psalm concludes with a picture of the victorious Messiah refreshing Himself by drinking water once He has defeated His enemies. After having crushed their heads, ***he will lift up his head***. This description anticipates the completed work of reconciliation and redemption climaxed by the glorious exaltation of the Lord Jesus Christ.



How should believers live today in light of Jesus's anticipated return?

BIBLE SKILL: *Use additional Scripture to learn more about a Bible character.*

Melchizedek served as the pattern for the Messiah as King and Priest, yet his identity has been veiled in mystery because the Bible contains little information about him. Read the following Scripture passages: Genesis 14:17-20; Psalm 110:4; Hebrews 5:6-10; 6:19-20; 7:1-28. How do these verses give you a more complete portrait of Melchizedek as a king and a priest? How do your impressions about Melchizedek give you a better grasp of the messianic mission of Jesus?

APPLY THE TEXT

- + Because Jesus holds all authority, we're to worship and honor Him.
- + Since Jesus is also our priest, we can come to Him with our needs.
- + Believers can trust God's promise that Jesus will return and restore righteousness.

○ Discuss reasons why it is essential we have in Jesus a great high priest who sympathizes with our weaknesses and is yet without sin. What does Jesus do as our priest? Why do we need Jesus to be our priest?

○ In what ways do you acknowledge Jesus's authority in your life? What will it look like for you to live under His authority this week?

○ Memorize Hebrews 4:14-15.

Prayer Needs
