

The Messianic Psalms - Psalm 88

by Chip Brogden

Psalm 88 teaches us about the death and resurrection of Jesus and the process of death, burial, and resurrection that we must go through to possess resurrection life.

Duration: 31:00

Scripture: Psalm 88

Topics: "Psalms"

Description

In this video, Chip Brogdon continues his study in the book of Psalms, specifically focusing on the Messianic Psalms that prophesy about the Lord Jesus Christ and his kingdom. He begins by explaining the importance of studying Psalms in understanding the person of Jesus Christ. The sermon then delves into Psalm 88, which is seen as a prophetic depiction of the death of Christ. Brogdon emphasizes the significance of Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection, and how it is a necessary process for all believers to experience in order to attain eternal life.

Transcript

Hello again everyone, this is Chip Brogdon coming to you with another edition of our weekly webcast. We are streaming online at www.watchman.net and we are continuing our study in the book of Psalms. If you would turn in your Bible to Psalm 88, we are going to begin this week with a study of Psalms 88 and the death of Christ.

Now if you are just joining us, let me give you a quick review of why we are in Psalms. We are studying the Messianic Psalms in particular, those Psalms that tell us something of the Lord Jesus Christ and of His Kingdom in a prophetic context. Jesus says, all the things written about me in the law, in the prophets and in the Psalms must come to pass.

And in the New Testament we learn that David is more than just a king, he is also a prophet. So the things that he wrote in the book of Psalms can be tied directly to the Lord Jesus Christ and so they are very instructive to us. In the beginning of our study after we got through the introduction we went through Psalm 8 and related that to the incarnation of Christ or the fact that Jesus became flesh.

In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, the Word was God and it says in John 1 that the Word became flesh and dwelt among us. Psalms 8 talks about how God has made Him a little lower than the angels yet crowned Him with glory and honor. So that was the first Psalm that we discussed, the

first Messianic Psalm.

Then we spent a couple of weeks on Psalm 22 talking about the crucifixion of Christ and that vision of God's purpose being fulfilled as a result of that. There on the cross a very graphic illustration and demonstration of a crucifixion several centuries, many centuries, many hundreds of years before crucifixion was even a practice. So we have gotten all the way through crucifixion and now this week we are talking about the death of Christ and we are working our way through these Messianic Psalms and applying them in not necessarily the order that they appear in Scripture but the order that they appear insofar as the application to the life of Christ and the life of Jesus.

The death, burial, resurrection, ascension, seating in heavenly places and then the ruling and the reigning. The ruling and the reigning Psalms are very critical and they are very exciting and very inspiring to study but we have got to work our way through the death, burial and resurrection Psalms first and foremost. Particularly this Psalm, Psalm 88 where we will discuss the death of Christ as prophesied in Scripture because most people were under the impression correctly so that the Messiah would live forever and so that created quite a problem when Jesus would say things like the Son of Man must be lifted up, the Son of Man must be turned over to the Gentiles where he will be crucified and the people said well we thought that the Messiah was going to live forever so who is the Son of Man and how can you be the Messiah if you are talking about dying? Well it is correct that the Messiah would live forever however there was a death to die and death is merely the entrance to life.

You can't live forever until you pass through death, that is resurrection. So that is one of those kingdom laws that govern God's dealings with us and Jesus is the shadow, well not the shadow, he is the substance but he is the foreshadowing, the example, the progenitor of everyone who would follow after him and trusted him for eternal life. We all have to go through this process of death, burial and then resurrection with Jesus.

So praise the Lord, why don't we go ahead and get started here with Psalm 88 and start out with prayer first of all. Let's go to the Lord. Thank you Father for another opportunity to study your word and to see Jesus in these scriptures.

I thank you Lord that your words are spirit and life, they are spirit and truth to us and I pray Lord that you open our eyes to see Jesus in this passage of scripture, this powerful psalm that speaks to us and gives us revelation and insight into the person of Jesus Christ. I pray that it will be an encouragement to us and I thank you Lord for giving us that spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Jesus Christ. Thank you for it Lord, in Jesus name, Amen.

Praise the Lord. I hope you are in Psalm 88 by now and I am reading from the New King James Version, Psalm 88, verse 1 says, Oh Lord, God of my salvation, I have cried out day and night before you, let my prayer come before you and cline your ear to my cry, for my soul is full of troubles and my life draws near to the grave, I am counted with those who go down to the pit, I am like a man who has no strength. Let's stop right there because as you begin reading Psalms 88, you are going to see that this psalm is different from any other psalm that you have ever read.

Let me share a little story with you. We have recently began doing something a little bit different in our family, in our house. Typically, the custom is when you sit down before you eat, you say a prayer over the meal.

Certainly that is a good habit, that is a good practice to be into, but we just got to the place where we felt like it was kind of a ritual, kind of a dull routine. We were looking to spice up that bit of time where we would normally bow our head and give thanks to God for the meal. It just became kind of ritualistic and we were looking for something else.

We came to the conclusion that instead of praying over our food, we would simply get the scriptures out and read a portion of scripture. Instead of praying the same old prayer every time, we thought we would do this. So we have just started this practice that when we sit down to eat a meal, we pull out the scriptures and usually have one of the children read a passage of scripture.

It is working out well for us because now instead of saying a prayer and then saying amen and then we go on about our business, now when we read this passage of scripture, it gives us something to talk about and we will have a conversation around God's word while we are digging into the food. So it is a good way to get the ball rolling and some interesting thoughts have been coming out of these little sessions. We are gathering together.

We are not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together. As scripture says, we are gathering around the dinner table or the breakfast table or the lunch table. We are sharing the word of God and Jesus is here in the midst of us.

So praise the Lord. That might give you an idea that you can incorporate into your own family time. The other day, earlier this week, it had been kind of a rough day.

I am sure you can relate to those days. You probably have rough days like that. Days where you are just a little bit down and you need some encouragement.

So we asked our older daughter to read from the Psalms. Read us something encouraging. Find a psalm that will lift us up and encourage us because it has been kind of a rough day.

Guess which psalm she turned to? She didn't say which one it was. She just started reading and she started reading the same passage that I began reading. She read this whole psalm, the most depressing psalm in the Bible.

I asked her, I said, why did you select Psalm 88? She said, how did you know that was Psalm 88? I said, because I know that is what it is for one reason. I am teaching on it this week. So we had a discussion and even just listening to her read this psalm and hearing it, God began to give me some insight into it.

So I was excited about that and I want to share some of those insights with you today. Psalm 88, I kid you not, is the most depressing psalm in the Bible. Well, one of the most depressing and I think probably the reason is because Psalm 88 is a little bit different.

It is the only psalm of its kind that does not end on a positive note. It does not end on a note of triumph or on a note of victory. Usually when you read the psalm and it is talking about, I mean there are other psalms that talk about how much trouble I am in and all my enemies are against me and he is crying out to God.

Then in the end God either answers the prayer or it ends on a note of victory, a note of triumph. Yes, I know God will deliver me. He is my God.

He is my rock of my salvation. So usually you find that psalms of this nature end on a kind of an upbeat note, but this Psalm 88 does not. It is dark and depressing all the way through it and you wonder what in the world is this psalm doing in here.

Because this is the psalm of the death of Jesus, it is going to make total sense as we go through it. So do not reject it on the basis that it is what I believe to be the most depressing psalm in the Bible. Outwardly speaking, yes, but if you get to the heart of this psalm, if you go beyond the outward doom and gloom and the negativity and really dive into it, I think you are going to find encouragement here.

But it is not on the surface the way some of these other psalms. Psalm 23 is pretty encouraging and it is comforting. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil for you are with me.

It is a picture of a green pasture and an overflowing cup and tables spread before me and it is very encouraging. Now Psalm 88 is also very powerful, but not in the same sense that Psalm 23 is. You have really got to dig into it and that is what we are going to do today.

So who wrote Psalm 88? Psalm 88, it says according to the header here, it is a song, a psalm of the sons of Korah to the chief musician set to, in the name of a music title that I am not even going to try to pronounce in Hebrew, a contemplation, a masculine or a meditation of Haman the Ezraite. Now if you do a little study as I did on who, I don't know if it is Haman or He-man, probably Haman the Ezraite, do a little study on him and you find out that his name means faithful. And interesting to note, he was the grandson of Samuel the prophet.

So you know that the sons of Samuel were wicked before the Lord, but the grandchildren of Samuel, at least this particular one, was a prophet. He was appointed by David to be one of the king's seers, one of the king's personal prophets, and he was appointed by the king to sing and to worship and to have instruments and to prophesy through these instruments of worship. He was a Levite there and David appointed him along with Asaph and another one to kind of be in charge of the worship and singing praise to the Lord and leading the people in the worship of the Lord there in the tabernacle.

And then in 1 Chronicles 25 you find out that Haman the Ezraite had 14 children and all of them were involved in some way in the worship of the temple. They were appointed by David as well. So you've got this prophetic musical gifted person, the grandson of Samuel, and the only psalm that we have recorded is this depressing Psalm 88.

So there is something here folks, that's my point, there is something here that we need to look at very carefully and not just read through it and say, well that's dark and depressing. I guess probably the point I'm trying to make is death is dark, death is depressing, but death is not the end of things. Death is only the beginning of things.

It is the gateway to resurrection life. And that's what Psalm 88 is going to show us here. So let's pick up again and read in verse 1 now that I've got that introduction.

O Lord God of my salvation, I have cried out day and night before you, let my prayer come before you, incline your ear to my crying. For my soul is full of troubles and my life draws near to the grave. Now see we're talking about, we're applying this Psalm to Jesus first and foremost as a messianic Psalm describing the death of Christ.

My soul is full of troubles and my life draws near to the grave. I am counted with those who go down to the pit. I am like a man who has no strength, adrift among the dead, like the slain who lie in the grave whom you remember no more and who are cut off from your hand.

Now does that not describe the separation of Jesus from his father in the sense that he took upon himself the sins of the world and became our substitute? So he says that he is going down into the grave. Verse 6, you have laid me in the lowest pit, in darkness in the depths. Your wrath lies heavy upon me and you have afflicted me with all your waves.

Selah. Selah means stop and think about that. So you have laid me in the lowest pit.

Now from the very earliest times of the church, the Apostles Creed has a statement in there that Christ descended into hell and he was raised again on the third day. So we're not going to get into a theological discussion about where hell is, what's the purpose of hell, who is in hell, why did Jesus go to hell, what was the theological significance of that. I think we just have to accept it from the scripture that he did descend into hell and we could get into a long study of what happened when he went into hell.

But basically we're not going to go there. All I want to get across is that he descended into hell, he was laid in the lowest pit for the purpose of a substitutionary redemptive work. He didn't go down there because of his sins.

He was sent there on our behalf. So we're not going to talk about how do you define hell. Is it paradise? Is it Gehenna? Is it the lake of fire? Those are beyond the scope of this study today, but we're only going to focus on this idea of Christ dying for us and taking that death and being resurrected out from that darkness.

Now you don't see any of this here in Psalm 88. All you see is you have laid me in the lowest pit, in darkness in the depths, your wrath lies heavy upon me and you have afflicted me with all your ways. So verse 8, you have put away my acquaintances far from me.

You have made me an abomination to them. I am shut up and I cannot get out. My eye wastes away because of affliction.

Lord, I have called daily upon you. I have stretched out my hands to you. If you're having a hard time and you open up the Psalms and you start reading Psalm 88, you can probably relate to this person, but it's not so encouraging, is it? Okay? Keep on reading.

And you see here that some questions, and this is the exciting part folks, you see some questions are beginning to be asked. Okay? Verse 10, here's the first question. Will you work wonders for the dead? Shall the dead arise and praise you, Selah? In other words, stop and think about this.

Will the dead arise and praise you? Will you work wonders for the dead? Remember folks, Haman the Ezrahite, who wrote this Psalm, is a prophetic seer. He is a prophetic musician and he is writing this Psalm. It is set to music and it is inspired of the Spirit of God.

Now, the surface level answer to the question is no. The dead aren't going to arise and praise you. God's not going to work wonders for the dead, but if you take the Psalms and apply it to the Lord Jesus, then what you are seeing in this Psalm is not so much the death and the darkness as much as it is the resurrection life aching to come forth out of this darkness.

And so the answer to the question, will you work wonders for the dead? The answer is yes, he will. Shall the dead arise and praise you? And the answer is yes, they will. Now, resurrection is not a concept that was very common back then.

The only instances that we really know of resurrection would be like when the prophet prayed for the son and laid down upon him and prayed, oh God send his spirit back into him and the child was raised up. So it wasn't a completely foreign concept, but for the most part, when you are dead, you are dead. When you are dead, there is no resurrection.

That's the normal course of things. And so here the Psalm asks, will you work wonders for the dead? Shall the dead arise and praise you? Well, we know the answer to that question if you apply it to Jesus is yes. Yes, the dead will arise and praise you.

Verse 11. We continue with more questions. Shall your loving kindness be declared in the grave? And the answer is yes, it will.

Or will your faithfulness in the place of destruction? And the answer is yes, he will call forth light out of the darkness. He will call forth life out of death. He will do it, just like he did it for Lazarus.

Lazarus, come forth. And that's a type and a shadow of Christ and his resurrection. Verse 12.

Shall your wonders be known in the dark? And the answer is yes, he commands light to shine forth in the darkness. He has called us out of the power of darkness and into the kingdom of light, into the kingdom of his dear son. He has called us out of darkness and into his marvelous light.

Praise the Lord. Verse 12. And your righteousness in the land of forgetfulness? Yes, because even though you might forget about God, he has not forgotten about you and he is seeking and saving those who are lost.

Verse 13. But to you I have cried out, O Lord, and in the morning my prayer comes before you. Lord, why do you cast off my soul? Why do you hide your face from me? I have been afflicted and ready to die from my youth.

I suffer your terrors. I am distraught. Your fierce wrath has gone over me.

Your terrors have cut me off. They came around me all day long like water. They engulfed me altogether.

Loved one and friend, you have put far from me and my acquaintances into darkness. And that's how that Psalm ends. It ends in darkness and death.

Yet, it asks these questions. It asks these questions and doesn't really give us the answer, but just if you apply them to Jesus, then you understand the answer to these questions are yes. It doesn't appear to be that way when you're in that situation.

When you're in the pit, when you're in the grave, when you're in the darkness, when his wrath is lying heavy upon you, it doesn't look like there's any way out. I am shut up, it says, and cannot get out. You have a picture here of someone who is in prison, someone who is in darkness and cannot get out of it.

And you know what, folks? You can apply this in a very practical manner to your own self. Now, we have applied and we do apply it, and traditionally the church for 2,000 years has applied this Psalm to Jesus.

And certainly that's correct.

But Jesus, as our example, Jesus as our high priest, he endured these things, not just for his own sake, but for our sake and to be an example to us. And what is the lesson that we learn here? Well, the lesson is that you can only possess resurrection life when you are thoroughly died. When you have thoroughly died, when you are thoroughly dead, only then can God raise you back to life.

When Jesus says, take up the cross, deny yourself, and follow after me, that is the beginning of a process, folks, of death, burial, and resurrection. And one of the issues that we have as Christians is, number one, we don't want to take up the cross because we don't want to die to ourself. We want to continue living.

But even when we do receive the instruction of the Holy Spirit and when we learn about this process of death, burial, and resurrection, and we understand that death is the gateway to life, it's part of God's purpose for getting us out of one world and into another world. It's how God brings us into resurrection life. Even then, when we take up the cross and we die, we tend to want to come back to life right away.

We don't want to spend a lot of time in the dark place, in the place of death, in the burial ground, or as some folks would refer to it as, the dark night of the soul, or the wilderness experience. I talk a lot about the wilderness and how I define the wilderness is not so much the lack of physical contact with other people or the lack of physical fellowship. It is more than that.

It is a cutting off and a dying to everything that we thought we knew. It is this sense of being shut up and cast off. It's losing the sense of God's presence.

It's not losing God. It's not that God has actually cast us off. It's not that God has actually withdrawn His presence from us.

We lose that sense of His presence. We don't have that feeling that He's there. All that experience is trying to teach us is that the presence of God is not based on how we feel.

If He says, I'm with you always, even to the end of the age, then He's with us always. It is beside the point whether I feel that or see that or experience that. That's what we're learning in the wilderness.

That's what we're learning in that dark night of the soul or in that place of solitude. It looks like not only have we lost all of our friends, but it even looks like that God is no longer with us. That God has forsaken us or that He has left us or that He's not speaking to us.

As the writer here says, I'm shut up and can't get out. I'm in the lowest pit in the darkness and it's your wrath that's upon me. I'm in affliction.

You cry out to the Lord. It's interesting here in Psalm 88, it never ends on that note of victory. It appears as if the prayer is never answered.

Only these questions, these unanswered questions, shall your loving kindness be declared in the grave or your faithfulness in the place of destruction? Will you work wonders for the dead? Shall the dead arise and praise you? Maybe that's a legitimate question. Maybe that's a rhetorical question. But the answer is yes.

Even when it doesn't seem as if we'll get through that dark night, even when it doesn't seem as if we will ever get out of that wilderness, God will raise the dead. He will speak light into the darkness. He will speak life into the death.

Yes, the dead will arise and will praise. Yes, God will work wonders for the dead. Yes, His loving kindness will be declared in the grave.

Yes, His faithfulness will be declared in the place of destruction. Yes, His wonders will be known in the darkness. Yes, His righteousness will be seen in the land of forgetfulness.

The issue, I guess, and the point of bringing this up is when God has us in that place, we need to stay there. Let Him do the resurrection. Let Him bring us out of that dark night.

Let Him raise us up out of that pit. Let Him be the one who says, okay, it's time for you to come out of the wilderness now and enter into the promised land. See, when you are thoroughly dead, there's nothing you can do to resurrect yourself.

Here's something else I've learned, folks. You cannot fake a resurrection. You can't do it.

Either a resurrection is genuine or it is not. If you try to fake your own resurrection, it proves you've never died in the first place. If you're going to receive the resurrection life of Christ in a practical way in your Christian life, you're going to have to allow that process of death to work itself completely in you.

Exactly what do I mean by that process of death? John 3.30, once again, He must increase, but I must decrease. And since He must increase, He will increase and He is increasing. In the same way, if you must decrease, you are decreasing and you will decrease.

And the ultimate decrease is death. So we are not to be afraid of death. I'm not speaking of physical death.

I'm speaking of a spiritual dying to self. We're not to be afraid of that. We're to embrace that as part of God's process, working itself out in us so that we can get out of that pit and get out of that dark night, get out of that darkness and stand on resurrection ground.

And that's where the victory is. Because when you're on resurrection ground, nothing can harm you, nothing can kill you from that day forward. Praise the Lord.

We're all out of time for this week, but it's been exciting and we'll do it again next week. This is Chip Brodden, streaming online at www.watchman.net. Thanks for listening and we'll pick up again here next week.

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