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Led Captive, Captive.

(2019)

Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

Led Captive, Captive.

Topics.

- Captive to sin, but now captive to righteousness.
- Jesus led captive those that were captives.

NOTE: the purpose of this document is not to do an in-depth study on each topic, but simply to discover what the phrase Led Captive, Captive means.

HE LED A HOST OF CAPTIVES AND GAVE GIFTS TO MEN

- **Ephesians 4:8:** Therefore it says, "When he ascended on high *he led a host of captives* and he gave gifts to men."

This verse is cited from (Psalm 68:18-20) which is a victory song about God delivering Israel from their enemies and their praises toward Him, but it also echoes God's deliverance for humans from sin through the Lord Jesus Christ. David in verse seventeen of the Psalm says:

- The wicked have no part with God, but the righteous, have every reason to rejoice and sing before Him, because God will be a Father, a protection and a home to the widows, the orphans and the lonely and will lead out the prisoners into prosperity. (Psalm 68:17).

Prisoners in this context, is not referring to people who are in jail, but to those who are oppressed and to widows, orphans, the lonely and the less fortunate. Psalm sixty-eight is showing that the wicked are held captive to defeat and miseries (meaning depressions, glooms, despairs, sorrows, distresses and misfortunes), but the righteous are captive to victory and joy and will conquer and find rest and dwell with God (Psalm 68:12).

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CAPTIVE TO SIN, BUT NOW CAPTIVE TO RIGHTEOUSNESS

- **Psalm 68:18-20:** You *ascended on high, leading a host of captives* in your train and receiving gifts among men, even among the rebellious, that the LORD God may dwell there. ¹⁹Blessed be the Lord, who daily bears us up; God is our salvation. *Selah* ²⁰Our God is a God of salvation, and to GOD, the Lord, *belong deliverances from death*.

The words, "You ascended on high," are a reference to Jesus being exalted to the right-hand side of God and the words, "Leading a host of captives in your train," means he has led (or set free) those who were held captive to the law of Sin and Death and made them his captives. These prophetic words of David are echoing Jesus setting free and leading those who were held captive (i.e., prisoners) to the law of sin and death and set them free and made them his prisoners to righteousness.

The words, "And receiving gifts among men," means that Jesus receives gifts of praise, honour and worship even from those who were once rebellious, because he has delivered them from the law of sin and death which once held them captive. Once everyone was captive to the law of sin and death, but now those in Christ are captive to righteousness and are delivered from death because deliverances from death belongs to God (20) and God imputes as a pure and free gift righteousness that leads to eternal life to all who belong to His Son the Lord Jesus Christ. In this same Psalm David wrote:

- God leads out the prisoners to prosperity (v6).

Prisoners are held captive which means this verse could be stated:

- God leads out the captive to prosperity (v6).

Meaning God saves those who are held captive. These verses are echoing Jesus who has made it possible for the LORD God to dwell amongst those who were once rebellious and who were held captive to sin and death because God imputes righteousness that leads to eternal life to whoever has faith in His Son the Lord Jesus Christ. In this present age God by His Holy Spirit and by His love dwells in the heart and mind of those who belong to the Lord Jesus Christ, but in the future age when ETERNITY comes to earth in all its majestic royal fullness God Himself will literally dwell amongst them (Rev. 21:1-4) and all who were once held captive to the law of sin and death will dwell with Him in eternal glory.

THE LAW OF SIN AND DEATH

The Law of Moses and the Ten Commandments carved in letters on stone is called the ministry of death (2 Cor. 3:7) because it states, "Whoever does not perfectly keep all its commandments is condemned (2 Cor. 3:9). This ministry of death carved in letters on stone is also called the, law of sin and death because it states that, "The wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23). This means that whoever does not perfectly keep all the commandments of the law is judged guilty by the law and condemned to death (2 Cor. 3:9), but the Good News is that there is a far higher law that overrides the law of sin and death. This divine law (also called the, law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus) states that death has no legal right or power to hold in the grave those who have faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, this glorious law supersedes the, law of sin and death. Paul in his letters states that all who trust in Christ have been granted the free gift of God which is:

- Eternal life in the Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. 6:23), because, the law of the Spirit of life has set them free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death (Rom. 8:2).

This means that the law of sin and death has no power over those who believe in Christ and faithfully follow him. This promise is guaranteed because it is not dependent on our self-effort, but on our faith, this is why the Scriptures state:

- Faith is counted to whoever believes in God who raised the Lord Jesus Christ from the dead who was delivered up to death for our trespasses and raised for our justification (Rom. 4:22-25)

And why Paul wrote:

- The promise to Abraham depends on faith in order that it may rest on grace and in this way be guaranteed to all Abraham's offspring (Jews and Gentiles) (Rom. 4:16).

God in his eternal foreknowledge and knowing human nature knew if He had made eternal salvation dependent on our self-effort there is no-way He could guarantee or promise it to any of us, thus the reason God in His great wisdom made eternal salvation dependent on faith and upon His grace. This is another reason the gospel of Christ is called the Good News.

NOTE: it is not the Ten Commandments that are at fault, since they are not only perfect, but also express God's perfect will, it is our corrupt fallen nature with all its sinful dysfunctions and aberrations (self, ego, pride, greed, lustful thoughts, jealousies, anger and such like things) that that are the problem since they prevent all of us from attaining to the perfection the law demands.

THE WORDS, "GOD IS OUR SALVATION"

Since every Christian knows the Lord Jesus Christ is their Saviour some religious teachers have used the words, "God is our salvation" (v18) to support the mistaken theory that that Jesus is God. Sadly, this stems from ancient religious teaching, tradition and a lack of understanding Bible language and the eternal and unique relationship of the perfect love and perfect unity between the heavenly Father and His Son the Lord Jesus Christ. Certainly, the one true immortal, invisible, eternal God Almighty the God of all creation is the Saviour of us all for the following two reasons,

1. He is the source of all life.
2. God in His eternal mind before time began planned and purposed that salvation to eternal life would be in his Son.

This means that Jesus is the eternal fulfilment of God's foreordained plan of salvation for all mankind and that without Christ God's eternal plan of salvation for mankind would be left bankrupt and no-one could be saved to eternal life. Putting both of these truths together it becomes clear that both the immortal invisible eternal God Almighty the one true God and the Lord Jesus Christ are both the Saviour, but in a different manner. God is the Saviour in that He is the source of all life and planned and purposed the eternal way of salvation, but Christ is our Saviour in that he is the fulfilment of God's eternal plan. Without God there would be no salvation, but God's eternal plan without Christ would be left bankrupt thus the reason the Bible in various contexts can refer to God the Father or the Lord Jesus Christ as the Saviour and why Psalm sixty-eight says "God our Salvation" (Psalm 68: 20).

WORDS OF COMFORT AND ENCOURAGEMENT

Since the teaching that Jesus is God has such a strong hold on much of traditional Christianity the following will encourage and comfort faithful brothers and sisters in Christ who maybe in some doubt and unsure of what to believe concerning the Father and the Son. The Bible very clearly shows that even if Jesus was God no one has to know this to be saved to eternal life since there is not one verse in the entire Bible that states:

- We must believe that Jesus is God to be saved.

Nor is there one verse from Genesis to Revelations that says:

- Whoever believes that Jesus is God the Son will be saved.

In total contrast to this silence there are literally multitudes of Scriptures throughout the pages of the New Testament that very clearly proclaim:

- We must believe that Jesus is the Son of God to be saved.

And that say:

- Whoever believes that Jesus is the Son of God will be saved.

Surely if it was important to believe that Jesus was actually God to be saved to eternal life Jesus, the apostles and Paul would have told us at least once in all their teaching concerning salvation, but all we hear from Paul, the apostles and Jesus himself is them saying that we must believe that Jesus is the Son of God to be saved to eternal life. Jesus himself said, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God 'and' Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent" (John 17:3).

For further information see the title:

- Trinity (The Doctrine of the Trinity) in:
- Various Topics (ON WEBSITE MENU).

- **Ephesians 4:8:** Therefore, it says, “When he ascended on high he *led a host of captives* and he gave gifts to men.”

God delivers us from death through Christ’s blood shed on the cross of Calvary. It is the blood of Jesus that delivers us from the law of sin and death that held us all captive (i.e., prisoners) because we all sin and the eternal law of sin and death states if you sin you die. Jesus said, “God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life (John 3:16). It should always be remembered that the cleansing power of Christ’s blood flows back to the foundation of the earth. In the book of Revelations it is written: “All that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world” (Rev. 13:8) and Peter wrote: “You were redeemed with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot foreordained before the foundation of the world and manifest in these last times for you (1 Peter 1:18-20). These verses shine a brilliant spotlight on the truth that Jesus was not only the central focus of God’s eternal mind and of His eternal plans and purposes for mankind’s salvation and for eternity, but also the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. The cleansing power of Jesus blood shed on the cross of Calvary doesn’t just cover and cleanse only those who have come to the Lord after his death and resurrection, but flows all the way back to the foundations of the earth to Adam and Eve like a spiritual invisible river cleansing all the faithful of the Old Testament from the fall of Adam onward who by faith looked to the appearing of the promised Messiah the Christ.

The faithful of the Old Testament were saved by their faith that the blood of their sin sacrifices (shadows of Christ) covered their sin and by their faith in the promised seed to come of the woman spoken of in (Genesis 3:15); by their faith in the prophet Moses said was to come like him; by their faith in God’s promise to Abraham that from his seed a deliver would come and by their faith in the promised seed of David the Messiah and Saviour, whereas the faithful of the New Testament are saved by their faith in looking back to the bloodstained cross of Calvary and by looking forward to the glorious return of the Lord Jesus Christ. This shines a glorious floodlight on the truth that whether a man or woman is of the Old or New Testament we are all saved by the same cleansing power, the same cleansing blood and the same deliver and Saviour. This is because God in his eternal mind planned and purposed before time began that His Son the Lord Jesus Christ would be the Saviour of all mankind for all eternity.

GOD GAVE THEM GIFTS

The words, “And he gave gifts to men” (v8) refer to the following gifts Jesus gives to all who come to him in humble and honest heartfelt repentance and faith:

- Joy, peace, forgiveness of sins, abundant grace and eternal life.
- Spiritual gifts used for the building up the local and global body of Christ.

SUMMARY

We began this study not to do an in-depth study on each topic, but simply to discover what the expression, “Led captive, captive” means. Amongst other things we have found that it means Jesus set free those who were held captive to the law of sin and death and made them captives of

righteousness. Another way of saying the same thing is to say that through Christ those who were once held captive to Satan's kingdom of sin and death have through faith in Christ and God's grace been delivered from the domain of darkness and transferred to the kingdom of God's beloved Son (Col. 1:13) and are now held captive to the Lord and his righteousness. Meaning, they now desire from the heart and mind to live a life that honours God and brings a good testimony to the name of Jesus and the Christian faith.

NOTICE: King David says, "The Lord gives the word; the women who announce the news are a great host" (Psalm 68:11).

As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.

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