

God's Messiah

SESSION 6

Psalm 110:1-7

Memory Verse: Hebrews 4:14-15

The Messiah will reign forever.

When Jesus came to Bethlehem, His arrival gave birth to fresh hope for God's people who had been waiting for the day when the Messiah would arrive. Messianic hope that sprouted at His birth grew stronger as He passed through the agony of the cross to the glory of the empty tomb.

Jesus lives on, and so does our hope. We affirm Jesus as Messiah. We believe that all authority has been given to Him. And we look forward to His return. In keeping with His messianic promise, He will come back one day; but He will come as a conquering King and Judge rather than a baby in a manger. He will defeat the enemies of His kingdom once and for all. His victory will be absolutely certain, and His reign will never end.

As you study this session, consider the impact His return has—or should have—on your life. And prepare ways to challenge the adults in your Bible study to do the same.



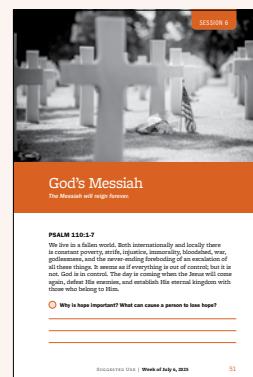
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We live in a fallen world. Both internationally and locally there is constant poverty, strife, injustice, immorality, bloodshed, war, godlessness, and the never-ending foreboding of an escalation of all these things. It seems as if everything is out 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. (PSG, p. 51)

Why is hope important? What can cause a person to lose hope?



Understand the Context (Psalm 110)

Psalm 110 fits easily into the category of royal psalms. This psalm provided God's people with a superlative resource for celebrating the kings of Israel in David's dynasty. It even may have been used at the coronation services for the kings in David's line, perhaps beginning with Solomon.

Ultimately, Psalm 110 pointed God's people toward the eternal reign of the Messiah, the King in David's line whom he referred to as his Lord (Ps. 110:1). Not only did the Messiah reign as King, but He also served as Priest. However, He did not follow in the line of the Levites who served for generations as priests in Israel (110:4). A perpetual King and Priest, He led an army into battle against His enemies.

The troops in His army followed Him willingly into warfare, and the battle ended in triumph for Him as He carried out His messianic mission. Therefore, God's people could look forward to the day when they would enjoy ultimate victory over their adversaries. That's when they would be able to abide in the perfect peace that only the Messiah could provide for them.

Because of the obvious messianic nuances in the psalm, quotes from it appeared often in the New Testament. The most well-known example involved the ministry of Jesus. As He debated the Jewish leaders regarding the identity of the Messiah, He brought up David's statement about the one he called "Lord" in Psalm 110:1. The Jewish leaders used the statement only to identify the

Messiah as David's son. However, in Matthew 22:45, Jesus told them that David's statement verified that he referred to the Messiah as his Lord.

Also, Peter made a reference to the first verse of this psalm as he preached the good news about Jesus at Pentecost. He referred to it as he declared to his audience of Jews from around the world that God had raised Jesus from the dead. Furthermore, Jesus the Messiah had been "exalted to the right hand of God" (Acts 2:33).

The anonymous writer of Hebrews made extensive use of this psalm, as well. At the outset of this epistle, he noted that Jesus sits at God's right hand, the place of greatest eternal prominence. In addition, God assured Jesus that His enemies would be placed under His feet in utter defeat and subjugation (Heb. 1:13).

The writer of Hebrews referred to the psalm once more when he declared that as Priest, Jesus followed in the line of Melchizedek (Heb. 5:6). In Hebrews 7:11-28, he elaborated on his declaration of Jesus as Priest in keeping with Psalm 110:4. As Jesus followed the pattern of Melchizedek as the ultimate High Priest for His people, He confirmed His eternal existence as the Messiah. Accordingly, Jesus served as the centerpiece of a new covenant between God and His people.

Read Psalm 110 in your Bible, noting words or phrases that describe Jesus. (PSG, p. 52)



INTRODUCE: Write the following terms on the board: *tornado, rioting, sliding car, power outage, slippery slope, poverty, death*. As adults arrive, encourage them to discuss what these terms have in common.

EXPLAIN: *All of these scenarios affect us emotionally. In each of these situations, we have little or no control. Whether our circumstances are caused by the weather, other people, or something unknown, we can do little to change the situation. Emotions run high when our world seems out of control, and we may be tempted to lose hope.*

ASK: **Why is hope important? What can cause a person to lose hope?** (PSG, p. 51)

DISCUSS: Read aloud the introductory paragraph on page 51 of the PSG. Highlight the sentence, “God is in control.” Lead a brief discussion on how knowing God is in control of every situation can produce hope in our lives.

TRANSITION: *In today’s session from Psalm 110, we find hope in the salvation Jesus offers and in the promise of His return and eternal reign. The psalmist, David, was confident that God would send His Messiah one day. And that encouraged Him to trust God in the most difficult of situations.*

NOTES

Group Activity Option

Music

Secure a recording of “He Will Hold Me Fast” and play it as adults arrive. Note that the original version of the song was written in 1906 by Ada Habershon. Share that additional words were added and adapted by Matt Merker in 2013, and the song was popularized by Keith and Kristyn Getty. To supplement the introduction, ask: ***What does “He Will Hold Me Fast” mean to you?***

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.

(v. 1) Declaration of the LORD: The psalmist David wrote about a resounding **declaration** made by God. He used the Hebrew title *Yahweh* (**the LORD**) to identify God’s ultimate authority over everything and everyone (Gen. 2:4; Ex. 3:14). Next, David chose *Adonai* (**my Lord**) to represent his own family line that would rule over Israel. Centuries later, Jesus would apply the divine title to Himself as He shed light on His identity as the Messiah (Matt. 22:43-45; Mark 12:36-37; Luke 20:42-44).

Key Phrase

My right hand

David went on to record the actual words God shared as He directed His King to the place of extreme honor and authority at His **right hand** (1 Chron. 29:23; Isa. 51:23). In the New Testament, such an honored place belonged only to Jesus as Messiah (Matt. 26:64; Mark 16:19; Luke 22:69; Rom. 8:34; Heb. 1:3). Equally significant, New Testament writers affirmed that God’s pledge to defeat His Messiah’s enemies also pointed to Jesus (Acts 2:33-34; 1 Cor. 15:25; Heb. 1:13).

(v. 2) The LORD will extend: The Messiah’s enemies would not be able to stand against Him because God would strengthen Him. The word picture of an extended **scepter** portrayed the reach of God’s absolute power. His Messiah would establish His reign over all people.

The New Testament underscored God’s declaration by calling attention to the imminent return and unending reign of Jesus (Mark 13:24-27; Acts 3:19-21; Rev. 19:11-16). His royal scepter would be extended **from Zion**, where God vowed He would live among His people (Ps. 132:8,13).

(v. 2) Surrounding enemies: As David reigned over Israel, he had to defend his kingdom against **enemies** who lived nearby. The neighboring

nations often attempted to conquer Israel, but they did not succeed during the reigns of David or his son, Solomon (see 2 Sam. 8:1-14).

However, neighboring nations continued to trouble Israel, especially when God’s people rejected Him and followed false gods. After God’s people were exiled to Babylon, Daniel wrote about a vision of the Messiah and the establishment of His perpetual reign over everyone everywhere (Dan. 7:13-14). Centuries later, John wrote about a vision of Jesus returning, establishing His kingdom, and defeating His enemies (Rev. 19:19-21).

(v. 3) Your day of battle: The Lord assured David that the kings who followed him would come from his family line. He also promised that his dynasty would never end (2 Sam. 7:1-16). Of course, He fulfilled His promise when His Messiah came. The Messiah had a distinct connection with the ancestral line of David (Matt. 1:6-17).

Just as David fought against enemies of the kingdom of Israel, the Messiah would go to war with the enemies of His eternal kingdom. And like David, the Messiah would not face the **day of battle** alone. His people would join Him in the fight and follow His leadership (Rev. 19:11-14). They would **volunteer** for the task.

(v. 3) In holy splendor: The faithful believers who joined the Messiah would not be portrayed as weak, weary soldiers who had lost interest in battle (Rev. 19:19). Instead, they would step into the conflict in **holy splendor**.

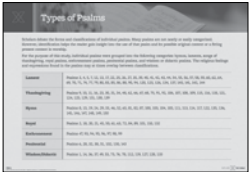
However, their attire would not necessarily include literal crowns or robes. Instead, their personal glory would be reflected in their imitation of the Messiah and His holiness. The details in the word pictures about the **dawn** and **dew** may have been elusive, but they pointed to a clear message. The Messiah’s followers would be as plentiful as dew drops at dawn. Also, they would be marked by youthful traits of energy and eagerness.

EXPLORE Psalm 110:1-3



APPLICATION POINT: Because Jesus holds all authority, we’re to worship and honor Him.

MINI-LECTURE: Use Understand the Context (PSG, p. 52) and **Pack Item 2** (Poster: *Types of Psalms*) to explain why Psalm 110 is considered a royal psalm. Emphasize that David was acting as a prophet as he focused on the coming Messiah. Point out that Psalm 110 is one of the most quoted Psalms in the New Testament. Encourage adults to note words or phrases that describe Jesus throughout this study.



READ: Invite a volunteer to read **Psalm 110:1-3** as the group considers the difference between “LORD” and “Lord” in verse 1.

VISUAL: On a whiteboard or poster paper draw three vertical columns. Above the first column write *King*.

ASK: What words describe Jesus as a King in these verses?
Record the responses in the first column.

EXPLAIN: Use information from page 64 of the Leader Guide to share the significance of God’s right hand. Highlight the Messiah’s majesty, as well as His role as conquering Judge. Emphasize that Jesus fulfills the imagery of the psalmist in these verses.

DISCUSS: Divide the group into teams of two to four, leading them to discuss this question: **How does God’s authority shape the way we approach Him?** (PSG, p. 55) After a few minutes, allow adults to share their responses to the questions.

NOTES

Group Activity Option

Compare/Contrast

Read Psalm 110:1-3 and Acts 2:33-36. Explain that the context in Acts is Peter’s sermon at Pentecost. Guide the group to notice how Peter quoted Psalm 110 and to note differences in the two passages. Ask: **How does Acts 2:33-36 clarify that Psalm 110 is speaking of Jesus? What should we know with certainty?**

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.”

(v. 4) Sworn an oath: In ancient Israel, God’s people made promises to each other before Him, and they punctuated those promises with a **sworn** vow. Such an **oath** verified that the individuals would keep their word (see Gen. 50:25; 2 Sam. 3:35; Heb. 6:16). In God’s relationship with His people, He also swore oaths to them (Ezek. 20:5). According to Psalm 89:34-36, God made an oath to David regarding the perpetuation of his dynasty. Here in Psalm 110, He made an oath related to the coming Messiah.

(v. 4) Will not take it back: Regarding the oath God made, He would not **take it back**. His promise was irrevocable because God cannot fail to keep His word. His promise had been given to His people in keeping with His character. Therefore, He would never make a promise and then fail to keep it (Num. 23:19).

Furthermore, God does not make oaths casually or lightly. Quite the opposite, His oath must be made in accordance with the redemptive plan that He had established in eternity. Of course, His eternal plan of salvation centered on the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus (Acts 2:23).

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.)

(v. 4) A priest: Previously the Lord declared that the Messiah would reign as King (Ps. 110:1-2). Here, He confirmed that the Messiah would also serve as Priest. In the Old Testament, God’s people considered the roles of king and priests to be separate. While kings performed the duties of priests on occasion, this was the exception rather than the rule (2 Sam. 6:14-18; 1 Kings 8:14-64). Like the psalmist, the prophet, Zechariah proclaimed

that the Messiah would assume both roles (Zech. 6:12-13). The writer of Hebrews also stated that Jesus served as High Priest for believers in keeping with His messianic mission (Heb. 5:5-10).

(v. 4) Forever: When the Lord led His people out of Egypt and into the wilderness, He commanded Moses to appoint Aaron as the nation’s first high priest. He added that Aaron’s priesthood would pass to his sons (Ex. 28:1; Num. 3:1-3). So, when Aaron died, Moses anointed Aaron’s son, Eleazar, as the new high priest (Deut. 10:6). The succession of high priests through Aaron’s family line continued throughout the Old Testament.

But only Jesus could play the role of our ultimate and eternal High Priest (Heb. 7:22-24). He would make the sacrifice that would provide salvation once and for all. And, since God raised Him from the dead, He would live on **forever** and never need to be replaced like Aaron’s sons.

(v. 4) The pattern: Across Israel’s history, priests provided an absolutely invaluable service. They went to the Lord on behalf of His people, and they went to His people on His behalf. The high priests in Aaron’s family line took responsibility for carrying out those critical duties. Their succession set up a pattern that the Israelites understood and affirmed. Now the Lord declared that the Messiah would establish a unique **pattern** order as High Priest (Heb. 7:25).

(v. 4) Melchizedek: A king as well as a priest, **•Melchizedek** appeared during the days of Abraham. His name meant “king of righteousness,” and he ruled over Salem, which can be translated “city of peace.”

When he appeared, he blessed Abraham. In turn, Abraham presented a tithe to him (Gen. 14:17-20). Scripture does not mention a predecessor or a successor to Melchizedek as king and priest. However, God declared that he provided the perfect pattern for the Messiah as the eternal King-Priest for believers (Heb. 4:14-16).

EXPLORE Psalm 110:4

2



APPLICATION POINT: Since Jesus is also our priest, we can come to Him with our needs.

READ:

Read aloud Psalm 110:4, directing the group to listen for anything that might be confusing to them in the verse.

RECAP:

Summarize the following content from page 56 of the PSG: “Jesus’s priesthood will 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).”

DISCUSS:

Write *Priest* at the top of the second column. Write *Melchizedek* under that label. Direct adults to scan the content about Melchizedek on page 56 of the PSG. Encourage adults to share facts about Melchizedek and record their responses under his name. Use information from page 66 of the Leader Guide to supplement the discussion. Talk about how Jesus follows the pattern of Melchizedek as priest and king.

ASK:

What makes Jesus uniquely qualified to be our priest?
(PSG, p. 56)

TRANSITION:

Jesus changed the priesthood forever. He is both our Ruler and the Mediator of our relationship with God.

NOTES

Group Activity Option

Bible Skill Activity

Direct adults to work in pairs to complete the session’s Bible Skill activity (PSG, p. 58.) Encourage them to read the Scriptures as listed and discuss the questions. After a few minutes, allow volunteers to share things that stuck out to them about Melchizedek. Briefly share connections between Jesus and Melchizedek as priests and kings.

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.

(v. 5) At your right hand: A reference to **right hand** appeared earlier in the psalm (Ps. 110:1). There, God placed the Messiah in a position of highest honor. Now, God used this expression to assure the Messiah that His mission would be successful. God had crowned Him as King. Then, He vowed that the Messiah would also serve as a Priest (110:4).

The combination of those roles underscored God's faithful devotion to the Messiah's mission. Centuries later, Stephen provided convincing evidence of God's faithfulness. Just before his death as a martyr, he testified that he actually saw Jesus standing at God's right hand (Acts 7:55-56).

(v. 5) The day of his anger: God looked ahead to the time when the Messiah would take His stand and **crush** His enemies. On that day, He would defeat them once and for all. The Old Testament prophets declared that the **day of his anger** was a certainty (Isa. 13:5-9; Zeph. 2:1-3; Ezek. 38:18-20). Of course, that day will be fulfilled when Jesus returns. It would be marked by fierce warfare that would end with the absolute obliteration of the Messiah's enemies.

(v. 6) Judge the nations: Accountability would not end with utter defeat. It would also include judgment. The Messiah would not return only to crush His enemies, but also to **judge** their hostile actions and willful rebellion against Him. Nations full of people who turned away from God would not escape His judgments.

Jesus spoke to His disciples about the day of judgment when He taught about the separation of sheep and goats (Matt. 25:31-46). Paul also declared a solemn warning about the day of the Lord's judgment that would come (Rom. 2:5).

(v. 6) Heaping up corpses: The psalmist's description of the scene on the field of battle left nothing to the imagination. The image of **corpses** piled up after the battle spoke volumes about the

extent of the destruction. The Messiah's enemies would come from every nation in the world; but, He would **crush** their leaders. This image carries the idea of shattering their bodies.

By the time that the battle ends, not even one opponent will be left to stand against the victorious Messiah. John presented a similar description of Jesus's complete victory when He returns (Rev. 19:11-21). While the imagery might seem violent, readers must remember that God is not being gratuitous. Jesus, the Messiah, will judge in righteousness, but He will judge those who reject Him.

(v. 7) He will drink: Throughout the Old Testament, drinking water from a **brook** or stream carries the idea of being refreshed and renewed. For example, in the account of Gideon, the Lord instructed him to choose troops based on the way they drank water from a spring (Judg. 7:1-8). In 1 Kings 17:1-6, the Lord sent Elijah to hide himself at Wadi Cherith, near the Jordan River. He instructed Elijah to drink water from the wadi. After the battle with His enemies, the Messiah would be refreshed by taking a drink from nearby streams.

(v. 7) Lift up his head: The monumental difference between the Messiah and His enemies became most evident in the aftermath of the battle. While the heads of his enemies will be crushed completely, He can **lift up his head** in triumph. Lifting up one's head signified victory, power, and resolve.

The Messiah will not leave any loose ends. Nothing will go undone and no promise will be broken. Just as Jesus accomplished the Father's plan perfectly on the cross, He will fulfill the Father's purposes when He comes back to judge the unrighteous.

EXPLORE Psalm 110:5-7

3



APPLICATION POINT: Believers can trust God's promise that Jesus will return and restore righteousness.

READ:

Invite a volunteer to read Psalm 110:5-7 as the group reflects on the verses with the second coming of Christ in mind.

WRITE:

Above the third column, write *Victor*. Guide the group to identify the evidences of the Lord's final victory in verses 5-7. State that Jesus will return and defeat his enemies. He will judge the nations and defeat those who have rebelled against Him.

DISCUSS:

Read the first lines of the hymn "What If it Were Today" (*Baptist Hymnal*, 2008, No. 290). Lead a brief discussion of how adults would feel if Jesus really did return today. Acknowledge that many people may have mixed emotions: excited for Jesus's return but sorry to miss out on some things in life.

ASK:

How should believers live today in light of Jesus's anticipated return? (PSG, p. 58)

RECAP:

Read the following from page 58 of the PSG: *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.*

CONCLUDE:

Emphasize that Jesus is the Messiah and that He is coming back some day. Challenge adults to consider how God is calling them to adjust their lives to this truth.

NOTES

Group Activity Option

Object Lesson: Ice Water

Display a glass of ice water. Share that water refreshes and is necessary for life. Read John 4:10-14, where Jesus described Himself as "living water." Point to the returning Messiah drinking from the brook when all the enemies have been defeated (v. 7). Highlight that believers can trust God's promise that Jesus will return and restore righteousness to the world.

CHALLENGE

- SUMMARIZE:** Review these points from Apply the Text on page 59 of the *Personal Study Guide*:
- *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.*
- REVIEW:** Distribute copies of **Pack Item 13** (*Handout: Christ in the Psalms*). Allow time for the group to scan the handout. Ask: **From what you read, what stands out to you?**
- READ:** Direct attention to Hebrews 4:14-15 and read the verses together.
- DISCUSS:** **Why is it 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?** (PSG, p, 59)
- PRAY:** Close in prayer thanking God for sending Jesus and asking Him to help each person be prepared for His to return.

After the Session

Send each adult in the group a text or email this week. If an individual has not been in Bible study for a while, consider calling them. Encourage the group to stay in touch with each other throughout the week. As a leader, reflect on each member of the group and pray that they will continue pursuing the Messiah and preparing for His return.

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