

The Covenant with David Part 2: His Son's More Excellent Name

Scripture Readings: 2 Samuel 7:12-16; Hebrews 1:1-13

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Dear Congregation of Christ: Beginning in 1985, 30 American Biblical “scholars” started meetings called “The Jesus Seminar” in Berserkeley, a.k.a. Berkeley, California. Eventually more than 200 of these “scholars” joined the seminar all the way to 2006. It was founded by a university professor of religion named Robert Funk. He was educated and taught in the most liberal universities in the United States and Europe. Here are three of his sayings: “Jesus did not ask us to believe that he was the messiah. He certainly never suggested that he was the second person of the trinity. In fact, he rarely referred to himself at all.” “Jesus did not ask us to believe that his death was a blood sacrifice, that he was going to die for our sins.” “Jesus did not call upon people to repent, or fast, or observe the sabbath. He did not threaten with hell or promise heaven.”

Such was the leader of The Jesus Seminar. No wonder that the conclusions of this seminar reflected his false teachings. They voted that 82 percent of Jesus’ sayings were not his words; that Jesus did not perform miracles such as walking on water, feeding 5,000 people, changing water into wine, or raising people from the dead; that he was crucified as a public nuisance; and that he himself did not resurrect from the grave. They also affirmed that Jesus never referred to himself as the Messiah, or as the Son of God who came down from heaven to die for the sins of his people. Lastly, these heretics also denied that Jesus taught that God would bring an end to this present world and restore it to a perfect order. Rather, Jesus taught that his vision of a perfect world is merely what life in this world could be if man could only live as Jesus taught. But the Holy Scriptures clearly contradict the claims of this ultra-liberal seminar about Jesus.

Last Sunday, we proclaimed four promises God made in his covenant with David. First, he would have an heir to his throne, Solomon his son. Second, Solomon would build a temple for God. Third, God would be a Father to him, and Solomon would be his son. And fourth, David’s throne would be an everlasting throne. Although these four promises were initially fulfilled by his son, Solomon, our Lord Jesus Christ is the only one who perfectly fulfills these promises. This Sunday, we will proclaim how Jesus fulfilled these four promises.

So today, we will proclaim and expound on how Jesus fulfills and continues to fulfill these promises in, **The Covenant with David: His Son's More Excellent Name**, under four headings.

Jesus is David's Offspring

In 2 Samuel 7:12, God promises David, *“I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body.”* In the opening verse of his Gospel, Matthew calls Jesus “the son of David.” This title was reserved for the Messiah whom the prophets foretold would someday appear. Isaiah prophesied the coming of the Messiah as *“a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall*

bear fruit” (11:1). What is left of Israel after its destruction and exile by Babylon is a stump or twig. Since Jesse is David’s father, this prophecy of “the stump of Jesse” is the Son of David, the Messiah who is to come. This stump is also called by Jeremiah “a righteous Branch” for David (23:5; 33:15). Therefore, the New Testament writers affirm that Jesus is this Messiah, the Son of David (Matt 1:20; Mark 12:35; Luke 1:32; Rom 1:3).

But it took many signs and wonders by Jesus to make people wonder if Jesus this coming Messiah, the Christ of the New Testament. In Matthew 12:23, after Jesus healed the sick and cast out demons, the Jews wondered, “*Can this be the Son of David?*” Then, when he entered Jerusalem on the last week of his earthly life, they hailed him, “*Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!*” (Matt 21:9)

Why is this important to us? For one, if the Son of David was not human, no one would be saved from God’s wrath on sinners. Our catechism readings (Heidelberg Catechism Q&A 15-18) teaches us that since human beings sin, God’s punishment against them cannot be atoned for by any other creature, except a human being, and this human being must be perfect and sinless. Therefore, the Son of God had to come down from heaven as a human being to sacrifice himself for all his people’s sins. Therefore, only the incarnate Christ is qualified for the mission of saving God’s chosen people: the only perfectly sinless human being. This is why the Jews hailed him, “*Hosanna to the Son of David!*” The Greek word “hosanna” means, “Please save us!” The Jews were pleading with him to save them.

In addition to salvation from sin, what other benefits does the Son of David give to us his people? What he did during his earthly ministry he is also able to do for us. When all kinds of physically sick people came to him, they pleaded with him, “*Have mercy on us, Son of David!*” Whenever he heard this plea, he had compassion on them, healed them, and gave them words of comfort and assurance, “*Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light*” (Matt 11:28-30).

Jesus, the Son of David, is our only Savior, Mediator, Comforter, and Intercessor.

Jesus is Building a House for the Lord’s Name

God also promised David that his son would build a house, a temple, where people would gather together to worship the Lord. Solomon, David’s son, inherited his throne and fulfilled this promise by building the temple in Jerusalem. But this was only a partial, earthly fulfillment, because about three hundred years later, the Babylonians conquered Judah, destroyed Jerusalem and the temple, and exiled the Jews to Babylon.

All hope is not lost, however, because we read in Amos 9 that God will restore the Jews and rebuild the temple. In verse 8, Amos prophesied, “Yet I will not totally destroy the descendants of Jacob.” Then in verse 11 of that day of restoration, “*In that day I will raise up the booth of David that is fallen and repair its breaches, and raise up its ruins and rebuild it as in the days of old.*” The fallen

“booth of David” refers to two things: David’s fallen kingdom and the Jerusalem temple. The word “booth” is also the same word used for “tent,” “tabernacle,” or “temple.” Amos’ prophecy rebuilding and restoration of Israel and its temple was fulfilled when the exiles returned from Babylon and rebuilt their nation and the temple after 70 years in Babylon.

Again, this rebuilt temple was not the final fulfillment of Amos’ prophecy. When Jesus came preaching the gospel of repentance and faith, he started building the final temple of God, the church. This church is the kingdom of Christ made up of true believers. So when Jesus started his church-building mission, he proclaimed, *“The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel”* (Mark 1:15). Jesus then declared to Peter and to the other apostles, *“On this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it”* (Matt 16:18). Jesus called Peter’s strong faith “the rock” upon which he will build his church.

And what is this church? According to James, this church is the fulfillment of Amos’ prophecy. In Acts 15, during the first church synod in Jerusalem, he declared that the salvation of Gentiles from all the nations is God *“rebuild[ing] the tent of David that has fallen... that the remnant of mankind may seek the Lord, and all the Gentiles who are called by my name”* (verses 13-17). We are assured of the completion of this church because our Lord himself is its Cornerstone built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets (Eph 2:20). And all believers are like living stones being built into a spiritual house (1 Pet 2:5). When this temple—the church—is completely built, our Lord will then take us to the new heaven and new earth where the church, God almighty, and the Lamb will be the new temple built by Jesus the Son of David, the Son of God (Rev 21:22).

Jesus is the Son of God the Father

The Lord’s third promise to David was towards his son, *“I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son. When he commits iniquity, I will discipline him with the rod of men, with the stripes of the sons of men”* (2 Sam 7:14). God the Father blessed King Solomon with great wisdom and riches, but he also sinned greatly against his Father in heaven. He was both an adulterer and an idolater. God therefore disciplined him by taking away ten of the twelve tribes of Israel from his son Rehoboam. But God still assured David, *“but my steadfast love will not depart from him”* (2 Sam 7:15). Therefore, the Lord continued David’s line all the way to Jesus, the Son of David, the Messiah.

All the four Gospels affirmed that Jesus is the Son of God. In Matthew, both the devil and his evil angels know that Jesus is the Son of God (Matt 4:3, 6; 8:29). The first statement of Mark’s gospel declared, *“The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.”* In Luke 1:35, the angel announced to Mary that she was carrying in her womb “the Son of God.” And John bore witness that Jesus is the Son of God (John 1:34; 3:18), and that anyone who believes and confesses that Jesus Christ is the Son of God will have eternal life (John 3:16; 20:31; 1 John 4:15).

In his letters, Paul also proclaimed that Jesus is the Son of God by the power of the Holy Spirit in his resurrection (Rom 1:3; 2 Cor 1:19). Knowledge of and faith in his resurrection lead us to maturity in our lives (Gal 2:20; Eph 4:13), because Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil (1 John 3:8). And the writer of Hebrews affirms that Jesus is the Son of God (4:14; 6:6; 10:29).

Therefore, Jesus the Son of God gives us these benefits: holy living in our earthly life, hope of the resurrection, and eternal life in heaven.

Over a hundred times in the four Gospels, our Lord himself calls God in heaven his Father. After Peter confesses that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, Jesus told him that his faith came only from *“my Father who is in heaven”* (Matt 16:17). In John 17, on the night before he was crucified, Jesus prayed for all his disciples, addressing God as his Father six times. Jesus addressed God not just as “Father,” but by an intimate *“my Father”* 39 times in the Gospels.

This intimacy with God the Father is also ours when we believe in Christ as the Son of God. Jesus is God’s only-begotten Son, but we are also God’s children, *“But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God”* (John 1:12). This is why we are called *“adopted”* children of God, but only through faith in Christ (Gal 3:26). He is gathering his adopted children from all the nations of the world into one church (John 11:52).

Let us remember that just as Jesus had an intimate, divine relationship with his Father in heaven, we too are in close communion with our Father in heaven. Therefore, as his adopted children, we can also address our Father in heaven as, *“Abba! Father!”* (Rom 8:15; Gal 4:5-6) This term is not merely “Father” in an honorific sense, or “Daddy,” as little children call their Father. This is a term of endearment, warmth, love, and intimacy, such as “Dear Father.” This is why many Christians address God in their prayers as, “Dear heavenly Father.”

Son of David, Son of God: these are the titles of our Lord Jesus Christ affirming both his full humanity and full divinity.

Jesus’ Throne is Established Forever

There is a title related to Jesus’ true humanity: “Son of Man.” But this is also a title of his true divinity. In Daniel 7:13-14, Daniel saw in a night vision one *“like a son of man”* ascending to heaven in the clouds. Then he was presented to God, *“the Ancient of Days,”* who gave him power and dominion over all peoples, nations and languages who belong to his everlasting kingdom.

This is God’s last promise to David that our Lord fulfilled. After he ascended into heaven, he sat on his throne at the right hand of his Father in heaven. The angel Gabriel revealed to Mary that the baby in her womb is the heir to David’s throne, *“and of his kingdom there will be no end”* (Luke 1:33). God has given him all authority in heaven and on earth forever (Matt 28:18; Rev 11:15).

Isaiah prophesied the birth of our Lord, the Son of God, who would be called *“Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”* His kingdom will be one of everlasting peace, justice and righteousness (9:6-7). His throne will be of steadfast love and faithfulness to his people. On his throne in heaven sits the Son of David, the Son of God *“who judges and seeks justice and is swift to do righteousness”* (16:5). Are you waiting and longing for a kingdom where there is no murder, violence, lying, sexual immorality, corruption and injustice? Keep waiting and watching, for the day is coming when Jesus will return from heaven and set up his everlasting kingdom of peace, righteousness, justice, love and faithfulness.

Dear brothers and sisters: All of God's covenant promises to David were fulfilled by our Lord Jesus Christ. When David and all the heirs of his throne sinned, God disciplined and judged them, taking the kingdom away from them. When Jesus came to inherit his father David's throne, he too was disciplined and judged, but not for his own sins, because he had no sin. Rather, he was judged as a Substitute to make purification for his people's sins.

After he completed his atoning sacrifice, he ascended into heaven and given all authority at God's right hand. His Father in heaven gave him a name that is more excellent than all the names in heaven and on earth. He is called the Son of David, the Messiah; the Son of Man, a divine title; the Son of God, the second Person of the Trinity; and the Eternal King of an everlasting kingdom. Let us remain steadfast in our faith through all our sufferings in this world, watching for his return from heaven to set up his kingdom of peace, love, faithfulness, righteousness and justice forever.