

The DEADLY Revelation in PSALM 110

Few Scriptural Passages have had such Profound Impact upon both Old and New Testament Theology as it relates to the “Nature of God”. It proved to be the major “Got-ya” of all time! Christ knew it and used it effectively, as did Paul the Apostle. What ‘essential’ does this Key Verse and Chapter expose?

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If repetition is any indication of importance, one verse from the Old Testament, along with explicit clips from its chapter setting **must reveal** a particular Truth essential to New Testament Theology. It was recognized by the Chief Revelator, and used expressly by Him at the most exquisite moments in His ministry. In fact, He was one of the Beings this passage was referring to. The religious establishment of the day bristled with murderous rage, upon hearing this well-known passage quoted! As it turns out, not much has changed in some religious circles, especially those remaining aligned with the traditional Judaic persuasions.

At first glance, Psalm 110 doesn't seem to present anything particularly profound. It contains many familiar lines, found repeated in New Testament settings, such as, ..***“you are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek..”*** (vs 4) quoted seven times in the Book of Hebrews, but by far the most familiar re-quote is the one from verses 1 and 5: ***“The LORD said unto my Lord, sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.”*** A passage quoted or referred to at least twenty times by no less than five New Testament authors, as well as by Christ Himself! This single passage contains a point so relevant and essential to New Testament Theology that it bore repeating again and again, enhancing some of the most poignant moments in the New Testament narrative. We should seek to understand the exact reason.

But, it isn't our first glance that ought to settle any matter in our minds, especially this one. We ought to know what Christ knew. His choice of how to respond to that point blank adjuratory question posed to Him at His trial, that guaranteed His condemnation in the face of a probable acquittal as dawn approached. It was calculated and deliberate.

The proper outcome of His Trial that night was essential. Nothing in that evenings' testimony was particularly noteworthy, let alone sufficient to justify condemnation or a death sentence. Witnesses all contradicted one another. A new dawn was fast approaching. There was no credible charge against Him to this point in time. Something HAD to be done! Jesus knew exactly how to respond to the High Priest's question to achieve the desired effect!

Psalm 110's Message

But before we proceed into this subject, we should review the Psalm in question in its brief entirety.

- 1. The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.***
- 2. The LORD shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies.***
- 3. Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth.***
- 4. The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.***

At this point in the narrative, the speaker changes to be speaking to Yahweh the speaker, rather than to Adonai, suggesting a second witness. (See John 8:16)

- 5. The LORD ¹ at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath.***

¹ Where the original Hebrew texts had the name for God as YHWH, translators represent the fact by spelling the English word in all caps. When it's Adonai, they capitalize only the first letter. The astute reader will notice that this rendition shows LORD in verse 5 as being YHWH, though commonly Lord in most versions. This place is one of the 134 places that the Sopherim of the 2nd century BC chose to emend their texts to change YHWH to Adonai. This deed demonstrates that the Jewish religion from early post-exilic period recognized what this passage revealed and chose to change it to better reflect their Babylonian acquired 'monotheistic' views. See my article on ***“The 134 Emendations”*** for more on this.

6. *He shall judge among the heathen, he shall fill the places with the dead bodies; he shall wound the heads over many countries.*

7. *He shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall he lift up the head.*

An alternate rendition of verse 7, “*He (who) shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall He lift up the (or their) head.*” (The **brook** being the out-flowing of God’s Spirit from beneath His Temple² and the **Way** is what Christianity was called before Acts 11:26. This clarification is supported by the dialog found in Simeon’s blessing in Luke 2:34. This memorable occasion (being written some 60+ years after it was spoken!) suggested to the priests, there officiating, that this child was to be the instrument of the removal from office of the then ruling establishment and the lifting up of others into their high positions. A loose paraphrase of Psalm 110:5 & 6, although He would ‘also’ be pierced through as we see the kings of the earth being in verse 5. What was noteworthy is that the verse just prior to these says, “*Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.*” Something having particularly disturbing interest to the religious leaders of the day! They being of an inferior (the temporary Aaronic) order.

Yahweh to Adonai

What this chapter reveals is that one **LORD** is seen speaking to another **Lord**. Yahweh is speaking to Adonai in verse 1. But it’s the clear statement in verse 5 that especially upset the religious establishment from early on, causing them in the 200’s BC to emend this passage to **edit out** the matter they took exception to. As page 1’s footnote explains, they emended the name of God as it appears in verse 5. That verse, as originally worded, showed that the Being: *Adonai* (in verse 1) was **also** *Yahweh* (in verse 5) A theological conundrum, unless there were **two** Yahweh’s!

² Ezekiel 47 Where the watercourse is small, thus a ‘brook’, is back close to its origin. After the first thousand measures (years?) it was only ankle depth. At the second thousand: knee deep, at the third thousand, hip deep, (the interval of the millennial age, between the second and third thousand?), but after that, impassible due to depth and volume. Does this point beyond represent the post-millennial second resurrection era and the inflow of the Great Multitude?

These following listed places are the twenty places the reference to Christ sitting at the right hand of God is re-mentioned in the New Testament. It was in response to a theological deficiency in the Jewish religion of the day: Their adamant position that God was a single personality only.³ Prior to the advent of their Messiah, this matter was not of such great significance as it came to be afterward. Israel had dealt with God for generations, not realizing that the Being they’d known of was the very one who later divested Himself of Spirit Level existence in order to become the True Paschal Sacrifice! It was their prior conception that facilitated their rejection. It was the later revelation as to His True Identity that proved to be so unfathomable and profoundly unacceptable. Jesus was the God of the Old Testament!

A veil remains today over some theologies.

Psalm 110:1 is referred to in these **twenty** places.

Matthew 22:44, **26:64**, Mark 12:36, **14:62**,
Mark 16:19, Luke 20:42, **22:69**,
Acts 2:33-35, 5:31, 7:55-56, Romans 8:34,
Ephesians 1:20, Colossians 3:1,
1st Corinthians 15:25-28, 1st Peter 3:22,
Hebrews 1:3, 1:13, 8:1, 10:12-13, 12:2

It isn’t just this one instance in Psalm 110 where we clearly see one God Being speaking to and inter-relating with another. The New Testament illustrates the same interaction. If it were this one place in Psalm 110 alone, we might pass it off as a textual anomaly. But it isn’t. The Apostle Paul, knew full well the theological issue the Jews had with this matter. This is evident from the five places he quoted Psalm 110:1 in that epistle he wrote to all Hebrew peoples, writing the following:

Even God has a GOD!

Hebrews 1:8 & 9 “*But unto the Son He saith, Thy Throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with*

³ This position is based largely on an interpretation of the Shema found in Deut. 6:4. See the articles: “*The Shema in the New Testament*”, “*Hear O Israel*” and “*Who is the God of the Old Testament?*”

the oil of gladness above thy fellows.”

(Who are these ‘fellows’? Are they the many brethren of whom He is the ‘firstborn? (Rom. 8:29))

In both repetitions, the Old Testament and New, God calls ‘the Son’ God, and later refers to Himself, the speaker, as God also. In the Old Testament instance, He uses the plural Family name, ‘*elohiyim*’ not their individual personal names: Yahweh, which both are also called!

The above NT passage Quotes Psalms 45:6&7

In Hebrews 1, God is *Greek #2316: ‘theos’*
In Psalms 45, God is Hebrew #430: ‘*elohiyim*’

1st Timothy 3:16 “*And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.*”

(This God could not be the Father who was never manifest in the flesh! This Being, while divesting His Spirit form existence, without divesting of His Divinity, lived sustained by physical matter for a third of a century in order to demonstrate an exemplary Life, and to experience death for redemption of His creation. He wasn’t received up into a place where God wasn’t already present!)

Philippians 2:5-11 “*Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:*

(That ‘form and equality’ at this point in time could not be His material existence, but rather His Divinity maintaining identical likeness of righteous Character.)

But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: (Took on a form He didn’t have before.) And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, (Humbling ones’ self indicates conscious participation.) and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. (Obeying Whom? Next line:) Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

(Lord is #2962 ‘*kurios*’: one supreme in authority.)

The Ultimate Paradox

Those who subscribe to belief systems that don’t accept there being two Beings in the Godhead find Psalm 110 and other similar passages to be their ultimate nemesis. Either the belief system must be emended to accommodate the Scriptures, or the Scriptures must be. In the second century BC the Sopherim, those with charge of the writings, chose to **emend** the *original* texts to accommodate their established beliefs. This act set before that community a stumblingblock second to none. As aged Simeon said in Luke 2: that He would be, “*a sign that will be spoken against*”. Rejected over a technicality! A most amazing thing! ⁴ A people awaiting and expecting a Messiah are put in a position of having to **reject** Him due to a faulty theological concept adopted in generations long past. Their religion came before their true Messiah. “*He came to His own and His own received Him not*”! Why? They were holding out great hope for a *Messiah*, but could only accept one who conformed to their limited pre-conception of Him.

Daniel Knew

In the seventh chapter of Daniel, he relates a vision of an event involving the Ancient of Days, ⁵ except that in it he showed that there are two Beings with that title! Not only do these two share the same personal name ‘*Yahweh*’ but also each are called the ‘*Ancient of Days*’! The noteworthy thing is that one of these two was manifest as the *Son of man* for a time. Jesus knew this (of course, He being that one) and took opportunity to remind His accusers at His trial of that fact in a forceful way.

It was the combination of these two scriptures, the one in Psalm 110:1 and the other in Daniel 7:13 that assured Christ’s timely condemnation and death. The High Priest, after an ineffective ‘prosecution’ demanded of Jesus: “*I adjure you by the living God that you tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus said unto him, You have said it.*”⁶

⁴ Romans 9:33 ...a stumblingstone and rock of offence:

⁵ See the article: “*Who is the Ancient of Days*”.

⁶ Mark 14:62 adds “*I AM*” at this point in the narrative!

Moses, who wrote of Christ, wrote of the Being he dealt with as the I AM in Exodus. 3:14 and as Yahweh in Exodus 6:3

Moreover, I say to you, in the future you shall see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.” A blend of these two ‘controversial’ passages!

He absolutely knew their aversions and what kind of reception this truth would receive. It wasn’t just a matter of there being two Beings in the Godhead, but that He was that other One! He used an established defect in their theology to accomplish this necessary objective: Becoming **our** Passover!

But in addition to these things, Psalm 110 offers an even more insightful refutation of the fundamental Judaic ‘strict monotheistic’ persuasion. Under that mind set, those who allow that Jesus the Christ was the long-promised Messiah, some allege that He didn’t have a pre-existence. That He didn’t exist, except in a prophetic sense, prior to His conception in the flesh in the late first century BC.

This is curious when one considers David’s clear statement in Psalm 110 verse 1.

Identifying David’s Lord

We have two Beings mentioned. Yahweh (THE LORD) (YHWH) is seen speaking to Adonai, (whom David calls ‘my Lord’). We recognize Adonai as being the one who (at this point in time) would, some 980 years later, become Jesus Christ. Now to those who want to say that the Being who was Jesus Christ didn’t exist prior to His human birth, there’s this conundrum. Why did David call Adonai ‘my Lord’ if He did not yet exist, and wouldn’t exist for another millennium? Why would David recognize and claim a ‘Lord’ while in the same place acknowledging the existence of that other ever-living Being: YHWH?

Now, Jesus Christ Himself affirmed that David was under inspiration when he wrote this passage,⁷ and Jesus quoted it a number of times, particularly when He wanted to point out to those Jews in audience that they had a ‘theological’ problem!

To whom did David pray? To his Lord, Adonai, who (some claim) didn’t yet have an existence? We can see from this verse, and the unique way it’s

⁷ Matt. 22:43, Mk. 12:36, “For David himself said by the Holy Spirit, ‘The LORD said unto my Lord’...”

worded, the obvious, that the Being who became Jesus Christ, **did** in fact have a conscious existence and interacted with mankind in and before David’s lifetime.

A further conclusion along this vein on the part of ‘strict monotheists’ is the proposition that to worship any but God the Father VIOLATES the First Commandment. Perhaps this conclusion is even more ‘problematical’ than the previous one! If that IS the case, then why did Elizabeth and His mother, Mary, both acknowledge the unborn Jesus as their Lord? Why would Elizabeth, under inspiration of the Holy Spirit, call Him (Mary’s unborn) her Lord? “*And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost: And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me, that the mother of **my Lord** should come to me?”* (Luke 1:41-43) Let’s ask, would the mother of John the Baptist be a commandment breaker? Would the scripture, written of her by someone else, sixty years later, say that she was, without qualification, under inspiration of the Holy Spirit when she referred to someone other than GOD the Father as her Lord?

Then, in verse 52 of Luke 1, Mary paraphrases Psalm 110:5-7, as does Simeon in the Temple just ten months later! (Luke 2:34) Both of these, as well as the book’s author, understood the implications of the final three verses of Psalm 110.

The presumption on the part of ‘strict monotheists’ that Jesus Christ HAD **NO** pre-existence dictates another presumption: That the God of the Old Testament therefore **MUST BE** none other than God the Father, when in fact, the Being Israel dealt with consistently was the same One who continued in the same capacity into the New Testament Era. Though **BOTH** Beings are alluded to in the Old Testament, One was the primary contact with mankind: the LORD God! It was His mission to, among other things, reveal⁸ the existence of God the Father, a Being beyond the comprehension of all but a few in prior ages. **Ω**

⁸ Matt. 11:27, Luke 10:22, John 1:18, 5:37 & 6:46, John 8:14-19, 54-56, 7:28, Heb. 4:8 & 14, 1st Cor. 10:4