

CHRISTADELPHIAN BIBLE POSTAL COURSE

Tutor's Name: _____

Date: _____

Student's Name: _____

Ref No.: _____

LESSON 15 • GOD'S PROMISES TO DAVID

Reading: 2 Samuel 7

The shepherd boy who became king

You have probably heard of David the shepherd boy, who killed Goliath the giant with a single stone from a sling.

David lived about a thousand years before the birth of Jesus Christ. He was born in the same place as Jesus - a little town near Jerusalem, called Bethlehem, and he was the youngest son of a shepherd called Jesse.

When David was quite young, God sent His prophet Samuel to anoint him to be king over Israel. But at that time, King Saul - the first King of Israel - was reigning. Saul became very jealous of David, and on several occasions tried to kill him, and David became a refugee.

Saul was not a good king; he was disobedient to God, and the time came when he was killed in battle with the Philistines. The way was open for David to become king.

After many trials and adventures, he built a palace in Jerusalem, and there he lived and reigned.

When David thought about the way in which God had blessed him, and then thought about the Ark of God which was still kept in a tent, he wanted to build a fine Temple at Jerusalem in which the Ark could be kept. (The Ark was a special chest containing the Ten Commandments, and having a cover known as the Mercy Seat, upon which God's glory shone.)

David told Nathan, the prophet of God, what he wanted to do. Nathan told David to go ahead; but that night God spoke to Nathan, giving him a special message for David.

God's message to David

Turn again to 2 Samuel, chapter 7. The most important part of God's message to David is in verses 12-16. Here God promises David a son (again we get that Jewish word, 'seed', which means a son, or descendant).

He says of this promised son:

"He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever" (verse 13).

This was to happen after David's death, for it was to be "when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers" (verse 12).

More about the Son of David

Now David had a son called Solomon, who reigned after him, in Jerusalem. The promises to David were partly fulfilled in Solomon, but the complete fulfillment had to wait for the coming of the Lord Jesus. Solomon was made king while David was still alive. And, of course, he did not reign for ever.

This promised son was to be a very special person, for God says of him: "I will be his father, and he shall be my son" (2 Samuel 7:14). Turn to the first chapter of Luke. Here we read of an angel coming to a young woman - one of King David's descendants - and telling her that she would have a son. This son was to be born, not through an earthly father, as all other children are, but through the power of God; for the young woman, whose name was Mary, was told: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall over-shadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:35).

The angel also told Mary:

"He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end" (Luke 1: 32-33).

Now we can see how the promise which God made to David was fulfilled when Jesus Christ was born.

1. God was his Father.

2. He was to reign for ever.

The King of the Jews

Jesus was born to be a King. The wise men, when they came to worship him, asked: "Where is he that is born King of the Jews?" (Matthew 2:2).

When Jesus was arrested and taken before Pilate to be tried, Pilate said to him: "Art thou the King of the Jews?" Jesus answered:

"Thou sayest it" (Mark 15:2).

That is the Jewish way of saying, "Yes, I certainly am".

As we have already seen, Jesus will come back to this earth to be King of the Jews, and to reign on David's throne.

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A world-wide kingdom

Jesus is not only to be the King of the Jews when he comes back. He is to reign over the whole earth. God says of him: "It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth" (Isaiah 49:6). ('Gentiles' means people who are not Jews.)

What about David?

Although David realised that this promise was not to be fulfilled for a very long time, he was full of thankfulness to God, and we can read his prayer of thanks in 2 Samuel 7:18-29. God had said: "Thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee (that is, in your presence)" (2 Samuel 7:16). (Note: 'House' can mean a building - the temple was called the house of God - but it can also mean family and descendants. This is what it means in the promises to David.)

So David knew that when at last his great Son (the Lord Jesus) reigned in Jerusalem, he himself would be raised from the dead, so that he might share the joys of the kingdom.

David often thought about this solemn promise - or covenant - that God had made with him, and he speaks about it in the Psalms. For instance, in Psalm 89:2-4, we read: "For I have said, Mercy shall be built up for ever: thy faithfulness shalt thou establish in the very heavens. I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant, thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations."

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verse 12: "When thy days be fulfilled and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom."
When David's life was over and he was dead, God would raise one of his descendants, and God would set up his kingdom.

verse 13: "He shall build an house for my name,
The descendant would build God a house. (Solomon built God a house. Jesus Christ is building God a house (see Ephesians 2: 1 9-22.)

and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever."
God would make his throne sure for ever. (Solomon did not reign 'for ever', nor did the Kingdom of Israel last 'for ever'. Jesus will reign 'for ever'.)

verse 14: "I will be his father and he shall be my son.
God would be the father of this descendant of David, and he would be God's Son. (Jesus is God's Son.)

If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him
Jesus did not commit sin, so God did not have to punish him.

verse 16: "And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee:
David's house and kingdom will be set up and David will be there. (This will happen when Jesus returns and David will be raised from the dead and be in that kingdom.)

thy throne shall be established for ever."
Jesus will at that time be reigning from David's throne (that is, from Jerusalem).
His reign will be 'for ever'.

Something to look forward to
Paul tells us in Hebrews 11:39-40:
"And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect."

Now Abraham, and David, and many other faithful men, died knowing that in the day of Jesus Christ's coming they would be raised again and "made perfect" - 'given eternal life with all who belong to Jesus. But as the passage shows, eternal life will not be just for these faithful men. It can be for us also.

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We have seen that Jesus Christ is both the seed of Abraham and the seed of David. The very first verse of the New Testament begins:

"The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. " So we are only able to understand the New Testament, if we have read and understood the Old Testament.

Summary

1. God promised David a son.
2. This son was to be Jesus, the Son of God.
3. He was to reign on David's throne for ever.
4. When he comes to reign, all God's faithful servants will be given eternal life, and will share his Kingdom on earth.

Chapters to read: I Samuel 17; 1 Chronicles 17

Learn by heart: 1 Chronicles 17;11,12

"And it shall come to pass, when thy days be expired that thou must go to be with thy fathers, that I will raise up thy seed after thee, which shall be of thy sons; and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build me an house, and I will stablish his throne for ever."