

The Messianic Psalms - Psalm 68

by Chip Brogden

Chip Brogden's sermon on Psalm 68 explores the significance of Christ's ascension and the necessity of embracing suffering for spiritual growth and victory.

Duration: 30:00

Scripture: Psalm 68:1-118, Matthew 6:33, Ephesians 1:17-20

Topics: "Psalms"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of paying attention to the preaching of the word of God. He believes that it should be a fundamental principle in our lives, not just a doctrine to be learned and checked off. The speaker refers to Psalm 68 and Ephesians 4 to illustrate the significance of the Ascension of Jesus. He explains that the key to overcoming our enemies, whether they are spiritual or internal, lies in letting God arise and recognizing the preeminence of Christ. The sermon concludes by highlighting the victory and triumph we have in Christ through his Ascension.

Transcript

Peace and be glad in it. Hello again everyone, this is Chip Brogdon coming to you with another edition of our webcast. I'm streaming online at www.watchman.net and we are going through the book of Psalms and studying the Messianic Psalms, those Psalms that specifically speak to us concerning the Lord Jesus Christ.

And up to this point we have progressed all the way through to the resurrection of Christ. And today we are going to talk about the Psalm of Ascension, the ascension of Christ. And so if you would grab your Bible and turn to Psalm 68, we'll get right into the study today.

I've got a lot to share with you and I'm looking forward to it. After we have discussed crucifixion, death, burial and resurrection, we're going to really now begin focusing on the ascension of Christ, His seating in the heavenly places, His ruling and His reigning over all things. And so it's exciting.

You pay the price and you suffer with Him, it says, and you will reign with Him. But if you're not willing to suffer with Him, if you're not willing to take up the cross and follow after Him, then there is no glory to be revealed afterwards. I get a lot of comments from people who are kind of intimidated by the teaching that says you must be decreased.

And it's as if they don't want to even discuss that decrease or if they do discuss it, they only want to spend a little bit of time on it. But the sentiment is, why don't you spend more time talking about who we are in Christ and all of the victory and the triumph that we have in Him and just how great we are now that we're saved. And certainly that's part of the Christian life, but it's almost as if you want to pass lightly over the cross and get to resurrection.

But folks, there is no power and there is no blessing and there is none of the things that we want out of the Christian life. You don't get those until and unless you embrace the death of the cross. Until you are decreased, there is no increase.

And the increase is not to make you greater, it's to make Christ greater. And if we're not willing to suffer with Him, the Bible says, then we're not going to reign with Him. And it just seems to me people want to focus on the ruling and the reigning and all the authority and the power that they have, but they're not willing to embrace the death of the cross, the brokenness, the decreasing, the surrendering of your life, the giving up of yourself and the consecrating of yourself over to the Lord.

They want to reign with Him. They don't want to suffer. And so I think by and large, churchianity, if you tune in to television or radio or browse the worldwide web, I think people have a firm grasp on teaching people how to overcome and how to be powerful and be more anointed and have spiritual gifts and how to get God active in their life for their benefit.

But there's not a lot of emphasis on brokenness and humility and experiencing the sufferings of Christ. And that's a pretty shallow and a hollow thing if you focus only on the benefits and the power and the spiritual gifts. That's exciting, isn't it? But it's not so exciting to people when you begin talking about the cross and self-denial and you must decrease.

But I teach people that is just as much a part of God's kingdom as the increase of Christ, the decrease of self. He must increase, but I must decrease. And there's no way around it.

There's no shortcuts to this. If you want to have and enjoy a resurrection life, a life of ascension with Christ, you've got to be identified with Him in His crucifixion, death, and burial. You just can't get there any other way.

And I think if we're not willing to pay the price, and I don't mean the price for our sins, Jesus died on the cross for our sins, when I'm talking about the cross, He says, if you're going to follow Me and be My disciple, you must take up your cross daily and follow after Me. And that cross is not the cross of Jesus who died for our sins. It is the cross of self-denial.

It's the principle in our life that I'm willing to suffer with Jesus so that I can reign with Jesus. I'm going to die daily so that I can experience the life of the Lord daily. Because the power of God that you're looking for doesn't come in a meeting.

It doesn't come in a prayer over you or someone laying hands on you. It comes in your weakness. And since you've already got your fair share of weakness and your fair share of temptation and testing and trials, you might as well make the best possible use of those circumstances.

Instead of fighting them and blaming the devil for everything, you might as well embrace them and do what Paul did. He says, I rejoice in my infirmities, in the things that make me weak, because when I am weak, then I am strong. That's where the power comes from.

Because that's where you learn grace. You don't learn grace in your self-sufficient, all-powerful manner. You learn grace and you learn to trust in the power of Jesus when you are weak in and of yourself.

That's the principle of decreasing and that's the principle of the cross. And I don't think enough attention is paid to that. So as we progress forward, it's very important that we understand the cross and the fact that I am crucified with Christ.

That is the beginning of the Christian life. I am crucified with Him. If we're not crucified with Him, we can't later on say, I am raised with Him.

Do you see what I'm saying? So it begins with the crucifixion. I am crucified with Christ. But thank God, the cross is not the end of us.

The cross is the beginning. It is the end of us in one sense. It's no longer I that live.

Yes, that is a definite end. But, Paul says, it is Christ who lives in me and the life that I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me. So there is life after death.

The cross is not the final chapter. It's the beginning of the end of you and the beginning of Christ in you. So, I don't think we pay enough attention to it and we need to.

It needs to be a life principle in our life. Not just a teaching, not just a doctrine. You learn about it, you check it off, and you want to move on to something else.

And I'm saying, folks, that we're not grounded enough in this truth. This truth will make you free. Truth will make you free, but first it will make you mad.

Praise the Lord. You're in Psalm 68. And before I go much further, I can see I'm going to get wound up, so why don't we go ahead and stop and pray and ask the Lord to bless this Word that we're going to share.

Lord, I thank You, in Jesus' name, for the opportunity and the privilege of looking into Your Word and seeing wonderful things. I thank You that the entrance of Your Word brings light. And I thank You, Lord, that You are the way and the truth and the life.

You are all things. And so, Lord, as we study these psalms, I pray that we would see Jesus in these psalms, that we would see something of Christ, and that we would see who we are in Him, not as we see ourselves, but that we would see Him and see who we are in Him through Your eyes and through the eyes and the words of Scripture. So, bless this time that we have together.

And Holy Spirit, come and be our Teacher. Lead us into all truth so that we can see Jesus in these words. I thank You for everyone who's listening, Lord.

And I pray Your blessing upon this time, this very brief time that we have together. In Jesus' name, amen and amen. Psalm 68, the psalm of the ascension of Christ, beginning in verse 1. It says, Let God arise, let His enemies be scattered.

I just love that. Let God arise, let His enemies be scattered. Let those also who hate Him flee before Him.

Now see, this is the psalm of ascension. So what are we saying? Let God arise, ascend upward, be lifted up. Let God arise.

Verse 2, As smoke is driven away, so drive them away. As wax melts before the fire, so let the wicked perish at the presence of God. But let the righteous be glad.

Let them rejoice before God. Yes, let them rejoice exceedingly. Sing to God.

Sing praises to His name. Extol Him who rides on the clouds by His name, Yah, and rejoice before Him. Hallelujah.

His name is Yah. Extol Him who rides on the clouds. And so here in the first four verses of Psalm 68, we have a picture of the ascension of Jesus.

We can't read the whole psalm. We're just going to pick up portions here that speak to this. But the whole tone of this psalm is indicating and it's telling us something that is very important as pertaining to spiritual warfare and the fact that we wrestle not against flesh and blood.

What is it telling us? That the key to overcoming the enemy, whatever that enemy is in your life, and most of the time the enemy is your adversary, the devil, but you've got issues in your own head and issues in your own thinking and in your own flesh that need to be dealt with. So whatever your enemy is, the key to this is let God arise. It's the ascension of Christ who demonstrates His preeminence over all these enemies.

And as you read through here, you see that there are two themes here. God arising and enemies submitting. Enemies being scattered.

Enemies being defeated. Armies fleeing. So praise the Lord.

I enjoy that. Let God arise. Skip down all the way to verse 18.

Now read this psalm completely through as you study it, but for time purposes we can't read the whole thing right now. But skip down to verse 18. Well, let's go to 17.

The chariots of God are 20,000, even thousands of thousands. The Lord is among them as in Sinai in the holy place. And that reminds me of the prophet who was there on the mountain.

And the prophet and the servant got up the next morning, you'll remember, and they looked out and they saw that great host, that enemy that had surrounded them there. And the servant said, Alas, my master, what shall we do? And the prophet said, Don't be concerned about this and fear not, because the ones who are with us are greater than the ones that are with them. And the servant, of course, didn't understand that at all.

They were hopelessly outnumbered. It was just him and his master and how could he say those things. And the prophet said, Lord, I pray, open his eyes so that he can see.

And God opened the eyes of that servant and that servant saw the chariots and the armies of God surrounding Elisha and him there on that mountain. And so it was absolutely correct and true that the ones that were with them, the armies of God, the chariots of God, were more than all those who were coming against them. And we've got a New Testament counterpart to that where John says, Greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world.

Hallelujah. So, we've got that here in this Psalm of Ascension which is a Psalm of victory. It is rising up over, ascending over all of the earthly, all of the fleshly, all of the evil, all of the wicked and ascending above.

Verse 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.

Blessed be the Lord, who daily loads us with benefits, the God of our salvation. Selah. Our God is the God of salvation, and to God the Lord belong escapes from death.

See, the picture here is that Jesus has been raised from the dead and now he is ascending and he is demonstrating his preeminence over all things. Now, as you go back to verse 18, You have ascended on high. You have led captivity captive.

You have received gifts among men. Does that ring a bell for you in the New Testament? Well, hopefully it does. It should.

If you would keep your place there in Psalm 68 and turn in your New Testament over to Ephesians chapter 4. We want to get the New Testament interpretation of this. Ephesians chapter 4. Now, if you're listening to this and the only part of the Bible that you believe is inspired is the Old Testament, if you don't believe in the inspiration of the New Testament or you want to prove everything from the Old Testament, then you're looking through a glass darkly. Obviously... Well, I shouldn't say obviously.

Just because it's obvious to me and to most people doesn't mean it's obvious to everyone who's listening. But I believe that the New Testament as well as the Old Testament are inspired by the Holy Spirit. And I don't believe that you can rightly interpret the Old Testament just by itself.

It requires the New Testament. Otherwise, you're going to only see one dimension of things. You're not going to see Jesus in the Old Testament until and unless you accept the truth of the New Testament and the New Covenant.

Okay, so... Don't write in and argue with me that it's talking about something else and the only proof you have is Old Testament. You have to have the New Testament and the Old in order to rightly divide the Word of God. And Jesus said it's like the scribe who's instructed in the Kingdom of God.

Someone like that is someone who brings out treasures old and new. See, so you've got the New Covenant, you've got the Old Covenant, and working together you can come into a proper understanding. Without it, you're just using one side of the coin and you don't have the rest of the truth.

So, Ephesians chapter 4 it's going to quote this psalm that we just read. It's going to quote Psalm 68 verse 18. Ephesians 4, 7 says this, But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift.

Therefore he says, and it quotes, When he ascended on high he led captivity captive and gave gifts to men. That's a portion of Psalms 68, 18. And then Paul interprets it.

Verse 9, Now this, he ascended. What does it mean? But that he also first descended into the lower parts of the earth. He who descended is also the one who ascended far above all the heavens that he might fill all things.

So, who is he talking about? Well, he's talking about Jesus. Obviously. That much is obvious.

So, Psalms 68 when it's talking about the ascension of God. The ascension of Yah. It is talking about the Lord Jesus Christ.

It's not talking about anybody else. According to Paul in Ephesians it is referring to the Lord Jesus Christ. So, praise the Lord.

Now, it would be helpful for us probably to look in Scripture and see the exact occasion when this ascension took place. And of all of the instances that reference the ascension of Christ the most descriptive and the most informative narrative can be found in Acts chapter 1. So, if you would turn to Acts chapter 1 and let's look at that quickly. Acts chapter 1, verse 9. And just to bring you up to speed.

This is just after Jesus says that you'll receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. You'll be witnesses unto me in Jerusalem and Judea and Samaria and to the uttermost parts of the earth. In verse 9 of Acts 1. Now, when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.

And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven, as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, who also said, Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus who was taken up from you into heaven will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven. So, praise the Lord. As He was speaking, after He had spoken these things, they watched, and He was taken up.

He ascended. A cloud received Him out of their sight. And, you know, some people are curious about the second coming of Jesus.

Well, I know He's coming back because here in Scripture, it says that He will come back from heaven in the same manner that they saw Him go up into heaven. And how? In a cloud. And as He ascended up, He'll descend back again.

And so there's your second coming. Now, when is that going to happen? Everyone has a different opinion on when. And quite frankly, folks, I don't know, and it really doesn't make a lot of difference to me so long as I know that He's coming.

You know? As long as He's coming, I'll be content. If it's today, if it's tomorrow, if it's before the tribulation, if it's after, if it's in the middle, or what have you. I'm content.

I'm just praying, come quickly, Lord Jesus. Come and receive your inheritance. Let the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ so that He can rule over them forever and ever.

That's the prayer of revelation. That's going to happen. And when is it going to happen? Well, Jesus Himself said, it's not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father has put in His own authority.

So that's something that we really don't need to argue about. We just need to be looking forward to that return of Christ. But it's what I call an ascendant spirit.

It's a spirit that rises up above the earth. And so that is part of the Christian life as far as I'm concerned. That should be a natural, spontaneous looking up inwardly, if not outwardly.

At least our heart should be looking up. Looking up into heaven. Looking with expectation of the return of Christ and to see Him ascendant.

Now, the ascension of Christ here in Psalm 68. Why don't we go back to Psalm 68 once more. Psalm 68.

And we'll read in verse 32 this time. Sing to God, you kingdoms of the earth. Oh, sing praises to the Lord.

Selah. To Him who rides on the heaven of heavens which were of old. Indeed, He sends out His voice, a mighty voice.

Ascribe strength to God. His excellence is over Israel and His strength is in the clouds. Oh, God, You are more awesome than Your holy places.

The God of Israel is He who gives strength and power to His people. Blessed be God. Hallelujah.

So, Psalm 68. The Psalm of the Ascension of Christ. Now, there's two things.

Two very important things that I want to leave with you as we consider the ascension. I want you to go back through in your study time and read this entire Psalm and really let it sink in the fact that God has arisen. Jesus has ascended.

And He is preeminent over His enemies. That's the first thing that we need to grasp. Ephesians.

Let's go back to Ephesians chapter 1. Ephesians chapter 1. It talks about this ascension of Christ. We've read about the prophecy of Psalm 68. We've read about the actual event when it happened in Acts 1. But in Ephesians 1, we're going to talk about the spiritual significance of what that means.

Okay? So, we'll begin reading in verse 17 of Ephesians 1. Paul is praying for the Ephesians. He says, I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe according to the working of His mighty power which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places. Now, next time, we're going to talk about the seating of Christ.

But I want you to see here that Paul is praying that we would see this ascension of Christ, not just read about it as a piece of history, but that the eyes of our understanding, the eyes of our heart, would be enlightened. Enlightened to know what? To know the exceeding greatness of His power towards us, that same power which raised Christ from the dead and seated Him at the right hand of God in the heavenly places. Now, what's significant about that? Verse 21, Far above all principality and power and might and dominion and every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in that which is to come.

And He put all things under His feet and gave Him to be the head over all things to the church which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all. Hallelujah. Isn't that pretty much describing what's happening in Psalm 68? It's talking about let God arise and His enemies be scattered.

And here Paul is saying that when Jesus was raised from the dead, that He ascended to the right hand of the Father and is exalted above every principality and every power, every might and dominion, and every name that is named in this age and the age to come. He has put all things under His feet. Hallelujah.

That is the victory of Christ. So, the first thing, I told you two points I want to leave with you. The first thing is the ascension of Christ shows us the preeminence of Jesus.

He is exalted above all things. Praise the Lord. All things are under His feet and God has given Him to be the head over all things to the church which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

That is preeminence. What is preeminence? Preeminence means the first, the full, and the final place. And that is God's purpose.

That is His will for Jesus Christ to have the preeminence in all things. And I say the manifest preeminence because Jesus is Lord, but we don't yet see all things submitted to Him. Nevertheless, there is coming a day when we will see all things submitted to Him not just in the Spirit, but in the natural as well, in this earth.

Praise God. That will be a wonderful day. So the ascension of Christ is showing us the preeminence of Jesus that He is exalted above all things.

But not only that, if you continue reading in Ephesians 2, you're going to see something that is very, very significant. Ephesians 2, beginning in verse 1, "...and you He made alive who were dead in trespasses and sins." See, immediately, Paul is identifying us with Jesus. Just as Jesus died, was raised, and was ascended and seated with His Father in heaven, and now He's above all things, Paul says, "...and you He made alive who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.

But God, who is rich in mercy because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ, by grace you have been saved." See? We were dead in trespasses, but it says that God has made us alive together. Verse 6, "...and raised us up together." Hallelujah. "...and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus." Now, if you've heard my testimony, you know my experience with this, that when God showed this to me, it was the revelation of Christ in me, and from that day forward, I was changed.

I saw something here that up until that point in time had always frustrated me. I looked for victory. I looked for techniques and methods to get to victory.

I understood that Jesus was exalted and His name was above every name, but I still lived a defeated life. And it wasn't until God opened my eyes here in Ephesians 2 and showed me this verse that He has raised us up together and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus. And in that moment of time, I saw those words, together and together, together, together, together.

I have been raised up together with Christ. That being raised up is the ascension. It's not being raised from the dead because He's already covered that in verse 1 of Ephesians 2. And you, He made alive who were dead in trespasses and sins.

Verse 5, even when we were dead in trespasses, He made us alive together with Christ. So, I was crucified with Christ, Paul says. Then he says that we were made alive with Christ.

And he says that He has raised us up together with Christ. Hallelujah! That's the ascension. So, the second thing we learned about the ascension of Christ is that we have been raised up together with Him.

So, our enemies are scattered as long as we abide in Christ. Apart from Him, we can't do anything. But in Him and through Him, we can do all things.

And He is our victory and our triumph. Praise the Lord. That's the ascension of Christ.

This is Chip Brogdon, streaming online at www.watchman.net. Thank you for listening. We'll pick up again here next week. God bless you.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/10/SID10475.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/chip-brogden/the-messianic-psalms-psalm-68/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net