

Acts 2:33 - Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of the Father by means of the session and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured out exceedingly abundantly that which you see and hear. (EXT)

Acts 2:34 - [**Argument: πάθος (*páthos*)**] “For it was not David who ascended into heaven, but he himself says: ‘The LORD said to my LORD, “Sit at My right hand,

v. 35 - until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet.” (NASB)

Review of the three modes of persuasion in a rhetorical argument:

1. These are the last two verses of eleven in Peter’s Argument (vv. 25–35). The structure of rhetoric is designed to persuade an audience.
2. The Argument Peter delivers consists of three sections: (1) **ἦθος (*éthos*)**: the character of the individual speaking or of the one referenced (vv. 25–28), (2) **λόγος (*lógos*)**: rationale of the Argument based on evidence presented (vv. 29–33), and (3) **πάθος (*páthos*)**: the passion elicited from the souls of the audience (vv. 34–35 cf. v. 37).
3. These three elements of a rhetorical presentation are designed to present truth supported by the speaker’s integrity or those he quotes, the validity of the rationales presented and known to the audience, and soliciting a positive response.
4. Here is a synopsis of the elements of rhetorical persuasion:

Classical rhetoric is about persuading people. In his book *Rhetoric*, Aristotle devised a whole lexicon of persuasive principles. He spoke of the three modes of persuasion: *ethos*, *logos*, and *pathos*. These are the three ways in which we are persuaded.

The first way we are persuaded by the speaker is by his character, his *ethos*. We believe him because he convinces us that he is good, trustworthy, or credible in some way. This appeals to our wills. We believe in the *man*.

5. In the ἦθος (*éthos*) mode of Peter's Argument, he quotes David from Psalm 16 who possesses the summum bonum of personal character and integrity in the pantheon of Jewish luminaries.

The second way we are persuaded is when we accept the rational appeal of the speaker, his *logos*. His arguments are rational and his evidence convincing. This is an appeal to our intellects. We believe his logic.

6. Peter's λόγος (*lógos*) section presents an analysis of David's personal life and death in light of prophecies that speak of the Messiah's death, burial, and resurrection followed by his session at the right hand of God.

The third way we are persuaded is when we desire to believe the speaker. We are drawn by his *pathos*. He excites our passions. We believe in him because we want to believe in him. This is an appeal to our hearts, to our emotions.¹

7. Peter's πάθος (*páthos*) mode concludes his Argument by quoting Psalm 110:1, also authored by David, which certifies the session of Jesus which guarantees His victory over Lucifer in the Angelic Conflict. *Páthos* appeals to the legitimate emotions that accompany the reception of truth into the soul.
8. Appealing to the *páthos* of his audience, Peter again calls upon David, this time to close his argument. He selected the fourteenth of the sixteen Messianic Psalms and the final composed by David, Psalm 110:1.
9. This Psalm was one of the favorites among the Jews because it prophesies the session of Messiah at the right hand of the Father.
10. It was well-known throughout Judaism down to the first-century A.D., including writers of the New Testament canon as is attested by this footnote in the *Scofield Study Bible*:

¹ Blue paragraphs above excerpted from: Martin Cothran, "The 3 Modes of Persuasion," *The Classical Teacher* (Summer 2016): 26.

The importance of the 110th Psalm is attested by the remarkable prominence given to it in the New Testament.

(1) It affirms the Deity of Jesus, thus answering those who deny the full divine meaning of His New Testament title of Lord (v. 1; Matthew 22:41–45; Mark 12:35–37; Luke 20:41–44; Acts 2:34–35; Hebrews 1:13; 10:12–13).

(2) It announces the eternal priesthood of Messiah—one of the most important statements of Scripture (v. 4; Genesis 14:18, *note*; John 14:6; 1 Timothy 2:5–6; Hebrews 5:6, *note*; 7:1–28).

(3) Historically, Psalm 110 begins, with the ascension of Christ (v. 1; John 20:17; Acts 7:56; Revelation 3:21). And

(4) prophetically, it looks forward: (a) to the time when Christ will appear as the Rod of the LORD's strength, the Deliverer out of Zion (Romans 11:25–27), and to the conversion of Israel (v. 3; Joel 2:27; Zechariah 13:9; see Deuteronomy 30:1–9, and *note* at v. 3); and (b) to the judgment upon the Gentile powers with precedes the setting up of the kingdom (vv. 5–6; Joel 3:9–17; Zechariah 14:1–4; Revelation 19:11–21). See Armageddon (Revelation 16:16; 19:17, *note*); Israel (Genesis 12:2–3; Romans 11:26, *note*); Kingdom (Zechariah 12:8, and 1 Corinthians 15:24, *notes*).²

11. Also to be noted is the popularity of Psalm 110 among writers of the New Testament:

This short Psalm, one of the most quoted in the New Testament, pictures Messiah as King (vv. 1–3), as Priest (v. 4), and as victorious Warrior (vv. 5–7).³

The Psalm is not only quoted by our Lord as Messianic [Matthew 22:42–45], it is more frequently cited by the New Testament writers than any other single portion of the ancient Scriptures.⁴

Not David ascended into the heavens. Peter quotes Psalm 110:1 as proof. No passage in the Old Testament is so constantly quoted as Messianic as this. Peter does not demand belief upon his own assertion, but he again appeals to the Scriptures, and to words which could not have received a fulfilment in the case of David.⁵

12. When Peter cites David in Acts 2:34 who cites God in Psalm 110:1, it requires a number of double and singular quotation marks to keep up with who says what to whom. Here are the two verses again with a color code:

² C. I. Scofield, ed., *The Scofield Study Bible: NASB* (Chicago: Oxford University Press, 2005), Ps. 110:1nt833–34.

³ Charles Ryrie, *Ryrie Study Bible: New American Standard* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 1995), 110:1nt935.

⁴ J. J. Steward Perowne, *The Book of Psalms* (repr. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976), 300.

⁵ Archibald Thomas Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament: The Acts of the Apostles* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1930), 3:33.

KEY: **Peter:** "... **David:** '...' **God the Father:** "..."

Acts 2:34 - "For it was not David who ascended into heaven, but he [**David**] himself says: 'The LORD [יהוה] (*Jehovah*): **Jehovah: God the Father**] said to my [**David's**] LORD [אֲדֹנָי] (*'Athonay*): **Messiah**], "Sit at My right hand, **v. 35** - until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet.'"

13. Peter wants to emphasize the point that it was not David that ascended into heaven. To do that he will quote David from the ever-popular 110th Psalm, written by David who quotes the Father.
14. Every person in that audience knows the verse Peter quotes. It is the capstone of his argument and is understood clearly by all in attendance.
15. Peter calls forth the individual who fulfills the *éthos* mode of the Argument: David is trustworthy, credible, and honest.
16. Peter uses David's testimony from Psalm 16:8–11 to clearly present the *lógos* mode of the Argument.
17. The audience must be persuaded that Peter's argument is rational and his evidence convincing.
18. This is accomplished by Peter allowing the words of David and a reference to the 110th Psalm as a means of persuasion.
19. In addition, he applies David's comments in Psalm 16:10 to the resurrection of Messiah in Acts 2:31. With this, he calls forth around 500 witnesses in verse 32 willing to confirm their recent observations of Jesus in resurrection body.
20. Verse 33 brings the *lógos* mode of the Argument to a conclusion by giving a summary of what Psalm 16:10 and Psalm 110:1 imply.