

Psalm 110

~ The Conquest of the King ~

Introduction

Many saints simply don't know how to live on the earth...

They're **not sure** what they are to be doing **down here**...

Every modern man I know lives this way – and sadly **far too many** Christians are **pretty much the same!**

It's kind of like (to quote one pastor) sitting alone – at a station – waiting for the train to come!

*We know that one day the train is going to come and **take us to our final destination** with God – but we have no real sense on what we are to be doing **while we wait!***

And to push the analogy **just one step further** – there's no real sense in which the glory of the heavens **to which we are going** – is in any real way descending upon the station!

Well thanks be to God that **that's NOT** the scene painted for us here in Psalm 110!

Psalm 110

Psalm 110 is a **Messianic Psalm** – It's a **Royal Psalm** – A Psalm of King David...

David is a King living in the time of Israel seated upon a throne who gets *a divine insight* into the Kingdom of God that is going to come in the Lord Jesus Christ!

Many have noted that this is **the most frequently** quoted Psalm in all of the New Testament Scriptures – some 30 plus times referenced (or referred to) in the New Testament...

Others have suggested that this **may well** have been a **pre-battle hymn** sung by the Jews **going out to war** against the Gentile nations!

Martin would refer to this Psalm as:

The crowning Jewel of the Old Testament...Every syllable is greater and more glorious than the Tower of Babel...

Spurgeon would say that:

*Every line of this Psalm has **an infinity** of meaning...*

And Michael Wilcock (a New Testament Scholar) I love what he says:

To the modern reader, Psalm 110 is full of puzzles. But to the early church, it is a Psalm of full of treasures...

Friends what we have here in this **most beloved Psalm of David** is *something of an insight into heaven itself* – something of a picture of what is to come when the reality of God is **fully recognized on earth as it is in heaven!**

This is a Psalm that is both fulfilled in Jesus (at His first coming) – and going to be fulfilled at His second coming!

It is both a **now but not yet** reality for the Church!

And so if you can understand this Psalm in particular – the **weight**, the **beauty**, and the **significance** found in it:

Then you have **in one sense** conquered the very troubles and cares this world...

Main Point

As so as you can tell **I am very excited** to be preaching this Psalm for us here on this Lord's Day – and **the main point** that I want us to see as we come to Psalm 110 is this:

King Jesus is presently conquering His enemies (through the gospel) to the ends of the earth... X2

Psalm 110

So, Psalm 110 – beginning at verse 1 David writes:

*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. 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. 4 The LORD has sworn an oath and will not take it back [saying]: 'You are a **priest forever** according to the pattern of Melchizedek. The Lord is at your right hand; and He will crush kings on the day of His anger. He will judge the nations, heaping up corpses; He will crush leaders over the entire world. And He will drink from the brook by the road; therefore, He will lift up His head...*

Opening Gambit

Although Psalm 110 is a Psalm written **by** the great king David – Psalm 110 **is NOT** a Psalm that is written **about** the **great** King David!

David here at the beginning of verse 1 makes it very clear that there are **2 Lords** sitting above him – there is:

1. The LORD-God Jehovah (Yahweh – Invisible – immortal – incomprehensible)!
2. And there is the Lord-God Adonai (Kurios – master – Lord – King)

Taken together therefore David is saying that:

*The LORD-God **Jehovah** says to his Lord **Adonai** sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool!*

This is one LORD giving place of **honour and authority** to another Lord!

Now what makes this verse such **an astonishing thing** to consider is that when David is writing this Psalm – David is sitting in Jerusalem, seated on a throne, in highest honour and earthly praise!

David is the King of Israel, seated on His throne, in Jerusalem – and so **for David** he himself is:

A Lord – a King – a Master!

David himself is the Adonai of Israel!

And yet David says that he submits his authority to **a greater king – a greater priest – and a greater Lord** than even David himself!!!

And so **that's the first thing** that we need to see here at the beginning of this Psalm!

Yahweh says to *Adonai* – **NOT** *Yahweh* says to David!

This is **NOT** a Psalm written **about King David** – this is a Psalm written of **David's King!**

Jesus

And so, the natural question then becomes well **if David had no earthly Kings** – if David is the king of Israel when he writes this Psalm – **then who is David referring to?!?!?**

If David is the Adonai and yet he refers to **someone greater** – who is that someone greater?!?!?

Great David's Greater Son

And **as you make your way through** the New Testament Scriptures – and you read what the Apostles had to say – it becomes **very clear** that David is speaking of **his great great great grandson** Jesus Christ!

See the Jews believed that David himself **would one day have** a son who was **greater than him** in authority – even though **He came after** him in **time!**

Although David ranked ahead of this son in time; this Son ranked ahead of David in authority!

And so Jesus when He was **resurrected and ascended** on the Day of Pentecost (which was the Day of His power – **verse 3**) – the bible tells us that He **sat down** at the right hand of God **after making purification for sins** – that's Hebrews chapter 1!

The right hand of God was the place of highest honour – it was the place of total power & security – the place of highest authority!

Likewise sitting down **in the ancient world** was sign that you were in a position of authority **able to speak** in the place of God!

Acts 2

Peter certainly **saw this as the case** when he applies this Psalm to Jesus in Acts chapter 2...

In Acts 2 we have Peter on the Day of His Power at Pentecost telling the crowds of who Christ is after His ascension!

Acts chapter 2 verses 34 to 35 – Peter says that:

*It was **not David** who ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God, but **David himself** says:*

The Lord declared to my Lord, 'Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool...

Therefore [Peter says that in light of Psalm 110:1] let all the house of Israel know with certainty that [this Psalm has been fulfilled in their midst] that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah:

That is both **King & Saviour** of this world!

So Peter takes this Psalm – **and he applies this Psalm** – and He puts it onto the Lord Jesus Christ and he says that after Jesus had made purification for sins (by dying on the cross) **He sat down** at the right hand of God, whereby He is now **currently** making intercession for sin **and making His enemies** His footstool!

Isaiah, Daniel, Psalms

So Peter in his address joins Isaiah by speaking about the increase of His government of which there shall be no end!

He echoes Psalm chapter 2 in which God sits in the heavens and laughs at those who try to break the bonds of Christ!

He echoes Daniel chapter 7 in which the Son of Man was given great authority, and power, dominion and glory throughout all ages and forevermore!

And of course He echoes the Lord Jesus Christ who taught us to pray *your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven!*

Jesus says that ***all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me – therefore go and make disciples:***

Go forth and fill the earth **and subdue it** with the glory and image of the invisible God!

Hebrews

And friends **this was NOT just** Peter's view – NOT just Jesus' view – but **this was certainly** the dominant view of the New Testament Church!

This is what the author of Hebrews is alluding to in Hebrews chapter 10 verse 12 that:

*After Jesus had offered **for all time**, a single sacrifice for sin, **He sat down** at the right hand of God, and is now waiting **from that time on** until His enemies are made His footstool!*

This is a present tense reality – **from that time on** indicates that this rule is from the time He sat down at the right hand of God!

Paul in 1st Corinthians 15 says **in no confusing terms:**

That He must reign until He puts all of His enemies under His feet. And the last enemy to be defeated is death...

So if the **last enemy** to be defeated is death then that means that **all of the lesser enemies** right up until the time of Christ's 2nd coming **will be conquered!**

The only enemy to be remaining will be death says Paul!

Future/Present

Now the most important thing to note about **this** entire Psalm is the timing of these verbs here in Psalm 110 – that **for David** this promise of a future Messiah:

Was still going to come!

This a **future King** – with a **future time** – and a **future kingdom** – that is one day **going to be** fulfilled!

But for us...

For Peter

For Paul

For the early Christians

This Psalm is a **present** reality for us here today!

So it's **future** in the timing of **David** – **present** in the book of **Acts! X2**

And so here we are 2,000 years **after the time of the book of Acts** and Jesus is still reigning!

He's still ruling!

He's still conquering the hearts of His enemies **through the power & glory of the Gospel!**

Up & Up

And an **honest reading of church history** must acknowledge this to be true!

That Jesus has been ruling and reigning **ever since** His ascension in Acts chapter 1 – and it's been a glorious & victorious reign ever since!

Yes it's been tumultuous – and yes it's been difficult – yes there are ups and downs – wins and loses – good times and bad!

But much like our own graph of sanctification **which often goes** like this:



In the general – in the main – in the big picture – this world is **on the rise in conformity and image** to the Lord Jesus Christ!

And even though it's a steady and very slow process – it's still a present tense reality says Paul!

Verse 2

And **we know this** because while Jesus is seated at the right hand of God the Father – we hear of what happens **down here** on the earth **below** – verse 2:

Yahweh sends forth His mighty Scepter from the city of Zion to rule in the midst of His enemies...

So out of the mountain of God – Yahweh **sends forth** His mighty sceptre to rule and judge the rebellious nations of the earth:

Scepter implies kingship – Scepter implies decree – it implies *ruling and reigning* over the hearts of His enemies!

The King’s Scepter was the Sceptre of His justice – it was the Sceptre of His rule – and the **symbol of His power!**

And much like **what we see in Psalm 2 this authority is NOT kept in heaven – but goes forth from heaven into all the earth!**

So the seat of His authority is in the heavenly places – but the extension of that rule is **on the earth!**

So He rules from heaven but **it’s manifest below in His people!**

Verse 3

Verse 3:

Your people will volunteer on your day of battle [Day of power]. In holy splendour, from the womb of the dawn, the dew of your youth belongs to you X2

Now the Hebrew here is **very much hotly debated** – many scholars have discussed what verse 3 actually says – the Hebrew here is diverse...

And **I certainly don’t** claim to know exactly what David is getting at – but **the really smart guys** tell me that:

This is basically a reference to *the inheritance of the nations* that this King receives on the day of His power!

Drops of Dew

So if verse 1 speaks of the resurrected and ascended Lord who is **seated** in power!

And if verse 2 speaks of **the extension** of His power **going forth** from Zion to the earth!

Then here in verse 3 we have **the inheritance of the nations** this King will receive **as a result of** His victorious power **going forth** into the earth!

And notice that:

This inheritance **is going to be as vast and as wide as the dew of the morning sun...**

Now just stop and think about what David is saying here!

He likens this army of God to the **dew & droplets** of the morning sun!

He says that if this King **is going to be successful** in conquering the hearts of His enemies – then **He's going to do it** with an army that's:

As vast, and as numerous, as the drops of the grass that **cover the morning ground!**

The Dew of the Morning

You see so very often when you and I go outside **into the morning light** (right before the sun touches the grass) there's going to be **droplets of dew** found **in every location** that the grass touches!

If you go out into the morning light **and you look on the ground** there is **going to be dew** in every location that the grass touches...

And **that's the point** that David is trying to make:

That as vast and as wide **as the grass touches** the entire earth – so too **as vast and as wide** will the King's army be on the day of battle!

Spurgeon says that:

*In brightness then **as well as in multitude** did they resemble the glittering drops of the morning dew...*

This King will have an army so big – so vast – so wide, and so expansive that it's going to cover **every location** that the King rules!

Verse 4

Now friends this is **only because** this King is **NOT** a malicious King – He's **NOT** a tyrannical King – He doesn't **rule and reign** with an iron rod – but this King is a **King of grace**:

He is a Gracious King **willing to save** His most ungracious enemies!

Verse 4:

The Lord has sworn an oath and will not take it back saying:

You are a priest forever according to the pattern of Melchizedek...

So He's NOT just a King – but this is a **Priest-King!**

Priest/King

See Israel's priesthood began with the line of Aaron in Exodus 28...

And **continued down** through the line of Aaron **and his sons...**

Until eventually the monarch in Israel rose up and separated the priesthood from the earthly
King!

And so in Israel's history the Kingship and the Priesthood were **2 distinct positions** that were kept **completely sperate** so as to **not confuse** the people; or give the people too much power **to one person!**

So it was never okay for a **King** to be a **Priest** – and it was never okay for a **Priest** to be a **King!**

In fact when King Saul (Israel's very first King) offers an unlawful sacrifice in 1st Samuel 13 we see Samuel tearing away the kingdom from Saul!

In 2nd **Chronicles chapter 26** King Uzziah was struck down with leprosy after he tried to usurp the priestly authority in the temple as the King of Israel!

It was never okay for a King & Priest to mix their roles:

But here in verse 4 David says that his Lord is going to be a ***Priest and a King*** after the order of Melchizedek!

He's going to be a Priest-King who fulfills both of these positions in perfect unity!

Now we meet Melchizedek in the early portions of the bible in Genesis chapter 14...

Now we don't know much about Melchizedek...but we do know that he's a King of Salem and a Priest of God!

And David is saying that **his Lord** (here in Psalm 110) is going to be a priest after the lineage of Melchizedek – NOT the line of Aaron...

In other words:

He is a different Priest and a different King that will **NOT only** conquer His enemies – **but will make a way** for His enemies **to be saved!**

He is a Priest-King after the order of Melchizedek!

He both **conquers** and He **saves!**

He both **rules & redeems!**

He subdues & He delivers!

He is a King who offers up mercy to His enemies by offering them grace!

And this tells us that **after Jesus Christ** had become both Lord & King in Acts chapter 2 – that there was **still going to be** rebel troops and enemies in the Kingdom of God **that He needed to subdue!**

The Expansion

And **this is what** verses **5 to 7** tell us – Verse 5:

The Lord is at your right hand; and 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 And He will drink from the brook by the road; And therefore, He will lift up His head...

So, King Jesus has conquered His enemies – He is extending His rule – but David says that **there are still going to be rebels** in the kingdom that He brings!

Verses 5 to 7 are therefore there **to remind us** and to **remove all doubt** about the Lord's ability to bring about this world-wide defeat!

Lest we think that the enemies of this world **are getting greater** – we have a king who is subduing the enemies of this world!

And I want you to notice **the progression here** that David uses – it's a progression which moves from the **lesser** to the **greater**:

It begins with **kings** – it moves to the **nations** – and finishes with the **world!**

This is a **world-wide conquest** that will be accomplished through King Jesus conquering the hearts of men!

One **after the next** – and **after the next** – and **after the next** – until eventually it covers the entire world!

Verse 7

And so in **verse 7** we read of **this powerful image** of a King who **finishes off the task** – verse 7:

He will drink from the brook by the road; therefore, he will lift up his head...

It speaks of the image of a mighty King who **in conquering the enemy** has them on the run, and He is in pursuit of them!

And rather than take a break – and head back to camp – and have a full meal – and a time to rest:

This King **merely drinks from the brook** – is quickly refreshed – and lifts up His head – **to finish the job!**

This King is in pursuit of His enemies **and He will finish the task** that He started!

In other words, the conquest of this King will be a **full & final** defeat of all of His enemies!

Unlike **Israel's former Kings** who **never fully cleansed** the land of God's enemies – this King will be **full & final – total & complete** in His conquest of enemy troops!

He will lift up His head and finish the task **in full!**

Application

And Friends as I was thinking of the glorious themes found in Psalm 110 I couldn't help but think of 2 applications that I want us to see as we come to a close here in this Psalm...

Application #1

We've looked at the theology of the passage – now let's look at the **practical applications** of this Psalm and what it says...

If Jesus Christ is ruling and reigning on His throne in heaven today – then what are the practical **outcomes and applications** of this Psalm we can take!

And so I want us to consider **2 points** and then we'll close in prayer – so if you're taking notes point number #1 is this – **in light of Psalm 110:**

Fight the good fight of Faith!

Fiends the King of this world has established a kingdom that is everlasting – eternal – and unrelenting – it is a kingdom that is slowly **growing and advancing** through the proclamation of the Gospel, through the advancement of the Church!

This is why we engage in missions – evangelism – cultural engagement – social justice – because we have a King **who rules the nations** and commands us to go and make disciples of those nations that he rules!

Go and bring the rebel troops **into the army** of King Jesus!

Because kingdoms rise and kingdoms fall but the word of our God shall stand forever!

And therefore **because of that** – fight the good fight of faith!

The Apostle Paul urges Timothy in 1st Timothy chapter 6:

Fight the good fight of faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who in his testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession.

With Joy

Friends fight the good fight of faith – and do it **says Paul:**

With Joy!

Paul says in Ephesians chapter 2 that Christ Jesus has **not only** redeemed us from the curse of the law, He has not only saved us from the wrath to come – but He has **also raised us up** to sit with Him in the heavenly places, in Christ Jesus!

And this means that we shall not only live with him – but we shall also reign with Him in glorious victory!

And this should **embolden us** in our battle against sin – it should **encourage us** as we preach the gospel – and it should make us fearless in the face of conflict:

Knowing that Christ Jesus **has already won** the battle of the nations!

He's already seated on the throne!

It's the 80th minute **and it's not a nail biter!**

The Lord Jesus Christ has broken the back of His enemy – He has crushed the head of the ancient serpent at the cross – and now we as the church are out in the world **cleaning up the mess!**

Our Father's World

And **not only** has He broken the back of the captain of the other team – but this King holds in His hands the hearts of His enemies...

So what fear do you have today that stops you from going forth into the world, and in Christ Jesus!

Why should we be scared of the secular flag that flies in the face of the public square – when our Father in heaven owns the cattle on a thousand hills!

Our King owns the square!

That's His property!

That's His possession!

That's His land!

Marine General

There's a great story told of a marine general in the Korean War where he and his army had managed to push the Koreans back up to North Korea – and the Chinese ended up coming in to surrounded the general and his troops...

And with the enemy surrounding him on every side, and the battle looks hopeless – he looks to his troops, and he says:

Well, they can't run now!

That should be us!

Friend that's how Christians need to be in the face of conflict!

What kind of faith is able to look to the enemies of God and say:

"We've got them now..."

Well only a faith that believes that Jesus Christ has already won!

The war is over – the battle is won – and we are now cleaning up the mess of our King!

So number #1 Fight the good fight of faith!

Down-Up

Point number #2 something that is related to that point:

*Fight the good fight but do it with the **down up pattern of Scripture...***

Down up

Now if you were here last week in our evening service you may remember that I had mentioned that... there is an old Puritan prayer which says:

*Let me learn by paradox that the way **down** is the way **up**...*

See the Christian life is one of constantly going down into the pits, into the depth, into the muck **in order that** we may come up victorious in Christ who has already conquered our greatest enemy of sin – and once you see this down-up pattern in Scripture – **you cannot ever unsee it!**

Adam went down into a deep sleep – and came up a glorious husband ready to rule and reign in the Kingdom with his bride!

Joseph went down into the pit, further down into the prison, and then up victorious to the palace gates!

Israel went down into slavery – into Egypt – but came up victorious and delivered by the hand of God!

Jonah in the belly of the fish – up to the city of Nineveh!

Daniel in the Lions Den – up to his former place of glory!

And of course, Christ in His humiliation and then His exaltation!

*Let me learn by paradox that the way **down** really is the way **up**...*

Slow Advancement

And because of this (because of this **down-up pattern** in Scripture) we should expect conflict to come – we should expect the church to be persecuted – we should expect trials and tribulations!

Because:

King Jesus **rules in the midst of His enemies!**

He **doesn't rule** in the **midst of His friends**...He rules in the midst of His enemies!

And so yes advancement is costly – the Gospel will go forth – and yes Christ will have the inheritance of the nations – but **that does NOT mean** that we can expect an easy and peaceful life!

We **cannot float** down the river of Christianity in a gentle & steady stream hoping for peace to come – no we must advance up the **spiritual beach of Normandy** with great sacrifice and courage!

Fiends the Gospel of Christ has always advanced through the death of His people – through the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church!

And so **why would we ever believe** that this Kingdom will come through any other means but spiritual warfare and sacrifice!

Latimer and Ridley

The great Latimer and Ridley were 2 men that understood this...

They were 2 men **burned at the stake** for counting the cost of following Jesus!

On the day of their death the flames arose ever so quickly to burn them alive at the stake...And so Latimer **turns to his brother** Ridley and says:

*Be of good comfort, Mr. Ridley, and play the man! For we shall this day light such a candle by God's grace, in England, as I trust **shall never be put out** [again]!*

Be of good cheer and play the man – our deaths today are NOT in vain!

Now **what kind of a faith** is able to look into the most **darkest, sinful situations** of the earth and say **with absolute joy**:

We've got them now!

Friends only a faith that believes that the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church – only a faith that believes that:

Jesus is King!

That He is ruling today!

And that He has set the theme for this down-up pattern given in the Scriptures!

*Let me learn by paradox that the way **down** really is the way **up**...*

Conclusion

Friends God's Kingdom **has come** into this world through the death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ!

Jesus Christ is **ruling and reigning** today from the right hand of the Father – and Paul says that He must reign until He has put all enemies under His feet, and the last enemy to be defeated is death!

This is a kingdom that is slowly **coming** and advancing through the slow and steady power of the gospel...

And **it is a kingdom** that will **one day ultimately** (finally) be revealed on the **Day of His Second Coming** when the King of glory returns to earth to judge the living and the dead!

And on that **final day** there will be more pain, no more tears, no more weeping, no more darkness, no more suffering...

There will be no sin, no more rebellion, no more broken hearts, no more wayward children – no more rebel troops!

Because we will **finally once and for all** be in the presence of our Saviour – our Priest-King on High!

And every tear will be wiped away, every broken heart will be made right, every moment of pain and suffering will be redeemed to the glory of God...

And we will be at rest!

And we will be home!

And we will be free!

But until that final day (while we wait for the resurrection of all things):

*Let me learn by paradox that the way **down** really is the way **up**...*

Our task as the people of God is NOT over – it's a glorious task that we get of going out to all the nations and telling them to repent **because the Priest-King reigns here!**

And you will either bow before Him in **rebellion and sin** at the end of the age...

Or you will bow before Him today in repentance & faith!

Either way you will bow, and you will be humbled....

Either in this life or the next!

So come to Jesus Christ – repent of your sin – & trust in the Son:

For He must reign until He has put all his enemies under His feet!

Psalm 110

Discussion Questions

[Read Psalm 110:1-7]

Main Point: *King Jesus is presently conquering His enemies to the ends of the earth.*

Q1. What would you say is the main point David communicates in 110:1? – What are 2 dominant themes that stick out for you in verse 1?

Q2. [Read Acts 2:32-36]. How does Peter apply this Psalm on the Day of Pentecost? – **[Read Hebrews 10:12].** According to the author of Hebrews, at what point does Jesus begin making enemies His footstool? – How long will this reign last according to Paul in 1st Corinthians 15:25-26? – According to Paul what happens after Jesus has successfully put His enemies under His feet? **[See verse 24].**

Q3. How does the reality of the Lordship of Christ encourage you to kill your sin? – How does it encourage you to proclaim the gospel? – What are 2 other practical things Christians/Churches can do to promote the Lordship of Christ on the earth?

Q4. [Read verse 2]. Why is it important to remember that Christ still has enemies on the earth? – How does this spur you on to evangelism? – **[Read Matthew 28:18-20].** How much authority does Christ have on the earth? – What are we to do be doing in light of that?

Q5. [Read Verse 3]. According to this verse, how vast will God's army be?

Q6. [Read verse 4]. Why is it such good news that the King is also a Priest? – What does this tell you about the Father's heart in saving the world? **[See John 3:16-17].**

Q7. [Read verses 5-7]. Do you think this is speaking of a future time or presently occurring today? **[Explain your reasons].** In what way does Jesus conquer rebel hearts today? **[See Colossians 1:13-14].**