

Jesus, Our King



READ FOR THIS WEEK'S STUDY: Hebrews 1.

MEMORY VERSE: “He [Jesus] is the reflection of God’s glory and the exact imprint [likeness] of God’s very being, and he sustains [keeps] all things by his powerful word. When he had made purification [cleansing] for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty [God] on high” (Hebrews 1:3, NRSV).

IMPORTANT THOUGHT: Hebrews often shows Jesus as our High Priest. But Hebrews also pictures Jesus as our King.

THERE HAVE BEEN MANY KINGS THROUGHOUT HISTORY. Some kings were good. Some kings were bad. Because they often used their power, they could decide the future of their nations. Israel did not want the judges to be their leaders. They wanted a king instead.

The Bible shows Jesus as a King. Jesus is the King of kings (Revelation 17:14; Revelation 19:16). In Hebrews, Jesus the Priest-King is more than just a kind of ruler. He is able to do so much for us because He is more than just a human. This week we will take a look at Jesus’ work as King.

THE WEEK AT A GLANCE: How does Hebrews picture Jesus as King? How did the earthly kings of Israel symbolize Jesus’ work as King? Why is the character of a king so important? What does Jesus do for us in His work as King?

*Study this week’s lesson to prepare for Sabbath, July 12.

SUN JESUS, THE KING.

Hebrews 1 is a “hymn” describing Jesus. God has spoken to us through Jesus (Hebrews 1:1). Jesus is the perfect example of God the Father (Hebrews 1:4). Hebrews 1:2, 3 summarizes Jesus’ life by showing that He was with the Father before the earth began. Hebrews 1:2, 3 covers His stay on earth and shows that He has gone to heaven to be our High Priest. He takes part in God’s government and kingship.¹ He is better than all the angels (Hebrews 1:4).



Jesus created the world through His word.

Hebrews 1:4-14 continues to praise Jesus: (1) Jesus is the Son (Hebrews 1:5); (2) we are to worship Jesus (Hebrews 1:6); (3) Jesus is King and God

from eternity² to eternity (Hebrews 1:8, 9); (4) Jesus is Creator (Hebrews 1:10-12); (5) Jesus takes part in God’s rule, and all people will be under His control (Hebrews 1:13).

Jesus as King appears in all of Hebrews. But the clearest example of Jesus as King is found in Hebrews 1. “In Hebrews 1 is shown the omnipotence³ of Jesus.”—Adapted from Ellen G. White Comments, *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 921.

In different places in the book of Hebrews, the author shows Jesus at the “right hand” of God: Hebrews 1:3, 4, 13; Hebrews 8:1; Hebrews 10:12; Hebrews 12:2. After looking up these verses, ask this question: Do these verses talk about Jesus’ earthly position? Or do they explain Jesus’ heavenly position? Give reasons for your answer.

Jesus is never called a king in Hebrews. But different phrases in Hebrews show us that He is a King. What verses in Hebrews 1 point to Jesus as King? Look up these other verses too: Hebrews 2:7, 8; Hebrews 7:1-3, 17; Hebrews 10:13. What do they say that prove Jesus is our King?

The hints about Jesus as King are quite strong in Hebrews. Jesus has an everlasting⁴ throne. He holds the

¹kingship—the authority (power) and rule that come with being a king; the position of being a king.

²eternity—life without end; forever.

³omnipotence—power that has no limit.

⁴everlasting—lasting forever; without beginning or end.

scepter⁵ of uprightness⁶ and justice (fairness). He is crowned. Everyone and everything are under His control. King Melchizedek⁷ is an example of Jesus. Clearly, Jesus is the King of the universe.

The character of a king is very important. A cruel, wicked king can destroy his kingdom spiritually and physically. Why is the thought of Jesus being King of the universe so comforting?

MON JESUS, THE PROMISED PRIEST-KING.

The king symbol in Hebrews is based on many Old Testament chapters such as Psalm 2; Psalm 45; and Psalm 110. Hebrews often uses Psalm 110. Psalm 110 is the basis of Hebrews 1. Hebrews 1:3 can be traced to Psalm 110:1. Hebrews 1:13 also comes from Psalm 110:1.

What are the important thoughts developed in Psalm 110?

The New Testament often quotes from Psalm 110. Psalm 110:1 explains that the king is placed on the throne. Psalm 110:4 explains that the priest-

hood is given to the king. Other verses in Psalm 110 talk about the great power of this king. God will control this king's enemies. The king will take part in God's rule. This king also will be a priest-king forever. This is a remarkable (amazing) idea, because no king in David's line served as a priest throughout Israel's history. So here we find a direct Messianic prophecy.⁸ The prophecy points to Jesus only.

Read Matthew 22:41-45. Why does Jesus quote Psalm 110? What was He telling the religious leaders about Himself?

In old-time Jewish thinking, there were to be two Messiahs (Saviors). One Savior was a royal Messiah from the tribe of Judah, and the other Savior was a priestly Messiah from the tribe of Levi. In the book of Hebrews, the two Messiahs are united into one Messiah, the Priest-King Jesus. This is a theme developed all through Hebrews.

Read Psalm 110 with Hebrews 1 in mind. Notice the promises of the power and sure victory of "my Lord" (Psalm 110:1) and of "the Son." How can we receive comfort and hope from these promises?

⁵scepter—an object (thing) in the king's hand showing his authority as king.

⁶uprightness—goodness; honesty; righteousness (holiness).

⁷Melchizedek—a priest-king in Abraham's time. Abraham paid his tithe to him (Genesis 14:17-20). Melchizedek is thought to be a symbol of Jesus as Priest-King.

⁸Messianic prophecy—a prophecy about the Savior who was to come.

TUE JESUS AS KING.

As Christians, we believe Jesus was with the Father from the eternal⁹ past. Jesus was not a created person. But the author of Hebrews was not interested in discussing Jesus' rule before His birth on earth.

What was important was that Jesus' real rule began after He died, rose from the dead, and went back to heaven. Then He sat down at the right hand of God after "he had made purification [cleansing] for sins" (Hebrews 1:3, NRSV). Jesus' suffering on earth and His death were followed by His resurrection¹⁰ and His exaltation¹¹ in heaven (Hebrews 2:6-9). First there was the Cross. Then there was the crown (Hebrews 12:2).

Study Acts 2:33-35. What is Peter saying in these verses about Jesus being placed on the throne in heaven? What have we received because Jesus was placed on the throne? Why is Jesus being placed on the throne so important?

Notice that Peter quotes Psalm 110:1. Psalm 110:1 is interpreted as Jesus becoming King after He rose from the dead and went up into heaven. The proof of Jesus rising from

the dead and going back to heaven was the gift of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost.¹² In Acts 5:30-32, Peter returns to this same topic.

Jesus became King after He brought salvation to humankind.¹³ In this way, salvation and Jesus as King are connected. As the results of salvation are never ending, so will Jesus always be King. His throne is forever and ever.

Jesus rules over His angels, His saints, and the heavenly world right now. But His enemies are still around. They will come under His rule in the future. His full rule of the universe is still in the future. His full rule of the universe will come at the end. The end is the time when sin and sinners are no more. All the questions of the great controversy (war) between Satan and God will have been answered. And God and His government will be proven right.

What does the connection between Jesus being King and salvation mean for us? In what way does Jesus being King give us the hope of salvation?

WED THE CHARACTER OF JESUS, THE KING.

What are some of the good parts of King Jesus' character?

⁹eternal—forever; without beginning or end; lasting forever.

¹⁰resurrection—to come back to life after dying.

¹¹exaltation—to put in a higher position. Jesus was exalted to King; praising, honoring, glorifying.

¹²Pentecost—the time the disciples received the outpouring of the Holy Spirit after Jesus went back to heaven. Read Acts 2.

¹³humankind—all the people of the world.

Hebrews 1:8, 9 _____

Hebrews 1:12 _____

Hebrews 2:9, 10; Hebrews 12:2, 3 _____

Hebrews 2:11 _____

Hebrews 7:1-3 _____



Jesus is not afraid to call us His brother or sister because of what He has done for us on the cross.

The title of "king" can stir up different feelings. For this reason, we must understand what kind of king Jesus is.

1. Jesus is the King of peace (Hebrews 7:1, 2). The same as Melchizedek, Jesus is the King of peace. The name *Salem* is connected to the Hebrew idea of shalom, "peace." Shalom describes peace, completeness (fullness), and welfare.¹⁴ It includes good health, successful relationships with other people, friendship, and the idea of salvation. There is no other peacemaker like Jesus. Peace is His character.

2. Jesus is the King of righteousness (holiness) and justice (fairness) (Hebrews 7:2; Hebrews 1:8). Jesus is always fair. He is righteous (holy). His righteousness puts us in the right relationship with God. Jesus loves righteousness and hates sin (Hebrews 1:9). "To love righteousness is higher and purer than to do righteousness. . . . To work because it is our duty is praiseworthy. But to work because of our love, is more praiseworthy. . . . Love is what made God save us."—Adapted from *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 400.

3. Jesus is the King of self-sacrificial love and kindness (Hebrews 1:3; Hebrews 2:9, 10; Hebrews 12:2-6). In Jesus, there is no selfishness or self-centeredness. He lives for other people. He accepts suffering and death, especially when that suffering and death will help many, many people to be saved.

4. Jesus is the King of humbleness and servant-leadership (Hebrews

¹⁴welfare—being well; doing well.

2:11). Jesus is the ruling Lord of the universe. But He calls us brothers and sisters. He is the King of kings. But He is called our Servant. He is the best Example of servant-leadership.

5. Jesus is the King of immutability¹⁵ (Hebrews 1:12; Hebrews 13:8). This does not mean that Jesus is not influenced by our joys, sorrows, and decisions. It means that His love, kindness, and justice never fail and never change. We always can depend upon Him.

Write a paragraph about the hope that awaits us because of each part of Jesus' character listed above. How does each part of His character help us fulfill the first and most important of all commandments (Matthew 22:37, 38)?

THU JESUS, KING FOR US.

Yesterday, we studied the parts of Jesus' character that make Him our King. Today, we will study His work for our sake. Actions grow out of the character. Actions are naturally related to character. We saw the wonderful parts of Jesus' character that make Him our King. What does it mean to us that He is our King? It means all of the following things listed below.

Write down what the verses are

saying about each of these things:

Salvation—Hebrews 2:3; Hebrews 5:9; Hebrews 7:25 _____

Faith—Hebrews 12:2 _____

Peace—Hebrews 7:2 _____

Sanctification—Hebrews 2:11; Hebrews 10:14 _____

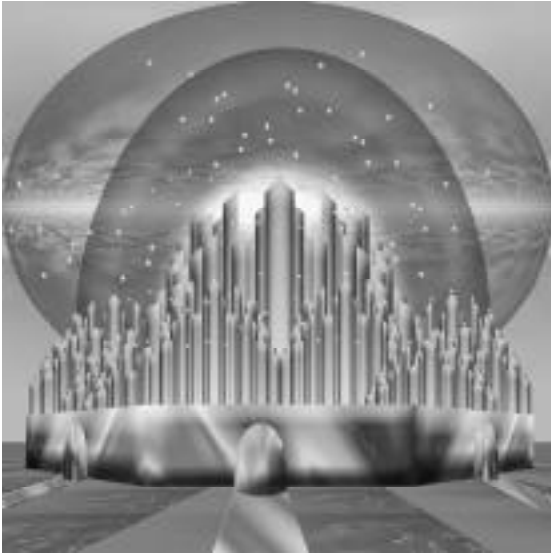
An example—Hebrews 12:2, 3 _____

Closeness—Hebrews 2:14, 17; Hebrews 4:15; Hebrews 7:25 _____

Help—Hebrews 2:16; Hebrews 4:16 _____

Providing a better future—Hebrews 11:16; Hebrews 13:14 _____

¹⁵immutability—not changing; refusing to be influenced.



Jesus our King is preparing a new place for us to live.

Hebrews is about Jesus in His work of saving us from the terrible results of sin. It is about Jesus saving us from eternal death. It is about what He is doing for us now. He is helping us survive in this world. He is giving us peace, power, and hope as we fight the fight of faith. He is encouraging us to hold fast to the end, where a crown of glory is waiting for us. This is the message of the book of Hebrews. It was what Paul wrote to the believers in his day. It is what he has written for us today.

Think about your own spiritual needs at this very moment. Is there any special area where you are struggling? Look again at the list of what it means to us that Jesus is our King. You may find something there that will meet your spiritual needs.

FRI **ADDITIONAL STUDY:** Ellen G. White had the following vision of heaven: “And I (White) saw another field full of flowers. As I picked the flowers, I cried out: ‘They (the flowers) will never fade.’ Next I saw a field of tall grass, very glorious to watch. The field was living green. The field had a reflection of silver and gold as it waved proudly to the glory of King Jesus. Then we (White and the people with her) entered a field full of animals—the lion, the lamb, the leopard, and the wolf were all together in perfect peace. We passed through the animals. And they followed us in peace. Then we entered a forest of glorious light. The branches of the trees waved back and forth. We all cried out: ‘We will live safely in the wilderness and sleep in the woods.’ We passed through the woods, because we were on our way to Mount Zion.”—Adapted from *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 68.



“The way to heaven is rough. Wild bushes and thorns are in our way. But

we can walk cheerfully through the rough pathway because we know that Jesus, the King of glory, once walked through it before us.”—Adapted from Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*, June 10, 1852.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Why does the book of Hebrews describe Jesus as a King? Some Christians think we should not call Jesus our King. Do you think we should call Jesus our King? Why or why not?
2. Being a king includes having authority (power). People submit to the king's power by obeying him. But many societies today challenge authority. Some people choose to think of Jesus as a friend rather than as

the King of the universe. How do you think of Jesus? What does it mean to accept Jesus as Lord? How does having Jesus as your Lord influence your everyday life?

3. This week we studied about all the things Jesus has done to save us. But some people who know of these things will still be lost. Why?

SUMMARY: Jesus is not only a king or even the most powerful King. He is Priest-King. He is connected to us as our King. And He is connected to us as our Priest. With His ministry (work) as Priest-King for our sake, Jesus enters another level of salvation. The readers of the Letter to the Hebrews can depend on Him in every way. In their King, they can find forgiveness, salvation, understanding, help, and strength.