

# The Priest King -- Psalm 110

by A.B. Simpson

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*The sermon explores the character of Christ as the Priest King, highlighting His divine nature, His role as a King of Righteousness and Peace, and His relationship with His followers.*

**Scripture:** Psalm 110:1, Isaiah 32:17, Matthew 28:18, John 10:10, Romans 12:1, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Ephesians 2:10, Philippians 4:7, Hebrews 7:17, 1 Peter 2:9

**Topics:** "Christ as Priest-King", "Consecration and Holiness"

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## Description

A.B. Simpson expounds on Psalm 110, portraying Christ as the Priest-King who reigns from His mediatorial throne, emphasizing His dual role as both King and High Priest. He highlights the divine nature of Christ, His authority over a rebellious world, and His gifts of righteousness and peace to His followers. Simpson encourages believers to be freewill offerings, fully consecrated to God, and to embrace the beauty of holiness that comes from a relationship with Christ. He illustrates how true followers of Christ radiate joy and freshness, drawing strength from their connection to Him. Ultimately, he calls for a complete surrender to Christ, promising that such surrender leads to a life filled with His blessings and youthfulness.

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## Transcript

This has been called by Luther the most beautiful of the Psalms. It is the picture of Christ upon His mediatorial throne. We have seen Him as the suffering Savior in the twenty-second Psalm; as the Shepherd in the twenty-third; as the risen and ascended Lord in the twenty-fourth and sixty-eighth Psalms. Now we see Him seated upon His throne in the one hundred and tenth Psalm, reigning over His mediatorial kingdom and exercising His holy priesthood as our Advocate with God.

### I. THE PRIEST-KING

1. He is a divine King. "The Lord said unto my Lord." He Himself is called Lord, not only by David, but by the eternal Father. We see two divine personalities here: "the Lord" and "my Lord." This is not uncommon in the Old Testament, and a very dull eye can find in many places the evidence of the divine Trinity, even in the Hebrew Scriptures. How glad we are to know that our King is the Lord of heaven and earth, and nothing can be too hard for Him!

2. Back of Him there is another person as mighty and divine -- the Father. There is a power behind the throne, even all the Godhead.

We read in Daniel of these two personalities: "The Ancient of Days" who came in the clouds of heaven, and "The Son of man" who came with Him, and to whom He gave the kingdom and a dominion which should never pass away. He can say, "All things that the Father has are mine" ; "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth"; and above all the rage of the heathen and the wrath of His enemies, "He that sits in the heavens" said, "Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion." "Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and you perish from the way."

3. He is ruling over a rebellious empire. He is not acknowledged. He is not as yet a millennial king as we see Him in other Psalms, seated upon a peaceful throne, but He is in the midst of a conflict, and waging the holy war of gospel dispensation against sin and Satan. But amid all opposition and conflict, he is calmly seated upon His throne, not dismayed or distracted by the violence of His foes, but "expecting until his enemies be made his footstool." He is confident of victory. He sees ever before Him the issue; and while amid the smoke of the battle we may be often perplexed and discouraged, yet He is smiling calmly at our fears and waiting for the consummation of all His plans and all our hopes.

4. He is the King of Righteousness. The name of His glorious type, Melchizedek, suggests this. The two roots of the word signify "king" and "righteousness." This does not merely mean that He is the righteous King, but it means especially that He is a King who dispenses righteousness to His followers and subjects. Other kings require righteousness from them, but His business is to give them righteousness, to make them holy, and just, and good. He takes them as a race of sinners, justifies them freely through His grace, and then imparts to them His own spirit and nature, and makes them partakers of His righteousness. It is His royal gift to us. Let us take it freely. He came "that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life."

5. He is the King of Peace. For Melchizedek was the King of Salem, which means peace. This is His next royal gift -- peace. It is His great legacy. "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you."

It is His royal benison to all His subjects. He is the Prince of Peace. They that follow Him find rest unto their souls and know the peace of God that passes all understanding. Has He given us His righteousness and His peace? Do we dwell with Him in the land of rest where "the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever"?

6. He is our Great High Priest. Not only does He rule over us, and for us, but stands between us and all our sins and their present and eternal consequences. He settles for us every question that can rise between us and God. He represents us in heaven in all our interests. He keeps our relations with God ever right. He secures for us the grace we need from moment to moment and day to day. He presents our petitions to the Father, taking out of them their faults and imperfections, correcting and directing them, and adding to them His own intercessions, mingling with them the incense of His perfect offering, and claiming acceptance for them through the merits of His own all-prevailing name.

Like the priests of old, He bears our names upon His shoulders in the place of strength, carrying all our burdens and bearing all our sorrows. Like Aaron, He bears our names upon His breast as well as on His shoulders, carrying us in the place of sympathy and love. "Seeing then that we have a great high priest" who is "touched with the feeling of our infirmities"; "who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way"; "let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Such is the picture of our great Priest-King.

His ancient type of Melchizedek stands in the record of the past like the great sphinx of the desert, a strange enigma.

The Apostle speaks of him almost as if he had no origin and no descent, but this may simply mean that we have no record of these, and that he is the same as though he came out of the darkness and went into the dimness of obscurity. Some have supposed that he was a divine person, the Son of God anticipating His incarnation, but we see no reason for this or proof of it. He was, doubtless, simply a human type of the divine Son of God.

He was the only one in the Old Testament who held both the office of a priest and a king. The Judges in some measure anticipated this: Eli ministering at the altar and also judging Israel; and Samuel, for a time, exercising both functions. But none of them could be called a king. Jesus holds both offices. He who rules us with His mighty scepter and holds our destinies in His hand, is the same who died for our sins, who intercedes for us at the Father's side, and who ever lives to save us to the uttermost. Blessed King, faithful Priest, precious Savior -- blessed be His glorious name forever!

## II. HIS FOLLOWERS

"Your people shall be willing [a free-will offering] in the day of Your power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: You have the dew of Your youth." This is the beautiful picture of the subjects of the glorious King.

1. They are freewill offerings. They are a consecrated people; they are not bound to Him by fetters of iron or forces of compulsion, but by a free, glad surrender of their hearts and sacrifice of their lives. They love Him, they delight to do His will, they have been conquered by His love. Their watchword is "Whose I am and whom I serve." They are not their own, but are bought with a price. They have presented their bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, their reasonable service. This is the condition of all full blessing in the kingdom of Christ. God gives all, and we give all.

Only as we freely give do we freely receive. A heart half consecrated can never be fully saved, or perfectly victorious and happy; but he who yields himself fully to God finds God as fully yielded to him. This is the true condition of all effective service. God does not ask our work first, but ourselves first, and then our service follows. He does not use hired servants or borrowed vessels. He owns His servants and puts His coat-of-arms on all the vessels of His house, and will use nothing fully until it becomes His and His alone.

I know a wealthy friend who desired at one time to adopt a child. The mother was unwilling to part with it permanently, but very glad to have it taken to the rich man's home and educated and befriended. When it came to the point of surrendering it utterly, her heart naturally shrank and almost refused; but she was told that in no other way would he accept the child. The reason was that he wished to make it his heir and bestow upon it his great wealth. Then she saw the advantage of complete surrender, and in the highest love to the little one, she gave up her personal claims that it might receive a greater blessing than she in her poverty could ever give it. So God asks us to give ourselves utterly to Him, only because He wants to give us His all in return and make us the heirs of all His riches and joint-heirs with His own dear Son.

2. They are clothed in the beauty of holiness. They are not only a consecrated people but a holy people. Here we see the true spiritual order of our higher experiences and blessings. Consecration must come first and then sanctification. We can consecrate ourselves as freewill offerings. Then God sanctifies us and clothes us with the beauties of His holiness. The consecration is ours; the sanctification is His. It is with

Christ's robes that He covers us; with Christ's virtues that He adorns us. Our holiness is as much His gift as our pardon. "To her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints." The bride receives her robe as the free gift of her Lord. She does not weave it and stitch it with her own weak hands, but she receives the seamless robe of her Lord in all its completeness, and puts on the Lord Jesus Himself as her sanctification and glory.

But here we read not only of holiness, but of the beauties of holiness. It is not merely a right character and life, but a lovely bearing, adorning the doctrine of God our Savior, and shedding luster upon our Christian profession and the name of our Lord.

We read not only of the garments that were clean, but of the garments that were bright or lustrous. Every housewife knows the difference between her clothes as she takes them from her clothesline and as she takes them from the laundry. They are clean when they leave the clothesline, but they are bright when they leave the laundry.

There is a stern and blameless righteousness which a man may live before the world and before the Lord, in which no fault can be found, and yet it may be as cold as the granite cliffs of some lone mountain peak. There is a sweet, soft, mellow, and beautiful holiness which is as different from the other as the lovely mountainside all covered with moss and flowers and fountains is different from the mountain peak. The life of Jesus was not stern virtue but sweet love. It was full of the beauty of holiness. How gentle, how tender, how thoughtful, how courteous, how unselfish, how refined, how delicate in its sensitiveness, how lofty, majestic, devoted, how transparent and sincere, how sweet and affectionate, how it attracted the little child, how it drew the poor sinner, how it fascinated the loftiest minds, how it satisfied the warmest hearts! Who can ever paint the beauties of Christ's character, the little touches of loveliness that filled up His life, the thousand trifles that others neglect, and that constitute the fullness of His perfection?

Look at Him as a little child. What a perfect child, and yet how far beyond other children. Look at Him as He bows His head to receive the baptism of John that He may fulfill all righteousness. Look at Him as He takes the little child in His arms. Look at Him as He refuses to meet the gaze of the poor woman whom they brought to Him in her sin, lest He should hurt her sensitive feelings by looking into her eyes in the presence of those pitiless men. Look at Him as He anticipates Peter's perplexity about the taxes at Capernaum, and sends him to find the gold in the mouth of the fish, even before he has time to speak of it. Look at Him as, with the towel around His waist, He bows at the disciples' feet, the lowliest, yet the loftiest of them all.

Listen to Him as, with heart already anticipating the burden of the cross, He forgets His sorrow and tenderly says: "Let not your heart be troubled." Listen as He speaks of His peace and joy even in that dark hour. See how perfectly human He is in His tears at Lazarus' tomb, and in His sorrow in Gethsemane, and yet how perfectly yielded to the will of God. Look at Him in the bright morning of the resurrection with His glad "All hail!" and His shining joy. Look at that exquisite scene in the garden as He calls Mary by name. Look at Him as He gently suggests her sin to the woman of Samaria without telling it; and again, by one look breaks Peter's heart without an upbraiding word, and then by that wonderful three-fold question by the Sea of Tiberias restores him again and suggests many things which He did not utter, but which the disciple could perfectly understand.

See the affectionateness that took Mary to His heart and John to His bosom, and on the cross of Calvary remembered the mother who bore Him, and consigned her to the care of the one whom He loved best. O

incomparable Christ! How the faintest touches of the picture put our coarseness and incompleteness to shame, and make us long to hide beneath the folds of His vesture, and be covered with His perfect righteousness! And so He would have us like Himself, clothed with all the beauties of a holy life and character.

How minute are the little directions of the Holy Ghost about our spirit and conduct! How many little things are described in the Christian's investiture! Not only the things that are honest and just and pure, but the things that are lovely and of good report. Here are some of them: courtesy, considerateness of others, sensitiveness to the feelings of one another, thinking no evil, rejoicing with them that rejoice, weeping with them that weep, condescending to men of low estate, in honor preferring one another, believing all things, hoping all things of the worst of men, rejoicing evermore, submitting one to another, and many more which the Holy Ghost has interwoven with almost every fiber of the Holy Scriptures, in little threads which make up the warp of holy living.

A great sculptor was once asked by his friend how he could linger so long over the marble statute which months before seemed complete to him, as he looked upon it. "Why," said the sculptor, "I have touched every part of this figure in these months and changed the whole expression by a thousand little touches. Here an eye has received a deeper fullness, a lip a more sensitive expression, a nostril is more dilated, an eye-brow is more expressive. These may be trifles, but trifles make perfection, and perfection is no trifle."

Oh, that the old story might be translated into the holier art of Christian living, and that we might go forth robed in the beauties of holiness, not only wearing the linen of the saint but the wedding garment of the bride.

3. They are bright with the light of the morning, born "from the womb of the morning." The truly consecrated and sanctified Christian is bright, joyous, radiant, and hopeful. Our light should shine before men. Our countenance should be radiant with the glory of God, and our whole bearing tell that we are the children of the light. The morning is the type of gladness, brightness, hopefulness. How different we feel after a night of rest and with the opening dawn! We lay down weary, jaded, perhaps exhausted, but we awake with such new strength and hopefulness that the tasks which yesterday depressed us today seem lighter than a feather, and we go out into life with zest and spring.

The Christian's life may be an everlasting morning. We may ever have the privilege of beginning afresh and, "forgetting those things which are behind," step out each moment into a new and eternal future of sunshine and blessing. Let our lives be more joyous, our spirits more like the morning. "Arise, shine; for your light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon you." "Your sun shall no more go down; neither shall your moon withdraw itself: for the LORD shall be your everlasting light, and the days of your mourning shall be ended."

4. They are fresh with the dew of His youth. The consecrated Christian knows what this means. It is a spirit of perpetual youth. It is a continual zest. It is a delightful freshness that keeps us watered and spontaneous in our spirit every moment. How soon the world ages, but the heart that is filled with Jesus is ever young. Holiness is the best preservative of youthfulness, freshness, sweetness, and joy.

It is possible to go through everything we touch with this spirit of springing freshness. It is not only for the hour of prayer and praise, and the mountain tops of holy ecstasy, but we can carry it through the drudgery of life, through the hum-drum, monotonous steps of toil, through the commonplace occupations of long days and hours, in the kitchen, the nursery, the crowded street, the noisy factory, at the office desk. We

can keep the sweet fragrance of this heavenly blossom, not only amid the smoke and grime of earthly toil, but even amid the fumes of the pit itself. When the dragon breathes upon us with his fiery breath, and ten thousand shafts of temptation whirl around us, this sweet atmosphere will purify the air and fortify us against even the touch of the foe, and the very smell of the pit will be dispelled by the heavenly fragrance that we carry in our breast.

Not only will this exhilarate our hearts and freshen our spirits, but even our bodies will be kept in health and buoyancy and our physical strength renewed at the fountain of His immortal youth.

We must not forget the source of this. It is not in ourselves but in Him. It is not our youth, but His youth that refreshes and bedews us. It is only as we have the heart of Christ within us that we have the fountain of perpetual freshness. Christ is ever young. How beautiful the thought that Jesus ever remains the young man of thirty-three! He never grew old, and He never will. That glorious face that beamed upon Mary and Peter and John on the morning of the resurrection with His glad "All Hail!" remains forever the same, and He is willing to touch us with His freshness, and fill us with His immortal youth.

One of Wellington's generals, it is said, came back to him for a moment just before setting out on a very difficult commission, to which his commander had appointed him. Reaching out his hand, he said: "General, let me grasp your hand before I go." He took the hand of the chief. His face brightened; and as he dashed away, he said: "Now I feel able for my work since I have touched that conquering hand." So each moment we can touch that conquering Hand that never lost a battle, that never relinquished a trust, that never grows weak or weary; and, strong in the strength of Christ, we can do all things hand in hand with Him.

Fresh from the dew of His youth. The figure of the dew is very suggestive. It comes at night. So out of our nights of darkness, sorrow, and waiting, come our mornings of refreshing and our days of victory. Again, it comes on quiet nights, never on stormy nights. And so, as we get before the Lord and hush our fretting and tumults, our thoughts and cares, and fears and plans, He fills us with His fullness and waters us with His refreshing. Again, the dew is always in the air; and we may always absorb it if we have the right temperature and spiritual condition to create it. The dew does not fall from heaven, but it gathers from the air around us. The old familiar illustration will stand repeating. The ice pitcher, on the warmest and sultriest day, in a moment is covered with crystal dew-drops. And so our Lord is ever around us in the very air we breathe. His freshness is ever within our reach if we will adjust ourselves to that presence. If we will grow cool and quiet and open our being to receive His life, He is ever ready to bedew us with His blessing, to fill us with His joy and peace and love, to send us forth the children of the morning, fresh with the dew of His youth.

The palm tree is the most glorious of all trees, with its waving branches and the precious clusters of fruit hanging from its laden boughs. But where does the palm tree grow? In the burning desert where the ground beneath is like consuming fire, and the air above as a heated oven. Whence does it draw its life? Just because of its situation the palm tree is provided with immense leaves, through all of whose pores the vapor of the air is absorbed, while its sensitive roots reach down to the hidden fountains and absorb from beneath the sand every particle of moisture that it can find. And so from the depths and heights it draws the life that sustains its glorious verdure and rich fruitfulness and makes it the queen of the vegetable creation. It is like unto him of whom the Oriental prophet has said with such truth and beauty: "He shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease

from yielding fruit."

Such is the blessed heritage of the children of the heavenly King. Such is the glorious recompense of entire consecration. Such is the reversion that comes to those who are willing to be a free-will offerings in the day of His power. Oh, let that day begin with some of us! Oh, let us make the full surrender now, and begin to follow Him in the glorious procession of the children of the morning, who, robed in the beauties of holiness and the bridal garments of the advent glory, already throbbing with the pulse-beats of immortal youth, are waiting for that glad day that shall bring us in fullness to that of which we are now permitted to enjoy the blessed foretaste and anticipation.

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