

August 2009

Frank W. Nelte

THE MEANING OF PSALM 110:1

Psalm 110:1 is one of the verses which collectively show that Jesus Christ co-existed as God with God the Father during the times of the Old Testament, that Jesus Christ is the second member of the God Family, that His existence predates the creation account in Genesis chapter 1, and that He has always existed with God the Father.

There are now a number of groups amongst the churches of God that deny Jesus Christ's existence prior to His birth as a human being. It follows that they have to argue against all of the Scriptures that support Jesus Christ's prior existence. Psalm 110:1 is one of those verses they must try to "explain away".

The most common tactic employed in such attempts is to try to explain what the Scripture in question supposedly does NOT mean. Typically such attempts will make no effort to explain what the verses in question actually DO mean; it is sufficient to their cause to claim that somehow they do NOT mean what they clearly seem to say. We should note the negativity inherent in that approach ... striving to show what the Scriptures don't mean without any attempt to show what they do mean.

Before we carefully examine Psalm 110:1, let's briefly review some of the main Scriptures that apply to Jesus Christ's existence prior to his human birth.

SCRIPTURES ABOUT CHRIST'S PRIOR EXISTENCE

Here is a random collection of some of the main Scriptures that apply to Jesus Christ's prior existence.

JOHN 8:58 = Christ said "Before Abraham was, I am". In this context Jesus Christ clearly claimed to have existed before Abraham was even born. The Jews correctly understood this claim and for that claim they wanted to stone Him.

LUKE 10:18 = Christ said "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven". This is a clear reference to an event before the time of the New Testament, which Christ claimed to have witnessed. So Christ is again claiming to have existed before His human birth. And Christ's ability to actually HAVE SEEN Satan falling ABSOLUTELY DEMANDS that Jesus Christ had been a spirit being. Human beings can't see Satan! Even if you and I had been present at that occasion we would NOT have seen Satan's falling from heaven because Satan is invisible to human eyes. Only spirit beings could have witnessed Satan's fall from heaven.

JOHN 17:5 = Christ said "O Father, glorify You Me with Your own self with the glory which I had with You before the world (Greek "kosmos") was". The Greek word "kosmos" generally refers to human society, and thus "before the kosmos was" refers to before the creation of Adam and Eve. Christ here claimed to have existed in a state of glory even before the creation of Adam.

JOHN 17:8 = Christ said "I have given unto them the words WHICH YOU GAVE ME", clearly implying that before Christ's birth as a human being the Father had already given Christ a message for mankind. Jesus continued to say "I came out FROM YOU", implying Christ's prior existence with the Father.

JOHN 1:1-2 = Jesus Christ is identified by John as "the Word" which existed in a beginning (referring to

a time before Adam's creation) with God the Father.

JOHN 1:3 = John says that "all things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made". John is trying to make clear that Jesus Christ is the One who created this entire physical universe of which we are a part.

JOHN 1:10 = The world (Greek "kosmos") was made by Jesus Christ. This is another way of saying that Jesus Christ was the Creator of Adam and Eve.

JOHN 10:30 = Christ said "I and My Father are one". These words were spoken during His human lifetime. These words could ONLY BE TRUE if Jesus Christ had existed with God the Father prior to His human life. This statement could not possibly be true for ANY human person who had not established A PRIOR RELATIONSHIP with God the Father. It is easy to overlook the ramifications of verses like this.

GENESIS 4:6 with JOHN 5:37 = Genesis 4:6 is one of very many Scriptures that shows God speaking to human beings (in this case to Cain). Yet in John 5:37 Jesus Christ said very clearly in reference to God the Father "you have neither heard His voice AT ANY TIME ...". This means that in all OT passages which show God as speaking to someone, that particular God was NOT God the Father. Therefore there existed throughout OT times TWO individual "Gods", only One of whom had direct contact with human beings.

GENESIS 3:8-13 with JOHN 5:37 = Adam and Eve very obviously MUST have seen God when they were first created. Yet according to John 5:37 that could not have been God the Father. So there was a God other than the Father who created and interacted with Adam and Eve. That "other God" was Jesus Christ.

JOHN 8:42 = Christ said "I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of Myself, but He sent Me". The context shows that Christ meant that He came forth from God the Father as a conscious Being with knowledge and awareness, not as a sperm cell implanted in Mary's womb. IF Christ had not existed prior to being conceived in Mary's womb, THEN God the Father could not have "sent Him"; such instructions can only be given to thinking individuals, not to sperm cells. So Christ's statement here once again implies His prior existence. Christ's whole statement ASSUMES the existence of TWO Beings prior to Christ's human life.

HEBREWS 1:2 = This tells us that Jesus Christ created "the worlds" (Greek "aionas", meaning "ages"). "Ages" implies the passage of time, and this necessitates that Jesus Christ must have existed BEFORE these "ages" began.

HEBREWS 1:3 = Jesus Christ also possesses the brightness of the Father's glory and He is "the express image of His person". This is a reference to the way Jesus Christ ALREADY WAS PRIOR TO HIS HUMAN LIFE! This is the glory Christ refers to in John 17:5, the glory He had shared with the Father BEFORE the creation of Adam.

COLOSSIANS 1:16 = This tells us that ALL THINGS were created by Jesus Christ, and the rest of the verse spells out what "all things" means in this particular context. The focus of this verse is on the past, not on the future.

EPHESIANS 3:9 = This verse also tells us that God the Father created "all things" by Jesus Christ. This presupposes that Jesus Christ existed before the creation of Adam.

PSALM 45:6-7 = These verses state: "Your throne, O God (Elohim), is for ever and ever ... therefore God (Elohim), Your God (Elohim), has anointed YOU with the oil of gladness". These verses speak

about TWO Gods, BOTH IDENTIFIED AS "ELOHIM", with One of them being anointed by the Other and being given a permanent position of rulership. So this verse is written from the premise that TWO Gods already existed during Old Testament times.

PSALM 110:1 = Again David speaks about TWO Gods. This verse we will examine shortly in great detail.

GENESIS 1:26 = This verse shows God saying "let US make man in OUR image, after OUR likeness", implying that the God who was here speaking, was speaking for TWO Gods. The word "Elohim" that is used here is a PLURAL word, referring to a category of Beings who are all "God". See this verse in conjunction with Psalm 45:6-7.

ISAIAH 53:5-6 = When it says "the LORD (God the Father) has laid on Him (Jesus Christ) the iniquity of us all", it is speaking about the sacrifice that Jesus Christ would bring on our behalf a number of centuries after the time of Isaiah. But this statement also ABSOLUTELY DEMANDS THAT JESUS CHRIST MUST ALREADY HAVE EXISTED AT THE TIME THIS STATEMENT WAS MADE! These statements could not possibly be made about an individual who didn't even exist at the time these statements were made!

It is absurd to imply that God the Father predicted CREATING a Savior centuries down the road, and guaranteeing that this individual with a totally free and independent will of His own would somehow NEVER sin! If God could guarantee that any created being with a free will would never sin, THEN God could have created Adam and Eve to be that way, and God could have created ALL the angels to be that way (one third followed Satan into sin). Predictions about a Savior who would live a sinless life could ONLY be made about an individual who ALREADY existed, AND WHOSE CHARACTER WAS ALREADY KNOWN to God the Father.

This principle applies to ALL the OT Scriptures that predicted the life and actions of the Savior to come; they all presuppose the existence of the One who would become that Savior. Without a prior knowledge of that Savior's character NONE of those predictions could have been made by God. Real character, which is based on exercising one's free will, can never be predicted with absolute certainty, not even by God. Real character is only established after tests and trials have been confronted and dealt with by the exercise of a free independent will.

MATTHEW 11:27 = Christ said "neither knows any man the Father, except the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal Him". This again shows that the God who dealt with men in the Old Testament could not have been God the Father. Therefore there must have been a second God already in existence during the Old Testament, and that second God was Jesus Christ. The same comments apply to LUKE 10:22.

HEBREWS 13:8 = Jesus Christ is "the same yesterday and today and for ever". This is not speaking about two or three consecutive days! The clear intent is to identify THREE CONSECUTIVE PERIODS OF TIME! "Yesterday" refers to the Old Testament times, the past; "today" refers to the present, the time of Christ's ministry and the immediate generation thereafter; "for ever" refers to the long distant future. In this expression Paul obviously contrasted "for ever" with "yesterday", making clear that "yesterday" is intended to cover the long distant past. So this verse also ASSUMES that Jesus Christ existed in the long distant past.

HEBREWS 7:3 = Melchizedek is shown as someone who has ALWAYS EXISTED. The whole point of Paul's references to Melchizedek (i.e. Hebrews 5:6; 5:10; 6:20; 7:1; 7:10; 7:11; 7:15; 7:17; 7:21) is to show that in the early Old Testament times (i.e. only before the Exodus) Jesus Christ was Melchizedek. Hebrews shows Christ and Melchizedek as equals, with ALL of Melchizedek's qualities and attributes also applying to Jesus Christ. Any individual who has "NEITHER BEGINNING OF DAYS NOR END OF

LIFE" has to be God! Even all the angels have a "beginning of days". The expression "made like unto the Son of God" is Paul's way of stating to the Jews in the Church that the One known as "Melchizedek" in the time of Abraham is the same individual who later obtained the identity "the Son of God", i.e. Jesus Christ. Christ's existence as Melchizedek is what Paul had in mind with "yesterday" six chapters later (i.e. 13:8), that Melchizedek and Jesus Christ are really the same individual.

1 CORINTHIANS 10:4 = Jesus Christ was "the Rock" in the wilderness, after Israel had left Egypt. With this statement the Apostle Paul states that Jesus Christ existed in Old Testament times, that Jesus Christ was the God who led Israel out of Egypt.

We now have more than 20 Scriptures that all apply to Jesus Christ's prior existence. None of them require special grammatical explanations. The points I have made above are all immediately apparent when we read these Scriptures. The implications and inferences inherent in these verses are easy to see. They all work towards creating a clearer picture regarding Jesus Christ's prior existence, and they are all compatible with one another.

It follows that people who reject Jesus Christ's prior existence as both Melchizedek and also as the God of the Old Testament must find ways to argue against every single one of these Scriptures. They must persuade us that all these verses don't really say and imply the things these verses in actual fact do say and imply very clearly. These people must discredit the obvious and immediate meanings of these Scriptures, even if they don't make an effort to present some theoretical alternate meaning or significance for these verses. Their goal is to deny the obvious and overt meaning of these Scriptures. Nothing else matters to them. In the process they invariably make some mistakes.

Let's now take a look at Psalm 110:1 to examine one example of this approach.

THE ARGUMENT PRESENTED FOR PSALM 110:1

This verse reads as follows in the KJV.

"A Psalm of David. The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool."

Retaining the two Hebrew words translated as "Lord" in this verse, we have:

YHVH said unto ADONAI, sit You at My right hand until I make Your enemies Your footstool.

The attempt to discredit that this verse shows God the Father speaking to Jesus Christ is centered on the word "Adonai". The argument involves certain grammatical technicalities, of which we should be aware. And while the Hebrew alphabet is strange to most of us, these grammatical technicalities are not difficult to understand. Nor is there any real ambiguity about the correct meaning of Psalm 110:1.

Note! The grammatical technicalities are not needed so much to understand the meaning of this verse, as they are to refute the grammatical claims that are made in an attempt to deny the obvious meaning of this verse.

Consider the following points.

1) There is the Hebrew word "adon", which is formed from an unused root word that means "to rule". This word is in the KJV usually translated as "Lord" or as "lord" or as "master". This word is used 335 times in the Old Testament.

2) Then there is the Hebrew word "Adonai", which is formed from "Adon". "Adonai" is considered to be an emphatic form of "Adon". This word is used 434 times in the Old Testament, and in the KJV it is translated 431 times as "Lord", 2 times as "lord" and one time as "God".

3) Biblical Hebrew makes extensive use of prefixes and suffixes which are attached to words in order to communicate additional information without the need to provide additional words. In our discussion prefixes are not a real concern. But the suffixes involved in this issue are extremely important. They hold the key for correctly refuting false claims for this verse. Specifically, it is the personal pronoun for "my" which is suffixed to the noun "adon" that is of concern to us in this question.

4) The Hebrew text of the Old Testament does NOT contain any vowel pointings. It is known that the vowel pointings were provided later (i.e. long after the books were originally written) by the Masoretes, the scribes who copied the Old Testament books between the 7th and the 11th centuries A.D. Where without vowel pointings a word could potentially have several different meanings, the vowel pointings had the effect of narrowing down the range of potential meanings that could be attached to a word consisting of only consonants.

An analogy might help to illustrate this. If our English words were all written without vowel sounds (i.e. consonants only), then the word "rm" could mean: room, ream, roam, rim, ram, rum or rhyme. By adding the vowels we eliminate any potential "mistaken identities" between these words "room, ream, roam, etc.". This is basically what the Masoretes hoped to achieve with the system of vowel pointings they devised for the Hebrew text, eliminate some possible sources of confusion.

However, since these vowel pointings were only invented many centuries after the books of the OT were originally written, it means that the vowel pointings these Masoretes provided represent only the understanding of those Masoretes. These vowel pointings were NOT written into the official copies of the OT books; those are still printed without the added vowel points. And the Masoretes assuredly provided the wrong vowels (and thus the wrong word!) in many instances.

I don't know how many words there are in the Hebrew text of the Old Testament. But I do know that the Hebrew text of the Pentateuch contains just under 80,000 words. That represents close to one third of the total text of the whole Old Testament. So it is likely that the Hebrew text of the whole Old Testament contains around 200,000 words, and possibly even more.

Now it is known that the Masoretes deliberately provided the wrong vowel pointings for 5,321 occurrences of the word "YHVH". In addition to these deliberate mistakes they also made mistakes where they didn't understand the text correctly. While there is no clear way to prove this one way or the other, I suspect that they made mistakes in at least 1% of cases. This would add another 2,000 words or so with wrong vowel pointings.

NOTE! This is not a case of errors in the actual Hebrew text; it is only a case of attaching wrong vowels to the text for the purpose of interpreting the text. But since these vowel pointings are acknowledged to not be a part of the official Hebrew text of the OT books, therefore the actual Hebrew text is not affected by these vowel pointing errors. It is not the Hebrew text that is corrupted by these added vowels; it is THE INTERPRETATION of the Hebrew text that is affected. And the vast majority of the vowels provided by this pointing system (99%, excluding the word YHVH,?) are most likely correct.

5) In order to express the personal pronoun "my" the 10th letter of the Hebrew alphabet (i.e. "yod") is attached as a suffix to the end of a word. Attaching a yod to a word adds the sound "ee" or "ai" to the end of that word. So where "adon" means "lord" the word "adonai" means "my lord". The word "adon" consists of the three letters "aleph, dalet, nun" (i.e. ADN), and the word "adonai" consists of the four letters "aleph, dalet, nun, yod" (i.e. ADN+yod).

6) Now in the unpointed Hebrew text of the Old Testament there was no way to distinguish between "my lord" referring to a human being (e.g. as used in reference to Abraham, pharaoh, Boaz, Eli, Elijah, etc.), and "my Lord" referring to God. In this text here I have tried to create a visual distinction by writing the word "lord" with either a small "l" or with a capital "L" when it is intended to indicate a reference to God. Such an immediate visual distinction is not possible in the official unpointed Hebrew text.

7) VERBALLY the Jews could immediately distinguish whether the word "my lord" was a reference to a human man or whether it was a reference to God (i.e. "my Lord") by pronouncing the added yod (the pronoun for "my") in two different ways.

When "my lord" is a reference to a man, then they pronounced the added yod as the letter "i" (pronounced "ee", so that the end of the word "adoni" rhymes with "see"). But when "my Lord" is a reference to God, then they pronounced the added yod as the diphthong "ai" (pronounced so that the end of the word "Adonai" rhymes with "sky"). But this verbal distinction is not present in the written unpointed text.

8) Enter the Masoretes and their system of vowel pointings. When the Masoretes understood the word "aleph, daleth, nun, yod" to be a reference to a man as "my lord" (e.g. to Elijah), then they added the vowel pointings for "i" (pronounced "ee") under the letter "nun". And when the Masoretes understood the word "aleph, daleth, nun, yod" to be a reference to God as "my Lord", then they added the vowel pointings for "ai" (also presented as "ay") under the letter "nun".

So in the transliterated text we basically have "adoni" (i.e. pronounced "adonee") for references to human beings and we have "Adonai" for references to God. But we need to keep in mind that in the unpointed Hebrew text "adoni" and "Adonai" are 100% identical; there is no distinction between these two words.

9) In our modern age the numbers from Strong's Concordance have been attached to every Hebrew word in the Old Testament. These Strong's numbers are attached to each core word, irrespective of the prefixes and suffixes that may be involved in any specific passage. This exercise has made it possible for people who do not have a knowledge of Hebrew to do a considerable amount of research into the Hebrew text, though certain limitations remain for people without a knowledge of Hebrew.

10) Now here is what we need to understand in our context. There is the word "adon" which means "lord". This word has the Strong's number #113. And there is the word "Adonai" which means "my Lord" in reference to God. This word has the Strong's number #136.

In the KJV we have Strong's #113 ("adon") used 335 times, and we have Strong's #136 ("Adonai") used 434 times. HOWEVER, when I did a search through THE HEBREW TEXT I found the word "adon+yod" (i.e. the word "Adonai") in 561 verses! How does that work?

The reason for this is that in the Hebrew text there is no distinction whatsoever between "adoni" and "Adonai". In computer Bible programs the word "adon+yod" has been assigned EITHER #113 OR #136 based completely on the vowel pointings placed under the letter "nun" by those Masoretic scholars.

It was the Masoretes who decided that in 434 places the word "adon+yod" refers to God and so they vowel pointed the word for "Adonai". In the remaining 120-plus instances that I looked up they decided that the word "adon+yod" refers to a human being and so they vowel pointed the word for "adoni". A search through the Hebrew text for "adon+yod" will find ALL THE INSTANCES where the pronoun for "my" is attached to the word "adon".

[COMMENT: To keep things simple I have excluded references to "adon+yod" that involve prefixes attached to this word. The actual number of words with "adon+yod" is higher than 561 verses when prefixes are included in the search. But the 561 instances of "adon+yod" are adequate to make the point that is involved here.]

11) Now while the word "adon" (i.e. without the suffix for "my") is typically the word for human "lords", it is ALSO FREELY USED to refer to God. Thus in the KJV the 335 recorded occurrences of "adon" are translated 197 times as "lord" (men), 105 times as "master/s", and 31 times as "Lord" (in reference to God). These 31 places show that using the word "adon" for God is not an isolated occurrence.

This use of "adon" for both God and men should tell us that when the pronoun for "my" is attached to this word, then this word is ALSO FREELY USED to refer to both God and men. And that is precisely what the facts show us. Of the 561 verses with the Hebrew word "adon+yod" referred to above the Masoretes judged 434 occurrences to be references to God, by attaching the vowel "ai" to the word; and the remaining 120-plus verses they judged to be references to men, by attaching the vowel "i" to the word. In this process they made some mistakes, by sometimes attaching the vowel "i" to references to God, and sometimes attaching the vowel "ai" to references to men. These mistakes should not surprise us, coming from people who changed the vowels for the word "YHVH" in over 5,000 places, in addition to changing the whole word "YHVH" for the word "Adonai" in over 100 places.

But this division is in fact totally artificial! Strong's numbers #113 and #136 both represent the same word "adon". The pronoun for "my" doesn't make it a different word.

GOD did not see a need to distinguish between when the word "adon" refers to men from when the word "adon" refers to God. The same word is used for both. And when the pronoun for "my" is attached to "adon", it is still the same word whether it refers to God or to men. The people who assigned Strong's Numbers to the Hebrew text created an artificial division here, even as the Masoretes artificially changed the vowels for the word "YHVH". Where they felt that the word "adon" with the pronoun "my" referred to men, they left this word grouped with the word "adon" (i.e. #113). And where they felt that the word "adon" with the pronoun "my" referred to God, they placed it in a category of its own, as if it was a separate word (i.e. #136). That was somewhat artificial!

In the New Testament the Greek word "theos" is used predominantly for the true God. But the word "theos" is also used to refer to pagan gods.

We need to understand that it is NOT THE WORD "adon" or "my adon" that identifies whether this is speaking about God or about some human person; it is always THE CONTEXT that makes clear whether the words "lord" and "my lord" refer to God or to some man. Likewise, in the New Testament it is THE CONTEXT that shows whether "theos" refers to the true God or to some pagan god.

Trying to divide all references to "my lord" into two distinct words (i.e. "adoni" if they thought it referred to any man, and "Adonai" if they thought it referred to God) was nothing more than a judgment call made by the Masoretes, the same people who made a judgment call about how to pronounce the word "YHVH". In so doing the Masoretes imposed their own interpretation onto the Hebrew text.

The truth is that Strong's #113 ("adon", used 335 times) and Strong's #136 ("Adonai", used 434 times) are all one and the same word. The 769 total occurrences include around 460 references to God, and over 300 references to man or men. Trying to separate references to "my lord" from references to "lord", and further trying to divide references to "my lord" into two distinct and separate words, when they actually are identical in Hebrew, is a rather weak exercise! It is the same type of thing as unilaterally changing "YHVH" into "Adonai", something else the Masoretes also did in some places.

However, if we want to insist that "Adonai" is a separate and distinct word, then we need to at least acknowledge that SOME of the 120-plus occurrences of "adon+yod" currently grouped under Strong's #113 should be included under Strong's #136 and therefore excluded from Strong's #113. And in that case I accept that in those places where "my Lord" (adon+yod) is clearly a reference to God, there we can look upon it as a name or title for the God of the Old Testament. And in that case even though "Adonai" literally means "my Lord", it is certainly acceptable to render it as "the Lord", which conveys the idea of a name or title more effectively than the literal meaning "my Lord". He is after all also the Lord of all the other people who are called by God, thereby minimizing the idea of "my" somewhat. Recall Jesus Christ's instructions for us to pray "OUR Father" rather than "my Father". And it won't do any harm if we keep in mind that any word which included the pronoun "MY" in its meaning is unlikely to be one of God's personal names, since "my" is not the pronoun Christ instructed us to use as a name in reference to God, though it is an acceptable form of address in some situations.

12) The main point in all this that affects us is this:

We need to recognize that THE TEXT of the Old Testament is what God has provided for us, while THE HEBREW VOWEL POINTINGS were subjectively added many centuries later. The vowel pointings are the same type of thing as the division of the whole text into verses. There is nothing inspired about either the vowel pointings or the verse divisions. In many cases the vowel pointings simply represent one specific interpretation of the Hebrew text. And we should never be afraid to challenge the validity of these vowel pointings, because it is a known fact that they do contain numerous errors. They are no more inspired than was the division of the text into verses.

With this brief and somewhat simplified background we can now get back to Psalm 110:1.

THE PROBLEM

While Jewish scholars generally recognize that Psalm 110:1 is speaking about the Messiah, the vowel pointings that were provided for "adon+yod" are for "i", making this word "adoni", the word commonly used for human beings.

This has enabled people to claim that this verse is speaking about some supposed HUMAN as "my lord". Therefore, so the reasoning goes, this cannot be a reference to Jesus Christ.

So note carefully!

THE ENTIRE ARGUMENT FOR REJECTING THAT THIS VERSE IS SPEAKING ABOUT JESUS CHRIST IS BASED ON THE VOWEL POINTINGS PROVIDED IN THIS VERSE FOR THE WORD MEANING "MY LORD"! THAT IS THE TRUNK OF THE TREE!

The people who reject that this verse shows God the Father speaking to Jesus Christ base EVERYTHING on those vowel pointings. This is their only supposed "proof" for rejecting that this is a reference to Jesus Christ. They have placed all their bets on one horse, and when that horse loses then they lose!

As it happens, it is extremely easy to prove the vowel pointings in Psalm 110:1 to be wrong! And therefore the whole argument against Jesus Christ being the Adonai of Psalm 110:1 collapses. It is the context that proves this argument wrong.

Here is the answer!

1) The "YHVH" LORD of Psalm 110:1 is clearly God the Father. There is no other possibility.

2) Verse 1 reads:

"The LORD (YHVH) said unto my Lord (Adonai), Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool."

Verse 5 reads:

"The Lord (Adonai) at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath."

So here is the picture this psalm presents to us.

In verse 1 God the Father says to one specific individual "sit at My right hand". And then in verse 5 there actually IS an individual at YHVH's right hand. In BOTH verses this individual is identified as "my adon". Now while the vowel pointings in verse 1 make this word read "adoni", the vowel pointings in verse 5 are clearly for "ADONAI"!

This illustrates the flaws inherent in the vowel pointings provided by the Masoretes. The identical word in verses 1 and 5, clearly referring to the same individual in both verses, is pointed for "adoni" in verse 1 and for "Adonai" in verse 5. They were not even consistent within the space of 5 short verses! So why should we trust the vowel pointings in other places where their validity is dubious?

The Adonai in verse 5 is very clearly a reference to a God Being! Therefore that same individual must also be a God Being in verse 1. That's all we need ... the context of this psalm.

However, there is much more evidence that Psalm 110:1 is indeed a reference to Jesus Christ. Consider the following points:

1) The claim that Psalm 110:1 is speaking about some MAN to whom David supposedly refers as "my lord" is absurd! God obviously did not say to king Saul "sit at My right hand". And apart from king Saul, David didn't have any "lords" over him. Who is this mysterious "my lord" supposed to be, if it isn't a reference to Jesus Christ? The whole idea is preposterous!

2) God the Father has thus far NEVER spoken to human beings (John 5:37 again). The claim that GOD THE FATHER would say to some human being "sit at My right hand" is totally flawed. So the Father's words in Psalm 110:1 cannot be addressed to a human being. And no human beings ever get to sit at the Father's right hand! That place is reserved for Jesus Christ.

3) Hebrews 1:13 says:

"But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool?"

This means that Psalm 110:1 cannot possibly be a reference to an angel! And it certainly cannot be a reference to a human being!

4) Hebrews 12:2 says:

"Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and IS SET DOWN AT THE RIGHT HAND OF THE THRONE OF GOD."

Romans 8:34 and Ephesians 1:20 and Luke 22:69 make the same point, that JESUS CHRIST is the only One who will ever sit at the right hand of God the Father. These verses prove that Psalm 110:1 MUST be addressed to Jesus Christ!

It is THE CONTENT of the Bible that proves that in Psalm 110:1 Jesus Christ is referred to as "Adonai", not some arbitrarily selected vowel pointings! In Psalm 110:1 the added vowel pointings actually DETRACT from the real meaning of this verse!

5) In Matthew 22:41 Jesus Christ asked the Pharisees "what think you of CHRIST?". Now notice Christ's reply to the Pharisees in verses 43-44.

"He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool?"

Notice that Jesus Christ said that in Psalm 110:1 David was calling THE CHRIST "Lord"! So here Jesus Christ IRREFUTABLY stated that David used the words "my Lord" in Psalm 110:1 to refer to CHRIST! Could it be any clearer?

6) Mark 12:35-37 makes the same point, that Psalm 110:1 is speaking about Christ. Luke 20:41-44 is another parallel passage that makes this same point.

7) In Acts 2:32-36 the Apostle Peter on the Day of Pentecost likewise applied Psalm 110:1 to Jesus Christ.

The evidence, both within Psalm 110 itself and also from the way Psalm 110:1 was quoted by Jesus Christ and others is irrefutable. Psalm 110:1 shows God the Father speaking to Jesus Christ about something that would take place after Jesus Christ's resurrection and ascension into heaven.

The meaning of Psalm 110:1 is very clear. There is no ambiguity, not with a verse that is quoted repeatedly in the New Testament. And this verse is one of many verses in the Bible that PROVES that Jesus Christ existed with God the Father before His life as a human being.

Frank W. Nelte