

14. Jesus in Psalms – Part 2

March 24, 2016

Last time we went over several Messianic Psalms from chapter 2 to 22. We will try to cover the rest of the Book of Psalms tonight, the Lord willing.

1) JESUS IN PSALM 45

This Psalm is a royal Psalm and functioned as a wedding song at the occasion of the wedding of a royal couple. In a special way the Psalm also applies to our Lord Jesus, who rules as the Son of David.

Psalm 45:6-7 Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom. 7 You love righteousness and hate wickedness; Therefore God, Your God, has anointed You With the oil of gladness more than Your companions.

I am sure that these two verses remind you of what you read in chapter 1 verses 8 and 9 of the Book of Hebrews. The author of Hebrews was quoting these two verses from this Psalm to show us the divinity of Jesus. It is God the Father referring to Jesus as God. If God the Father called Jesus “God,” I don’t need anyone to tell me otherwise.

Some will object, “How do you know that it is God the Father referring to Jesus in the Book of Hebrews?” I have a very simple answer, “Context.” Read the first chapter of Hebrews, it is so obvious that the Father is speaking about His Son Jesus. It doesn’t take a biblical scholar to comprehend it.

B. JESUS IN PSALM 68

Psalm 68:17-18 The chariots of God are twenty thousand, Even thousands of thousands; The Lord is among them as in Sinai, in the Holy Place. 18 You have ascended on high, You have led captivity captive; You have received gifts among men, Even from the rebellious, That the LORD God might dwell there.

This v18 is the verse apostle Paul used in Ephesians chapter 4:

Ephesians 4:8-10 Therefore He says: “When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, And gave gifts to men.” 9 (Now this, “He ascended”--what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth? 10 He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.)

Did you notice three changes? Two of them are only slight: a transfer of person from the pronoun of “you” to “he” and a purely stylistic transformation of a finite verb into a participle – from “have ascended” to “ascended”.

But the more important change is from “received gifts among men” to “gave gifts to men.” The best explanation is that the apostle was drawing on an ancient oral tradition reflected in the Aramaic ‘Targum’ on the Psalter and the Syriac Peshitta version, both of which read, “You have given gifts to men.”

I know what you are about to say, “Whatever.” But I am explaining this to you guys, just in case some of you cannot go to sleep tonight because of this tiny biblical translation discrepancy.

But seriously, what does it mean in v9 and 10? Does it mean that Jesus descended to somewhere into the lower parts of the earth before he ascended to heaven? And what does this “led captivity captive” mean in Psalm 68?

For your inquiring mind, here is an explanation. If you use a cross-reference Bible or the Treasury of Scripture Knowledge, it explains to us easily:

This refers to Jesus' preaching to the spirits in 'hades' described in 1 Peter 3:19 and 4:6:

1 Peter 4:6 For this reason the Gospel was preached also to those who are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.

Where do you think that the spirits of Abraham, David, Daniel, Isaiah, Elisha, and other God-believing and God-fearing OT saints were before the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ? They couldn't be in heaven. They all were in hades, a.k.a. Sheol, waiting for the Messiah to set them free and take them to heaven.

Luke 16:22-26 So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried. 23 And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. 24 Then he cried and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.' 25 But Abraham said, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented. 26 And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us.'

But did you also notice from what Abraham said to the rich man in v26? Those who rejected God while they were alive now were being tormented, but they could not go from their side to the other, nor could they go to heaven from where they were. In other words, the Catholic theology of purgatory does not exist. It is nothing more than Catholic priests wanted their people to believe so that the family members and relatives could give more money to the Catholic churches as a step of faith for the dead people to go to heaven. It was nothing more than a horrible marketing scheme.

When these captives in the captivity of hades heard the life-saving message of Jesus Christ which they already believed in faith while they were alive on earth, they received Jesus into their hearts and Jesus led their spirits to heaven as He ascended.

Only when Christ returned to the Father could He send His Spirit and His Spirit's gifts. The Ascension, then, is central, which is why Paul took the time to explain it more deeply.

By the way, Psalm 68 is depicting the glory of God in His goodness to Israel and it is one of the most beautiful Psalms. In 1497, the Italian reformer Savonarola had been preaching the truth of the Bible against the corrupt Roman Catholic establishment at that time. It became more than the pope Alexander VI wanted to endure, and Savonarola and two of his close friends were sentenced to die by fire. It is said that three of them were marched to the plaza in Florence, Italy, to be burned to death, they sang together this very Psalm, a Psalm of strength and faith in God.

C. JESUS IN PSALM 69

Psalm 69:7-9 Because for Your sake I have borne reproach; Shame has covered my face. 8 I have become a stranger to my brothers, And an alien to my mother's children; 9 Because zeal for Your house has eaten me up, And the reproaches of those who reproach You have fallen on me.

Psalm 69 is another Messianic Psalm. King David was describing his dire situation and prophesying concerning Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit without knowing what is going to happen in the distant future.

The Lord Jesus bore reproach for our sakes; He allowed shame to cover His precious face; His disciples deserted Him; His own brothers and sisters didn't believe Him, yet Jesus had one goal in His mind – brining glory to the Father in heaven.

Here is a glimpse of what our Lord Jesus went through in the Garden of Gethsemane as well as the agonizing time on the cross of Calvary:

Psalm 69:17-21 And do not hide Your face from Your servant, For I am in trouble; Hear me speedily. 18 Draw near to my soul, and redeem it; Deliver me because of my enemies. 19 You know my reproach, my shame, and my dishonor; My adversaries are all before You. 20 Reproach has broken my heart, And I am full of heaviness; I looked for someone to take pity, but there was none; And for comforters, but I found none. 21 They also gave me gall for my food, And for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.

You remember the time when Jesus was praying to the Father in the Garden:

Matthew 26:37-41 And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and He began to be sorrowful and deeply distressed. 38 Then He said to them, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with Me." 39 He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will." 40 Then He came to the disciples and found them asleep, and said to Peter, "What? Could you not watch with Me one hour? 41 Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

Jesus took His inner circle disciples – John, James, and Peter to the area not far from where He would pray. He poured out His heart in prayer and came back to His disciples only to find out that they were sleeping as they didn't have pity for their Master during this difficult time.

The scene was abruptly changed from the Garden of Gethsemane to Calvary in Psalm 69:21:

Matt 27:32-34 Now as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name. Him they compelled to bear His cross. 33 And when they had come to a place called Golgotha, that is to say, Place of a Skull, 34 they gave Him sour wine mingled with gall to drink. But when He had tasted it, He would not drink.

It was customary to give a narcotic drink to those about to be crucified, because this would help to ease the pain which meant that the man on the cross would last longer. Jesus refused this drink. He did the will of God in full awareness.

D. JESUS IN PSALM 102

Psalm 102:25-27 Of old You laid the foundation of the earth, And the heavens are the work of Your hands. 26 They will perish, but You will endure; Yes, they will all grow old like a garment; Like a cloak You will change them, And they will be changed. 27 But You are the same, And Your years will have no end.

Through John 1:1-3 and Colossians 1:16, Ephesians 3:9; and Hebrews 1:2, the Holy Spirit made clear to us that this universe is the creation of Jesus. People in this world think that this universe will continue on or they will evolve into higher beings. But their evolution or reincarnation theories are going directly against the second law of

thermodynamics which can be simplified by saying heat transfers from hot to cold; things go from organized mode to chaos. In other words, eventually this universe will stop generating heat and will not be organized unless the Creator intervenes. The heavens and the earth may change and perish, but our Lord Jesus is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

In v26, the Psalmist says, *"they will all grow old like a garment; Like a cloak You will change them, And they will be changed."* Here is a description of the scene that the Lord Jesus is going to make the new heavens and the earth. This will happen after the Second Coming of Christ, the Millennium period, and sending satan to the Lake of Fire.

2 Peter 3:10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.

Revelation 21:1 Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea.

E. JESUS IN PSALM 110

Psalm 110:1 A Psalm of David. The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool."

Psalm 110:4 The Lord has sworn And will not relent, "You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek."

V1 was quoted 5 times in the NT (Matthew 22:44, Mark 12:36, Luke 20:42, Acts 2:34, Hebrews 1:13) to validate Jesus' claim to be the Messiah.

In Matthew 22, Jesus asked the Jewish religious leaders a question regarding the identity of the Messiah from Psalm 110:1. The Pharisees identified and knew "the Son of David" as the lineage of the Messiah. In the Jewish culture, one would never call his offspring "Lord". Truly, David is referring to Someone greater than himself. If Christ is merely the Son of David as they suppose, David would never have called any of his descendant "Lord."

The scribes and Pharisees, who prided themselves on their deep knowledge of Scripture, were slumped. Using the written Word, Jesus Christ who is the Living Word had beaten them at their own game. The Pharisees, Scribes and Sadducees tried to corner Jesus, so that they could come up with excuses for not believing in Him. But Jesus systematically eliminated their lame excuses.

Melchizedek appeared once in Genesis 14:17-24 and disappeared until a psalmist referred to him in here. Jesus never mentioned him, nor did any of the apostles in any of their epistles. Obviously Melchizedek is not going to win a biblical character popularity contest any time soon.

Hebrews 7:1-3 For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, 2 to whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all, first being translated "king of righteousness," and then also king of Salem, meaning "king of peace," 3 without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, remains a priest continually.

We find very impressive credentials of Melchizedek, here in v1 through 3. Let's start to list them:

- 1) The name 'Melchizedek' means "king of righteousness".
- 2) He was the king of Salem, a.k.a. Jerusalem. – King of Peace
- 3) Priest of the Most High God
- 4) Without daddy, without mama, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life
- 5) Made like the Son of God
- 6) Remains a priest continually.

By reading this resume, this Melchizedek is not an average Joe. We studied about this Man rather in depth in Hebrew chapter 7. I am not going to be dogmatic about the identity of Melchizedek, whether he was Jesus Himself or just a type of Jesus. Having descended from the tribe of Judah instead of Levi, Jesus was an outsider of the legal heritage for a priest of the OT. However, His priesthood was of a completely different order that existed before the Levitical priesthood ever started. In other words, the priestly order of Melchizedek overrides the order of the Levitical priesthood.

From beginning to end, the Levitical priesthood was based on the Law of Moses that was given to them to point out the shortcoming of human efforts due to God's perfect standard and the desperate need of the Divine Savior/Priest without spot or blemish and could intercede for us for eternity.

I can comfortably say that the reference of Melchizedek in Psalm 110:4 is none other than our Lord Jesus Christ. If you disagree with me, that's OK. You are entitled to be wrong.