

Lessons From Psalm 110

One of the greatest parts of scripture, in my opinion, is when a particular verse(s), or chapter makes a clear connection to other passages. More than that, I find it far more amazing when lessons can be made from connections drawn from across testaments. These lessons give me assurance that the God I serve is one who is truly longsuffering, but also is unchanging. That being said, in a recent study with Jim McDonald, he showed me how one verse, Psalm 110:1, is referenced across four books, by three or four different teachers, and each reference contains a different lesson about Christ. These references are made by Jesus in Matthew 22:41-45, Peter in Acts 2:32-35, Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:25-27, and the writer of Hebrews in Hebrews 1:13. Before looking at these passages, however, we need to know what the passage in Psalms says. It reads, "The Lord says to my Lord: 'Sit at My right hand Until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet.'"

First, let's consider the words of Christ. At this point in Matthew, Jesus has taught the parable of the marriage feast and countered the trap set by the Pharisees in making the infamous statement, "Then Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and to God the things that are God's." At this time, Jesus is being approached by both the Pharisees and Sadducees, and beginning in verse 41, said, "Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them a question: 'What do you think about the Christ, whose son is He?' They said to Him, 'The son of David.' He said to them, 'Then how does David in the Spirit call Him 'Lord,' saying, 'The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, Until I put Your enemies beneath Your feet"'? If David then calls Him 'Lord,' how is He his son?' When looking for the Messiah, the common thought of the day was that the Messiah was a descendant of David, which was correct. The fault, however, is that they only thought of Him in a physical sense. They thought He was nothing more than a man, descended from the bloodline of David, and would liberate the Jews from Roman rule. So Jesus references this psalm to show that if this Messiah is a descendent of David, then why does David himself call his heir lord? Jesus is trying to teach the Jews that who they search for is much more than a man; the Christ they look for is both man and the physical embodiment of God.

Second, Peter uses this psalm in his sermon to the Jews on the day of Pentecost. In Acts 2, Peter and the other apostles have just had the Holy Spirit come upon them and they were able to speak to the people in their own language. It is when the people question how this is possible that Peter begins preaching to the multitude about Jesus. In verses 32-35, he begins to really drive home that Jesus, who they put to death, has been resurrected, and as the psalm says has been set at the right hand of the throne of God. Peter, in this one Old Testament quote, is demonstrating in front of three thousand people that the man they put death has now been given full reign and power! It makes sense they were cut to the heart because they are finally realizing exactly what they have done.

Third, the writer of Hebrews reminded the Jewish Christians of who Christ is. The unknown author, throughout the entirety of Hebrews, is dealing with people who have

become followers of Christ, but due to external circumstances, they have begun to give up. Because of this, the writer reestablishes just who Jesus is, as well as all that He has done for these people. The majority of chapter 1 is a long list of rhetorical questions comparing Christ to the angels. In verse 13 he asks, "But to which of the angels has He ever said, 'Sit at My right hand, Until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet'?" The point is that the angels, who are eternal creations of God that few men have seen, are still under Christ who has been made more powerful, excellent, and radiant than they. He is showing just how much authority Christ has in the kingdom.

Finally, in 1 Corinthians, Paul has confronted the issues that existed in this church, openly telling them what they are doing wrong and the avenue in correct the problem. In chapter 15, Paul teaches what it means when, although they still believe Jesus was resurrected, they say that there is no resurrection of the dead. He points out that if there is no resurrection, then Christ was not brought back; and if Christ was not brought back, then their faith is in vain, and because it's in vain, then Christians are the most miserable and pitiful people. In verse 20, he changes his tune, reminding them that Christ did rise from the dead, and verse 25 references Psalm 110, establishing that Christ will continue to reign until every enemy has been defeated. Now, Paul is in no way preaching of a thousand year reign that Premillennialists believe! Paul is saying is that until the final day, Christ will be triumphant until every enemy is defeated, the last being death; and once death has been conquered, "... the son Himself also will be subjected to the One who subjected all things to Him, so that God may be all in all" (v. 28).

We have a very beautiful four-part message that has been delivered through scripture. We can draw from these passages that Jesus, who was born around 4 B.C., who lived a perfect life, and was later crucified came not only as man, but as the human embodiment of God, establishing that His commandments and teachings are truth. Also, while He was put to death on earth, He has risen from the dead and given reign. He has been established higher than even the angels. Most importantly, He will be triumphant over all His enemies and like Him, if we remain faithful, we will share in His experience of being resurrected and set in a perfect place of rest and glory; but if we do not then we will be resurrected to face eternal punishment. Please consider the tremendous and beautiful things Jesus has done for you in these passages, and use them as a driving force to make your life right and continue to be in fellowship with your Father in Heaven.

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