

The Authority and Majesty of a King

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Last week we started in talking about the nature of a king. We said that Psalms 93 through Psalm 100 are a series of what are called theocratic Psalms and they celebrate God as sovereign King, and we wanted to, first of all last week, start with the recognition that Scripture uses this metaphor to talk about God and about our Lord Jesus Christ repeatedly, and so we felt like it is important for us to see the breadth of the usage of this metaphor to describe God, to describe Christ, and then tonight what we want to do is to explore some of what that metaphor means because as we said last time, we live in an era and in a culture where we have no meaningful concept of a king. We don't live in a monarchy, and even in the monarchies that exist today, they are largely ceremonial posts and so that is different than the biblical perspective on a king, and when we were talking about Christ last time, we saw that throughout the course of his career, if I can use that word, the word "king" is ascribed to him at key points at every time. He was prophesied in the realm of a king. When he was born, they were looking for the king of the Jews. When he was crucified, the charge against him read, "The King of the Jews." And in his second coming, he will come back and he will be recognized as the King of kings and the Lord of lords. So this is a pretty crucial, pretty central idea describing our God and describing our Christ, that somehow God is King, somehow Christ is King.

You know, when I came to Psalm 93 and started to study this, you know, I thought, well, you know, that kind of matters what the metaphor is pointing us to. What is it talking about, what is it directing us to the reality about God when it describes him as a King? Whatever it is, it must be important. There is a series of about eight Psalms that are directed to this right now, the title is applied to Christ repeatedly. I think it's important for us to have a sense of what that metaphor intends to communicate and that's what we want to try to do this evening.

We've titled this message, "The Authority and Majesty of a King." The authority and majesty of a king, and one older source said this, said, "To form a correct idea of a Hebrew king we must set aside our modern notions of government and grasp the context of biblical history." In other words, if you were living in biblical times, if you were living around the time of David or Solomon, what would the metaphor or what with the reality of a king mean to you then, because that is the reality back then that is at play when Scripture is talking about God as King here in these series of theocratic Psalms. It doesn't matter what we think about it today, we want to know what they were thinking about it back then and what that concept of king meant to them when it was written so that what

they understood intuitively we would do a little bit of spade work, as it were, to come to understand what it signifies for us today. The reality is the same, it's just that we are removed by 3,000 years from the reality of king to an Israelite reader, and so we want to step back and try to step into their sandals, so to speak, and understand what it means, and I think that we can be pretty fair to the metaphor if we understand that it is communicating two primary concepts: authority and majesty. Authority and majesty. A king had authority and a king had majesty, and so when the Bible says that God is King and calls on us to acknowledge him as King, it is describing him as one who has authority and one who has majesty, and I want to spend this coming hour showing you this from Scripture, and all of this designed, all of this designed to lay a foundation that we can stand on as we look at these Psalms in the coming two months or so.

So let's look, first of all, at the authority of a king and go back to Psalm 93:1 for just a moment and we'll ground ourselves in this text for the moment anyway. Psalm 93:1 says,

1 The LORD reigns, He is clothed with majesty; The LORD has clothed and girded Himself with strength; Indeed, the world is firmly established, it will not be moved.

The word "reign," the Hebrew verb "reign" is derived from the very noun that means king. Those words are intimately related in the Hebrew language and one lexical source says that the verb means "to be and to exercise the functions of a monarch: a king; one who reigns, one who is king and one who functions as a king and exercises the authority." That's the idea that is behind the word "reign."

So a monarch or a king is a sovereign head of state. The nation of Iran used to have a shah and the shah was the Persian word for king. He was a sovereign head of state, meaning that final authority was rested in that particular man and God had made provision for a king for his people very early on in his law. Turn back to the book of Deuteronomy 17 and here in this first part of our message tonight, we're looking at the authority of the king, the authority of a king and we're looking at some Scriptures to give us a sense of what that authority entailed on a human level, that is. On a human level, what kind of authority did a king have?

Deuteronomy 17:14 says,

14 "When you enter the land which the LORD your God gives you, and you possess it and live in it, and you say, 'I will set a king over me like all the nations who are around me,' 15 you shall surely set a king over you whom the LORD your God chooses, one from among your countrymen you shall set as king over yourselves; you may not put a foreigner over yourselves who is not your countryman."

Now pause there for just a second. The king is over them. It is an expression of authority that he will be over them and will reign over them as their monarch.

Verse 16,

16 "Moreover, he shall not multiply horses for himself, nor shall he cause the people to return to Egypt to multiply horses, since the LORD has said to you, 'You shall never again return that way.' 17 He shall not multiply wives for himself, or else his heart will turn away; nor shall he greatly increase silver and gold for himself. 18 Now it shall come about when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, he shall write for himself a copy of this law on a scroll in the presence of the Levitical priests. 19 It shall be with him and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, by carefully observing all the words of this law and these statutes, 20 that his heart may not be lifted up above his countrymen and that he may not turn aside from the commandment, to the right or the left, so that he and his sons may continue long in his kingdom in the midst of Israel."

Now my point in taking you to that passage is just to see that there was a foundational text in place as Moses gave parting instructions to the people of Israel before he passed away and before they entered into the Promised Land, he was looking into the future when there would be a time for a king to reign over Israel and this is laying down some of the groundwork. He is a king who must be an Israelite, and there were prescriptions that were put on him, and he was to be one who revered the law of God. That was God's pattern for a king over Israel.

Now as history unfolded, obviously the Israelite kings, the human monarchs, failed most often in that capacity. They did multiply wives for themselves. They did disregard the law of God which gives us a sense that even as you're walking through the progress of revelation and the unfolding of Israel's history, that you're starting to long for another King, the real King, the true King who became known as Christ, and because Christ was the one who did truly fulfill the law, who did revere the law of God, who did reign in majesty and will, better stated, when he returns on earth he will reign over the earth, Christ himself will be this fulfillment of this King of which the human Israel kings fell short. For now, we're just looking at the beginning and seeing how it unfolded over the course of Israel's history.

Now with that stated, in a subsequent time of national tension some 300-350 years later, Israel was ready for a king and they demanded a king from the prophet Samuel. Look at 1 Samuel 8 with me. 1 Samuel 8 in your Old Testament, and in 1 Samuel 8:1, there is a transition that is taking place. Samuel had judged Israel, he had guided them, but it was time for a transition and in chapter 8, verse 1,

1 ... it came about when Samuel was old that he appointed his sons judges over Israel. 2 Now the name of his firstborn was Joel, and the name of his second, Abijah; they were judging in Beersheba. 3 His sons, however, did not walk in his ways, but turned aside after dishonest gain and took bribes and perverted justice. 4 Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and

came to Samuel at Ramah; 5 and they said to him, "Behold, you have grown old, and your sons do not walk in your ways. Now appoint a king for us to judge us like all the nations." 6 But the thing was displeasing in the sight of Samuel when they said, "Give us a king to judge us." And Samuel prayed to the LORD. 7 The LORD said to Samuel, "Listen to the voice of the people in regard to all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me from being king over them. 8 Like all the deeds which they have done since the day that I brought them up from Egypt even to this day--in that they have forsaken Me and served other gods--so they are doing to you also."

Now at this particular point in time, Israel was demanding a king but a king was not per se was not the problem, it was because God had made provision for a king, the problem at this point in history was the lack of faith in Yahweh that they were manifesting. They were rejecting the kingship of Yahweh at that point in history because they wanted to be like all the other nations and now through Samuel, what follows in the text that follows here in 1 Samuel 8 is that God warns them of the consequences that are going to follow for what they are demanding, and what you're going to see here is that God is going to lay out for them the vast sovereign authority of a king. So what we see is this in verse 9, God tells Samuel,

9 "Now then, listen to their voice; however, you shall solemnly warn them and tell them of the procedure of the king who will reign over them."

Then in verse 10 we see that the king would draft their sons into service to prepare for war. Look at verse 10.

10 ... Samuel spoke all the words of the LORD to the people who had asked of him a king. 11 He said, "This will be the procedure [or the custom] of the king who will reign over you: he will take your sons and place them for himself in his chariots and among his horsemen and they will run before his chariots. 12 He will appoint for himself commanders of thousands and of fifties, and some to do his plowing and to reap his harvest and to make his weapons of war and equipment for his chariots."

Samuel tells them, "This king is going to have authority to draft your sons into his service and they must comply, they must obey. He will have authority over your family. He will have authority over your sons. He will direct them to do what he commands and they must obey him." The king, in other words, is one with vast authority in that way. And he goes on, it won't be simply the sons, the daughters will be affected by the authority of the king. Verse 13,

13 "He will also take your daughters for perfumers and cooks and bakers.

It goes on, and this king will impose taxes upon you. Verse 14,

14 He will take the best of your fields and your vineyards and your olive groves and give them to his servants. 15 He will take a tenth of your seed and of your vineyards and give to his officers and to his servants. 16 He will also take your male servants and your female servants and your best young men and your donkeys and use them for his work. 17 He will take a tenth of your flocks, and you yourselves will become his servants."

So let's step back for just a moment. All we're doing here at this point in time, something that I like to do from time to time, is just looking at details because it is one thing to say, "Oh, a king had authority over his realm," and you say, "Okay, a king had authority over his realm," and you just kind of leave it at that vague statement and it doesn't really mean too much. When you start to look at the details, however, and you see authority being worked out in the details, it starts to take your breath away, that this man had authority, has, speaking, you know, in the sandals of an Israelite at that time, "Okay, wow, this man has authority to take my sons away, to take my daughters away, and to draft them into his service. He has the authority to take my produce away, to tax my wealth and to make it his and to use it for the purposes that he sees fit, and I must comply. I am under his authority. What he says becomes law and guides what my life is going to be like." That's the authority of the king and God warned them when it comes to this human king, that they weren't going to like it but there wasn't going to be anything they could do about it. There would be no appeal of the king's decisions.

Look at verse 18,

18 "Then you will cry out in that day because of your king whom you have chosen for yourselves, but the LORD will not answer you in that day."

The king will have authority, you will cry out because you're saying, "This is burdensome," but there will be no recourse because his authority is now going to be absolute over your lives. This king would have authority to do what he wished over the realm of his reign to accomplish his objectives. Let me say that again. If you're taking notes, write this down carefully and underline it because it's really important for understanding the metaphor that we're going to look at in coming weeks when we talk about God as King. The king would have authority to do what he wished over the realm of his reign to accomplish what he desired.

Look at verses 19 and 20 of 1 Samuel 8.

19 Nevertheless, the people refused to listen to the voice of Samuel, and they said, "No, but there shall be a king over us, 20 that we also may be like all the nations, that our king may judge us and go out before us and fight our battles."

This king had authority to lead them into war and this king had authority to judge and to exercise legal dominion over them, and so this king had vast free exercise of authority

within his realm, to wage war, to wage taxes, to conscript sons and daughters into his service without appeal. He was king. I don't know how else to say it. He reigned. He was the monarch. He was El Hefe, the chief, the boss, and there was no one over him.

What was said about other kings is true of a biblical king and I quote from a 19th century resource, "The power of the king is absolute over the property and lives of his conquered enemies, his rebellious subjects, his own family, his ministers, over public officers civil and military, and all the numerous men and women of his domestic service. He may punish any person of these classes without examination or formal procedure of any kind." We are used to in our society, in our culture the only thing that we've known however far short it may fall of the ideal, we consider ourselves a nation of laws, that our society is governed by laws. Well, under the realm of a king, it's the government, it's a society of a man who is able to exercise his authority and he is the final authority. There is not law above him.

How far-reaching was this authority of the Hebrew king? Well, without turning there, let me give you three examples here. In 1 Samuel 22, you can look these up later if you wish, in 1 Samuel 22, King Saul could order the deaths of 85 priests and the inhabitants of a city because they helped David escape from him. He could order priests to be murdered and the order was carried out. In 2 Samuel 11, King David could order Uriah to be exposed to death in battle and David's commanders obeyed. In 1 Kings 2, King Solomon could order his brother Adonijah executed over the pleas even of his mother. The power of life and death was in the hand of a king and his subjects were to obey and carry out what he commanded. He had authority over their lives, he had authority over their freedom, he had authority over their resources. It was government by man rather than government by law.

Now, to be sure in speaking of these human kings, they were influenced by custom. Biblical kings were warned and counseled by prophets and looked for direction sometimes from there. On a divine level, they were under God's authority and so when we're talking about these human kings in biblical history, it's not that they were utterly without constraint but on a human level they were free to reign as they wished. They could take or reject the warnings of the prophets and there was no human appeal above them. That is the kind of authority that they had. They had authority over their realm.

Now beloved, step back. We'll look at this as we go through the Psalms in the coming weeks but what I just want you to see is this: when Scripture in Psalm 93:1, let's go back there for just to kind of use Psalm 93:1 as a bit of a trampoline, you bounce off of it and you come back to it again. Psalm 93:1, "The LORD reigns, he is clothed with majesty; the LORD has clothed and girded himself with strength, indeed the world is firmly established, it will not be moved." Here in Psalm 93:1 saying that the Lord reigns over the world, Scripture is saying that God has authority over all creation. God rules and does what he wishes in the world in the realm of mankind on this globe on which we live, and as you go through Scripture and as we'll see in the Psalms to come, he is King over all of the universe. He reigns and has full unfettered authority over everything that happens within the universe in the visible and invisible realms. God is King over all which is to

say that he has authority over it all, which to put it in a theological term is to say that he is sovereign over all and there is no one above him, there is no one beside him, there is no one that can raise up and ask him, "What are you doing?" God acts according to his will, according to his wisdom, according to his righteousness as King, indicating that he has sovereign authority over everything and there is no external constraint upon him in what he does. That's the level of authority that God has and that is what the metaphor of king is pointing us to.

So one of the things that Scripture tells us repeatedly, especially in Proverbs, Proverbs 1:7 for example, that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Well, when you realize that when we are talking about the God of the Bible and you realize that his authority is infinite, there is no limit to his authority, he is utterly sovereign over all, he is sovereign over the world, he is sovereign over history, he is sovereign over our individual lives and the breath that we breathe, you start to realize that this metaphor of king is designed to invoke a healthy sense of respect and awe and fear of him because there is such great authority that is resident in his being. So a king has authority.

Now, secondly, we've seen the authority of a king, let's consider the majesty of a king for a moment or two. The majesty of a king. Beyond his earthly power, Israel's king was vested with a divine significance that also commanded respect and obedience. There was a divine significance to the king that they were called to respect and honor.

1 Samuel 10, if you will. 1 Samuel 10. As you turn there, by this point Saul had been chosen to be king and in 1 Samuel 10:1,

1 Samuel took the flask of oil, poured it on his head, kissed him and said, "Has not the LORD anointed you a ruler over His inheritance?"

So Samuel is anointing Saul in a symbolic gesture that he is the one whom God has delegated authority to, to exercise authority over the realm of God's chosen people, and so in this ceremonial act, he is symbolically vested with a sense of majesty as God's chosen servant anoints him for the role that he is now about to enter into.

In 1 Samuel 16:3, Samuel is about to anoint David after Saul had failed in his exercise of his position, and in 1 Samuel 16:1, let's go there,

1 ... the LORD said to Samuel, "How long will you grieve over Saul, since I have rejected him from being king over Israel?"

Now we have skipped over a lot of history here tonight because we're looking at a different point than to consider the career of Saul, maybe we'll do that another time, but God says to Samuel,

"Fill your horn with oil and go; I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have selected a king for Myself among his sons." 2 But Samuel said, "How can I go? When Saul hears of it, he will kill me." And the LORD

said, "Take a heifer with you and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to the LORD.'

Now before we get to verse 3, you will remember how Samuel went and passed through the sons of Jesse looking starting with the oldest, working his way down and looking for this one that he was to anoint as king and it turns out that it was David and he was out in a field shepherding sheep. Well, in verse 3 all I wanted you to see here is this,

3 "You shall invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do; and you shall anoint for Me the one whom I designate to you."

So again there's this sense of anointing the king and to install him in that ceremonial manner into his office and beyond that, the anointing signaled something else as well and with Samuel acting as a prophet, Samuel acting as God's chosen spokesman, Samuel exercising God's authority in that spiritual role that God had appointed to him, for Samuel to anoint a man as king had a great great significance, it indicated that the king was going to rule by God's anointing and by God's providence. In other words, there was a certain sacredness invested in the king by virtue of this anointing that installed him into his office.

We can think a little bit of the impressive ceremony when a new President is sworn in on his inauguration day and he stands before the nation and the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court swears him in, he takes the oath of office and all of this ceremony designed to communicate that something really significant has taken place and there is authority being vested in this ceremonial occasion, being invested in this man that he will henceforth be able to exercise during the term of his office. Well, step into Israel, multiply that by about 50,000-60,000, multiply it exponentially, when the God of the nation, his spokesman, his prophet is anointing a man to be king over his people and you get a sense of something of the significance of a man being anointed into that office. There was a divine authority that was vested in this man and that divine authority, therefore, gave him a sense of majesty that this was one elevated above the people with authority over them who commanded respect.

Look at 1 Samuel 24. How great was this authority and how great was this majesty? Well, you remember that Saul had been pursuing David trying to kill him because he was jealous of David and wanted, he knew that David was a threat to his throne and Saul was trying to kill him, and in verse 2 of 1 Samuel 24, 1 Samuel 24:2,

2 ... Saul took three thousand chosen men from all Israel and went to seek David and his men in front of the Rocks of the Wild Goats. 3 He came to the sheepfolds on the way, where there was a cave; and Saul went in to relieve himself. Now David and his men were sitting in the inner recesses of the cave. 4 The men of David said to him, "Behold, this is the day of which the LORD said to you, 'Behold; I am about to give your enemy into your hand, and you shall do to him as it seems good to you.'" Then David arose and cut off the edge of Saul's robe secretly.

Verse 5, read this, notice this carefully,

5 It came about afterward that David's conscience bothered him because he had cut off the edge of Saul's robe.

He hadn't even hurt him and yet his conscience troubled him. Why? Verse 6,

6 So he said to his men, "Far be it from me because of the LORD that I should do this thing to my lord, the LORD'S anointed, to stretch out my hand against him, since he is the LORD'S anointed."

Even though David had been anointed to one day be Saul's successor, Saul was still the legitimate king and David recognized that there was such a sacredness invested in that office that it troubled his conscience simply to cut a corner off of Saul's robe, let alone to physically harm him, and the reason that he gives for his conscience bothering him is he says that, "That's the Lord's anointed. I should not raise my hand against him at all. Whatever the Lord's going to do with him, I need to wait on the Lord. I should not raise my hand against him." So great was, so great was the sense of position that the anointing gave there was a sense of majesty that attached to that role that a human should not raise his hand against. You'll remember later when Saul was killed in battle and a man came and reported it to David and said that, "I killed him at his own request," and David had the man struck down and said, "Who are you to raise your hand against the Lord's anointed?" So there was this sense of honor and reverence that was attached to the king.

Now in addition to his authority and this majesty, as part of the majesty, the king, at least in Solomon's day, was distinguished by outward honors and luxuries that emphasized his magnificence. He was distinguished by outward honors and luxuries and insignia, you could say, that emphasized his great magnificence.

Look at 1 Kings 7. We're looking at things from King Saul, from King David, from King Solomon simply to develop a picture in our minds of something of the authority and majesty of a king when these Psalms were written. In 1 Kings 7:1,

1 ... Solomon was building his own house thirteen years, and he finished all his house. 2 He built the house of the forest of Lebanon; its length was 100 cubits and its width 50 cubits and its height 30 cubits, on four rows of cedar pillars with cedar beams on the pillars. 3 It was paneled with cedar above the side chambers which were on the 45 pillars, 15 in each row. 4 There were artistic window frames in three rows, and window was opposite window in three ranks. 5 All the doorways and doorposts had squared artistic frames, and window was opposite window in three ranks. 6 Then he made the hall of pillars; its length was 50 cubits and its width 30 cubits, and a porch was in front of them and pillars and a threshold in front of them. 7 He made the hall of the throne where he was to judge, the hall of judgment, and it was paneled with cedar from floor to floor. 8 His

house where he was to live, the other court inward from the hall, was of the same workmanship. He also made a house like this hall for Pharaoh's daughter, whom Solomon had married.

So there's this great magnificent palace in which he lived, the palace reflecting something of the majesty, something of the esteem accorded to him, the palace being an outward reflection of the majesty of the one who dwelt in it. The king was dressed in royal robes. He wore a radiant crown. Those who approached him often bowed to the ground when they entered into his presence. Why? It was a recognition, the physical prostration was an indication that they were in the presence of majesty and so they bowed low and by their physical humbling of themselves they indicated their submission to him, their recognition of his greatness, and they honored it.

Look at 1 Kings 10 where you see a picture, where you see an outsider's perspective, you might say, of the majesty of King Solomon. In 1 Kings 10:1,

1 ... the queen of Sheba heard about the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the LORD, she came to test him with difficult questions. 2 So she came to Jerusalem with a very large retinue, with camels carrying spices and very much gold and precious stones. When she came to Solomon, she spoke with him about all that was in her heart.

This must have been a really remarkable time because she was a person of eminence herself, to go to Solomon, it would have been a highly exalted conversation on a human level.

Verse 3,

3 Solomon answered all her questions; nothing was hidden from the king which he did not explain to her. 4 When the queen of Sheba perceived all the wisdom of Solomon, the house that he had built, [watch this now, all the outward insignia of majesty] 5 the food of his table, the seating of his servants, the attendance of his waiters and their attire, his cupbearers, and his stairway by which he went up to the house of the LORD, there was no more spirit in her.

Her breath was taken away by the majesty of what she saw and the wisdom that fell from the lips of this king of Israel. Her breath was taken away and she said in verse 6,

6 ...she said to the king, "It was a true report which I heard in my own land about your words and your wisdom. 7 Nevertheless I did not believe the reports, until I came and my eyes had seen it. And behold, the half was not told me. You exceed in wisdom and prosperity the report which I heard. 8 How blessed are your men, how blessed are these your servants who stand before you continually and hear your wisdom. 9 Blessed be the LORD your God who delighted in you to set you on the throne of Israel; because

the LORD loved Israel forever, therefore He made you king, to do justice and righteousness."

And in all of this, in all that we've said here this evening, beloved, friends, brothers and sisters in Christ, we haven't even mentioned his army, the royal court of his officers, the counselors that he enjoyed, and we're only describing with the written word the majesty of the buildings which testified to his eminence, and yet there's a sense in which as we read the word and the Spirit gives us understanding, that our own breath is taken away. Such authority given to a man, to a king on earth, such displays of outward majesty that dwarfed and intimidated someone who, in one sense, the Queen of Sheba, who was somewhat of a peer to him as she was a monarch over her own realm with a lot of wealth and a large retinue of her own, she comes into the presence of Solomon and she's overwhelmed by it, how much more little ordinary men and women like you and me to come and see that. And the majesty, beloved, the majesty, those outward emblems of majesty, those outward displays of nobility – watch this – they accented his authority. The majesty, the outward majesty caused people to respect even more his unseen authority so that the outward manifestation of glory testified to authority which evoked respect and awe and submission. There were no others beside this king let alone over him on this human level. This is the authority and the majesty of a king as it would have been known by the people of Israel at the time that the Psalms were being written. They had an intuitive understanding, they lived with this day by day, they were born into this culture, they knew it intuitively, all that we've tried to do is to put our nose up against the glass to look in from a distance, to look through the glass and to try to see it a little bit through their eyes. The king, the concept of king communicated authority and majesty to them. The king had outward displays of his majesty that showed forth the authority within his realm.

Now what does all of that have to do with the God of the Bible? Why have we spent the past 50 minutes or so talking about this? Well, beloved, to quote a different lexical source, "When Scripture describes God as King, it is using a metaphor to describe His divine and absolute rule over all creation." And here is where this becomes very edifying, very sanctifying, very sobering which draws us to worship in ways that only Scripture could prompt us to do. When God is declared to be King, it means that he has authority over all creation. Everything that happens visible and invisible, God reigns over it and he has authority to dispose of it as he wishes. The human subjects, the 7 billion humans that live on the earth, are under his authority and he can do with them what he pleases and there is no one to challenge him in that. As men rise in authority on a local, state, national or worldwide stage, they are under the authority of this God whom Scripture describes. He has vast authority and then you say, "Well, where are his displays of majesty? What displays his majesty? What is the outward token of majesty that testifies to his authority?" And Scripture bids us to look up into the glories of heaven, to look up at the order of the universe and the spin of galaxies in perfect order, to look up at the brilliance of the sun which blinds us if we look at it, the stars in their order, the order of day and night, the seasons that come and go with predictable regularity, and we look up at that vast infinite display of majesty and we get something of a picture of the unspeakable authority of God must be like. He is clothed in majesty not of a human palace built with

human hands that testified to the glory of Solomon, he is clothed in the majesty of the universe which declares his work and his praise. You can look, you could look at it from a different perspective and look at the deliverance of Israel from slavery in Egypt and their deliverance through the Red Sea and you see a display of the majesty and authority of God as he overturned the most powerful army on earth to set his people free. God is free to reign over men in the universe as he wishes. He is clothed in the majesty of his being, the majesty of his works, and there are no gods over him or beside him.

That's how great he is and then we haven't even gotten to the greatest display of them all, the greatest display of his authority and majesty in the incarnation of his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. What is his authority? What is his majesty? What is the majesty of Christ? Well, he has such authority that he can speak the word and calm a sea. He can speak a word and demons come out of those that they were possessing and they obey. How great is his authority? How great is his majesty? He died and came back to life and in his death he exercised authority over sin to put sin away for those who believe in him. He reigns and has authority over sin, over death, over hell, that's how great his authority is. It's not simply the visible physical realm over which God reigns, he reigns over death itself. He reigns over sin and it is by that authority and by that majesty that he has the ability to forgive our sins and to evoke our worship and our praise.

The majesty of this King, the authority of this King, beloved, means that he has the ability to save your soul to the uttermost. For those of you who have put your faith in Christ, there is absolutely no possibility whatsoever that your faith is misplaced or that your faith will be squandered or that somehow God will not deliver on all of his promises to you that are set forth in the word of God. There are many reasons why that is true. God is true, God is faithful, God is loyal, all that's true, tonight we just simply see that it has to be true that God will deliver on his promises because he has the authority to do so. He is free to do what he wishes and it has pleased our Father to set his grace and goodness upon us in the Lord Jesus Christ and he has the authority to carry us through no matter what the tribulations may be in the meantime. He has the authority and the majesty and the intention to carry us through until all of his promises are fulfilled and we will realize in Christ every promise in Christ is yes and amen. And to those of you that are not in Christ, when Jesus calls you to come and says, "Come to me all ye who labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest," he has the authority to make that command to you because he's over you, this is his command, this is his call that he calls you and commands you to obey, and so you respond to his authority and then we realize that we are responding to the majesty of a divine love that has the ability to deliver on the promise when he says, "I will give rest to your soul."

What a King. What authority. What majesty. It takes many Psalms to extol this authority, to extol this majesty as we have come to this section of the Psalter and it will be our privilege next week to begin to look at those Psalms in detail. I hope you'll be with us because I know it will be an edifying time.

Let's pray together.

Majesty, worship His majesty. Unto Jesus be all honor, glory and praise. O Christ, we do magnify Your authority. We've hardly scratched the surface in anything that we've said, but we acknowledge Your authority over our souls. We're grateful that You are in that position for unlike human kings, You are righteous and true and faithful and gracious altogether. It is remarkable, O Christ, it is marvelous, it is wonderful to think that the One who has all authority is You and in You, Your authority is exercised in a manner consistent with all of Your attributes of holiness, justice, righteousness, grace, mercy, peace and patience, among others. To be under the authority of you as King is the greatest possible position that we could be in and so we thank You for exercising Your authority to bring us into Your kingdom, we pray for those who are outside Your kingdom either hearing this word in this room or in subsequent media, Father, we pray for them. We would have all the world under Your authority. We ask You to exercise Your authority to the good of Your subjects but even more so to the great glory of Your holy and majestic name. We pray these things through Christ our Lord. Amen.

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