The Messiah in Psalm 110

Assignment 5-1 for BI5533 Old Testament History

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The messianic significance of Psalms 110 is so important to understand because of the way it portrays Jesus Christ as a coming king that will fulfill earlier prophecies. John MacArthur put this passage on a level of importance as well when he says “this psalm contains one of the most exalted prophetic portions of Scripture presenting Jesus Christ as both a holy king and a royal high priest – something that no human monarch of Israel ever experienced.”[[1]](#footnote-1) We see that this passage is very important because of its ability to put the savior into a light that not many may of heard prior to David speaking these words.

This passage starts with the author describing, “The Lord says to my Lord” which can be confusing if you don’t realize he is talking about The Lord being God the father and my Lord being Jesus Christ. I believe even though this may have confused some, many would have understood the connection he was making to the Davidic covenant in 2nd Samuel. The Lord then goes into talking about making Jesus enemies a footstool, which is also a fulfillment of the previous chapter. Schreiner states “Jesus Christ fulfills Ps. 109 Ps. 110, for his enemies betrayed him and killed him, but the Lord raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand as the priest-king.”[[2]](#footnote-2) The previous statement has helped me put this passage into context and coincides nicely with what John MacArthur was saying above about Jesus being the priest-king.

The Lord goes into verse 2 talking about the following “The Lord sends forth from Zion your mighty scepter. Rule in the midst of your power” which I believe is talking about events yet to come which is interesting because that means this passage is talking about Jesus second coming as well which is a future event for us. Christ is pictured in the next verse ruling over his people and his people coming to him freely. The next verse is when we get into Christ being called a high priest which is the fulfillment of the Davidic covenant with his throne especially when he adds in forever at the end of the priest statement meaning Christ is the last king/priest that Israel will need. We then see Jesus executing judgment on the nations and drinking from the brook after his victory.

The main importance to this passage that honestly took a little while to click with me is more than just a connection to the NT. I was trying to figure out how this passage fit with us now and applies to the NT while neglecting a lot of things that are prophesized in Revelations and elsewhere in the Bible of Christ’s second coming. I wanted to try to constantly connect this passage to Christ first coming, which does not fit unless we are talking about the ascension which is covered when Christ sits at the right hand of God in verse 1 but other than that I was really at a loss for connections. I then felt like a light bulb clicked and realized this passage is talking in future terms to us as well, which I am not used to seeing. We see Christ coming back but this time instead of coming in the form of a lamb he will be coming as a lion to take down all who stand against him and reign in his rightful place on David’s throne.

The promise of Christ is just as real now as it was to the Israelites back then. I can see a big connection between the people of the OT and us nowadays because we are not yet able to see the picture as a whole but are given little glimpses into God’s divine plan. Jesus is the ideal Davidic ruler and he is “coming in conquest” which is why Merrill, Rooker and Grisanti place this in the Royal psalms portion.[[3]](#footnote-3) I believe it is fitting to note that while the message feels clearer to me now I can also understand why people thought Jesus was coming to rule and reign before he was crucified. I would like to say that I would of known what was happening back then but I could of easily read this and thought the savior that is fulfilling the prophesies is coming to wipe out his enemies in a physical battle first.

I believe God was intentional about this passage to show us the fluidity of his word. Things are mentioned in this passage that still have yet to take place and it shows how unchanging God’s word can be even when it is written by different authors separated by many years. Gods message never changes and that is that he loves his people and that he is coming to redeem them and save them. Sometimes we tend to take the hard way but God still being rich in mercy always is guiding the way to salvation, which is a key point all over the passage and all over the Bible. My pastor always says this one statement which I am not sure how well it applies but it keeps going through my head so I will write it down “keep the main thing, the main thing” he says this to remind us to keep Jesus the main thing in our lives and how everything points to Jesus even from the time of creation to now. The main point to all of this is that God is speaking through this passage to his people about the coming messiah and I think it serves as a great reminder to me that Christ is coming back and we need to ready for when does.

Bibliography

1. The King In His Beauty, Thomas R. Schreiner (Grand Rapids MI: Baker Academic, 2013)
2. The MacArthur Study Bible, English Standard Version (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2007)
3. Eugene H. Merrill, Mark E Rooker and Michael A. Grisanti (Nashville: B&H Publishing, 2011)

1. The MacArthur Study Bible, English Standard Version (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2007) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The King In His Beauty, Thomas R. Schreiner (Grand Rapids MI: Baker Academic, 2013) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Eugene H. Merrill, Mark E Rooker and Michael A. Grisanti (Nashville: B&H Publishing, 2011) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)