

PSALM 110

This psalm is pure gospel; it is only, and wholly, concerning Christ, the Messiah promised to the fathers and expected by them. It is plain that the Jews of old, even the worst of them, so understood it, however the modern Jews have endeavoured to pervert it and to rob us of it; for when the Lord Jesus proposed a question to the Pharisees upon the first words of this psalm, where he takes it for granted that David, in spirit, calls Christ his Lord though he was his Son, they chose rather to say nothing, and to own themselves gravelled, than to make it a question whether David does indeed speak of the Messiah or no; for they freely yield so plain a truth, though they foresee it will turn to their own disgrace, ~~424~~ Matthew 22:41, etc. Of him therefore, no doubt, the prophet here speaks of him and of no other man. Christ, as our Redeemer, executes the office of a prophet, of a priest, and of a king, with reference both to his humiliation and his exaltation; and of each of these we have here an account.

I. His prophetic office (v. 2).

II. His priestly office (v. 4).

III. His kingly office (v. 1, 3, 5, 6).

IV. His estates of humiliation and exaltation (v. 7). In singing this psalm we must act faith upon Christ, submit ourselves entirely to him, to his grace and government, and triumph in him as our prophet, priest, and king, by whom we hope to be ruled, and taught, and saved, for ever, and as the prophet, priest, and king, of the whole church, who shall reign till he has put down all opposing rule, principality, and power, and delivered up the kingdom to God the Father.

~~424~~ PSALM 110:1-4

THE MESSIAH'S DOMINION

A psalm of David.

Some have called this psalm *David's creed*, almost all the articles of the Christian faith being found in it; the title calls it *David's psalm*, for in the believing foresight of the Messiah he both praised God and solaced himself, much more may we, in singing it, to whom that is fulfilled, and therefore more clearly revealed, which is here foretold. Glorious things are here spoken of Christ, and such as oblige us to consider how great he is.

I. That he is David's Lord. We must take special notice of this because he himself does. ^{<423>}Matthew 22:43, *David, in spirit, calls him Lord*. And as the apostle proves the dignity of Melchizedek, and in him of Christ, by this, that so great a man as Abraham was paid him *tithes* (^{<304>}Hebrews 7:4), so we may be this prove the dignity of the Lord Jesus that David, that great man, *called him his Lord*; by him that king acknowledges himself to reign, and to him to be acceptable as a servant to his lord. Some think he calls him his *Lord* because he was the Lord that was to descend from him, his son and yet his Lord. Thus his immediate mother calls him her *Saviour* (^{<414>}Luke 1:47); even his parents were his subjects, his saved ones.

II. That he is constituted a sovereign Lord by the counsel and decree of God himself: *The Lord, Jehovah, said unto him, Sit as a king*. He *receives of the Father* this honour and glory (^{<607>}2 Peter 1:17), from him who is the fountain of honour and power, and *takes it not to himself*. He is therefore rightful Lord, and his title is incontestable; for what God has said cannot be gainsaid. He is therefore everlasting Lord; for what God has said shall not be unsaid. He will certainly take and keep possession of that kingdom which the Father has committed to him, and none can hinder.

III. That he was to be advanced to the highest honour, and entrusted with an absolute sovereign power both in heaven and in earth: *Sit thou at my right hand*. Sitting is a resting posture; after his services and sufferings, he entered into rest from all his labours. It is a ruling posture; he sits to give law, to give judgment. It is a remaining posture; he sits like a king for ever. Sitting at the right hand of God denotes both his dignity and his dominion, the honour put upon him and the trusts reposed in him by the Father. All the favours that come from God to man, and all the service that comes from man to God, pass through his hand.

IV. That all his enemies were in due time to be made his footstool, and not till then; but then also he must reign in the glory of the Mediator, though the work of the Mediator will be, in a manner, at an end. Note,

1. Even Christ himself has enemies that fight against his kingdom and subjects, his honour and interest, in the world. There are those that will not have him to reign over them, and thereby they join themselves to Satan, who will not have him to reign at all.

2. These enemies will *be made his footstool*; he will subdue them and triumph over them; he will do it easily, as easily as we put a footstool in its proper place, and such a propriety there will be in it. He will make himself easy by the doing of it, as a man that sits with a footstool under his feet; he will subdue them in such a way as shall be most for his honour and their perpetual disgrace; he will *tread down the wicked*, ^{<3003>}Malachi 4:3.

3. God the Father has undertaken to do it: *I will make them thy footstool*, who can do it.

4. It will not be done immediately. All his enemies are now in a chain, but not yet made his footstool. This the apostle observes. ^{<3008>}Hebrews 2:8, *We see not yet all things put under him*. Christ himself must wait for the completing of his victories and triumphs.

5. He shall wait till it is done; and all their might and malice shall not give the least disturbance to his government. His sitting at God's right hand is a pledge to him of his setting his feet, at last, on the necks of all his enemies.

V. That he should have a kingdom set up in the world, beginning at Jerusalem (v. 2): *“The Lord shall send the rod or sceptre of thy strength out of Zion*, by which thy kingdom shall be erected, maintained, and administered.” The Messiah, when he sits on the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens, will have a church on earth, and will have an eye to it; for he is *King upon the holy hill of Zion* (^{<3006>}Psalms 2:6), in opposition to Mount Sinai, that frightful mountain, on which the law was given, ^{<3028>}Hebrews 12:18, 24; ^{<3024>}Galatians 4:24, 25. The kingdom of Christ took rise from Zion, the city of David, for he was the Son of David, and was to have *the throne of his father David*. By the rod of his strength, or his strong rod, is meant his everlasting gospel, and the power of the Holy Ghost going along with it — the report of the word, and the arm of the Lord accompanying it (^{<2501>}Isaiah 53:1; ^{<3016>}Romans 1:16), — the gospel coming in word, and in power, and *in the holy Ghost*, ^{<3005>}1 Thessalonians 1:5. By the word and Spirit of God souls were to be reduced first, and brought into obedience to God, and then ruled and governed according to

the will of God. This strong rod God sent forth; he poured out the Spirit, and gave both commissions and qualifications to those that preached the word, and *ministered the Spirit*, ^{<403>}Galatians 3:5. It was sent out of Zion, for there the Spirit was given, and there the preaching of the gospel among all nations must begin, at Jerusalem. See ^{<424>}Luke 24:47, 49. *Out of Zion must go forth the law of faith*, ^{<211>}Isaiah 2:3. Note, The gospel of Christ, being sent of God, is *mighty through God* to do wonders, ^{<710>}2 Corinthians 10:4. It is *the rod of Christ's strength*. Some make it to allude not only to the sceptre of a prince, denoting the glory of Christ shining in the gospel, but to a shepherd's crook, his rod and staff, denoting the tender care of Christ takes of his church; for he is both *the great and the good Shepherd*.

VI. That his kingdom, being set up, should be maintained and kept up in the world, in spite of all the oppositions of the power of darkness.

1. Christ shall rule, shall give laws, and govern his subjects by them, shall perfect them, and make them easy and happy, shall do his own will, fulfil his own counsels, and maintain his own interests among men. His kingdom is of God, and it shall stand; his crown sits firmly on his head, and there it shall flourish.

2. He shall rule *in the midst of his enemies*. He sits in heaven in the midst of his friends; his throne of glory there is surrounded with none but faithful worshippers of him, ^{<611>}Revelation 5:11. But he rules on earth in the midst of his enemies, and his throne of government here is surrounded with those that hate him and fight against him. Christ's church is a lily among thorns, and his disciples are sent forth *as sheep in the midst of wolves*; he knows *where they dwell, even where Satan's seat is* (^{<613>}Revelation 2:13), and this redounds to his honour that he not only keeps his ground, but gains his point, notwithstanding all the malignant policies and powers of hell and earth, which cannot shake the rock on which the church is built. *Great is the truth, and will prevail*.

VII. That he should have a great number of subjects, who should be to him for a name and a praise, v. 3.

1. That they should be his own people, and such as he should have an incontestable title to. They are given to him by the Father, who gave them their lives and beings, and to whom their lives and beings were forfeited. *Thine they were and thou gavest them me*, ^{<876>}John 17:6. They are redeemed by him; he has purchased them to be to himself *a peculiar*

people, ^{<3024>}Titus 2:14. They are his by right, antecedent to their consent. He *had much people in Corinth* before they were converted, ^{<4830>}Acts 18:10.

2. That they should be *a willing people*, a people of willingness, alluding to servants that choose their service and are not coerced to it (they love their masters and would not go out free), to soldiers that are volunteers and not pressed men (“Here am I, send me”), to sacrifices that are free-will offerings and not offered of necessity; we *present ourselves living sacrifices*. Note, Christ's people are a willing people. The conversion of a soul consists in its being willing to be Christ's, coming under his yoke and into his interests, with an entire compliancy and satisfaction.

3. That they should be so *in the day of his power, in the day of thy muster* (so some); when thou art enlisting soldiers thou shalt find a multitude of volunteers forward to be enlisted; let but the standard be set up and the *Gentiles will seek to it*, ^{<2310>}Isaiah 11:10; 60:3. Or when thou art drawing them out to battle they shall be willing to *follow the Lamb whithersoever he goes*, ^{<644>}Revelation 14:4. *In the day of thy armies* (so some); “when the first preachers of the gospel shall be sent forth, as Christ's armies, to reduce apostate men, and to ruin the kingdom of apostate angels, then all that are *thy people shall be willing*; that will be thy time of setting up thy kingdom.” *In the day of thy strength*, so we take it. There is a general power which goes along with the gospel to all, proper to make them willing to be Christ's people, arising from the supreme authority of its great author and the intrinsic excellency of the things themselves contained in it, besides the undeniable miracles that were wrought for the confirmation of it. And there is also a particular power, the power of the Spirit, going along with the power of the word, to the people of Christ, which is effectual to make them willing. The former leaves sinners without matter of excuse; this leaves saints without matter of boasting. Whoever are willing to be Christ's people, it is the free and mighty grace of God that makes them so.

4. That they should be so *in the beauty of holiness*, that is,

(1.) They shall be allured to him by the beauty of holiness; they shall be charmed into a subjection to Christ by the sight given them of his beauty, who is the holy Jesus, and the beauty of the church, which is the holy nation.

(2.) They shall be admitted by him into the beauty of holiness, as spiritual priests, to minister in his sanctuary; for *by the blood of Jesus we have boldness to enter into the holiest.*

(3.) They shall attend upon him in the beautiful attire or ornaments of grace and sanctification. Note, Holiness is the livery of Christ's family and that which *becomes his house for ever.* Christ's soldiers are all thus clothed; these are the colours they wear. The armies of heaven *follow him in fine linen, clean and white,* ^{<3804>}Revelation 19:14.

5. That he should have great numbers of people devoted to him. The multitude of the people is the honour of the prince, and that shall be the honour of this prince. *From the womb of the morning thou hast the dew of thy youth,* that is, abundance of young converts, like the drops of dew in a summer's morning. In the early days of the gospel, in the morning of the New Testament, the youth of the church, great numbers flocked to Christ, and there were *multitudes that believed, a remnant of Jacob,* that was as *dew from the Lord,* ^{<3805>}Micah 5:7; ^{<2804>}Isaiah 64:4, 8. Or thus? "*From the womb of the morning (from their very childhood) thou hast the dew of thy people's youth,* that is, their hearts and affections when they are young; it is thy youth, because it is dedicated to thee." *The dew of the youth* is a numerous, illustrious, hopeful show of young people flocking to Christ, which would be to the world as dew to the ground, to make it fruitful. Note, The dew of our youth, even in the morning of our days, ought to be consecrated to our Lord Jesus.

6. That he should be not only a king, but a priest, v. 4. The same Lord that said, *Sit thou at my right hand, swore, and will not repent, Thou art a priest,* that is, *Be thou a priest;* for by the word of his oath he was consecrated. Note,

(1.) Our Lord Jesus Christ is a priest. He was appointed to that office and faithfully executes it; he is *ordained for men in things pertaining to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sin* (^{<3806>}Hebrews 5:1), to make atonement for our sins and to recommend our services to God's acceptance. He is God's minister to us, and our advocate with God, and so is a Mediator between us and God.

(2.) He is *a priest for ever.* He was designed for a priest, in God's eternal counsels; he was a priest to the Old-Testament saints, and will be a priest for all believers to the end of time, ^{<3807>}Hebrews 13:8. He is said to be *a priest for ever,* not only because we are never to expect any other

dispensation of grace than this by the priesthood of Christ, but because the blessed fruits and consequences of it will remain to eternity.

(3.) He is made a priest with an oath, which the apostle urges to prove the pre-eminence of his priesthood above that of Aaron, ^{<BIB>}Hebrews 7:20, 21. *The Lord has sworn*, to show that in the commission there was no implied reserve of a power of revocation; for *he will not repent*, as he did concerning Eli's priesthood, ^{<BIB>}1 Samuel 2:30. This was intended for the honour of Christ and the comfort of Christians. The priesthood of Christ is confirmed by the highest ratifications possible, that it might be an unshaken foundation for our faith and hope to build upon.

(4.) He is a priest, not of the order of Aaron, but of that of Melchizedek, which, as it was prior, so it was upon many accounts superior, to that of Aaron, and a more lively representation of Christ's priesthood. Melchizedek was *a priest upon his throne*, so is Christ (^{<BIB>}Zechariah 6:13), king of righteousness and king of peace. Melchizedek had no successor, nor has Christ; his is an unchangeable priesthood. The apostle comments largely upon these words (Hebrews 7) and builds on them his discourse of Christ's priestly office, which he shows was no new notion, but built upon this most sure word of prophecy. For, as the New Testament explains the Old, so the Old Testament confirms the New, and Jesus Christ is the Alpha and Omega of both.

^{<BIB>}PSALM 110:5-7

THE MESSIAH'S DOMINION

Here we have our great Redeemer,

I. Conquering his enemies (v. 5, 6) in order to the making of them *his footstool*, v. 1. Our Lord Jesus will certainly bring to nought all the opposition made to his kingdom, and bring to ruin all those who make that opposition and persist in it. He will be too hard for those, whoever they may be, that fight against him, against his subjects and the interest of his kingdom among men, either by persecutions or by perverse disputings. Observe here,

1. The conqueror: *The Lord — Adonai*, the Lord Jesus, he to whom all judgment is committed, he shall make his own part good against his enemies. *The Lord at thy right hand, O church!* so some; that is, the Lord that is nigh unto his people, and a very present help to them, that is at their right hand, to strengthen and succour them, shall appear for them against his and their enemies. See ^{}Psalm 109:31. *He shall stand at the right hand of the poor,* ^{}Psalm 16:8. Some observe that when Christ is said to do his work at the right hand of his church it intimates that, if we would have Christ to appear for us, we must *bestir ourselves,* ^{}2 Samuel 5:24. Or, rather, *At thy right hand, O God!* referring to v. 1, in the dignity and dominion to which he is advanced. Note, Christ's sitting at the right hand of God speaks as much terror to his enemies as happiness to his people.

2. The time fixed for this victory: *In the day of his wrath*, that is, the time appointed for it, when the measure of their iniquities is full and they are ripe for ruin. When the day of his patience has expired, when the day of his wrath comes. Note,

(1.) Christ has wrath of his own, as well as grace. It concerns us to *kiss the Son*, for he can be *angry* (^{}Psalm 2:12) and we read of the *wrath of the Lamb*, ^{}Revelation 6:16.

(2.) There is a day of wrath set, a year of *recompences for the controversy of Zion, the year of the redeemed*. The time is set for the destruction of particular enemies, and when that time shall come it shall be done, how unlikely soever it may seem; but the great day of his wrath will be at the end of time, ^{}Revelation 6:17.

3. The extent of this victory.

(1.) It shall reach very high: *He shall strike through kings*. The greatest of men, that set themselves against Christ, shall be made to fall before him. Though they be *kings of the earth*, and rulers, accustomed to carry their point, they cannot carry it against Christ, they do but make themselves ridiculous by the attempt, ^{}Psalm 2:2-5. Be their power among men ever so despotic, Christ will call them to an account; be their strength ever so great, their policies ever so deep, Christ will be too hard for them, and wherein they deal proudly he will be above them. Satan is the prince of this world, Death the king of terrors, and we read of kings that make war with the Lamb; but they shall all be brought down and broken.

(2.) It shall reach very far. The trophies of Christ's victories will be set up *among the heathen*, and in many countries, wherever any of his enemies are, not his eye only, but his *hand*, shall find them out (^{<1218>}Psalm 21:8) and his wrath shall follow them. He will *plead with all nations*, ^{<2102>}Joel 3:2.

4. The equity of this victory: *He shall judge among them*. It is not a military execution, which is done in fury, but a judicial one. Before he condemns and slays, he will judge; he will make it appear that they have brought this ruin upon themselves, and have themselves rolled the stone which returns upon them, that he may be *justified when he speaks* and the *heavens may declare his righteousness*. See ^{<6911>}Revelation 19:1, 2.

5. The effect of this victory; it shall be the complete and utter ruin of all his enemies. He shall strike them through, for he strikes home and gives an incurable wound: He shall *wound the heads*, which seems to refer to the first promise of the Messiah (^{<0135>}Genesis 3:15), that he should *bruise the serpent's head*. He shall *wound the head of his enemies*, ^{<1821>}Psalm 68:21. Some read it, *He shall wound him that is the head over many countries*, either Satan or Antichrist, whom *the Lord shall consume with the breath of his mouth*. He shall make such destruction of his enemies that he shall *fill the places with the dead bodies*. The slain of the Lord shall be many. See ^{<2303>}Isaiah 34:3, etc.; ^{<3512>}Ezekiel 39:12, 14; ^{<6421>}Revelation 14:20; 19:17, 18. The filling of *the valleys* (for so some read it) *with dead bodies*, perhaps denotes the *filling of hell* (which is sometimes compared to the valley of *Hinnom*, ^{<2313>}Isaiah 30:33; ^{<2102>}Jeremiah 7:32) with *damned souls*, for that will be the portion of those that persist in their enmity to Christ.

II. We have here the Redeemer saving his friends and comforting them (v. 7); for their benefit,

1. He shall be humbled: *He shall drink of the brook in the way*, that bitter cup which the Father put into his hand. He shall be so abased and impoverished, and withal so intent upon his work, that he shall drink puddle-water out of the lakes in the highway; so some. The wrath of God, running in the channel of the curse of the law, was *the brook in the way*, in the way of his undertaking, which must go through, or which ran in the way of our salvation and obstructed it, which lay between us and heaven. Christ drank of this brook when he was made a curse for us, and therefore, when he entered upon his suffering, he *went over the brook Kidron*, ^{<6811>}John 18:1. He drank deeply of this *black brook* (so Kidron signifies),

this bloody brook, so drank of the *brook in the way* as to take it out of the way of our redemption and salvation.

2. He shall be exalted: *Therefore shall he lift up the head.* When he died he *bowed the head* (^{<5880>}John 19:30), but he soon lifted up the head by his own power in his resurrection. He lifted up the head as a conqueror, yea, more than a conqueror. This denotes not only his exaltation, but his exultation; not only his elevation, but his triumph in it. ^{<5185>}Colossians 2:15, *Having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them.* David spoke as a type of him in this (^{<4976>}Psalms 27:6), *Now shall my head be lifted up above my enemies.* His exaltation was the reward of his humiliation; because he *humbled himself, therefore God also highly exalted him,* ^{<5189>}Philippians 2:9. Because he drank of the brook in the way therefore he lifted up his own head, and so lifted up the heads of all his faithful followers, who, *if they suffer with him, shall also reign with him.*