

Dr. Robert A. Peterson, Revelation and Scripture, Session 14, Special Revelation in the New Testament, Holy Scripture, Key Passages, Mark 12:35-37, and John 10:35

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This is Dr. Robert A. Peterson in his teaching on Revelation and Holy Scripture. This is session 14, Special Revelation in the New Testament, Holy Scripture. Key Passages, Mark 12:35-37, and John 10:35.

Let us pray. Gracious Father, we thank you that you are the speaking God, that you have specially spoken forth your word for us. How we would be in the dark without the written word of God! Bless us as we study what it says about itself and what others have thought about it. Lead us in your truth. Encourage us, we pray. In Jesus' name, amen.

We have worked with general revelation in creation, in conscience, in history. We've talked about special revelation in the Old and New Testaments, and then we focused on special revelation as the incarnation in the New Testament.

And now, for the rest of our time, we work on knowing God through scripture and special revelation in the written word of God. An indispensable form of special revelation is Holy Scripture. It is the source of our knowledge of the other forms of revelation, records the history of special revelation, and, most importantly, tells us of Jesus' love, life, death, resurrection, and return.

We begin our study of scripture as revelation with a survey of five key passages, and I'll just mention them. Mark 12:35-37 and John 10:35.

The scripture cannot be broken. 1 Corinthians 14:37 and 38, and then the two most famous texts on scripture, 2 Timothy 3:14-17 and 2 Peter 1:16-21.

Since Mark 12 is based on Psalm 110, let's turn there first. There's no doubt that the Psalms speak of Jesus, but how they do so is not as easy to determine. Sometimes David, or the Psalmist, is a type, a prefiguration in his person of the Christ who is to come. Sometimes sentences, clauses, or phrases in the Psalm are used in the New Testament in a prediction fulfillment motif to describe the life of Jesus.

All of this, of course, is legitimate. I'm not questioning it. I'm simply saying there is a variety here.

Sometimes, the Psalmist is a sufferer, a righteous sufferer, and the New Testament tells us that the way that thing plays out in the total picture of the Bible is that that righteous sufferer is a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ, the righteous sufferer. There are Messianic Psalms, but very few are purely Messianic Psalms. Although the matter is debatable, it is my opinion and that of some respected Old Testament scholars whose coattails I'm riding on that Psalm 110 is such a Psalm, a Psalm of David.

The Lord says to my Lord, sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool. The Lord sends forth from Zion your mighty scepter—rule in the midst of your enemies.

Your people will offer themselves freely on the day of your power in holy garments. From the womb of the morning, the dew of your youth will be yours. The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind.

You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. The Lord is at your right hand. He will shatter kings on the day of his wrath.

He will execute judgment among the nations, filling them with corpses. He will shatter chiefs over the wide earth. He will drink from the brook by the way.

Therefore, he will lift up his head. The fact that this is a Psalm of David turns out to be important as things play out. The New Testament identifies it as such as well, as the Psalm title does.

The Lord says to my Lord. Two different words for God are used. Lord in capital letters, L-O-R-D, is Yahweh, the covenant name of God in the Old Testament, the Tetragrammaton, only and always used of God himself.

Lord here is, Adonai. Lord here is Adonai. The way it plays out is that there is a distinction between the Lord Yahweh and the Lord Adonai.

Adonai is sometimes used for angels and human beings, human lords as they were, and angelic ones, and not for God himself, although it is used for God himself as it is in this context. The Lord says to my Lord, sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool. Yahweh says to David's Lord, sit at my right hand.

God thus invites David's Lord; more than invites, he tells him, and he commands him to sit at his right hand. That is the place of the greatest honor and authority in the world until I make your enemies your footstool and defeat your enemies.

Ancient inscriptions and so forth show pictures of kings with their feet on other kings' heads, and there is no doubt as to the meaning. Sit at my right hand until I vanquish your enemies. The problem is, as both Psalm Title and New Testament

testify to Psalm of David, because any other Israelite in the kingdom, in the southern kingdom of Judah, would have two lords, God in heaven, Yahweh, and Yahshua, Yahshua, Yahshua, Yahshua, and the king, David.

But since David is the author of the Psalm, he only has one king, and that is God in heaven. He has no king on earth. But this Psalm says that he has two kings, which is curious at the least and suggestive at the most, even before Jesus' exegesis of it, that David has two divine lords.

And Yahweh, Yahshua, Yahshua, Yahshua instructs David's Lord to sit at his right hand, the place of honor and authority, apparently a place of equality with God. The Lord, Yahweh again, sends forth from Zion your mighty scepter. God acts on behalf of David's Lord.

Rule in the midst of your enemies. Your people will offer themselves freely on the day of your power in holy garments. It's warfare, and David's Lord is not lacking for recruits to fight on his behalf.

The people willingly fight on his behalf. From the womb of the morning, the dew of your youth will be yours. This is a debated text, and two possibilities were obtained.

One is that David's Lord, Yahshua Lord, that it repeats the sense of the lines we just read. From the womb of the morning, the dew of your youth, that is, young men volunteering for battle, will be yours. From the very beginning of the day, the number of volunteers to fight on behalf of David's Lord is as numerous as the dew glistening on the grass in the early morning as the sun beats down and shines.

From the womb of the morning, from the beginning of the morning, the dew of your youth volunteers, young volunteers, will be yours. It thus repeats what 3A had said. Your people will offer themselves freely.

Another possible translation is, from the womb of the morning, the dew of your own personal youthfulness will be yours. The exegesis is debated, but the sense, both senses are given in the psalm itself. So, it's not really a problem for theology.

Either 3B, I'll call it, repeats 3A, or 3B anticipates 7. He will drink from the brook, by the way. Therefore, he will lift up his head. That speaks of a Gatorade at halftime, if you will, sustaining David's Lord in his battle against his enemies. That is similar in meaning to this: from the very beginning of the day and of the battle, the dew of your youthfulness will be yours.

You will not lack energy and resourcefulness in your fight against your foes. So, either 3B repeats the sense of 3A or anticipates the sense of 7. Both are true. So, pardon me for my cop-out, but it doesn't matter for theology.

The Old Testament exegetes will continue to debate the matter. The Lord has sworn, I take this to be a second paragraph beginning or a second stanza, if you will, because it's a second divine utterance. The Lord has sworn, verse 1 says to my Lord, and then it gives the speech.

Here, the Lord has sworn and will not change his mind, and then it gives the divine speech. Both of these, 1 and 4, have an introduction, an introductory formula to an oracle, and a direct speech of God. This time, as surprising as the first one, the Lord has sworn and will not change his mind.

You, David's Lord, are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. Oh, this is unreal. David's Lord sits at God's right hand as a ruler, as a king.

He's a warrior king, as verses 2 and 3 show, but now he's also a priest? That is unbelievable. Priests and kings are kept separate in the Old Testament. Furthermore, he's a priest forever.

That's impossible. Aaron's sons are priests, and when one dies, another one takes his place. And here comes the real shocker.

You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. What? Other than this, there is no such thing in the Old Testament as the order of Melchizedek. Melchizedek appears out of the blue, out of nowhere, in Genesis 14.

He meets Abraham after his defeat of the kings and his rescue of Lot, and he's called a priest of God Most High. He blesses Abraham, who pays him a tithe, as he would be paying to God himself. He pays it to Melchizedek as a representative of God, as a priest of God.

The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind; it's a solemn oath. The oracle, this time, is an oath. You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

David's Lord sits at God's right hand as a triumphant king, in the place of honor and authority and in a place apparently equal with God. And now he's also a priest in this strange order. Melchizedek appears in Genesis 14, in Psalm 110 verse 4, and then in the book of Hebrews, especially in chapter 7, where a big exposition is given of his name.

He's king and priest of Salem, and so forth. King of righteousness, king of Salem, priest of God Most High. So, it turns out that the order of Melchizedek is an order with two priests.

Melchizedek and Jesus, that's it. And of course, the psalm doesn't use the name of Jesus. Furthermore, the battle motif is resumed in verse 5. The Lord is at your right hand.

This is different than verse 1. Verse 1, David's Lord is exalted to the right hand of God. Here, the Lord, it's Adonai or Adon, it's God, not the Tetragrammaton, not Yahweh, is fighting at David's right hand, a place of weakness, is taken by, covered by the person who, as we would say, has his back, has his right hand, and that is the Lord himself, fights for him. He will shatter kings, a strong word, on the day of his wrath.

He will execute judgment among the nations. Here, there is no judgment in terms of wise counsel. Here, judgment in terms of slaughtering the enemies.

And slaughter it is because filling the nations with corpses, bodies piled up. He will shatter chiefs, or leading men, heads, over the wide earth. And then, as we said before, 7 speaks of God rejuvenating David's Lord as he engages in this powerful battle.

So, I see this as an exclusively messianic psalm, and that is problematic. What sense does it have for the hearer, the readers, and the hearers at the beginning, at the giving of the psalm? If this interpretation is correct, then the sense it has is to give them hope, even in ways they can't fully understand, that God will visit his people, he'll provide another priesthood, and he will, the coming one, will succeed, will sit at God's right hand, and astonishingly, will be both king and priest at the same time. Surely, too much for the Old Testament saints to understand.

And it looks like a place to me that's spoken of in 1 Peter 1, where the prophets scratched their heads to understand the person of Christ and the things he would do as the spirit of Christ within them predicts what would come to pass, predicts the sufferings and glory of Christ. With this background, we go to Mark 12, where Jesus is back on the hot seat. His Jewish leaders and opponents are after him, although here, Jesus takes the initiative.

And as Jesus taught in the temple, Mark 12:35, he said, how can the scribes say that the Christ is the son of David? David himself declared, but notice, David himself, in the Holy Spirit declared, the Lord said to my Lord, sit at my right hand until I put your enemies under your feet. Jesus says, David himself calls him Lord, so how is he his son? And the great throng heard him gladly. It's important to understand Jesus is not denying that the Messiah is the son, the descendant of David.

He's adding another piece of information, however, which is hard theologically to combine with the fact that the Messiah is the son, the descendant of David. How can the scribes say that Christ is the son of David? Jesus doesn't deny it. He just wants to

know how the humanity of the Messiah fits with this Old Testament reference to his deity.

He deliberately confounds his opponents, as he teaches, of course, about himself, although he doesn't even say that. David himself declared this is an amazing place, this verse. David himself declares that they're David's words, but David speaks these words in the Holy Spirit.

That is, under inspiration. David's words are, at the same time, the Holy Spirit's words. Oh, they're David's words; they're human words, but they're divine human words.

They're God's words and David's words at once. And the words are remarkable. The Lord said to my Lord, sit at my right hand until I put your enemies under your feet.

The Lord, Yahweh, God in heaven, says to David's Lord, calls him Lord, and tells him to sit at his right hand, as we saw in our exposition of Psalm 110. The Lord said to my Lord, sit at my right hand until I put your enemies under your feet. David calls him Lord, Jesus says, so how is he his son? And the people rejoiced to see Jesus confound the Jewish leaders.

On Tuesday of Passion Week, Jesus debates the Pharisees and Herodians over paying a poll tax to Caesar. This is in the immediate preceding context. In the preceding context, it gets more immediate with each phrase that I read.

The Sadducees debated over the resurrection and ascribed the greatest commandment. So in Mark 12, 13 to 34, Jesus debates the Pharisees and Herodians over paying a poll tax to Caesar. He debates the Sadducees who denied the resurrection. Jesus affirms it.

And Jesus debates a scribe over the greatest commandment. Then, he confronts the Jews with the words we just read. How can the scribe say that the Messiah is the son of David? David himself says, by the Holy Spirit, the Lord declared to my Lord, sit at my right hand until I put your enemies under your feet.

David himself calls him Lord. How then can he be his son? Jesus confounds his enemies. The scribes acknowledge that the Messiah will be a descendant of David, that is, a human being. Jesus does not deny the Messiah's humanity but makes his foes deal with an additional truth.

The Messiah is also divine. David writes Psalm 110. He relates how God, the Lord, told David's Lord, the Messiah, my Lord, to sit at God's right hand until he defeated the Messiah's enemies.

Inspired by the Holy Spirit, King David acknowledges two individuals as Lord, God and the Messiah. And as we previously pointed out, as King, David regards no mere man as Lord. After all, he was the human Lord, King, and the Messiah over Israel.

Jesus clinches the argument. I misspoke before. Of course, King David was the king of the unified kingdom and not just the southern kingdom.

That follows the death of Solomon and the division between Jeroboam in the north, Israel, and Rehoboam in the south, Judah. I apologize. Jesus clinches the argument in verse 37.

David calls the Messiah, the coming one, Lord, but then how is he David's son? How can he be a human being and God simultaneously? The great crowd enjoys hearing Jesus perplexes the Jewish leaders and teachers. We will not judge their hearts or motives in that enjoyment. Jesus acknowledges the human authorship of Holy Scripture.

David wrote Psalm 110. As the Psalm title says, Jesus also teaches the divine authorship of Scripture. For David speaks Psalm 110 by the Holy Spirit.

Christian standard Bible, ESV, in the Holy Spirit. Both are acceptable translations of the preposition, Greek preposition, en. It can mean in, it can mean by to show, instrumentality.

The Spirit is the agent by which David wrote. The Christian Standard Bible's rendering of a parallel passage in Matthew 22:43 captures the sense. "How is it then that David, inspired by the Spirit, calls him Lord?" That is, the Spirit is an interpretation bordering on a paraphrase but communicates what I regard as the true teaching of the verse.

How is it then that David, inspired by the Spirit, calls him Lord? Psalm 110:1 is not merely the product of King David. The Holy Spirit also guides the writing process. There's a divine as well as a human aspect to the Bible.

Our next passage is in John 10. We saw previously that in his Good Shepherd discourse, Jesus claimed that he and the Father were one, John 10:30, in their, in the context, in their ability to keep the sheep safe, in their ability to do the divine work of preservation, maintaining the salvation of God's people. John 10.31, the Jews picked up stones again to stone him.

Jesus answered them, I have shown you many good works from the Father. For which of them are you going to stone me? The Jews answered him, it is not for a good work that we're going to stone you, but for blasphemy, because you, being a man, make yourself God. Jesus answered them, is it not written in your law, I said

you are gods? And if he called them gods, to whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken, do you say of him whom the Father consecrated and sent into the world, you are blaspheming? Because I said I am the Son of God? If I'm not doing the works of my Father, then do not believe me.

But if I do them, even though you do not believe me, believe the works, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me, and I am in the Father. Again, they sought to arrest him, but he escaped from their hands. Once again, we have an Old Testament Psalm as the critical background from this passage, and that is Psalm 82 this time.

This is a difficult passage in John's Gospel, and we need to understand that in a sense, Jesus is playing by the rules of his opponents. He's not giving the total picture of absolute truth, he's not giving any falsehood, but he's playing by their rules, and he beats them at their own game, so to speak. But in so doing, he does not give a full account of his person.

He confounds them by using their scriptures, which are his scriptures, to show that it is not blasphemy for him to call himself the Son of God. Psalm 82 is short, and I can read the whole thing—the Psalm of Asaph.

God has taken his place in the divine counsel. In the midst of the gods, small g, and plural, he holds judgment. God has taken his place in the divine counsel.

In the midst of the gods, he holds judgment. How long will you judge unjustly and show partiality to the wicked? Give justice to the weak and fatherless. Maintain the rights of the afflicted and the destitute.

Rescue the weak and the needy. Deliver them from the hand of the wicked. You have neither knowledge nor understanding.

They walk about in darkness. Excuse me. They have neither knowledge nor understanding.

They walk about in darkness. All the foundations of the earth are shaken. I said, you are gods.

Small g and plural again. Sons of the Most High, all of you. Nevertheless, like men, you shall die and fall like any prince.

Arise, O God, judge the earth, for you shall inherit all the nations. In the context, God in heaven, in his divine court, in his role as judge, is displeased because human beings on earth who stand in his place, and there is some debate whether these human beings are kings or princes or maybe magistrates, judges on earth, but in any

case, he is displeased because they are not demonstrating the justice that they should. They are poor representatives of God because they judge unjustly, verse 2. They show partiality to the wicked, presumably the wicked rich, who pay them bribes.

And God commands them to give justice to the weak and the fatherless, to maintain the rights of the afflicted and the destitute, to rescue the weak and the needy, to deliver them from the hand of the wicked, which is what these judges or rulers are not doing. He just blasts the wicked human beings who rule and dispense judgment wrongly in his name. He calls them gods.

In verse 6, I said, you are gods, sons of the Most High, all of you. That kind of sounds like kings to me, but I know there is debate among Old Testament scholars, and theologians need to be humble and listen to the experts in both Testaments. Nevertheless, like men you shall die and fall like any prince.

Arise, O God, judge the earth, for you shall inherit all the nations. Jesus' thought here is not easy to follow. Once again, he is not making a total, absolute claim, but he is playing by the rules of the Jews and exegeting the Old Testament in a way of which they would approve, and thereby he confounds them again.

Jesus concludes the Good Shepherd discourse by claiming that he and the Father are one in keeping God's people safe. The Jews respond by picking up stones to stone him. Jesus asks them for which of his many good works from the Father they want to stone him, verse 32.

They reply that they are going to stone him not for good works but for blasphemy because he, a mere man, is making himself equal with God, verse 33. Jesus then uses an Old Testament argument to show that he is not guilty of blasphemy. He appeals to Psalm 82, where the Lord rebukes wicked Israelite magistrates for dealing dishonestly by favoring the wicked and taking advantage of the poor and needy.

The Lord reminds them that he is their judge in heaven, and they will pass away. Nevertheless, God calls them gods, small g, because they stand in his place on earth and administer justice to fellow human beings. I have benefited from Alan P. Ross 's commentary on the Psalms, volume 2, pages 5 through 26.

Jesus uses a Jewish argument, from the harder to the easier. We still use this today, but it was used by Jews before him. If the more difficult thing is true, that God would call mere human beings gods, then the less difficult thing is also true, that Jesus could be called God's son.

This is the argument from the greater to the lesser, or more technically, more specifically, from the harder to the easier. The argument goes like this, and Jesus

uses the same argument, for example, in the Sermon on the Mount. If God does the harder thing, he will do the easier thing in the Sermon on the Mount.

If God gives you a body and health, won't he give you clothes to clothe your body? Here, if God calls mere human beings, rulers or judges, earthly judges, gods, it's a lesser thing for Jesus to call himself the son of God. It's less difficult. Good grief.

If the more difficult thing is true, that God would call mere human beings gods, then the less difficult thing is also true, that God would call that Jesus could be called God's son. As I said before, this is not a full-blown teaching of the deity of Christ, but he's got them over a barrel as he opens up God's word. So he's not claiming everything that's true about himself, but he's certainly disarming their attempt to accuse him of blasphemy.

At first glance then, Jesus does not appear to claim deity, yet on closer inspection, we see he speaks of his pre-existence and incarnation when he mentions the one the Father set apart and sent into the world. As a matter of fact, sort of incidentally, he does teach his deity. John 10:36 ESV, do you say of him whom the father consecrated and sent into the world? The son of God existed before he was born in Bethlehem.

He pre-existed. He was consecrated and sent into the world. He thus is divine.

It's not the focus of this. The focus of this is to catch them in their own trap, to reason from the scriptures in ways that they can't respond to. But in so doing, he does imply, it's a good way to say it, his deity.

Jesus mentions the authoritative Old Testament when he declares, that he is God. The scripture cannot be broken, verse 35. He provides a clue to the interpretation of the word broken by referring to the Jewish law in verse 34.

Is it not written in your law that I said you were God's? Jesus refers to the Old Testament scriptures, and a psalm mind you, not the Pentateuch, as law. Jesus provides a clue to the interpretation of the word broken in the expression, the scripture cannot be broken, by referring to the Jewish law in verse 34, and quoting Psalm 82 in verse 35. Jesus does not quote from the law proper the five books of Moses.

He cites a psalm to demonstrate his right to be called son of God. Jesus regards the whole Old Testament as law, so to speak, and as such, none of it can be broken. Broken here means annulled, or lightly set aside, as if it had little authority.

Jesus thus teaches that all the Old Testament is law in the sense of being authoritative. Jesus also treats the Old Testament as inspired of God. He regards it as God's authority that is able to settle theological disputes.

Jesus affirming the Old Testament's authority implies its inspiration. The only reason it's authoritative for theology to settle debates such as the one he's having with the Jewish leaders is because it is God's inspired word. Jesus does not speak often specifically of the Old Testament inspiration, but in many passages he demonstrates that he regards it as God's very word.

A really important book here is John Wenham, *Christ and the Bible*. It now has seen its third edition, and John Wenham has gone to be with the Lord. His two sons, one an Old Testament scholar and one a New Testament scholar, continue good work in their father's name, however.

John Wenham has studied Jesus' view of scripture and concluded that he treats it as historically accurate, authoritative for theology and ethics, and verbally inspired revelation from God. Jesus submits himself to it and obeys it throughout his earthly life. Wenham's summary bears repeating, and I quote from *Christ and the Bible*, John Wenham, "to Christ the Old Testament was true, authoritative, inspired. To him, the God of the Old Testament was the living God, and the teaching of the Old Testament was the teaching of a living God. To him, what scripture said, God said. Moreover, to Christ, his own teaching and the teaching of the spirit taught apostles were true, authoritative, and inspired.

To him, what he said, they said, under the direction of the Spirit, God said. To him, what he and they said, under the direction of the spirit, God said. To him, the God of the New Testament was the living God, and in principle, the teaching of the New Testament was the teaching of the living God."

So, we saw in Mark 12, Jesus regarding Psalm 110 as being spoken as of, when David spoke he spoke by or in the Holy Spirit, and here Jesus says the scripture cannot be broken, affirming its authority, because implied it is the very word of God. In our next lecture, we will continue to study some of these key passages, introducing the doctrine of Holy Scripture as special revelation.

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