

“The King is Coming”

Psalm 110

So today is Palm Sunday, a day of victory on the church calendar. A short-lived day of victory because the anticipation by the people for Jesus to beat up the Romans and set up His rule from Jerusalem did not happen. Instead He was arrested, crucified but a week later resurrected. A different and better victory all around. But what about the prophecies about His coming? Is He still coming and when?

With the unprecedented turmoil happening in the entire world right now because of the Coronavirus, a few evangelical preachers are warning us that Jesus’ return could be very soon. We really don’t know when but we are to be ready in case He comes in our lifetime.

And the fact that He is coming back should change the way we think about our world and live in the world. That’s the whole point about Jesus’ return and the end of the world. Peter got that when he wrote in 2 Pet. 3:12,

¹¹ Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives ¹² as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming.

The coming of Jesus should change who we are and how we live our lives. Before we come back to this toward the end, let’s reaffirm through Psalm 110 why we know Jesus will come back, what Jesus is doing while He waits for God’s green light to come and a little glimpse of how the world will respond to Jesus’ return. And we can get all this from Psalm 110.

Ps. 110 is unique among the psalms because it is a prophecy. We know it’s a prophecy because 1) the word in v.1 for ‘says’ [*The LORD says to my Lord*] is the Hebrew word for oracle. A word used exclusively for divine revelation and is found in the prophets a lot. One of the best examples is found in Jer. 23:30,

³⁰ “Therefore,” declares the LORD, “I am against the prophets who steal from one another words supposedly from me. ³¹ Yes,” declares the LORD, “I am against the prophets who wag their own tongues and yet declare, ‘The LORD declares.’”

In Jeremiah’s day many false prophets stood up and ‘declared’ [that’s the same Hebrew word in Ps. 110:1] they had a word [declaration/oracle] from God. So God ‘declares’ He’s against the false prophets who make false oracles.

So if Ps. 110 is an oracle/prophecy from God does that make David a prophet as well as a king? There was another time when David received a word from God, 2 Sam. 23 says,

These are the last words of David: “The oracle of David son of Jesse,

the oracle of the man exalted by the Most High, the man anointed by the God of Jacob, Israel’s singer of songs:

² “The Spirit of the LORD spoke through me; his word was on my tongue.

³ The God of Israel spoke, the Rock of Israel said to me:

- ‘When one rules over men in righteousness, when he rules in the fear of God,
4 he is like the light of morning at sunrise on a cloudless morning, like the brightness after rain that brings the grass from the earth.’

The apostle Peter says the same in Acts 2:29, after he quoted what David said in Ps. 16:8-11,
²⁹ “Brothers, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried, and his tomb is here to this day. ³⁰
But he was a prophet and knew that God had promised him on oath that he would place one of his descendants on his throne. ³¹ Seeing what was ahead, he spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to the grave, nor did his body see decay.

So if David prophesied about the resurrection surely believing he prophesied about Jesus’ rule is not difficult. And of course, Jesus Himself affirmed this passage was about Him. During His last week leading up to the cross He was under great scrutiny and the Pharisees and Sadducees were questioning Him, looking for ways they could trap Him by His words. But one time Jesus turned the tables on them. It was well understood in Jewish circles that Ps. 110 spoke about the Messiah. That was not in question. But there is a point that confounded the Jewish teachers because they believed the Messiah would be a man, a descendant of David – only. So Jesus used Ps. 110 on the Jewish leaders and tested them when He asked in Matt. 22,

⁴¹ While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, ⁴² “What do you think about the Christ? Whose son is he?”

“The son of David,” they replied.

⁴³ He said to them, “How is it then that David, speaking by the Spirit, calls him ‘Lord’? For he says, ⁴⁴ “‘The Lord said to my Lord: “Sit at my right hand until I put your enemies under your feet.”’

⁴⁵ If then David calls him ‘Lord,’ how can he be his son?” ⁴⁶ No one could say a word in reply, and from that day on no one dared to ask him any more questions.

Because in Ps. 110:1 David refers to the Messiah as his Lord, Adonai, a term for God. The reading of the Psalm in Hebrew is more understandable because there are two different Hebrew words translated Lord. When Lord is all capitalised it’s the Word ‘Yahweh’, God’s covenant name. Adonai (lower case Lord in the psalm refers to the Messiah Christ. So perhaps we should read it like this:

[God] says to my Lord [Jesus]: “Sit at [God’s] right hand until
[God] makes [Jesus’] enemies a footstool for [Jesus’] feet.”

² [God] will extend [Jesus’] mighty scepter from Zion;
[Jesus] will rule in the midst of His enemies.

³ [Jesus’] troops will be willing on [Jesus’] day of battle.
Arrayed in holy majesty, from the womb of the dawn
[Jesus] will receive the dew of your youth.

⁴ [God] has sworn and will not change his mind:
“You [Jesus] are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.”

⁵ [Jesus] is at [God’s] right hand; [Jesus] will crush kings on the day of his wrath.

⁶ [Jesus] will judge the nations, heaping up the dead
and crushing the rulers of the whole earth.

⁷ [Jesus] will drink from a brook beside the way;
therefore [Jesus] will lift up his head.

It helps when we understand who the pronouns refer to. Now we see why Jesus made clear reference to Himself in this psalm, as both David's son and David's Lord. The Messiah would be both divine and human (Rom. 1:3-4).

So then, why didn't He rule when He first came and why are we still waiting for Him to return? Since God is the One who is speaking and the One who declares Jesus as King, we understand that

Jesus Waits for God's Command to Rule **(110:1-3)**

God declared to Jesus (David's Lord) to '*Sit at His right hand until He makes Jesus' enemies a footstool for Jesus' feet.* God orchestrates world events including when Jesus will return. Jesus admitted that Himself in Matt. 24:36,

³⁶ *"No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.*

For now Jesus is at the Father's right hand, the place of honour and co-rulership. How did Jesus get to have that position?

He rested from His finished work on the cross (v.1)

'Sit' has the idea of rest from your accomplishments. What accomplishments?

^{Eph. 1:20} *That power is like the working of his mighty strength, ²⁰ which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, ²¹ far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come.*

Why was He dead?

^{Heb. 1:3} *The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.*

^{Heb. 10:12} *But when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God. ¹³ Since that time he waits for his enemies to be made his footstool, ¹⁴ because by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy.*

God sent His Son to be one of us, to live a perfect life to die in our place for our sins, placing our sins on Him and Jesus paid the ransom we owe to God. God proved Jesus was divine by raising Him from the dead and now He is resting from His accomplishment at the Father's right hand waiting for His command to return.

God even tells us the location for Jesus' throne here in the Psalm:

² *The LORD will extend your mighty scepter from Zion; you will rule in the midst of your enemies.*

He will rule from Jerusalem (v.2)

This is why Jesus' coming on a colt into Jerusalem was so exciting. He was fulfilling prophecy, especially Zech. 9:9 and Dan. 9:25. This is why Jerusalem is such a hot spot; a place divided by four religious groups all vying for control. In spite of what we see today, it will be the capital of the world one day with Jesus ruling from there.

V.3 says He won't be alone, that He'll have an army.

We will join when we are made holy (v.3)

³ *Your troops will be willing on your day of battle. Arrayed in holy majesty, from the womb of the dawn you will receive the dew of your youth.*

Since we're not quite arrayed in 'holy majesty' yet, he's obviously pointing to a future day when we are purified and holy in God's presence. When we've already died or been taken to glory. We return riding white horses behind Jesus according to Rev. 19:11-16

¹¹ *I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and makes war. ¹² His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself. ¹³ He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God. ¹⁴ The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean. ¹⁵ Out of his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. "He will rule them with an iron scepter." He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. ¹⁶ On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.*

Earlier in Rev. 19 we read about us, the ones wearing white linen:

"Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty reigns.

⁷ *Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready.*

⁸ *Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear." (Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of the saints.)*

So what's Jesus been doing since His ascension at the Father's right hand? What's He doing right now for you and me?

Jesus Prays for Us While He Waits to Rule **(110:4)**

Here's the main reason why this Psalm never referred to a human only descendent of David:

⁴ *The LORD has sworn and will not change his mind: "You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek."*

No Davidic king ever served as priest. One tried one time and Uzziah ended up a leper for the rest of his life! Melchizedek was the King/priest of Jerusalem in the days of Abraham. After Abraham rescued Lot in a war with their neighbours, Abraham presented Melchizedek a tenth of the spoil as an offering to God. Hebrews 5 and 7 show how Jesus is a King-Priest like Melchizedek, not a descendant of Levi.

The author of Hebrews explains Jesus' role as mediator and intercessor:

Heb. 5:7 *During the days of Jesus' life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with loud cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. ⁸ Although he was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered ⁹ and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him ¹⁰ and was designated by God to be high priest in the order of Melchizedek.*

Jesus prayed and yet submitted to His Father's will for Him on the cross. Jesus understands our hearts more than anyone because He suffered and so can identify with us;

¹⁴ Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. ¹⁵ For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin. ¹⁶ Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need

Who better to act as our intercessor and go between to God than Jesus? This is why we can take all our concerns to Him:

Rom. 8:34 Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.

As Lord and King Jesus can meet our needs and give us the strength we need to endure our trials, concerns and sorrows as we go through life. This is what he is doing now while He waits for God's command to return. And when He does return

Jesus Will Remove God's Enemies Once for All **(110:5-7)**

Jesus showed tremendous grace and mercy the first time He came. But when he returns He will judge this time.

⁵ *The Lord is at your right hand; he will crush kings on the day of his wrath.*

⁶ *He will judge the nations, heaping up the dead and crushing the rulers of the whole earth.*

⁷ *He will drink from a brook beside the way; therefore he will lift up his head.*

Crush, judge, wrath, crushing, dead. His patience with the world will end and He will defeat the leader/king of the world (Antichrist) who will rally all the nations against Israel in Jerusalem as written in Zech. 14 and toss them in the lake of fire (Rev. 19:19-21). The picture of Jesus drinking from a brook is that of one who is still standing at the end of battle enjoying a drink to refresh Himself.

And so we wait again on another Palm Sunday, a reminder that the Lord will return in power and defeat all those who oppose Him, His Father and us. Why hasn't He returned yet? Because He is so patient and loving, 2 Pet. 3:9 says,

not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

God delays Jesus' coming so more people can be saved. This is where we come in. Instead of sitting around waiting for Jesus to come, Jesus said that since He had all authority on earth that we are to go and make disciples of all nations [nationalities], baptizing them and teaching them to obey everything He commanded us to do. Perhaps a good measuring stick to see how much we believe Jesus will return is by how much we trust His authority to tell others about Himself. And their need for salvation before He comes. Phil. 2:10-11 says every knee will one day bow down before Him and confess that He is Lord. For many that will be a forced confession before they enter eternal suffering. Our prayer and desire should be to help them believe in their heart that God rose Jesus from the dead and profess with their mouth that Jesus is Lord.

And right now the focus can be to look down on this earth and see all the pain and confusion and hope only that the virus will go away. And we do pray for that. But a healthier perspective comes from Col. 3:1-4

Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. ² Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. ³ For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. ⁴ When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

Keep your mind focused on Jesus, God, and the truth of His Word. Look up. That's where Jesus is now. If He's there now then He's got things under control. He's coming back and we'll be with Him in glory. That's where our life is hidden, reserved. Put your hope in Him, not in a virus free or better earth.

And the best way to do that is to do what Peter told us to do in 2 Pet. 3:12-14,

¹¹ Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives ¹² as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. ¹⁴ So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him. ¹⁵ Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation

The way we live for God now gives witness to those around us that we know who's in control and that Jesus will return. In the meantime God's delay means salvation for some. Perhaps your family member, neighbour, friend, co-worker. Perhaps our response with patience and kindness to COVID-19 results in sharing the gospel with someone. And they will be saved and become part of Jesus' army who will return with Him one day. Let's praise Him and pray for others.

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If you have any comments or questions about this message please contact us at olivet@rideau.net