

PSALMS 2; 110

KING BENJAMIN'S SPEECH AND THE ROYAL PSALMS

Mosiah 5:7: sons . . . this day . . . begotten you

Mosiah 5:9: at the right hand [of God]

Psalm 2:7: I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.

Psalm 110:1: The LORD said unto my LORD, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.

Comments

Mosiah 5:7 and 5:9 appear to each paraphrase Psalms 2:7 and 110:1 respectively. In Mosiah 5:7, King Benjamin declares that “because of the covenant which ye have made ye shall be called the children of Christ, his sons, and his daughters; for behold, this day he hath spiritually begotten you.” The parallel text in Psalm 2:7 reads, “Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.” Benjamin then indicates that all who have entered into the covenant “shall be found at the right hand of God” (Mosiah 5:9). This is comparable to the Lord’s invitation in Psalm 110:1 to “sit thou at my right hand.”

The following are words found in proximity to these verses:

“rejoice” – Mosiah 5:4; Psalm 2:11

“wrath of God” – Mosiah 5:5; Psalm 2:5; 110:5

“serve” – Mosiah 5:13; Psalm 2:11

“son” – Mosiah 5:7; Psalm 2:7, 12

“Lord” – Mosiah 5:2, 15; Psalms 2:2, 4, 7, 11; 110:1

“anointed/Christ” – Mosiah 5:7–10, 15; Psalm 2:2

“willing” – Mosiah 5:5; 110:3

“power” – Mosiah 5:15; Psalm 110:3

“drink” – Mosiah 5:5; Psalm 110:7

“head” – Mosiah 5:8; Psalm 110:7

The contexts of Mosiah 5 and Psalms 2 and 110 are essentially the same. Notably, a careful reading of Psalms 2 and 110 indicates that they likely have a shared origin or life setting. They share several parallel words and concepts (enemy kings, rod, judgment, wrath, Zion, and so forth). Although the setting is not certain, most scholars would agree that Psalms 2 and 110 are royal psalms and that they would have been used in coronation ceremonies. This was the context of King Benjamin’s speech—the coronation of his son, Mosiah.¹ The addressee in both psalms would likely have originally been the Israelite king. King Benjamin would have been addressing his son, the new king, but he was also very clearly expanding, or democratizing, the coronation ceremony to include all the men and women present in the audience.

Psalms 2 and 110, taken together, depict the coronation or enthronement of the anointed one, including the decree that he is the Lord’s son and that he is “this day” begotten of the Lord. He is invited to sit at the Lord’s “right hand.” This is exactly what King Benjamin declared of those people who entered into the covenant. Although these psalms do not mention the word *covenant*, Psalms scholar Peter C. Craigie argued that the decree from Psalm 2:7 “is a document, given to the king during the coronation ceremony (cf. 2 Kgs 11:12); it is his personal covenant document, renewing God’s covenant commitment to the dynasty of David.” He further explains that “at the heart of the covenant is the concept of *sonship*.”²

Conclusions

The best explanation for why these phrases from Psalms 2 and 110 show up in Mosiah 5 is that King Benjamin used the words or concepts that were part of ancient Israelite covenant renewal that was performed during coronation ceremonies. The words have been democratized so that they no longer apply to the king alone but to all citizens who desired to enter into the covenant.

¹ Mosiah 1:10; 2:30; 6:3.

² Peter C. Craigie, *Psalms 1–50*, Word Biblical Commentary 1 (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2004), 67.

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