

Born of a Daughter of David

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In former years one of the most enjoyable experiences of life was to take a vacation by touring the country, as it was called in those days. You'd get the old car greased, fill it with gas, take along two or three extra tires, load in the family, get a road map, then start down some highway, following the markers as you went along. There was nothing more exciting than to hit the open road and go down a highway over which you had never driven before. Columbus did not get a greater thrill than those of us who took that kind of trip. And I'm confident that Marco Polo never had a finer experience in all of his explorations than those of us who went down a new highway.

It is true that the highways back then were not freeways. In fact, they were not very good oftentimes, and there were many detours. They were not too well marked, and there were not any of these fabulous motels along the way. It was indeed a luxury if you could stop in at a Harvey House for a meal. Today the increase of traffic, the big trucks on the highway, the excessive speed and difficulty in parking even in a country hamlet have taken away a great deal of the old thrill and the keen enjoyment of taking that kind of a trip.

A little town in the Midwest has a sign posted on the highway as you approach it: "Don't be discouraged if you don't find a place to park. Remember it took Noah 40 days to find a place to park."

The story is told of a man in Los Angeles who was walking down "automobile row," saw a beautiful car in the window, went in and priced it, then purchased it immediately. The salesman, who was very excited, said, "I suppose you'd like to drive it away with you right now." "Oh, no," the customer said as he looked at it, "I'd never be able to find as good a place as this to park it." So he left it at the place he had bought it!

Well, during this Christmas season I'd like you to take a trip with me to Bethlehem. We are going to need a road map, and that road map is the Word of God. We find that God has put up certain signs along the highway, and if we follow these carefully, they will bring us to Bethlehem.

God has blazed a trail in prophecy, and it is easy to follow in history. As someone has said, "History is *His* story" so that we will be able to follow a road through the Bible that will bring us to that stable back of an inn yonder in Bethlehem.

I trust this will be a thrilling trip for you, and I want to ask you to pile into the bus now because we have a long way to go.

Born of a Woman

Our trip begins at the Garden of Eden, and our first stop is at Genesis 3:15.

God, you remember, made man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his breathing places the breath of life so that man became a living soul. Then from Adam's side God made a helpmeet for him and brought her to him. She was the most beautiful creature this world has ever seen. You have never seen any beauty in a daughter of Eve today but what Eve didn't combine that with everything else. She was lovely. And Adam said, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." God brought to Adam his other half. This is a marriage which I know was made in heaven (some are not, they are made in another place). I wish I could say that they lived happily ever after. But that is not the way the story ends.

It is a sad story. The third chapter of Genesis is probably the most important chapter in the Bible. It tells the story of the entrance of sin and death into the human family. It is the only thing that can explain the plight of man as we have it today.

The serpent became an instrument of Satan to implant doubt in the minds and hearts of God's creatures. Adam and Eve did not believe that God was doing the best for them. They did not obey God. They rebelled against their Creator.

As head of the human family, this sin of Adam plunged his entire progeny into sin. And God came down to rescue man – to seek and to save that which was lost. The very minute man sinned, God was there with a remedy. You see, the Cross of Christ was not an ambulance rushed to an accident. Christ is the Lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world. He is in the plan and purpose for the world from the very beginning. This is evident in the verse before us, which is God's prophecy concerning Christ. Here God is speaking to Satan:

And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; he shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. (Genesis 3:15)

He is saying this: "I will put enmity between thee [the serpent] and the woman, and between thy seed [the serpent's seed] and her seed. He [Christ] shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel."

In other words, there would come of the woman the Messiah, the Savior. Eve did not sense that the struggle would be so long. She did not realize that there would have to be generation after generation before He would finally come.

In fact, when she gave birth to her first son, she named him Cain, which means acquisition, and she said, "I have gotten a man from the LORD" (Genesis 4:1). This could be translated, "I've gotten *the* man, even Jehovah," thinking that Cain was the Redeemer whom God had promised. However, there came a day when Cain killed his brother Abel. When Eve held that bloody, lifeless form of Abel to her breast, not only was her mother's heart broken because of death, but the son she thought would deliver man was a murderer. Cain was not a redeemer, he was a murderer.

Now obviously this Scripture does not refer to Eve nor does it refer just to the serpent. It reaches out and down through the ages, and the seed is identified for us. The seed is Christ.

Now notice that it speaks of *her* seed, not *his* seed. The Redeemer was to come from a woman without the aid of a man. How else could God take upon Himself our humanity and be without sin?

On the cross Christ died, but He rose again – "His heel was bruised." Also something else happened: the head of Satan was bruised; the head of sin was absolutely dealt with, my beloved. Today Satan is like a judged man waiting to be executed. He is on the way to execution (see Revelation 20:10). The tremendous truth that stands out in this first highway marker is that the Savior would be born of a woman. As far as that prophecy was concerned, up to 2000 years ago any woman was a candidate. But now we are going to consult again our road map, the Word of God, and the next highway marker will narrow the field down considerably.

Born of the Tribe of Judah

Having left Genesis 3:15, the next place I touch Scripture is at Genesis 12:3. It is God's promise and call to Abraham, which concludes with these remarkable words:

And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. (Genesis 12:3)

Turning over several pages, I find that God enlarges upon this promise. He says now to Abraham:

And I will make thee exceedingly fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. (Genesis 17:6)

This is a fragmentary prophecy to be sure, but the field is narrowed down, and I know that it's from Abraham and his line that there is coming this One promised to Eve. I know now that it can be in no other family on earth. We'll not find Him coming through Japheth or coming through Ham, but He will come through the line of Shem, narrowed down to the family of Abraham and the nation that will come from him. A King is coming who is to be a blessing to the entire earth.

Again I begin to turn the pages, and I come to another highway marker that will keep us on the track. These are the words of old Jacob on his death bed, speaking to his twelve sons who are gathered about him. He could, I suppose, have picked out any son to be the one through whom the Messiah was to come – that is, if he were guessing. But since he is speaking by the Spirit, it must be Judah. Judah is chosen. Jacob says:

Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise: thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies; thy father's children shall bow down before thee. Judah is a lion's whelp: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he crouched as a lion, and as an old lion. Who shall rouse him up? (Genesis 49:8, 9)

It is from this verse that the Lord Jesus gets the title of the Lion of the tribe of Judah. But the next verse is what interests us:

The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be. (Genesis 49:10)

This narrows the field down so that we know the Messiah will not only come through Abraham, but He will come through the tribe of Judah. There is no use, friend, in looking for Him in any of the other eleven tribes. He won't be coming through them. He will be coming through Judah and Judah alone.

Notice that He is called Shiloh – “Until Shiloh come.” There is a place in the Promised Land called Shiloh where the ark of the covenant was brought to rest, and the tabernacle was erected there. They remained at Shiloh until David laid the groundwork for building the temple in Jerusalem. Shiloh means “a valley of rest.” You've heard the song “Peace in the Valley,” well, Shiloh means that. There is rest in that valley. It speaks of the One who is to come to bring peace and rest to the heart of mankind – mankind in the valley of death.

Also the name Shiloh means something more. In Hebrew the name means “whose it is.” It was the prophet Ezekiel who hundreds of years later gave to his people this message from God:

I will overturn, overturn, overturn it, and it shall be no more, until he comes whose right it is; and I will give it him. (Ezekiel 21:27)

God will overturn governments until Shiloh comes, the Lord Jesus Christ, whose right it is to rule. Shiloh, you see, becomes the name of the Messiah who is to rule the world from Jerusalem. Before we leave Genesis we know that the Messiah will come from the tribe of Judah.

Born of the Family of David

With this information we continue our journey through the Bible. We go through the rest of the Pentateuch, through Joshua and Judges but we find no other highway marker. Then we come to the little Book of Ruth, and our inclination is to pass by it. But we'd better not pass by it. At this juncture it becomes the most important book in the Bible. "But," you may protest, "the Book of Ruth is only a love story of a maid from Moab." Yes, it is. But her marriage with Boaz of Bethlehem produced a son who is a vital link in the line to the Messiah. I suppose I have taught the Book of Ruth more than any other book in the Bible, but I have never taught what I'm going to refer to now, and that's the genealogy that closes the book.

So Boaz took Ruth, and she was his wife; and when he went in unto her, the LORD gave her conception, and she bore a son...and they called his name Obed: he is the father of Jesse, the father of David. Now these are the generations of Perez [Perez was a son of Judah, and his genealogy brings us to Boaz]...And Obed begot Jesse, and Jesse begot David. (Ruth 4:13, 17, 18, 22)

Without the Book of Ruth we could never tie the family of David into the tribe of Judah. This book is the link that connects Judah with the family of David.

You will recall the wonderful story of David's selection as Israel's second king. The prophet Samuel was sent by God to Jesse to anoint one of his sons as the next king. One son after another passed before Samuel, and finally the youngest, David, came. Then God said, "Arise, anoint him; for this is he" (1 Samuel 16:12).

It is to this one that God made certain tremendous promises. I am turning to what I believe to be one of the greatest chapters in the Bible, the seventh chapter of Second Samuel, which is the promise God made to David.

After David became King, he established his capital at Jerusalem, and he built his palace there. He took the entire city from the Jebusites, and forever after Jerusalem was to be called the city of David. There he built his palace on one hill, Zion. "Over on the other hill," David said, "I want to build God a house." The prophet Nathan encouraged him in his desire, but God stopped him. God said, "Because you are a man of war, and have shed blood, you shall not build a house for My name." But because it was in David's heart, God made a covenant with him that *He* would build David a different kind of house, a house that would last forever. God concluded this promise with these tremendous words:

And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established forever before thee; thy throne shall be established forever. (2 Samuel 7:16)

Either God meant that or God did not mean it. David thought God meant it:

Then went King David in, and sat before the LORD, and he said, Who am I, O Lord GOD? And what is my house, that thou hast brought me thus far? And this was yet a small thing in thy sight, O Lord GOD; but thou hast spoken also of thy

servant's house for a great while to come. And is this the manner of man, O Lord GOD? (2 Samuel 7:18, 19)

David understood that the Messiah was coming through his line, to sit upon his throne. David believed that with all his heart. And David was right to believe it because God took an oath – God doesn't have to take an oath, but He did with David. We find it in Psalm 89:

My covenant will I not break, nor will I alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before me. It shall be established forever like the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven. Selah.

(Psalm 89:34-37)

My friend, if the moon disappears out of the heavens tonight, then God may break His promise, but as long as we are able to see the moon in the sky, God says that He will never go back on His word to David.

The prophets took this up. In fact, it became their theme song. For over one millennium in the history of Israel the prophets repeated like a stuck record that He was coming and He was coming in David's line. We could spend almost an entire day turning to Scriptures that have to do with this, but let me draw your attention to only a few. I turn first to Isaiah, considered to be the prince of the prophets:

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. (Isaiah 9:6)

Now note carefully the next verse:

Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with justice and with righteousness from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this. (Isaiah 9:7)

You see, Isaiah thought God meant that He was really going to do this thing which He had promised to David. Jeremiah wrote in probably the darkest hour of the history of these people (and it's at the darkest hour that the hope of His coming shines the brightest), and he also believed God would keep His promise to David:

In those days, and at that time, I will cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land... For thus saith the LORD, David shall never lack a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel... Thus saith the LORD, If ye can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, and that there should not be day and night in their season, then may also my covenant be broken with David, my servant, that he should not have a son to reign upon this throne... (Jeremiah 33:15, 17, 20, 21)

Apparently God knew that in our day and generation there would arise many groups of people who would attempt to destroy this prophecy by robbing it of its literal meaning. As a result, it is emphasized and reinforced all the way through the Old Testament. While we can't examine every reference, I will risk turning to Ezekiel's great prophecy concerning the dry bones in the valley which speak of the nation Israel. We generally don't follow through on that, but if we did, we'd notice God's further instructions to His prophet:

And say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God: Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the nations, to which they are gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land. And I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel, and one king shall be king to them all; and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all. And David, my servant, shall be king over them, and they all shall have one shepherd; they shall also walk in mine ordinances, and observe my statutes, and do them. (Ezekiel 37:21, 22, 24)

This same note also runs through the Minor Prophets. I turn to Zechariah, one of the last to write in the Old Testament. Here is this man's message:

In that day shall the LORD defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be like David; and the house of David shall be like God, like the angel of the LORD before them. And it shall come to pass, in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplications; and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn. (Zechariah 12:8-10)

His prophecy makes it clear that even after the Babylonian captivity they were still looking for the Messiah to come.

The prophet Micah pointed out the very place He would be born:

But thou, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting. (Micah 5:2)

A remarkable prophecy in Daniel marks Him out so that they should have known even the *time* when Jesus was to be born yonder in Bethlehem. In Daniel's prophecy of the 70 weeks, he said that from the time of the building of the temple until the Messiah was cut off would be 69 weeks (of years), and you can follow history from the days of Artaxerxes II in 445 B.C. and it will bring you to that day when Jesus Christ was crucified on a cross outside of Jerusalem. I say to you, they should have been yonder at the inn in Bethlehem waiting for news of His birth.

Historians have recorded that there was an air of expectancy in the world at that time. Suetonius relates: "An ancient and definite expectation had spread throughout the East, that a ruler of the world would, at about that time, arise in Judea." Tacitus makes a similar statement. Schlegel mentions that Buddhist missionaries traveling to China met Chinese sages going to seek

the Messiah about A.D. 33. And it was out of the East that the wise men came to Jerusalem saying, “Where is He that is born king of the Jews?”

Somebody says, “Wait a minute, preacher, I think you’ve missed something pretty big on this trip you are taking us on. You forgot that the line of David that goes all the way from Solomon down to Joseph cannot bring the Messiah into the world.” And I must confess it is true. I turn to the prophecy of Jeremiah and find that this line is short-circuited. I find we have been detoured. We’re going to have to back up here a minute. Something has happened. We cannot follow this line down to Bethlehem. We will learn the reason by listening to God speak through Jeremiah the prophet regarding one of Israel’s kings, Jeconiah:

As I live, saith the LORD, though Coniah, the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, were the signet upon my right hand, yet would I pluck thee from there.
(Jeremiah 22:24)

Notice that God slurred off the *Je-* prefix because it stands for the name of God. God calls him Coniah rather than Jeconiah. It is as if God said, “I don’t allow him to use My name.”

And I will cast thee out, and thy mother who bore thee, into another country, where ye were not born; and there shall ye die. (Jeremiah 22:26)

The curse God pronounces on Coniah is severe:

Is this man Coniah a despised broken idol? Is he a vessel in which is no pleasure? Why are they cast out, he and his seed, and are cast into a land which they know not? O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the LORD. Thus saith the LORD, Write this man childless, a man that shall not prosper in his days; for no man of his seed shall prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah. (Jeremiah 22:28-30)

You see, that line that led from David to Joseph is cut off. No king of Israel can come from that family. Yet we find this man’s name in the genealogy of Jesus in the New Testament: “And Josiah begot Jechoniah.” There it is. Because of grievous sin, no man from this line can ever sit upon the throne of David. You see, Joseph *cannot* be the father of Jesus if Jesus has any claim at all to the throne of David. Yet God had promised David that his throne would be established *forever*. How can it be? How can Messiah come through David’s line? How can prophecy be fulfilled?

Four hundred long, weary years went by after Malachi wrote the final words of the Old Testament. Heaven became as brass; God was silent.

God did not speak to man. Those were years of world-shaking events when the power center shifted from the East to the West. Those were years when the people of Israel were ground under the heel of slavery. Finally we find them subjects of Rome in the West.

Then one day in the weary round of a perfunctory religion, a priest by the name of Zacharias was standing at the altar of incense when the angel Gabriel appeared to him and said :

...Fear not, Zacharias; for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife, Elisabeth, shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John. (Luke 1:13)

Interesting those two names; Zacharias and Elisabeth. Zacharias means “God remembers” and Elisabeth means “the oath of God.” God remembers His oath. What oath? The oath He made to David. But how can that be fulfilled?

Six months after this, the angel Gabriel was sent on another mission. He passed by Rome, the power center; passed by Jerusalem, the religious center; went up yonder to the little town of Nazareth and appeared to a virgin whose name was Mary. Now Mary is of the house of David also. The record tells us that she went with Joseph down to Bethlehem because she had to register as a member of the family of David. The angel said to Mary:

...Hail, thou who art highly favored, the Lord is with thee.... Thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. 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. (Luke 1:28, 31, 32)

How can He do it? Not through the line of Joseph. But, you see, all of us have two lines – you and I have our father’s line and our mother’s line. Joseph’s line was blocked off by a curse, so he cannot be the father. But Mary can be the mother because her line, as given in the Gospel of Luke, is like the one in Matthew until David – then it is different. In Matthew’s genealogy it says, “David begot Solomon,” but in Luke’s account it says that Nathan was the son of David, and this is the line that is followed. It is the line of Mary. Mary was a descendant, a daughter, of David.

The Lord Jesus got the legal title to the throne of David from Joseph as the husband of Mary. He got the blood title from Mary. He *had* to be virgin born in order to get the title to the throne of David. He was born of a daughter of David.

Born a King

We are at Bethlehem now. Do you see that little baby there in the stable? A stable, I know, is not befitting Him; that little baby has the title to this universe! It is He who will rule this universe, my beloved. Those baby hands will hold the scepter of this world in which you and I live. But those little baby hands, waving in every direction, are going to be nailed to a cross before He takes the scepter. You see that little baby brow there? Just a little baby, that’s what He was. But He will wear the diadem of deity; He will wear the crown of God’s entire universe. But wait. That little brow will be pierced with a crown of thorns, put there for you and for me. Purple robes ought to grace those weak little shoulders, but before that purple robe He must wear swaddling clothes and the seamless robe of a peasant. Those shoulders are going to bear a cross for you and me; those mighty arms will be outstretched in salvation on that cross; those nail-scarred hands will be knocking at the door of men’s hearts. He who will hold the scepter of this universe will sit on the throne of David someday. But first He will have to sit in your place and my place, the place of judgment, before He becomes the Judge of all the earth.

Look at Him there. He is King. Born a King. Lived a King. Died a King. Buried a King. Rose again a King. And this very day He is at God’s right hand a King. One of these days He is coming to earth a King.

That night when King Lear was out in the storm and the sentry challenged him as he came to the gate, “Who goes there?” King Lear through the storm called back, “A king, every inch a king.” I don’t know about King Lear. I *do* know about this King, Christ Jesus. He is every inch a king.

My friend, look about you. America is prosperous. The supermarkets are groaning today with their shelves laden down. The department stores are bulging with luxury items. The cash registers are giving out the “Christmas” chimes. Also we are a very religious people. Churches will be filled this Christmas.

What a contrast to His coming. A stable. Poverty. Lowliness. What a place for the One who is King of kings and Lord of lords! What obscurity. No one there but a few paltry shepherds, and later a few wise men came. That’s all.

But He has crown rights. God has said to Him, “...Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool” (Psalm 110:1). There is coming a day when “at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth” (Philippians 2:10). He is coming on a white charger with tremendous power by which He will judge this world:

And I saw heaven opened and, behold, a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood; and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies that were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS. (Revelation 19:11-16)

He is coming a King.

Somebody says, “But I’m an American. I don’t acknowledge royalty. I believe in democracy.” There are some sorry interpreters of American life today and of American history. Do you think that our founding fathers gave us our system of government because of their confidence in the integrity and benevolence of man? Quite the opposite is true. If you’ll read American history aright, you will find that those men believed in the total depravity of the human race. Acting on this, they first considered making a king, then decided against it. Do you know their reason? They knew that no man can be trusted with power because the human heart is evil. That is the reason we have our democratic system today. Man cannot be trusted with power.

However, there is One coming who can be trusted with power. Of Him it is said, “And in thy majesty ride prosperously because of truth and meekness and righteousness...” (Psalm 45:4). You will notice that none of our political parties use truth and righteousness and meekness. But that is the way *He* will rule someday.

On one occasion a rich young ruler came to Jesus with the question, “Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?” (Mathew 19:16). And the Lord Jesus put before him a question that should have brought that young man to the Lord Jesus personally. Instead, the record tells us “he went away sorrowful.” And I cannot find any record of the Lord Jesus running after him, saying, “Wait, I’ve got another argument to give you.” No. The King stood there and the King let him go.

And he that taketh not his cross and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.
(Matthew 10:38)

The King goes by this Christmas, and I fear He may pass us by. As King He will pass you by if you are not willing to bow to Him.

During this Christmas season I have been reading the story of John Wesley. I had not known John Wesley said this, but he wrote in his journal: "I struggled long and hard, with agony and pain, but when I submitted myself unto Him, His peace streamed into my heart."

Ours is a day of rebellion. This is a day when both youth and adults want their own way. Never has mankind been more restless and dissatisfied and distraught than at this hour.

My friend, you and I are so made that we need to bow to somebody. And we need to bow to Him. He is King. King of kings, Lord of lords.