

## Revealing the Kingdom of God The Life of the Son of David

We ended last class, looking at prophecies of the coming kingdom of God. Isaiah lived around 700 B. C. Micah was a contemporary of Isaiah. Ezekiel, Daniel, and Jeremiah were all contemporaries and they lived around 600 B. C. These three men preached during the siege and exile in Babylon, where Israel stayed for 70 years.

Babylon fell to Persia in 539 B. C. Persia fell to Alexander the Great and Greece in 334 B. C. Greece fell to Rome in 31 B. C., the final battle being the Battle of Actium. We will revisit these states shortly...

### THE PROPHECY OF A COMING KINGDOM:

Ezekiel was a prophet contemporary with Jeremiah and he associates the “son of David” with being the true shepherd over God’s people: ““Then I will set over them one shepherd, My servant David, and he will feed them; he will feed them himself and be their shepherd. “And I, the Lord, will be their God, and My servant David will be prince among them; I the Lord have spoken.” (Ezek. 34:23-24).

He repeats the promise in Ezekiel 37:24-25: “My servant David will be king over them, and they will all have one shepherd; and they will walk in My ordinances and keep My statutes and observe them. “They will live on the land that I gave to Jacob My servant, in which your fathers lived; and they will live on it, they, and their sons and their sons’ sons, forever; and David My servant will be their prince forever.”

Hosea (3:5) predicts the coming of David; Amos predicts the coming of David (9:11-12; fulfilled in the church according to Acts 15:16-17. A significant passage in the OT prophets is Zechariah 12:10 when God predicts the crucifixion of the son of David:

“I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn.” That passage is quoted and applied to Jesus Christ in John 19:37.

In Zechariah, just a few verses later, the prophet said, “In that day [the day of the crucifixion of the son of David] a fountain will be opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for impurity” (Zech 13:1).

Before we close our study of this question from the OT, it’s time to look at two passages from the book of Daniel. Daniel was a contemporary with Jeremiah and Ezekiel, having been carried into exile by the Babylonians and he served the king himself, King Nebuchadnezzar. While God’s people were in exile, God sent a series of visions to Daniel, as well as Nebuchadnezzar which would be interpreted by Daniel, to show God’s people what was going to happen to Israel over the next several hundred years (400 to be more precise).

“David” is not mentioned in Daniel. The word “kingdom” is used 47 times in Daniel. “King” is used 187 times in 12 chapters!!! That illustrates that the question of royalty and the royal kingdom is very significant.

First, Daniel 2:44-45 - “In the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed, and *that* kingdom will not be left for another people; it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, but it will itself endure forever. “Inasmuch as

you saw that a stone was cut out of the mountain without hands and that it crushed the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver and the gold, the great God has made known to the king what will take place in the future; so the dream is true and its interpretation is trustworthy.”

It is hard not understand from this text that the kingdom would be established during the days of the Roman Empire. Many scholars reject that view. Instead of seeing the four kingdoms as: Babylon, Medo-Persian, Greek, and Rome, they frequently split the Medo-Persian Empire and suggest the author of Daniel (whom they reject as being the prophet) is saying the kingdom would be established during the dark days of the Greek Empire when the ruler Antiochus Epiphanies IV was ruling over Israel. There are a number of problems with that, but it seems clear from 8:20 that Daniel sees the two kingdoms: Media and Persia as one united kingdom. So the kingdom of the Messiah is going to be established during the days of the Roman Empire.

Secondly, let's look at Daniel 7:13-14 - “I kept looking in the night visions, And behold, with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man was coming, And He came up to the Ancient of Days And was presented before Him. “And to Him was given dominion, Glory and a kingdom, That all the peoples, nations and *men of every* language Might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion Which will not pass away; And His kingdom is one Which will not be destroyed.”

Let's break this text down and look at the individual components:

- 1) One “like a Son of Man” was coming; He came to the “Ancient of Days” and was presented to Him.
- 2) There in the presence of the Ancient of Days, in heaven, He received “dominion, glory, and a kingdom.”
- 3) All peoples, nations, men of every language serve Him.
- 4) His dominion would be an everlasting dominion; it would not pass away. It will not be destroyed.

“Son of Man” is used in the Gospel accounts *84 times!* It is Jesus' preferred designation for Himself. Basically, it is an idiom to refer to a human being; someone who has the nature or quality of being “man” or “human.” But, as we will see when we study the Gospels of Matthew and Luke in particular, Jesus is setting Himself in the context of this prophecy of Daniel 7. He is going to receive God's kingdom and He will rule over God's kingdom and that kingdom will have no end.

That sets the stage for seeing how the kingdom is revealed in the person and work of Jesus Christ.

Now, to reiterate the dates that we mentioned at the beginning of this study:

Babylon fell to Persia in 539 B. C. Persia fell to Alexander the Great and Greece in 334 B. C. Greece fell to Rome in 31 B. C., the final battle being the Battle of Actium. We are about 25 years before the birth of Jesus Christ.

So, what we are looking for, at the point that the NT begins is:

- 1) A new descendant of David (a “son of David”) is supposed to begin / establish the Kingdom of God.
- 2) This descendant will establish a kingdom which will last forever.
- 3) This kingdom is supposed to be established during the days of the Roman Empire.

- 4) This kingdom will be universal; it will not be only for the Jews.
- 5) This king is to have all dominion, all authority, all power.
- 6) This king will also be identified as “Son of Man.”

#### MATTHEW INTRODUCES US TO THE “SON OF DAVID”:

Consider how Matthew introduces his Gospel account, 1:1: “The record of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham.”

The phrase “son of David” is used ten times in Matthew’s Gospel. 1:20 is the only time the phrase is used for someone besides Jesus; in this case, it is Joseph, Jesus’ earthly father, to further emphasize that Jesus is the descendant of David.

Let us consider the passages that mention the “Son of David:”

Matthew 9:27 - In Capernaum, “As Jesus went on from there, two blind men followed Him, crying out, “Have mercy on us, Son of David!”

It is significant that Jesus healed the eyes of blind men, because the Messiah, who was associated with this “Son of David” idea, was prophesied to open the eyes of the blind, from Isaiah 35:5-6:

“Then the eyes of the blind will be opened And the ears of the deaf will be unstopped. Then the lame will leap like a deer, And the tongue of the mute will shout for joy. For waters will break forth in the wilderness And streams in the Arabah.”

Matthew will quote this passage, rather Jesus will quote this passage, in Matthew 11:4-6 and apply the passage to Himself. That is significant. What it shows is that Jesus is performing miracles to *prove* Himself to be the Messiah, the “Son of David,” the coming anticipated King. The Jews were anticipating the Son of David, the Messiah, to perform miracles, or “signs” to indicate Who He was: John 7:31.

In Matthew 12:22-23, in the context of healing a demon-possessed man, Matthew writes: “All the crowds were amazed, and were saying, “This man cannot be the Son of David, can he?” It is in this text, 12:28, when Jesus says, “But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, then the *kingdom of God* has come upon you.” We’re going to return to the theme of the “Kingdom of God / heaven” in Matthew shortly, but notice that Jesus says that casting out demons is a sign that the kingdom of God was about to be established. That is very significant.

The next time the phrase “Son of David” is used in Matthew is 15:22: “And a Canaanite woman from that region came out and *began* to cry out, saying, “Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is cruelly demon-possessed.” This passage is significant because now we have a *non-Jew* recognizing the identity of Jesus of Nazareth as the coming King, the “Son of David.”

Two more blind men, sitting outside the city of Jericho recognize Jesus as the “Son of David,” whom He heals: 20:30-31.

When Jesus enters into Jerusalem, in fulfillment of a prophecy from Zechariah 9:9, in Matthew 21:9, the Israelites sing a Hallel psalm (118:26): “The crowds going ahead of Him, and those who followed, were shouting, “Hosanna to the Son of David; Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest!”

In 21:15, the chief priests and scribes were indignant that Jesus would allow these people to sing that psalm and apply it to Jesus. Then, Jesus quoted Psalm 8:2 where David writes that God will motivate infants and nursing babies praise Jehovah God.

Finally, the phrase “Son of David” is used in Matthew 22:41-46. In that text, Jesus asks the Pharisees a question, based on Psalm 110:1 and this question hinges on the relationship between the “Son of David” and the “Christ” or “Messiah.” “How can David, led by the Spirit, call his “son” Lord? The Jewish rabbis debated that question.

Let me clarify things a little by translating the Hebrew more literally: “A word of Jahweh to my master, ‘Sit to My right until I put your enemies a footstool to your feet.’”

The Jews accepted this psalm as David speaking to his descendant, the “Son of David.” How could David’s descendent also be his master? Additionally, Jehovah God is telling David’s descendant to sit at His right hand. That is royalty. That is a royal position. This makes Psalm 110 connect to the picture of the “Son of Man” from the prophecies of Daniel and Ezekiel. We’ll come back to that picture in just a moment. In the same psalm, 110:4, David mentions that God will swear that this same individual will be a “priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.” I won’t go any further into that theme (the Hebrew writer deals extensively with that question in Hebrews 7), except to say that this “Son of David” was going to be a priest *as well as* king. So, the moment Jesus started taking care of the sins of the world is also the moment He started reigning as King. The minor prophet Zechariah also pictures the “Branch,” the King serving as a priest (6:11-15).

Mark only uses the phrase “Son of David” three times, but not in any context differently than Matthew.

Luke also uses the phrase three times. Only once is different than Matthew: 3:31 where Luke identifies Mary, Jesus’ mother, as being a descendant of Nathan, the “son of David.” So, Jesus was a descendant of King David from both sides of the family.

John does not use the expression “Son of David” at all. In fact, the phrase is not used at all after the last passage in Luke (18:38-39). On the other hand, “Christ” or “Messiah” is used **477** times from Acts-Revelation. Clearly, this is the NT wrier’s preferred designation for Jesus, even more than His personal name, which is only used 353 times!