



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Hebrews 1:10-12

“The Royal Priest and His Exalted Servants”

TRANSCRIPT

[Prayer] Father, we turn to Thee with anticipation as we consider again the inspired word of God. We thank Thee for the Holy Spirit, who is the author of it and we pray, Lord, that He may be our teacher again and that through his instruction we may come to better understand our Lord and the salvation that he has brought, and what it may mean to us, not only in the sense of the understanding of Christian theology but also in our daily lives. Enable us, Lord, to not only understand the word but by Thy grace understand its application to us. And give us the grace and the enablement to be obedient to the Scriptures and the teaching of them. We thank Thee for the epistle that we are studying and we look forward, Lord, to the ministry of the Holy Spirit as we consider our great High Priest, our constant intercessor, our advocate, who accomplishes all of his saving pleasure in us, ultimately. We are grateful, we are thankful. We pray that our time together may build each of us up in our faith.

We pray, in Jesus' name. Amen.

[Message] This is, I believe, the sixth of our series of messages on the Epistle to the Hebrews, and I want to apologize a little bit to you because, being a former professor, it's very easy to want to dig as deeply as I'm able to do in a text like the ones that we have been looking at. And the use of the Old Testament, which the author has made, is extremely interesting to me. This study

tonight will be the last in our series on chapter 1, but we’ll try not to do too much of the more detailed study as we go along. That is, the kind of detailed study that can be a bit tedious for someone who may not be quite as interested as we are, in the details.

Tonight, we are looking at Hebrews chapter 1, verse 13 and verse 14. But we’re doing, as we did last week, we’re using this as our text but then the text that is cited, Psalm 110; we want to turn and consider that psalm. Not only because it’s a great psalm, but because it will be helpful to us to understand how the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews has constructed his epistle; and, what are the things that were significant for him. And this particular psalm, as we’ll point out in a moment, was particularly significant for him.

Our subject for this evening is “The Royal Priest and His Exalted Servants” and let me begin by reading verse 13 and verse 14 of chapter 1.

“But to which of the angels has He ever said, ‘Sit at My right hand till I make your enemies your footstool?’ Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?”

This is the seventh of the author’s citations, and it is the capstone of his proof that the Son has a more excellent name than the angels. That’s what he said in verse 4, “Having become so much better than the angels, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.” And then, he launches into his series of citations from Scripture in order to demonstrate that the Son, indeed, does have a more excellent name.

We’ve looked at some of the names that we have seen in the texts that he’s cited. The name Son, of course, stands out. But, we noted also that the Son, the person who has the more excellent name, is also called God, he’s also called Yahweh, or Lord, and so, if you add up what he’s been saying, you can understand why he says, “He has a more excellent name than the angels.”

Now, the text that he cites is Psalm 110, the 1st verse of which reads as it does here in verse 13. “Sit at My right hand, till I make your enemies your footstool.” At least, that’s the major part of it. Now, what I’d like for you to do is to turn back to Psalm 110 because this is the source of what he says in Hebrews chapter 1. And, I think, as we go through this psalm rather briefly, we’ll understand why he regarded it as so important. But, let’s read, now, Psalm 110, verse 1 through the final verse, verse 7.

You’ll note that above the text are the words, “A Psalm of David.” That’s very important. As a matter of fact, the Davidic authorship of this psalm is extremely important, and that particular statement is important because our Lord, as we shall also see later on, referred to this psalm and referred to this particular verse, the 1st verse, as one that was written by David and spoken in the spirit. Verse 1 reads.

“The Lord said to my Lord, ‘Sit at My right hand, till I make your enemies your footstool.’
The Lord shall send the rod of your strength out of Zion. Rule in the midst of your enemies. Your people shall be volunteers.”

Now, I think that those of you that may have the Authorized Version, I did not look it up again to refresh my mind about it, but I believe it reads something like, “Your people shall be willing in the day of your power.” But my text reads, “Your people shall be volunteers.” But, remember, that “willing” because we’re going to comment upon it later.

“In the day of your power; in the beauties of holiness, from the womb of the morning, you have the dew of your youth. The Lord has sworn and will not relent, “You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.” The Lord is at your right hand; He shall execute kings in the day of His wrath. He shall judge among the nations, he shall fill the places with dead bodies; He shall execute the heads of many countries. He shall drink of the brook by the wayside; therefore He shall lift up the head.”

Psalm 110. Now, if the author only cited this particular first verse one time, referred to the psalm only one time, it might be insignificant and not really compelling to spend so much time on it, but Psalm 110, if you’ve read through the Epistle to the Hebrews, you know is one of his truly great passages. In fact, the importance of this psalm is well known, but it’s particularly important for the Epistle to the Hebrews. This is the most extensively cited Old Testament passage; that is, extensively cited in the New Testament. It has explicit citations in the New Testament from Psalm 110. They are not only explicit citations, there are, also, allusions to it and, in addition, there are even what might be called echoes of Psalm 110 from there in various places of the New Testament.

Let’s illustrate that. I’d like for you to keep your hand in Psalm 110, and turn to Mark chapter 12, verse 35 through verse 37. In Mark 12, verse 35 through verses 37, the Lord Jesus refers to this particular psalm in discussions with the Pharisees concerning the Messiah. In verse in Mark 12, we read.

“Then Jesus answered and said, while He taught in the temple, “How is it that the scribes say that the Christ is the Son of David? For David himself said by the Holy Spirit, ‘The Lord said to my Lord, ‘Sit at My right hand, till I make your enemies your footstool.’ Therefore, David himself calls Him Lord; how is He then his Son? And the common people heard Him gladly.”

Now, that’s very interesting, you see, what he has done is pick up this text and he has, because they had the view that the Messiah was the son of David, and he asks the question because he wants them, obviously, to come to realize that while he is the son of David, he’s more than the son of David. So he says, “David himself said by the Holy Spirit,” remember the title, it’s “A Psalm of David,” “The Lord said to my Lord, ‘Sit at My right hand, till I make your enemies your footstool.’ Therefore David himself calls Him ‘Lord’; how is He then his Son?”

Now, reflecting upon it, he would have hoped, and no doubt some did, that they would realize that the Lord Jesus is both David’s son and Lord. That is, he is in his human nature, he is David’s son, but in his divine personality and divine nature, he is David’s Lord, the second person of the Trinity. It is our Lord’s way to cause them to think, in order to come to an understanding of who he really was.

Now, that’s an explicit citation, as you can see, of Psalm 110 in verse 1. But, now, turn over just a few pages to Mark chapter 14 in verse 62 and here we will see further reference to Psalm 110 but this time only an allusion to it, not a specific citation. Verse 61, now our Lord is before the high priest in the Sanhedrin. We read in verse 61.

“But He kept silent and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked Him, saying to Him, ‘Are You the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed?’ Jesus said, ‘I am. And you shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven.’”

Sitting on the right hand of God, the Power. Well, now, of course, that’s what the Psalm says. “Sit on my right hand.”

Now, that particular expression that our Lord used is an expression that he derived from Psalm 110. We’d conclude from that that Psalm 110 not only meant a great deal to the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, but it meant a great deal to the Lord Jesus Christ, himself.

And, one other thing, in order that you might see a simple echo of it, a reference but not very specific, Ephesians chapter 1 in verse 20, we read these words. The Apostle, you’ll remember, is uttering a prayer for knowledge and power, and then in verse 20 of Ephesians 1, following along in the prayer he says, “Which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly.”

And so he refers there to Psalm 110, not citing it, not alluding to it specifically, but just echoing the sense of it, “Sit at My right hand, until I make your enemies the footstool at our feet.”

One well-known modern commentator has said with reference to Psalm 110, that it is the text “on which the entire homily,” that is, the entire homily of the Epistle to the Hebrews, is based. It’s his proof text, or it’s his theme text, that would be better. It’s his theme text of his whole epistle.

Another commentator has said, “It is the text of the Epistle to the Hebrews.” Thinking of the Hebrews’ Epistle as something of a discourse, or even as some recent commentators have suggested with some older ones, a sermon. The text would be Psalm 110. It, surely, is fundamental for the rest of the New Testament. It’s the fundamental text of the New Testament message. It underlines the teaching of the New Testament, on the exaltation of the Lord Jesus, on his heavenly session at the right hand of the Father in Heaven as the great High Priest, and, of course, his royal priesthood being seated at the right hand of God and exercising a priestly ministry. So this is a most important psalm and our author thinks it’s so important, he will refer to it six or eight times through the remainder of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

Now, I just suggest a little exercise for you; when you go home this evening, read the Epistle to the Hebrews through. It should take you fifteen or twenty minutes. It’ll take your mind off what happened this afternoon or what happened at noon today. And you will enjoy reading through the Epistle to the Hebrews and just pick up how many times references to Psalm 110 are found, remembering that the 4th verse reads, “The Lord has sworn and will not repent; ‘you are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.’”

Now then, what I would like to do is to just make a rather quick trip through Psalm 110. This is the psalm of the Messianic king-priest. Our Lord, I said, affirms explicitly the authorship of the psalm by David in that passage we quoted in Mark 12, also found in Matthew chapter 22. Two great declarations are made in this psalm. Verse 1, “The Lord said to my Lord, ‘Sit at My right hand, till I make your enemies your footstool.’” And Verse 4, “The Lord has sworn and will not repent, ‘You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.’” Two great declarations and then, following the declarations, the one in verse 1, then following in verses 2 and 3, some comments or

explanations of the significance of that declaration. And then in verse 4, the second of the declarations and in verse 5 through verse 7 further explanation that pertains to that.

So looking now at verse 1, “The Lord said to my Lord.” In other words, Yahweh, the Lord said to my *Adonai*, my lord, over against the king of the future, David is no longer king, but he’s subject. “The Lord said to my Lord.” Here is the King of Israel saying there is someone over him whom he worships. It’s reminiscent of the time when Joshua was outside of Jericho and when he was reconnoitering, remember, before the taking of the city and saw the man over against him. Joshua chapter 5, verse 13, reads.

“And it came to pass when Joshua was by Jericho that he lifted his eyes and looked and behold, a Man.”

My text has that capitalized and that’s very valid, I think, because, ultimately, we shall see, this person is not simply a man, he’s more than a man.

“A man stood opposite him with his sword drawn in his hand. And Joshua went to him and said to him, ‘Are you for us or for our adversaries?’” And he said, “No.”

Isn’t that interesting? He doesn’t really answer the question, “Are you for us?” “No.” Are you for our adversaries? No. You don’t answer an either or question by, no. But, he answered it by, no, and by what he says in a moment, you’ll see exactly why he did, because he’s not for them, nor is he for their adversaries, but he has come to take over. Notice what he says.

“No, but as commander of the army of the Lord I have now come.’ And Joshua sensing that he was not talking to an ordinary person fell on his face to the earth and worshiped, and said to

him, ‘What does my Lord say to his servant?’ Then the Commander of the Lord’s army said to Joshua, ‘Take your sandal off your foot.’”

I wonder if he had one or two. My text says, “Take your sandal off.” Any theologians in the audience? Answer my questions.

“‘Take your sandal off your foot, for the place where you stand is holy.’ And Joshua did so.”

Well, I think that’s reminiscent of what we have here. “The Lord said to my Lord.” In other words, David, the King, acknowledges that there is someone who higher than he is.

Now, he says, “The Lord said to my Lord, ‘Sit at My right hand.’” Now, the sitting suggests what the Epistle to the Hebrews states so plainly. In the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ, the great High Priest having offered the sacrifice that makes satisfaction for sins sits down at the right hand of the Majesty on high. We have already seen that in Hebrews chapter 1 in verse 3, in our study of the first few verses. Because, there, the author again referring to Psalm 110 implicitly says, “When He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.” The task is finished. And so that which we read about in Psalm 110:1, “The LORD said to my Lord, ‘Sit at My right hand, till I make your enemies your footstool.’” That task, looking at it from the standpoint of the New Testament, has been finished.

Here, of course, in Psalm 110, it assumes the permanent dignity of “My Lord,” so unusual, that he must be divine, for he sits and sits, so far as the text is concerned, eternally at the right hand of the Father in heaven.

Now, think of about this statement for a moment. “The Lord said to my Lord, ‘Sit at My right hand, till I make your enemies your footstool.’” Now, there are some implications that one may derive from that statement. One of the first is that he must have had personal contact with some

people in order for them to be his enemies. Is that not true? “Sit at My right hand until I make your enemies your footstool.” And, evidently, in the implications of this particular text we may go on to say that in some sense, he has visited and they have become his enemies. And, in fact, you might even say that when this oracle is spoken, He’s with them. For he says, “Sit at My right hand until I make your enemies your footstool.” It’s as if, in the ultimate fulfillment of this statement, it occurs when our Lord is here upon the earth and the time has come for him to ascend to the right hand of the Father. “Sit at My right hand, until I make your enemies the footstool of your feet.”

Now, he says, “until,” “Until I make your enemies your footstool.” That would indicate to us that there is a time coming when the enemies of the Lord Jesus shall be put down and our Lord will no longer have them, in the sense in which he has them there.

Now, there is another passage in the New Testament in which, one of the New Testament authors, expounds significant things in connection with that. In 1 Corinthians, chapter 15 in verse 24 or 5 through verse 28, the Apostle Paul in connection with the resurrection states, I’m reading verse 25 of 1 Corinthians 15, “For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that will be destroyed is death. For He has put all things under His feet.” But, when he says, “All things are put under Him,” it is evident that he who put all things under him is excepted, the Father. Now, when all things are made subject to him, then the Son himself will also be subject to him who put all things under him, that God may be all and all. So that the plans and purposes of the divine Trinity are in process of being fulfilled and, ultimately, the Son will turn over the mediatorial accomplishments that he has brought to pass by virtue of his ministry to the Father and the mediatorial time will come to an end. God will be all in all. So there is a time coming when the enemies shall be made the footstool of his feet.

Verse 2 says, “The Lord shall send the rod of your strength out of Zion. Rule in the midst of your enemies!” Now, this would suggest that He is given universal dominion. And, notice, it starts from Jerusalem. Isn’t that interesting? It starts from Jerusalem. “The Lord shall send the rod of your strength out of Zion.” As we’ve been saying all along, Jerusalem is still the most significant

city upon the face of this earth; and it will assume an even greater significance in the future in connection with our Lord and the ministry that lies ahead.

Then he goes on to say, “Your people [That is, the Lord’s people] shall be willing [or volunteers] in the day of your power;” the king and his subjects, in priestly array, giving willing service. That’s the point, it seems to me, that he wants to make. Those who serve the Lord Jesus Christ in the work that he does are not draft-dodgers. They are willing servants of him. No reference to our new president. But they are not draft-dodgers. They are volunteers. They are willing.

And, furthermore, the king and his subjects are subjects in “priestly array” for he says, “In the day of your power; in the beauties of holiness, from the womb of morning.” That expression, “In the beauties of holiness,” is a reference to those who serve in priestly work, such as the Levites. The references in the Bible suggest that. So that suggests that those who serve with our Lord, who are his disciples, who are willing, and furthermore, they have moral qualifications for serving in his service.

Mr. Spurgeon has a very interesting paragraph in connection with that verse, “Thy people shall be willing, in the day of His power.” He starts it by saying, “God’s people are willing people.”

Adam Clark, now, Adam Clark wrote a commentary on the Bible but Adam Clark was an Arminian. Adam Clark says, “This verse has been woefully perverted. It has been supposed to point out the irresistible operation of the grace of God on the souls of the elect, thereby, making them willing to receive Christ as their Savior, a doctrine which he utterly discards.”

Mr. Spurgeon said, “Well, my dear Adam Clark, we are extremely obliged to you for your remark, but at the same time, we think that the text has not been ‘woefully perverted.’ We believe that the text has been very properly used to show that God makes men willing. For if we read our Bibles rightly, we understand that men by nature are not willing. For there is a text you are extremely fond of, which we do not think belongs to you, and which says, “Ye will not come to Me, that you might have life.” And there is another text we should like to put you and your brethren in mind of,

“No man can come to Me except that the Father who has sent me draw him.” If he would remember that, we think, even though the text does not teach it, you might, at least, have some respect for the doctrine. But, it says, “God’s people shall be willing in the day of God’s Power.” And from the fact that no man is willing by nature, we infer from this text that there must be a work of grace making men willing. If men are not willing by nature and yet these individuals who serve the Lord are willing, are volunteers, “are willing in the day of His Power,” then the Holy Spirit must have performed a work upon them to make them willing.” We do not know, he goes on to say, I added that. That was a footnote from S. L. Johnson in Dallas. “But we have been accused of having no logic. And we are not particularly sorry about that for we would rather have what men call ‘dogmatism’ than logic.” Now, what he means by dogmatism is not what we mean today. Today, that would mean something like a slanted kind of mind that is set on believing something in spite of the evidence. What he meant by dogmatism is the specific teaching of the word of God.

He goes on to say, “It is Christ’s to prove; it is ours to preach. We leave argument to Christ for us. We have only to affirm what we see in God’s word. God’s people are to be a willing people. We can tell who are the children by the fact that they are willing.” He said, “I preach to many of you and I tell you about Hell. I bid you to flee from it. I tell you of the Lord Jesus Christ. I bid you to look to him. But you are unwilling to do so. What do I conclude from that? Either that the day of God’s power has not yet come; or that you are not yet God’s people.”

You see, the point of this is, and so true in Gospel preaching, when a person preaches and preaches the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, and there is no response, we are not to take or make an immediate judgment because they don’t respond to us that, therefore, they are non-elect. We don’t know that. We know that at that moment they don’t belong to our Lord. But as far as the future is concerned we cannot, of course, pass judgment upon that. So when the word of God is preached, either the day of God’s power has not yet come, if they have not responded, or they may not be the Lord’s people. When I preach with power and the word is dispensed with unction, if I see you unmoved and unsettled, unwilling to cast yourselves on Jesus Christ, what say I? Why, I fear

that you are not God’s people; for God’s people are willing in the day of His Power, willing to submit to sovereign grace, to give themselves up to the hands of the mediator, to hang simply on His cross for salvation.

I ask again, what has made them willing? Must it not have been something in grace which has turned their will? If the will of man be purely free to do right or wrong, I conjure you, my friends, to answer this. If it be so, why do you not turn to God this very moment without divine assistance? It’s because, you’re not willing. And it needed a promise that “God’s people should be willing in the day of his Power.”

Now, something very important for all of us because if we want to settle the question of whether we belong to the Lord or not; if we want to settle the question of whether we are among God’s elect, the simplest and surest way to settle it is to bow your heart before the Lord Jesus Christ, acknowledge your lost condition and turn to Him for your salvation. That settles the question.

Now, of course, if you don’t want to do that, then you don’t have a right to complain about the doctrine of divine election. It’s as simple as that. So our Psalmist says the Lord’s people “Shall be willing in the day of his power.” My text has “volunteers.”

One of the interesting things about the Israel of the future and the Gentiles of the future involved in this is simply that they will be willing followers of the Lord Jesus Christ and willing to enter into a struggle with him to accomplish the purposes of God. As I mentioned, they are not draft-card burners.

One of the interesting things about the Israelis in the early days of their warfare in the land, I don’t know whether you remember this or not from your reading, but the Israeli officers never issued the command, “Follow me.” I’m sorry let me take that back. They never issued the command to their companies or whatever they were commanding, they never issued the command, “Forward,” and the officers followed along. They always said, “Follow me.” And the Lieutenants and the Captains led their soldiers into warfare. One of the results of that was that they suffered death in their officer corps at a surprisingly high percentage. One-fourth of the men who were slain

or lost their lives, were in some cases the officers of the Israeli army. What I was looking at, some years ago, the statement read this way. “We have also learned that in the casualty lists of the Israeli army, the proportion of officers runs as high as twenty-five percent, unheard of elsewhere. The Israeli officers extraordinarily attentive to the welfare of his men and every life is to him a precious thing.” Well, it’s great to know that we have the greatest of all commanders, the Lord Jesus Christ, and he does not say, “Forward” to us but he says, “Follow me” to us.

Now, he says, in the second of the declarations “The Lord has sworn and will not repent, ‘You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.’” Now, the “You” of verse 4 is the “my Lord” of verse 1. “The Lord said to my Lord, ‘Sit at My right hand.’” And now, the “Lord,” the reason for that is that Yahweh, we translate verse 1, “Yahweh said to my *Adonai*,” two different words for Lord, “Yahweh said to my *Adonai*, “Sit at My right hand.” And here, “Yahweh has sworn and will not relent, ‘You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek.’” So David’s Lord holds a second post. He is not simply one who sits at the right hand of Yahweh on high, as commander of the forces of the Lord, but he is also a High Priest. He is a king-priest. And this second declaration makes that statement. Now, later one, when we get into the Epistle to the Hebrews and talk about the marvelous ministry of our Lord as the great High Priest, we’ll see that the argument of our author is built around this 4th verse. So I’m sure you realize how significant Psalm 110 is for the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews and I don’t think we waste a single moment of our time talking about this psalm because it will come up from time to time.

Now, he is a priest forever, “According to the order of Melchizedek.” And later on, we’ll talk about that in more detail. But you’ll remember when Abraham met Melchizedek, this priest of God most high, this individual towered above Abraham. Abram paid tithes to Melchizedek, acknowledging that the priesthood that would ultimately come from him through Levi was a priesthood that was subservient to the priesthood of Melchizedek. That’s why Melchizedek is so significant and later on, I say, we will develop that. But here he is a priest “after the order of Melchizedek.” Specifically, if I just sum it up in one word, Melchizedek was a type or an illustration

of an eternal priest. And our great High Priest is an eternal priest. Verses 5 through 7 record the things that the Lord will do in the future at his second advent, “The Lord at your right hand.” Now, that’s very interesting because the question that one might ask at this point is, “Which lord is referred to in verse 5? Is it Yahweh or is it *Adonai*?” Well, now, in the Hebrew text it is *Adonai*. So “The Lord is at your right hand; He shall execute kings in the day of His wrath. He shall judge among the nations, He shall fill the places with dead bodies.” The priest-king is a warrior king, also. He at Yahweh’s right hand carries out the ministry. And being the God-man, it’s natural that he, just as he did when he was here upon the earth, when engaged in strenuous activity should stop for refreshment. And in verse 7, we read, “He shall drink of the brook by the wayside; Therefore He shall lift up the head,” an indication of the fact that in the ministry it will be such a significant ministry and one that requires so much of him that this figure may be used in connection with it.

Now, we have a few minutes left and I want you to turn back to the Epistle to the Hebrews, and we’ll take a look at that.

Here in verse 13, the Psalmist now, the Psalmist? I mean the author of the Epistle, with Psalm 110 in mind, arguing that the Son has a more excellent name than the angels, says, “But to which of the angels has He ever said, sit at My right hand, till I make your enemies your footstool.” We said that Psalm 110 is a prophecy of the messiah, but there are different kinds of prophecies. There are some kinds of prophecies in which a person of the Old Testament refers to something that is transpiring using it as an illustration of what is to happen in the future. For example, David himself is a type of the Lord Jesus Christ. If you look at his life, you’ll see many places in which he was a fitting example of our Lord. There are other individuals who are typical figures in the Old Testament. As a matter of fact, all the prophets were typical figures because our Lord as the great prophet. All the priests, particularly the high priests, like Aaron, were figures of our Lord and thus types of him because they carry out the kind of ministry that our Lord later will carry out in perfection.

This Psalm 110 is a pure prophecy of the Lord Jesus Christ. Here, the psalmist who is David distinguishes between himself and the one who is to come. This is, I think, the only time in all of David’s psalms in which he acts as a type, but in which he distinguishes the person of whom he is ultimately speaking from himself. “The Lord said to my Lord, ‘Sit at My right hand until I make your enemies the footstool of your feet.’”

Now, this is a pure prophecy of the Messiah, “Sit at My right hand Till I make your enemies your footstool.” The Jews, who interpreted the Old Testament Scriptures, also regarded this Psalm 110 as a messianic prophecy. They regarded the person who sat at the right hand as being a messianic figure.

We’ve already talked about the fact that the Lord Jesus referred to this particular psalm and argued that he was referred to there. If our Lord were not the Messiah, the argument that he made wouldn’t have any cogency and so, he regarded that psalm as a reference to himself. The Jews regarded it as a reference to himself. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews regarded it as a reference to himself. The apostles regarded it as a reference to our Lord.

Now, finally, in verse 14, we read, after saying, “To which of the angels has He ever said,” he asks, “Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?” The angels, who stand in the presence of the Lord, do not sit in the place of unique honor at the right hand of the Father. That in itself, will tell you they are inferior to the one who sits at the right hand of the Father. What do they do? They are “ministering” spirits. The word that is translated “ministering” here is a word that means “to serve in the office” or ministry of an apostle or a prophet or a teacher. But it’s specifically was used of priest and Levites. And, I think, that’s probably the sense in which we are to think of it here. “Are they not all ministering spirits,” they minister just like the priests and Levites did in their ministry. They promote the interests of God’s people. That’s very encouraging, isn’t it, to think that the angels are ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who shall inherit salvation.

Now, this does not say that each one of us has an individual angel. So far as I know, there isn't anything in the Bible that specifically states that. There are angels who perform specific tasks that do relate to specific people. And there was a place in the Book of Acts, in which reference is made to Peter, you'll remember, and the statement is made, "his angel." So I'm not going to tell you it's impossible. It may be that I have an angel. And if I have an angel, I must say I have a great deal of sympathy for him because I have probably led him a merry chase. And, he probably, if he were able to speak now, says, "And it's not over yet." But we do know, whether we have an individual angel or not, that as a body, the angels are ministering spirits. Of course, they perform a lot of tasks for the Lord God, but what our author set his attention upon is that they are ministering spirits for those who will inherit salvation.

Now, like he does in the rest of this epistle, he looks at salvation as something that lies in the future in its fullness. That's the stress that he makes. Like Paul when he says, "Now is our salvation nearer than when we first believed." We know there is a sense in which we, if we believe in Christ, have been saved. And there is a sense in which we are being saved, of course. And there is a sense, as the passage I cited, in which we shall be saved fully and finally. That's the force of the term in the Epistle to the Hebrews.

They are sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation. And that word, "will" incidentally, is a word that has purpose attached to it, also. Who "will" inherit salvation, in the sense that it is the divine purpose that that, ultimately, be accomplished. So the citations in this epistle are also citations that have the aspect of expectation connected with them.

Well then, to sum up, the Son through whom God has spoken to us has a more excellent name than the angels. As we look back over our seven citations, because, remember there are seven of them; we have seen that he is the Son, the Son of God. Now that is a divine term because it suggests he has the nature of God. He is the one Son who doesn't have to be told what a son should do because he has the nature of God and he knows precisely and perfectly the will of his Father in heaven. But we have also seen in two places that he has given a most exalted name, Yahweh. In

verse 6, we argued that the point of that citation in Deuteronomy 32, verse 6, was that the angels of God should worship him, the firstborn. But when we looked back at Deuteronomy 32, we saw that the “him” of that passage was the one who says, “I am who I am,” or that which it specifically attaches to Yahweh in heaven. The term that our Lord used of himself so often in the Gospel of John was, “I am.” *Aniy hum*, I am He, is the Hebrew expression. *egō eimi*, the Greek expression, “I am” or “I am He.” And so not only is He the Son of God, He is the one who is Yahweh, the covenant keeping God with whom Israel dealt in the Old Testament.

Not only that, we saw that in verse 10, “And You, Lord, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth.” Is a statement our Lord applies to the Lord Jesus Christ. That statement in Psalm 102 is also a reference to Yahweh. So when we read in the Old Testament, Yahweh, or Jehovah if some of you have an Authorized Version, you are to remember that Yahweh is a term that refers to the being of God, and there are three Yahwehs: Yahweh the Father, Yahweh the Son, Yahweh the Holy Spirit; three personalities. We believe in one God who subsists in three persons. But the title Yahweh, while generally referring to the Father in the Old Testament, is seen in many texts to refer to the Son, also and even to refer to the Holy Spirit by the use of the Old Testament in the New Testament. So he is Son, he is Yahweh, we saw from Psalm 45, verse 8, “Your throne, O God,” *Elohim*, the term that speaks of God as the creator, the mighty God who has created the heavens and the earth. That is applicable to the Son, too, because again the term God is a term that attaches itself to the being of God, whereas there are three personalities. So the things that refer to the being of God refer to all three personalities. So the Son then, Yahweh, God, or *Elohim*, and now in Psalm 110, *Adonai*, a reference to our Lord as the Master; *Adonai*, a term that in the Old Testament never refers to anyone but the deity.

So you can see why our author has said, “He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than the angels.” Son of God, Yahweh or Jehovah, God, Lord, these are the names that apply to the Son. You cannot help but see that this author has a most exalted view of the person and the work of our Lord. The work will appear as the epistle develops. And being at God’s right hand,

what is most marvelous about it is that he has brought “me” into God’s presence and lives to realize this in my experience. This is what is meant by the fact that he has saved me and by identifying himself with me has brought me into covenantal relationship with him. And what pertains to him is what pertains to me, as my Savior God. So, what can we say about the angels? They are servants. What can we say about the name of the Son? He’s a Son. What can we say about the angels? They are subjects. What can we say about the Son? He is sovereign. What can we say about the angels? They are creatures. What can we say about Him? He is the creator, as we read here in Psalm 102, “The heavens are the work of your hands. They will perish but you remain.” They will grow old like a garment, be cast aside like the clothes that you wore four years ago. Like a cloak, you will fold them up. They will be changed. But you are the same and your years will not fail.” There is a statement in the psalms that I like very much. I think of it, when I come to this passage here, “For the Thou art great, and doest wondrous things. Thou art God alone.”

Now, I have an illustration that I love and I’ve given it before, but some of you may not remember it and some of you maybe have never heard it. But it’s always inspired me to reflect upon it. There was a preacher in Baltimore, whose name was Dr. Fuller. He was a popular, interesting evangelical minister of the word of God. He was very zealous for Christian unity. And he preached one morning on the necessity and the duty of magnifying things that unite and minimizing things that divide believers. That’s very common in the church today. You have people say, “Why do we argue over these little points, because we’re all going to heaven, who believe in Christ. And why don’t we just get together down here and agree because we’re going to have to live with each other for eternity?” That has a lot of appeal to a lot of people. And if you think about it for a moment, it means that we really ought not to have any kind of disagreements whatsoever, and if one person says something that’s unscriptural and another person says something that’s scriptural, we shouldn’t say, “Now, we maybe better settle this question, which it is. But we just should remember that we’re all going to be in heaven, and then when we get to heaven those things can be settled. And, we won’t get mad at one another because we differ.”

Well, he preached a sermon, he was a good man, but he preached a sermon along those lines. And he went on to talk about the absurdity of sectarian divisions, he talked about the Baptists that when they got to heaven they would be looking around for their immersed friends. And the Methodists, when they got there would be looking for the fellow members of the class meetings of the Methodists. The Presbyterians, zealous defenders of Presbyterian ideals of law and order and the Westminster confession, they would be looking around for people that agreed with them. And the Episcopalians, when they got there, they would be looking for those who followed the true apostolic succession, which they have always hoped that they have as a denomination.

He said, when he finished his message, a Unitarian came up to him and said, “Dr. Fuller, I’m surprised at your lack of charity. You really didn’t represent any Unitarians at all as being in heaven.” And Dr. Fuller said, “Well, if you come back tonight, I will give you a glimpse as to the feelings of a Unitarian in heaven.” And so he came. He was a neighbor of the preacher’s. And so in the course of the sermon that evening, he imagined a Unitarian as stationed with John on an island of Patmos and permitted to enter through an open door and see the things that would come to pass hereafter and that John describes in his book. And Dr. Fuller described the emotions of the Unitarian who found himself in heaven.

In the first place, he said, he witnessed a scene in the 5th chapter of Revelation, that scene where the book was in the right hand of the one that sat upon the throne and no man or angel dared to touch or even to look upon it. The Lion, Lamb of God, slain for sin, but triumphant as a king, came and took the book. And then he heard the acclamation of the saints, “Thou art worthy to take the book and to open the seals thereof, for Thou was slain and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood out of every kindred and tongue and nation, and hast made us unto our God, kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth.” And around about that company, he observed countless angels ascribing to the slain, the same slain but risen Lamb, all worship, “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.” You remember, of course, the Unitarians do not believe in the deity of Christ, and so,

here the saints of heaven are shouting, “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive glory and power.”

And he said, he went on a little bit further and he saw a great multitude standing on the sea of glass, and they were lifting their voices in similar acclamations and describing salvation unto our God and unto the Lamb. Why, he said, there are no Unitarians in this company. He went a little bit further and he saw a white horse in the country, riding upon him and upon his vesture and upon his thigh, a mysterious name written, “King of kings and Lord of lords,” and a countless band of worshipers and warriors following in his train. He went further and saw the New Jerusalem, let down from God out of heaven, having the glory of God, and he saw no temple there. And he found that the reason was that the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And he found no light, even of the sun therein, and learned that the glory of the Lord did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And he found on the throne joint sovereigns, Father and the Lamb. Why, he said, there is nobody here that does not worship the Lamb jointly with God himself. I cannot stay here unless I join this worship. And so he moved in the midst of the throne and waved his palm, this is the man that he was telling about, he moved in the midst of the crowd, waved his palm, struck up his heart and cried out, “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, salvation unto the Lamb.” And then Dr. Fuller finished his sermon and when he finished it, his Unitarian neighbor walked up the isle, shook his hand earnestly with both his own and said, “Jesus Christ has conquered, led me by here and like Thomas say, ‘My Lord and My God.’” How true that is. There are no Unitarians in heaven. All those in heaven are Trinitarians. And all those who are Trinitarians have been willing in the day of his power, because God in his marvelous sovereign grace has touched their heart and has brought them to bow before our great God and Savior, the Lamb that was slain for the sins of men.

Have you believed in him? Is your trust in him? Has the Holy Spirit spoke plainly within your own heart, giving his own testimony that you do belong to him? That’s certainly our prayer. May God bring it to pass if it hasn’t been brought to pass at this point.

Let’s bow in prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we are indeed grateful to Thee for this great individual who wrote this epistle, who was such a student of the word of God and has given us such great light, reminding us of the greatness of the Son of God, the one of whom David wrote, “Sit Thou at My right hand,” speaking for the Father, “Until I make Thine enemies the footstool of Thy feet.”

Lord, help us truly to worship the Lamb, and praise him and thank him constantly, for the blessings of the salvation, which we shall have experienced and will experience so much more marvelously in the future.

For Jesus' sake. Amen.