

Key Psalms

"110"

A Psalm of David

with gathered thoughts of Jim vH.

- 1 The **LORD** said to my Lord,
 “Sit at my right hand,
 Till I make your enemies your footstool.”
- 2 The **LORD** shall send the rod of your strength out of Zion.
 Rule in the midst of your enemies!
- 3 Your people shall be volunteers
 In the day of your power;
 In the beauties of holiness, from the womb of the morning,
 You have the dew of your youth.
- 4 The **LORD** has sworn
 And will not relent,
 “You are a priest forever
 According to the order of Melchizedek.”
- 5 The Lord is at your right hand;
 He shall execute kings in the day of his wrath.
- 6 He shall judge among the nations,
 He shall fill the places with dead bodies,
 He shall execute the heads of many countries.
- 7 He shall drink of the brook by the wayside;
 Therefore He shall lift up the head.

The Extraordinary Messianic Psalm

Psalm 110 is quoted at least 14 times in the New Testament - half of that in Hebrews - by our Lord, by Peter and by Paul. As we comment, it is good to remember that “**LORD**” in capital letters stands for Yahweh, the name most used for God in the Old Testament. In this psalm (in 1, 2 and 4) it refers to God the Father each time, whereas “Lord” refers to God the Son (1 and 5).

1. The psalm, speaking prophetically, starts off with the momentous fact of the Resurrection having taken place.

God in Heaven speaks to his Son on earth: “**Sit at my right hand!**” The one thus invited is the Son of Man, the One who has truly finished the work of salvation at Calvary, and who then rose from the dead.

Even now, on his way, as it were, to his Father’s right hand, He gives us a wonderful insight into the new ministry of love and concern He was about to start - comforting and commissioning at the same time. He appears to the devastated Mary Magdalene, then tells her: “*Do not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to my Father; but go to my brethren and say to them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God’.*” (Jn. 20:17).

When seated at the right hand of the Father, the Son of Man, nevertheless, continues to appear to his disciples during the following forty days. This period closes with his visible ascension. Then, at the feast of Pentecost, ten days later, God, the Holy Spirit, descends to indwell his disciples.

Note that when the Father invites the Son of Man to be seated at his right hand, He also says: “**Till I make your enemies your footstool.**” This tells us that the “enemy” is still at large, is still wreaking havoc on earth, even though the decisive battle has been won and his fate is truly sealed.

It also tells us that, though Christ is now “seated” at the right hand of the Father, his “rest” is not complete. There is no “footstool”, and, as mentioned, He is actively ministering to his people on earth. There *will* be a “final rest”, with the “footstool” provided. God the Father guarantees this will be forthcoming.

2. What God reveals about the future, has everything to do with **Zion** (Jerusalem). Forty years after the Son’s victory over Satan, through death and resurrection, **Zion** was going to be destroyed, temple and all. Jesus had shed tears over the people who were going to go through the extreme suffering of the Roman siege, destruction and deportation (Lk. 19:41-44). Those tears were certainly shed for all of the following generations of Israel as well, estranged as they too would be from their Messiah.

Yet one day Zion will be truly and completely under its one and only legitimate government: ***“For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon his shoulder. And his name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David and over his kingdom, to order it and establish it with judgment and justice from that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.”*** (Is. 9:6-7). It is what presently the Son is waiting for at the right hand of the Father: ***“The LORD shall send the rod of your strength out of Zion. Rule in the midst of your enemies!”***

3. That truly converted and reborn remnant of Israel, written about by Paul in Romans 11, who will at last have wholeheartedly embraced their Messiah, *they will be there “in the day of his power”* (Rev. 19). That “day” will wonderfully manifest God’s radiant work: Israel, his beloved people, though ever wayward and unfaithful, has finally come into its own, among all the nations. Not in the ugly *pretence* of holiness that made them crucify their Messiah, but in the true beauty of true holiness. There’s a sparkling freshness about them as the new day breaks. Could it be the prospect which He relishes the most, as He is now seated there?

“The LORD has chosen Jacob for himself, Israel for his special treasure” (Ps. 135:4); ***“They shall be mine’, says the LORD of hosts, ‘on the day that I make them my jewels’”*** (Mal. 3:17).

4. This psalm is mostly about what is still future for us; it is about the awesome days when the Messiah will be King and Judge in Jerusalem and all his enemies will be defeated (Ps. 24:8-10; Mt. 25:31). Yet like the gem encrusted on a beautiful ring, we have verse 4 right in the center, and it speaks not about the King, but about the Priest, not about what is still future, but about what is the present here and now, and (acc. to Hebrews) not about Israel, but about his other holy people, the “church of the firstborn”.

God the Father has made it abundantly clear that while the Son of Man is seated at his right hand, He is “priest”, not in a temporary function in a chain of succession, as the sons of Aaron, but uniquely ***“according to the order of Melchizedec”***, who was king of Salem, yet priest of God Most High at the same time.

“Hebrews” explains, expanding on this prophecy, that Christ is the church’s one High Priest, for all of the time that his church is still on earth. He is the One ministering to his redeemed, as He did with Mary Magdalene. In Revelation 1-3 John finds him ministering to the seven golden candlesticks, which represent the whole of the universal church, but consist of innumerable local congregations.

Of course, there is no question of earthly and material “sanctuaries” - they are **not** needed. The only ‘sanctuary’ that the High Priest recognizes is the spiritual one.

5 & 6. The risen Lord announced to his disciples that ***“all authority had been given to him in heaven and on earth”*** (Mt. 28). The company of his redeemed is to be totally submissive to that authority of the High Priest, seated at the Father’s right hand! The apostle Paul compares this to the authority of a “head” over its “body”.

The world says resolutely “No” to such authority. Psalm 2, e.g., paints the startling picture of that reality. And so the High Priest, the Son of Man, is to get up from his Father’s right hand, as soon as his priestly work is done. The redeemed, caught up (1 Ths. 4), face the Tribunal of Christ (2 Cor. 5) and celebrate the Wedding of the Lamb. Then, *with* them, He initiates his return to earth, together with all his “saints”. They **“will appear with him in glory”** (Zech. 14:5^B; Col. 3:4). Then, as King of kings, He will reign on earth and execute judgment on all the nations (gentiles) that rejected him and his authority - described in these verses and in Mateo 25. A thousand year period of true peace and righteousness is ushered in on earth with Christ on the throne (Rev. 20). Eventually, the new earth takes its place (Rev. 21).

7. This last verse is remarkable as, in this context, it seems mysterious. What to make of it? We may take it as a wonderful little parable. All the above verses have shown us the “way of the Lord”. Rising from the dead, there was *still* a long way to go: High Priest of the Church of the Redeemed, then the coming King of Kings who judges the whole earth... Of course, before the resurrection, the way of the cross, lasting 33 years - that way too had been long and extremely arduous.

How could the Son of Man endure? This is what He said about it: **“Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner.”** **“I can of myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and my judgment is righteous, because I do not seek my own will but the will of the Father who sent me”** (John 5).

Interestingly, the *first* time we hear him speak is, when as a 12-year-old, He says that He must be about his Father’s business (Lk. 2); conversely, with his very *last* words, before dying, having been about his “Father’s business” unceasingly, He commits his spirit into his “Father’s hands” (Lk. 23)!

So what was the secret that marked the life of the Son of Man, all the way, every day? It was that brook, running parallel to the path He was treading! It was **always** available for him to drink from, and He made sure He always drank from it - all the way! How else could the Son of man hold his head high, even before the priests and Pilate and Herod and the soldiers, and even when confronted by the devil himself? His secret was the brook - He knew how to **drink from the brook!**

To drink from a brook you have to bend very low, you have to get down on all fours, a humiliating position and very vulnerable. Thus the Son was at the Father’s feet continually, and thus, completely satisfied and refreshed, He could hold his head high, continually! We may simply put it this way: “The man who knows how to hold his head high in the presence of God and men and demons, is the man who daily stoops deeply to drink from the brook of his Father’s love, his faithfulness and his all-sufficiency!”

We too, redeemed to be the High Priest’s holy people (1 P. 2:4-10), may continually drink from the brook! We too may get down very low before our Lord, worshipping him, listening to him, and drinking from him, who is the Fountain of Living Water. We too can then hold high our head in this perverse world as we walk along life’s way with the One who loved us, conquered us and is our High Priest!

“He shall drink of the brook by the wayside; therefore He shall lift up the head.”