

## Waltke, Psalms, Session 22, Resources from Notebooklm

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Study Guide, 4) Briefing Document, and 5) FAQs

### 1. Abstract of Waltke, Psalms, Session 22, Liturgical Approach, Psalm 110, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

This lecture by Dr. Bruce Waltke **analyzes Psalm 110**, a coronation psalm, **within its liturgical context**. He **highlights the psalm's significant role in New Testament Christology**, citing numerous instances where it's referenced or alluded to in relation to Jesus Christ. Waltke **examines the psalm's structure and rhetoric**, comparing it to Assyrian coronation liturgies to illuminate its form and meaning. Finally, he **offers a detailed verse-by-verse interpretation**, exploring its imagery, parallelism, and prophetic significance.

**2. 21-minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Waltke's, Psalms, Session 22 – Double click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link there (Old Testament → Psalms → Waltke).**



**Waltke\_Psalms\_Session22\_Ps110\_Liturgical.n**

### 3. Briefing Document

Okay, here is a detailed briefing document summarizing the main themes and important ideas from the provided lecture transcript by Dr. Bruce Waltke on Psalm 110:

#### **Briefing Document: Dr. Bruce Waltke on Psalm 110**

**Source:** Excerpts from "Waltke\_Psalms\_EN\_Lecture22.pdf"

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**Overview:** This document provides a summary of Dr. Waltke's lecture on Psalm 110, emphasizing its liturgical context as a coronation psalm, its profound significance in the New Testament (NT), and its rich theological and prophetic implications. Waltke explores the psalm's structure, rhetoric, and imagery, drawing parallels to ancient Assyrian coronation liturgies and highlighting the psalm's fulfillment in Jesus Christ.

#### **Key Themes and Ideas:**

##### **1. Liturgical Context and the "Cultus":**

- Waltke frames the Psalms as "libretto to the cultus," or external expressions of religion, established by Moses. He sees David as transforming this ritual into "opera" with the Psalms as the accompanying music, glorifying God under divine inspiration.
- Psalm 110 is specifically identified as a "coronation psalm," part of a liturgy where the king is installed as God's representative on Mount Zion. This is linked to the enthronement of the Messiah.

##### **1. Psalm 110's Importance in the New Testament:**

- Waltke emphasizes that Psalm 110 is "perhaps the most important psalm in the New Testament." It is cited directly three times and alluded to approximately 25 times.
- He meticulously examines how Jesus uses Psalm 110 to challenge the Pharisees, Sadducees, and a lawyer regarding the nature of the Messiah, proving that the Messiah is more than just the son of David. Jesus asks how David could call his descendant "Lord".
- The psalm is foundational to Christology, particularly the idea of Jesus sitting at the right hand of God, as seen in Peter's sermon at Pentecost, the Book of Hebrews, and various Pauline epistles.

- This theology – that “Jesus ascended to heaven and sits at God's right hand is crucial to New Testament Christology.” This concept is also reflected in the Apostolic and Nicene creeds.
- The idea that Jesus is a priest in the order of Melchizedek is also taken directly from this Psalm and elaborated upon in the book of Hebrews.
- “This Psalm, that's this statement that Jesus sits on the right hand of God and he's like Melchizedek. That theology is minted in Psalm 110 and circulated in the New Testament.”

#### 1. **Analysis of the Psalm Itself:**

- **Superscript:** The superscript "A Psalm of David" is critical. David calls the subject of the Psalm "my Lord," indicating the Messiah is greater than David. This supports Jesus' argument that he is not merely a human Messiah but also divine.
- **Structure and Form:** It's a poem with rich imagery (e.g., God's army like morning dew, the king's endurance like drinking from a wadi).
- It features parallelism and was likely sung with stringed instruments.
- It functions as a prophecy delivered through music, often the means by which prophetic utterances were inspired.
- Waltke argues, based on the work of John Hilbers, that Psalm 110 is structured similarly to Assyrian coronation poems, which involved the alternation of speakers between God, the prophet, and sometimes the congregation. This is supported by the shifts in addressee and speaker throughout the psalm and was likely an antiphonal practice.
- The psalm is divided into two equal parts, marked by divine speech and prophetic reflection:
  - \* \*\*Part 1 (vv. 1-3):\*\* God's declaration of the king's enthronement ("Sit at my right hand") and the prophet's reflection about his ruling in the midst of enemies and a willing army.
  - \* \*\*Part 2 (vv. 4-7):\*\* God's oath of the king's eternal priesthood like Melchizedek, and then reflections upon the king's conquests and victory.

- **Key Verses and Imagery:****Verse 1:** "The Lord says to my Lord, 'Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool.'" This verse establishes the king's authority and eventual triumph. "Sitting is the posture of authority" and the right hand is linked to "the portico of justice," where the king judges.
- **Verse 3:** "Your people will offer themselves freely on the day of your power." The king's army is described as a voluntary force moved spiritually, like a free-will offering.
- **Verse 4:** "The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind, 'You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.'" This verse establishes the eternal nature of Christ's priesthood, a key element of the book of Hebrews. This verse introduces a second divine speech which acts as the basis for another prophetic reflection.
- **Verse 7:** "He will drink from the brook by the way; therefore he will lift up his head." This verse depicts the Messiah's strength, perseverance, and ultimate victory.
- **Rhetoric:** Waltke highlights the use of "alternating parallelism," where an introduction, citation, and reflection pattern is repeated in both halves of the psalm, creating a powerful and symmetrical structure.

#### 1. **Prophecy and Oath:**

- Waltke distinguishes between prophecy and oath. Prophecy is conditional on human response, while an oath, like God's promise in verse 4, is unconditional and irrevocable. The phrase "The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind" underscores the certainty of Christ's priesthood.
- David acts as a prophet, anticipating a future fulfillment of the psalm in Christ.

#### 1. **Symbolism:**

- **Right Hand of God:** A place of honor, authority, and judgment. It also signifies that Jesus will implement God's law and justice.
- **Footstool:** Represents the king's enemies being subjugated and humiliated.
- **Zion:** The center from which the kingdom expands.
- **Scepter:** A symbol of authority and rule. The scepter represents God's power.

- **Morning Dew:** A metaphor for the new age and the dedicated, divinely-raised army of God.
- **Wadi (Brook):** Represents the Messiah's source of refreshment and strength as he completes his task.

#### 1. **Fulfillment in Christ:**

- Waltke argues that Psalm 110 finds its ultimate fulfillment in Jesus Christ's ascension, current reign, and future second coming.
- The King's current rule is through the suffering Church. He says "the church relies on prayer ... your kingdom come, your will be done."
- He is presently seated at God's right hand, ruling over a universal kingdom, and will eventually judge the earth and subdue his enemies. The kingdom was initiated at Pentecost.
- He notes the global reach of Christianity, especially in Southeast Asia, as evidence of the kingdom's expansion. He also notes the desire of Chinese believers to bring the gospel to Jerusalem as a marker of the end times.

#### **Quotes:**

- "The Psalms were the libretto accompanying the ritual that Moses had given the people. The Psalms were also set to music. The temple was so much grander than the tent. So really I say that David was like a Mozart and transformed the ritual into opera in a grand and glorious way to the praise of God and actually under the inspiration of God."
- "This Psalm, that's this statement that Jesus sits on the right hand of God and he's like Melchizedek. That theology is minted in Psalm 110 and circulated in the New Testament."
- "And so, he says, the Lord says to my Lord, sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool."
- "Sitting is the posture of authority."
- "The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind, 'You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.'"
- "It's that faith that we have that Christ is the victor and that righteousness will prevail."

- “Prophecy is always contingent upon the behavior of the people.”
- "But when God swears on an oath, then it's irrevocable."

**Conclusion:**

Dr. Waltke's lecture provides a comprehensive analysis of Psalm 110, revealing its crucial role in understanding both the Old Testament's prophetic vision and the New Testament's Christology. The psalm's rich imagery, liturgical context, and structure all point to the Messiah's divine nature, eternal priesthood, and ultimate victory. By examining both the psalm's historical setting and its theological fulfillment in Christ, Waltke illuminates the enduring relevance of this important passage of scripture.

## 4. Psalms Study Guide: Session 22, Liturgical Approach, Psalm 110

### Psalm 110: A Study Guide

#### Quiz

**Instructions:** Answer the following questions in 2-3 sentences each.

1. What is the liturgical approach to the Psalms, and how does Dr. Waltke describe David's role in it?
2. How does Psalm 110 function within the New Testament according to Dr. Waltke? Give a few specific examples.
3. What question does Jesus pose to the Pharisees based on Psalm 110, and what point is he making?
4. What are the two main parts of Psalm 110, according to the structure outlined by Dr. Waltke?
5. What are the similarities that Dr. Waltke points out between Psalm 110 and Assyrian coronation liturgies?
6. Explain the significance of the phrase "sit at my right hand" in the context of the ancient Near East.
7. According to Dr. Waltke, what does the "footstool" imagery in Psalm 110 symbolize?
8. How does Dr. Waltke interpret the phrase, "Your people will offer themselves freely on the day of your power?"
9. Explain Dr. Waltke's understanding of the "dew of the morning" in Psalm 110.
10. How does Dr. Waltke distinguish between a prophecy, a promise, and an oath in the context of Psalm 110?

#### Answer Key

1. The liturgical approach to the Psalms focuses on the external expressions of religion, or the "cultus." David transformed the rituals given by Moses into a grand "opera," setting the Psalms to music to accompany these rituals.

2. Psalm 110 is cited and alluded to more than any other Psalm in the New Testament, serving as a basis for understanding Christ's divinity and his role as both king and priest. Examples include Jesus' debate with the Pharisees, Peter's sermon at Pentecost, and the book of Hebrews.
3. Jesus asks the Pharisees how David could call the Messiah "Lord" if the Messiah were merely David's son. This was to show the Messiah's divine nature, greater than that of a human king like David.
4. Psalm 110 is divided into two parts. The first focuses on God's decree for the king to sit at his right hand until his enemies are subdued, and the second centers on the king's eternal priesthood like Melchizedek and his eventual victory.
5. Both Psalm 110 and Assyrian coronation liturgies begin with an introductory formula, are divided into two parts with a sub-oracle, involve a change of speakers, and describe the legitimization of the king as well as the promise of dominion over enemies.
6. The phrase "sit at my right hand" signifies a position of ultimate authority and power, and also represents the king's role as God's representative administering justice, much like the portico of justice in the temple.
7. The "footstool" imagery symbolizes the complete subjugation and defeat of the king's enemies, similar to ancient rulers placing their feet on the heads of defeated foes.
8. Dr. Waltke interprets this to mean that the king's army will be a voluntary one, filled with dedicated warriors who are eager to fight for the righteous cause of the king. It also refers to the disciples who, in faith, fight spiritually in Christ's kingdom.
9. The "dew of the morning" is a metaphor for the new age and the dedicated army that supports the king, who come with renewed spirit and faith, year after year, much like the consistent and mysterious arrival of morning dew.
10. Dr. Waltke explains that prophecies are conditional on human behavior, while oaths, like the one in Psalm 110, are irrevocable and unconditional. Prophecies intend to move people to repentance, while an oath represents God's unchangeable word.



## Essay Questions

**Instructions:** Answer each of the following questions in essay format.

1. Analyze the importance of Psalm 110 in the New Testament, focusing on how it contributes to the understanding of Christ's identity and his roles.
2. Discuss the ways in which Psalm 110 can be interpreted both in its original historical context and its theological significance for the Christian faith.
3. Examine the role of imagery in Psalm 110, specifically focusing on the metaphors of the scepter, the right hand, the footstool, and the dew of the morning, and analyze their impact on the meaning of the psalm.
4. Compare and contrast the structure and content of Psalm 110 with the Assyrian coronation liturgies and discuss the potential implications of these similarities.
5. Explain the concept of alternating parallelism in Psalm 110 and analyze how this structure enhances the understanding of the psalm's meaning and its different voices and perspectives.

## Glossary of Key Terms

- **Cultus:** The external expressions of religion, including rituals and ceremonies.
- **Liturgical Approach:** A method of interpreting the Psalms that focuses on their function in religious worship and ritual practices.
- **Coronation Psalm:** A psalm associated with the ceremony of enthroning a king, often emphasizing divine appointment and authority.
- **Christology:** The study of the person and work of Jesus Christ, including his nature and role as the Messiah.
- **Melchizedek:** A priestly king in the Old Testament who serves as a type of Christ and his eternal priesthood.
- **Antiphonal:** Sung or recited responsively, typically by two groups of voices or a leader and a congregation.
- **Aseity:** The property by which a being exists in and of itself, not derived from any other cause.
- **Prophetic Speech (Naum):** A particular kind of divine communication, often used by a prophet acting as a spokesperson for God.
- **Right Hand:** Symbol of power, authority, and privileged position.
- **Footstool:** Symbol of the complete subjugation of enemies.
- **Scepter:** A staff or baton held by a ruler as a symbol of authority.
- **Zion:** A symbolic name for the city of Jerusalem and the spiritual center of God's kingdom.
- **Holy War:** A war understood to be initiated by God, demanding complete dedication and righteousness from participants.
- **Wadi:** A dry riverbed in the desert that can fill with water after rain.
- **Alternating Parallelism:** A poetic structure where ideas or themes are presented in a pattern, often alternating between introduction, citation, and reflection.
- **Apostasy:** Abandonment of one's religious beliefs or principles.

## 5. FAQ on Themes from Dr. Bruce Waltke's Psalms, Session 22, Liturgical Approach, Psalm 110,

### FAQ on Psalm 110

1. **What is the significance of Psalm 110 within the Old Testament and how is it used in the New Testament?**
2. Psalm 110 is a coronation psalm, a liturgical text used during the installation of a king, portraying him as God's chosen ruler. In the New Testament, it is perhaps the most important psalm. It is repeatedly cited and alluded to, especially regarding the identification of Jesus Christ. It establishes the divinity of Christ by showing that he is both David's son and Lord. The Psalm's themes of Christ's ascension, his seating at the right hand of God, and his eternal priesthood are foundational for Christian theology. The psalm is cited by Jesus himself, Peter in his sermon at Pentecost, and in Hebrews to explain Jesus' identity and role.
3. **What is meant by the "liturgical approach" to the Psalms and how does Psalm 110 fit into this framework?**
4. The "liturgical approach" to the Psalms involves understanding them as texts that were part of the ancient Israelite cultus, or religious rituals. These rituals included sacred personnel, sacred institutions, sacred seasons, and a sacred site. David transformed these rituals, turning them into an "opera" with the Psalms as the libretto set to music. Psalm 110, as a coronation psalm, was part of the liturgy surrounding the king's installation, and it speaks to the king's relationship with God, his authority, and his role as a ruler and priest.
5. **Who are the different speakers and addressees in Psalm 110, and why is this important?**
6. The psalm features a shifting dialogue between God, David as prophet, and the congregation. First, God speaks to the king, "Sit at my right hand." Then, the prophet speaks of the king's scepter and rule. Next, God declares the king a priest forever like Melchizedek. Finally, the prophet addresses the congregation, speaking about the king's victory and judgment. This shifting dynamic is similar to Assyrian coronation liturgies and suggests an antiphonal performance in the temple, with different voices conveying different messages and perspectives. The changing speakers is a clue that this was a liturgical performance.

7. **What does it mean that the king is invited to "sit at God's right hand," and what is its significance?**
8. To "sit at God's right hand" signifies a position of ultimate authority, power, and rulership. In ancient cultures, sitting was the posture of authority, and the right hand was the place of highest honor and jurisdiction. It symbolizes the king's role in administering God's justice and law, just as the king in the temple would sit at the portico of justice on the right hand of the temple. This imagery points to Jesus' ascension and his rule at God's side, emphasizing his authority as the judge of the earth, who is under God the Father.
9. **What does it mean for the king to have his enemies made a "footstool," and how does this relate to the imagery of victory and power?**

The image of making enemies a "footstool" is a powerful symbol of victory, domination, and subjugation. In ancient times, rulers would often place their feet on the necks of their conquered foes, representing absolute triumph. The footstool, in that era, was considered a part of the throne itself and often adorned with images of subjugated enemies. This imagery reflects how God's king will ultimately subdue all opposition to God's reign, including death itself.

1. **How is the idea of the "freewill offering" connected to the king's army and his cause?**
2. In Psalm 110, the king's army is portrayed as offering themselves freely, reminiscent of a freewill offering to God. This signifies a voluntary and dedicated army, not one of conscripts. These warriors are motivated by their love and trust in their king and the justness of their cause. This mirrors the idea that followers of God should give themselves willingly to His service, reflecting the Holy War rules of Deuteronomy, which emphasized that those not dedicated to the cause should not be required to fight.
3. **What does it mean for the king to be a "priest forever in the order of Melchizedek," and how does this differ from the Levitical priesthood?**

4. The declaration that the king is a "priest forever in the order of Melchizedek" signifies an eternal and superior priesthood. The Melchizedek priesthood precedes the Levitical priesthood, which was established later in the Law of Moses. This establishes a priesthood not based on lineage but on the eternal power of the priesthood itself. The book of Hebrews in the New Testament elaborates on this, emphasizing Jesus' unique role as a high priest who surpasses the temporary and earthly Levitical priesthood, and mediates God and man forever.
5. **How is the structure of Psalm 110 organized, and why are these structural elements significant for interpretation?**
6. Psalm 110 is structured using an "alternating parallelism" with two parts. Each part includes an introduction to a divine citation, then a divine citation, and finally a prophetic reflection. This pattern is mirrored in the two halves of the psalm, where God first speaks and then the prophet expands upon what God said. The poem also includes shifts in speaker. This literary structure helps clarify the psalm's meaning by showing how the themes are developed and emphasized, and that it would have been a liturgical, antiphonal performance. Additionally the symmetry of the two parts (74 words in each) illustrates God's order and control.