

Psalm 110 – Three Riddles

I. Did not our hearts burn within us?

a. Read **Luke 24:13-27, 32**

- i. Two of Jesus' apostles journeying from Jerusalem to a town named Emmaus, a 7-mile walk, immediately after Jesus' death. Time to walk and talk to discuss what had just happened.
- ii. The two are clearly confused and distraught:
 1. "We were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel." (Instead, they crucified Jesus. Not what they were expecting!)

iii. Jesus' response:

1. "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory? And beginning at Moses and the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself."
2. They had missed what had been clearly laid out in the Old Testament Scriptures.

b. Today, we will look at one of the Psalms that had spoken about Jesus and what was to come.

- i. This is a short Psalm, written by David around 1000 B.C.
- ii. Quoted or alluded to at least 20X in the New Testament by Jesus and the New Testament writers. *This is an important one.*
- iii. This Psalm was (and still is) extremely controversial and got Jesus into serious trouble, as will it get us in trouble if we take it seriously.
- iv. This Psalm confounded many, contains several riddles. I found three riddles, leading to great treasure, if we are willing to work for it.
- v. Let's turn to **Psalm 110 (Psalm 109** in the LXX). The lesson will be simple: solve three riddles by
 1. reading the Psalm,
 2. reading several New Testament passages that quote or allude to the Psalm to unpack its meaning.

II. Read Psalm 110 (109)

- a. **Riddle #1:** the Two Lords (vs. 1-2)
 - i. Who are these two lords of David?
 - ii. One says to the other, sit at my right hand until I crush your enemies.
- b. **Riddle #2:** the Lord Begotten Before the Morning Star (vs. 3-4)
 - i. With him is the beginning
 - ii. I have begotten You from the womb before the morning star
 - iii. He would be a priest forever in the order of Melchizedek.
- c. **Riddle #3:** the Lord Who Will Crush His Enemies (vs. 5-7)
 - i. The Lord at Your right hand will crush kings in the day of His wrath
 - ii. He will judge the nations
 - iii. He will raise his head high (in victory?)

III. Riddle #1: The Two Lords

- a. "The Lord said to my Lord sit at my right hand until a crush your enemies under your feet."
 - i. David has two lords. Who are they?
- b. Read **Matthew 22:35-45**
- c. Jesus asks: whose son is the Christ? (whose line is the Christ from?)
 - i. Answer: David (**2 Samuel 7** and **Psalm 2**)
 1. Pharisees are pleased with themselves; they have an answer for Jesus: The Christ will be David's son (come from his lineage).
 - ii. Jesus' follow-up question, quoting **Psalm 110 (109)**: Why would David call his descendant (the Christ) his Lord?
 1. The Pharisees are silenced! How can these both be true?
 2. There is only one way these can both be true!
 - a. Jesus was descended from David.

b. Jesus was the Son of God who was begotten by the Father before the morning star (and therefore is David's Lord)

- i. Jesus' claim: He was the Christ, the Son of God. Read **Matthew 26:57-68** (alluding to **Psalm 110**)
 - 1. "It is as you said. Nevertheless, I say to you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven."
 - a. Sitting at the right hand
 - b. Coming to judge the nations
- ii. This claim is what sends Jesus to His death.
 - 1. Jesus does not say he is a good moral teacher (which He was!).
 - 2. Instead, he claims that He was God's Son, who has always existed, who would destroy God's enemies.
 - 3. Jesus taught His followers to always tell the truth. Is He lying here? Or is He telling the truth?

IV. Riddle #2: The Lord Begotten Before the Morning Star

- a. Read **Psalm 110:3-4**
- b. The Lord/Christ/Son who always existed
 - i. "With You is the beginning in the day of Your power..." (vs. 3)
 - ii. "I have begotten You from the womb before the morning star...." (vs. 3)
 - iii. Read **John 1:1-5, 14-18**
 - 1. The Word/Son/Christ was with God in the beginning
 - 2. The world was created through the Word/Son/Christ
 - 3. The only begotten of the Father
 - 4. Came to reveal the Father, born of Mary as a child in a barn.
 - iv. Read **John 17:4-5**

1. The glory the Son had with the Father before the world began. He will return to this eternal glory after His death.
 2. **Micah 5:1**
- c. Read **Mark 16:14-20**
- i. After Jesus was put to death, He was raised from the death, appearing to His followers.
 - ii. Then, Jesus ascends to heaven, sitting down at the right hand of God.
- d. Read **Hebrews 8:1-2, 10:11-18, 12:1-4, 12-13** (referencing Psalm 110)
- i. Jesus endured the cross, despised its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.
 - ii. You, too, endure hostility, don't grow weary or discouraged, strive against sin! Remember, Jesus suffered, is now with the Father, awaiting His return, at which time He will destroy His enemies and bring salvation to His people. He's in control.
 - iii. You have nothing to be discouraged about!
- e. Read **Ephesians 1:15-21**
- i. Jesus is seated at the right hand of the Father in the heavenly places, above all powers. (Paul wants us to understand the state of things)
 - ii. The Father's power is with us while the Son waits (with the Father) for His return, to bring us a wonderful inheritance.
- f. Read **1 Peter 3:18-22**
- i. Jesus suffered. But now is seated at the right hand of God in heaven.
 - ii. Even though we suffer now, Jesus will return to save us.
 - iii. Peter speaks of Noah, a type/foreshadowing, saved by water (baptism) and the wooden ark (the cross).
- g. Read **Acts 2:32-41**
- i. Peter explains that Jesus was crucified but was raised from the dead and ascended to the heavens to sit at God's right hand, till God's enemies are put under His feet. (Quotes **Psalm 110**)
 - ii. People's response: What shall we do? (repent, be baptized, your sins will be forgiven, you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit)

h. **A Priest in the Order of Melchizedek**

- i. **Psalm 110** says: “You [The Lord/Christ/Son of God] are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek. (vs. 4)
- ii. Read **Genesis 14:17-19**. A mysterious king!
 - 1. King of Salem (= King of Peace)
 - 2. Brings bread and wine
 - 3. “the priest of God Most High.”
 - 4. Blesses Abram and God Most High
- i. Read **Hebrews 7:1-3, 14-28**
 - i. The Jewish priesthood would run from Aaron, a Levite. But a new priestly order would come, in the order of Melchizedek, from the line of Judah (from which David also came)
 - ii. Jesus is the new and perfect priest “according to the order of Melchizedek.”
 - iii. Jesus ushered in a better covenant, offered Himself once and for all, a perfect sacrifice for our sins.
 - iv. Jesus
 - 1. An eternal priest
 - 2. The prince of peace
 - 3. Bringing bread and wine (Eucharist)

V. **Riddle #3: The Lord will Crush His Enemies**

- a. Read **Psalm 110:5-7**
- b. Jews believed their Christ would come to destroy their enemies on this earth. In Jesus’ time, the Romans.
 - i. But this was not what happened! Jesus was crucified.
 - ii. Further, Jesus had a very different message:
 - 1. Love your enemy, feed and clothe him.
 - 2. Forgive those who sin against you.
 - 3. If someone takes your tunic, give him your cloak.

- iii. This is not an effective way to crush your enemies! *How do we explain this? How can this prophecy refer to Jesus as the Son of God?*
1. **Answer:** His victory over His enemies would come at His SECOND coming / His return.
 - a. His first time coming was as a suffering servant. He returned to His father after the resurrection and is seated at the Father's side.
 - b. He will come a second time to crush His enemies.
 - c. *We must hold on to both of these pictures of Christ, both advents, both comings!*
- c. From Justin Martyr, Dialogue with Trypho Chapter XXXII.
- i. Trypho, a Jew, is objecting that Christ is described in the Old Testament Scriptures as coming in glory, yet this is not what happened! Justin explains the two advents (comings) of Christ.
 - ii. "And when I had ceased, Trypho said, 'These and such like Scriptures, sir, compel us to wait for Him who, as the Son of man, receives from the Ancient of days the everlasting kingdom. **But this so-called Christ of yours was dishonourable and inglorious, so much so that the last curse contained in the law of God fell on him, for he was crucified.**'"
 - iii. Then I replied to him, 'If, sirs, it were not said by the Scriptures which I have already quoted, that His form was inglorious, and His generation not declared, and that for His death the rich would suffer death, and with His stripes we should be healed, and that He would be led away like a sheep; and if I had not explained that there would be two advents of His,—one in which He was pierced by you; a second, when you shall know Him whom you have pierced, and your tribes shall mourn, each tribe by itself, the women apart, and the men apart,—then I must have been speaking dubious and obscure things.
 - iv. But now, by means of the contents of those Scriptures esteemed holy and prophetic amongst you, I attempt to prove all [that I have adduced], in the hope that some one of you may be found to be of that remnant which has been left by the grace of the Lord of Sabaoth for the eternal salvation.
 - v. **In order, therefore, that the matter inquired into may be plainer to you, I will mention to you other words also spoken by the blessed David, from which you will perceive that the Lord is called the Christ by the Holy Spirit of prophecy; and that the Lord, the Father of all, has brought Him again from the earth, setting Him at His own right hand, until He makes His enemies His footstool; which indeed**

happens from the time that our Lord Jesus Christ ascended to heaven, after He rose again from the dead, the times now running on to their consummation....

- vi. [speaks of Daniel and timing of Jesus' return and their foolishness to not grasp these two comings]
- vii. The words, then, which were spoken by David, are these: 'The Lord said unto My Lord, Sit Thou at My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool. The Lord shall send the rod of Thy strength out of Sion: rule Thou also in the midst of Thine enemies. With Thee shall be, in the day, the chief of Thy power, in the beauties of Thy saints. From the womb, before the morning star, have I begotten Thee. The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent: Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek. The Lord is at Thy right hand: He has crushed kings in the day of His wrath: He shall judge among the heathen, He shall fill [with] the dead bodies. He shall drink of the brook in the way; therefore shall He lift up the head.'"
- d. God's enemies, whom He will crush, are Satan, his angels, and all who are under his control and oppose God's will.
 - i. The First Apology of Justin, ANF 1, p. 178. Chapter XLV.—Christ's session in heaven foretold. Justin's speaks of:
 - 1. the identity of God's enemies, whom God will destroy: the devil and his host (who hold the world hostage, enslaved to sin)
 - 2. God's compassion (to wait for people to turn back to Him, delaying his second coming), and
 - 3. that the Rod of Power that will come forth from Jerusalem (not the sword, but the Word of God!)
 - ii. "And that God the Father of all would bring Christ to heaven after He had raised Him from the dead, **and would keep Him there until He has subdued His enemies the devils, and until the number of those who are foreknown by Him as good and virtuous is complete, on whose account He has still delayed the consummation**—hear what was said by the prophet David. These are his words:
 - iii. 'The Lord said unto My Lord, Sit Thou at My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool. The Lord shall send to Thee the rod of power out of Jerusalem; and rule Thou in the midst of Thine enemies. With Thee is the government in the day of Thy power, in the beauties of Thy saints: from the womb of morning have I begotten Thee.'

- iv. That which he says, '**He shall send to Thee the rod of power out of Jerusalem,**' is predictive of the mighty word, which His apostles, going forth from Jerusalem, preached everywhere; and though death is decreed against those who teach or at all confess the name of Christ, we everywhere both embrace and teach it. And if you also read these words in a hostile spirit, ye can do no more, as I said before, than kill us; which indeed does no harm to us, but to you and all who unjustly hate us, and do not repent, brings eternal punishment by fire."
- e. The last enemy to be crushed is death!
 - i. Read **1 Corinthians 15:20-28**
 - ii. Paul speaks of Jesus' return.
 - iii. Christ is the first fruits. He died. He was raised.
 - 1. For "those who are Christ's" (vs. 23), they will die, but be raised from the dead upon His return.
 - iv. Jesus will put His enemies under His feet. (**Psalm 110**). This includes death itself!
 - v. Where the Father gave the Christ His Kingdom, and placed Him over it, Jesus will, at the end, deliver the Kingdom back to the Father.
 - vi. See Tertullian, *Against Praxeas*, ANF book 3, p. 599-600
 - 1. Describing the nature of the trinity: that through God's power, Jesus will put all His enemies under His feet, including death, then the Son will deliver the Kingdom to the Father and the Son will Himself be subject to the Father. References both **1 Cor. 15:27-28** and **Psalm 110**.

VI. Our Response

- a. If not a Christian, acknowledge that the Prince of Peace, the One Begotten by the Father before the Morning Star, was crucified for our sins.
 - i. If not a Christian, repent and be baptized, that your sins may be forgiven, and you may receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. (**Acts 2**)
- b. If a Christian...
 - i. Read **Colossians 3:1-17**
 - ii. Christ is seated with the Father (**Psalm 110**)
 - iii. When Christ appears, His followers will appear with Him in glory!

- iv. Until then, and in light of Christ now sitting at the right hand of the Father, let us...
 - 1. Put to death the sins of our flesh, “because of these things the wrath of God is coming” (vs. 5-6)
 - 2. Put on the fruit of the Spirit, as God’s elect (vs. 12)

VII. Epilogue: A Few Other Early Christian Quotes

- a. I found the first verse of **Psalm 110** quoted 31 times by the early Christians! Here are a few quotes that were helpful to me as I studied out this psalm.
- b. Irenaeus Against Heresies, ANF 1, p. 441
 - i. [Making the point that Jesus and the Christ are one and the same....]
 - ii. “And again, the angel said, when bringing good tidings to Mary: ‘He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord shall give unto Him the throne of His father David;’ [Luke 1:32] acknowledging that He who is the Son of the highest, the same is Himself also the Son of David. And David, knowing by the Spirit the dispensation of the advent of this Person, by which He is Himself as Lord, sitting on the right hand of the Most High Father.” [Psalm 110]
- c. Irenaeus Against Heresies, ANF 1, p. 418, Chapter VI—Making the point that the Scriptures, inspired by the Holy Spirit, tell us both the Father and Son are God.
 - i. Therefore neither would the Lord, nor the Holy Spirit, nor the apostles, have ever named as God, definitely and absolutely, him who was not God, unless he were truly God; nor would they have named any one in his own person Lord, except God the Father ruling over all, and His Son who has received dominion from His Father over all creation, as this passage has it: “The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou at my right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool.” [Psalm 110]
 - ii. Here the [Scripture] represents to us the Father addressing the Son; He who gave Him the inheritance of the heathen, and subjected to Him all His enemies. Since, therefore, the Father is truly Lord, and the Son truly Lord, the Holy Spirit has fitly designated them by the title of Lord.”