

CHRISTADELPHIAN BIBLE POSTAL COURSE

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LESSON 2

God's Promise to David

To read: Acts 8-14
To learn: Luke 1:31-33

QUESTIONS

In the first lesson we learnt that the gospel, preached by Jesus and the apostles in the New Testament, was based on a series of promises made by God to the patriarch Abraham, father of the Jewish people, nearly 2,000 years before Christ. One of the most important promises, the offer of forgiveness of sins to people of whatever race or nation ("in you will all the families of the earth be blessed") is being fulfilled since the days of Jesus Christ in people who, coming to know and believe the true teaching of the Bible, have been baptized in the name of Jesus. Other promises, such as that of Abraham and his seed inheriting the land of Canaan for ever, will be fulfilled when Jesus returns with power and glory to establish the kingdom of God on earth.

Now, in this second lesson, we will see that the biblical teaching about the reign of Jesus Christ on earth is also based on some promises made by God in Old Testament times.

1. In Luke 1:31-33, the angel Gabriel announces to a Jewish virgin called Mary that she will be the mother of an extraordinary son:

"You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name _____. He will be great and will be called the _____ of the _____. The Lord God will give him the _____ of his _____, and he will reign over the house of _____ for ever; his kingdom will _____."

In other words, Jesus would be the Son of God and a descendent of King David at the same time and he would reign eternally on the throne of David over the people of Israel ("the house of Jacob;" Jacob is the original name of Israel, grandson of Abraham. See Genesis 32:22-28).

Therefore it is very significant that even though Mary was surprised and asked the angel how she could have a son if she was a virgin, she did not have to ask him about the part that her illustrious son would play as King over Israel, since she and all the other Israelites knew that the Saviour would reign on the throne of David. They knew it because they had read it in the Scriptures. Let us see now what our Old Testament, the Jewish Scriptures, says about the kingdom of the Son of David on the earth.

THE PROMISES WHICH GOD MADE TO DAVID

2. Read carefully 1 Chronicles 17:1-15. The great king David, the man after God's own heart (1 Samuel 13:14), reigned in Jerusalem over the nation of Israel almost a thousand years before the birth of the Saviour. In 1 Chronicles 17 we read that when David had established his kingdom, he wanted to build a temple in Jerusalem for God. Nevertheless, the LORD told him through the prophet Nathan that He would not allow him to build the temple but He made David the following promise (verses 11-14): "When your days are over and you go to be with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, one of your own _____, and I will establish his _____. He is the one who will build a house for me, and I will establish his _____ for ever. I will be his _____ and he will be my _____. I will never take my love away from him, as I took it away from your predecessor (the previous King, Saul). I will set him over my house and my _____ for ever; his _____ will be established _____."

This is the promise to which the angel Gabriel refers when he appears to Mary. Since the days of King David, the pious Jews never discarded the awaited advent of the great King who would rise up from the descendants of David to reign over Israel. In the Psalms and by means of the prophets, the LORD explained and amplified the promise made to David. Let us look at some examples:

3. Read carefully Psalm 2. In verses 6-8, the LORD God affirms: "I have installed my _____ on _____ my holy hill." (Zion is the mount on which Jerusalem is built). I will proclaim the decree of the LORD: He said to me, "You are my _____ today I have become your _____. Ask of me, and I will make the nations your _____ the _____ of the _____ your possession."

That is to say, the LORD God affirms that His Son will reign from Jerusalem, not only over Israel but also over all the other nations.

THE ANOINTED

4. In Psalm 2 verse 2 we read that the governors of the world will not want to recognize the rulership of the Son of God and will gather together "against the Lord and against his _____."

Now, in the Hebrew language the word "anointed" is Messiah. In Greek, the language in which the New Testament was written, the word "anointed" is Christ. In other words, when we call Jesus the Messiah or the Christ, we call him the "anointed". In the ancient custom of the Israelites, when a new king started his reign, he would be anointed, that is to say, olive oil would be poured on his head as a sign of being chosen as King. Look at the example of the way in which Samuel first anointed Saul. (1 Samuel 10:1) and then David (1 Samuel 16:1-13). So when we call Jesus the Messiah or the Christ, this means that we recognize that he has been chosen by God to reign in Jerusalem on the throne of David.

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5. Read all Psalm 72, which describes how the Kingdom of the Messiah will be. Another Psalm on this theme is 89, particularly verses 3 and 4, 20 to 29, and 35 to 37.
6. In Isaiah 9:6-7 we find another prophecy of what the Son of God will do when he reigns on the earth. Verse 7 says: "Of the increase of his government and _____ there will be no _____. He will reign on _____ and over his _____ establishing and upholding it with _____ and from that time on and _____."

The Anointed...

7. Read Isaiah 11:1-10 which also speaks of the Kingdom of the Messiah. Verse 1 says that "A shoot will come up from the stump of _____."

This is equivalent to saying that the Messiah will be a descendant of David, as Jesse is the father of David (1 Samuel 16:1, 9:11). Verses 2-10 describe how the Messiah will establish peace and justice and the knowledge of God on the earth. Also read Isaiah 2:1-4 where the prophet tells us about the day when the whole earth will be governed in peace from Jerusalem.

8. The prophet Jeremiah also prophesies of the Kingdom of the Messiah, for example in Jeremiah 23:1-8. In verse 5, God affirms through the prophet, "The days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will raise up to _____ a righteous Branch, a King who will reign wisely and do what is _____ and _____ in the land."
Read carefully Jeremiah 33:14-17 and 25-26

9. In the book of the prophet Ezekiel, chapter 34, verses 23 and 24, God speaks about the restoration of the Kingdom of God, saying: "I will place over them one _____, my servant _____, and he will tend them and be their _____. I the LORD will be their God, and my servant _____ will be prince among them. I the LORD have spoken." In this passage the Messiah is poetically called David (the beloved) because Jesus is a descendant of David.

THE KINGDOM OF THE MESSIAH IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

10. When we pass from the Old Testament to the New, we discover that the passages relating to the birth of Jesus Christ emphasize that he is the promised descendant of David. For example, Matthew starts his gospel saying: "A record of the genealogy of Jesus Christ son of _____, son of Abraham." (Matthew 1:1).

Both Matthew and Luke make mention of the fact that Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, the birth city of David (Matthew 2:1; Luke 2:4; 1 Samuel 16:1), just as Micah had prophesied more than 700 years before (Micah 5:2; Matthew 2:5,6; John 7:42).

11. All the Israelites who lived in the days of Jesus Christ knew the above mentioned prophecies well, so that when Jesus preached the Kingdom of God and revealed himself as the Son of God and Messiah, those who believed in him understood that some day, he would reign for ever in Jerusalem on the throne of David, over the nation of Israel and over all the other nations of the earth. This is precisely what the angel Gabriel confirmed to Mary his mother (Luke 1:31-33), as we have previously seen.

12. When the disciple Andrew knew Jesus, John tells us (John 1.41) that: "The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him "we have found the _____." (that is, the _____) Therefore, both the word Messiah and the word Christ mean "anointed". In other words, Andrew was recognizing that Jesus had been chosen by God to reign over Israel. In John 1:49, we read that while Jesus spoke to Nathanael, "Nathanael declared, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the _____ of _____."

13. On one occasion, the Jews who followed Jesus, knowing that he was the promised Messiah, wanted him to reign over them straight away. John 6:15 says: "Jesus, knowing that they intended to come and make him _____ by force, withdrew again to a mountain by himself." Jesus knew that the time to reign had not yet come.

14. Read carefully Acts 1:1-11, Verse 3 says that after his resurrection, Jesus appeared to the disciples over a period of forty days and spoke to them about the _____ of _____.

Without doubt he gave his disciples many explanations about the Kingdom that he was going to establish on earth; but a detail that he did not give them was when he would establish it. The disciples hoped that this would happen very soon; for this we read in Acts 1:6 "So when they met together, they asked him, "Lord are you at this time going to restore the _____ to Israel?"

But Jesus answered them (verse 7) that it was not for them to know when this would happen. Shortly after, Jesus ascended to heaven, but the angels reassured the disciples that the Messiah would come again, telling them (verse 11): "This same Jesus, who has been taken from you to heaven, will _____ in the same way as you have seen him go into heaven."

It is worth mentioning the fact that the Bible never suggests that the believer will ascend to heaven to enjoy eternal life there. The hope of the true disciple is to reign on the earth with Jesus Christ, See Revelation 2:26-27; 3:21; 5:10; Psalms 115:16; Isaiah 45:18.

15. When Jesus returns to the earth, he will sit on the throne of David in Jerusalem. In Matthew 25:31, Jesus says to his disciples: "When the Son of Man _____ in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his _____ in heavenly glory." In Acts 3:21, Peter explains to us that it is necessary for Jesus to remain in heaven "until the time comes for God to restore everything, as he promised long ago through his holy _____."

In other words, when Jesus comes he will accomplish all that has been prophesied about him in both Testaments of our Bible.

CONCLUSION

God promised King David that one of his descendants would reign for ever on his throne. The prophets repeated and amplified this promise or pact, The New Testament reveals to us that the promised descendant of David is Jesus of Nazareth, also called the Messiah or Christ. During his ministry on the earth, Jesus never reigned as King, but when he comes again, he will displace all the human governments, reigning from Jerusalem over the nation of Israel and all the other nations of the earth. There will be peace, prosperity, justice and health in all the globe, because "the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea." (Habakkuk 2:14)

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