

How the children of Israel fit into God's Plan -1

WEEKLY READINGS:

Genesis, chapters 18-20

Luke, chapters 19-21.

READING FOR STUDY PAPER:

Genesis, chapter 37

Isaiah, chapter 43.



The beginning of the story

The story of the Israelites really begins with that faithful man Abraham. He had a son in his old age named Isaac, and Isaac had a son named Jacob, who was afterwards called Israel. Jacob had twelve sons, who were the fathers of the twelve tribes of Israel.

The youngest but one of these sons was called Joseph, and the story of his life, which we have in the Bible, is one we never get tired of reading. But it is more than a good story - it tells us about important events in the history of the `people of the Bible` - the Israelites. It gives us, too, a wonderful example of the over-ruling care of God for His people.

We all remember the story of how Joseph's jealous brothers sold him as a slave; and, how after many trials, he became governor of Egypt. Then, in a time of famine, his father and his brother came down to Egypt, because - thanks to Joseph, and thanks, of course, to God - there was corn in Egypt. For a time, the Jews (originally called Israelites, or children of Israel) were quite happy in Egypt. But after Joseph's death, as the number of Jews in Egypt grew more and more the Egyptians began to oppress them, and treat them as slaves.

Freedom for the slaves

Perhaps you know the story of how God brought these Jewish slaves out of Egypt, under the leadership of a man called Moses, and led them through a barren and deserted land to the borders of the land of Israel. On this long and dangerous journey, God fed them and cared for them. As we read in Nehemiah, chapter 9, verses 20-21,

“Thou gavest also Thy good Spirit to instruct them and withheldest not Thy manna from their mouth, and gavest them water for their thirst.

“Yea, forty years didst Thou sustain them in the wilderness so that they lacked nothing; their clothes waxed not old, and their feet swelled not.”

God drove out the wicked tribes who lived in the land of Israel, and gave it to the Jews. He gave them laws, and chose Judges to rule over them. He said to them, “If you disobey, you will be punished.” You will read in Deuteronomy, chapter 28, the blessings which God would give them if they obeyed Him, and the curses that were to come upon them if they disobeyed Him.

The Jews demand a king

Nearly 400 years went by. During those years, God had appointed Judges to rule over the twelve tribes of Israel. (The descendants of Jacob were divided into twelve family groups, called tribes). But the Jews became dissatisfied and wanted a king like the nations around them. In asking for a king, they were refusing to recognize that God was their king. When Samuel, their Judge, told God how they had demanded a king, God said, “They have not rejected thee, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them” (I Samuel, chapter 8, verse 7).

God granted their request, and gave them the king they wanted. You may like to read for yourself the interesting story of the anointing of Saul, the first king of Israel. You will find it in I Samuel, chapters 8 and 9.

A divided kingdom

Saul was followed by the great King David, of whom you will be hearing more in a later lesson. After a long reign of 40 years, David died, and his son Solomon became king.

Solomon was very rich, he taxed the people rather heavily. This made the people discontented, and when Solomon died, they came to his son, Rehoboam, and asked him to ease their burden. You will read, in I Kings, chapter 12, how Rehoboam listened to his young friends, instead of taking the advice of the wise old men who had been his father’s counsellors.

When the people came to King Rehoboam to ask whether he would agree to their request, he answered very unwisely. We read in I Kings, chapter 12, verses 13-14, that the king “answered the people roughly” saying,

“My father made your yoke heavy, and I will add to your yoke: my father also chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions.” No wonder the people rebelled against such a king! Ten of the tribes of Israel went away, and formed a kingdom of their own, under a man named Jeroboam. Only Judah, the tribe to which Rehoboam belonged, and the little tribe of Benjamin, remained faithful to him. So from this time on, we have two histories, side by side, in the Bible. There is the history of the ten tribes, often spoken of as `Israel´ or the Northern Kingdom (because they lived in the northern part of the land) and the history of the two tribes spoken of as `Judah` or the Southern Kingdom.

The continual disobedience of the Jews

In the first and second books of Kings we read the sad story of how the people continually forgot about God, and forsook His ways. At last, things became so bad that God said He would punish the people, as He had warned them continually that He would, by causing them to be taken from their land as slaves. You will see from these words from II Chronicles, chapter 36, verse 15-16, how God had done everything He could to bring His people back to His ways,
“And the Lord God of their fathers sent to them by His messengers, rising up betimes, and sending; because He had compassion on His people, and on His dwelling place:
“But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised His words and misused His prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against His people, till there was no remedy.”

Punishment at last

Israel, the Northern Kingdom, was first taken captive. The king of Assyria came and carried the people into Assyria, and, as a nation, they never came back to their own land. You can read about this in II Kings, chapter 17, verses 6-18, and in verse 23, where the writer says,
“...the Lord removed Israel out of His sight, as He has said by all His servants the prophets. So was Israel carried away out of their own land to Assyria unto this day.”
Later, the kingdom of Judah was taken captive by the king of Babylon. But their state was not as hopeless as that of Israel; God promised that after 70 years they should be brought back to their own land, and the Temple, which had been destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, should be rebuilt.

Back in their own land again

Some of the Jews had grown so comfortable and wealthy in Babylon that they did not want to go back to their own land. But a faithful company led by men raised up by God were prepared to make the difficult journey, and to start to rebuild the Temple, and settle down to a new life.

They met with many difficulties, but God sent prophets to encourage and correct them; and the last three books of the Old Testament - Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi - are the writings of these prophets.

Through the prophet Micah (Micah, chapter 3, verse 6) God had spoken of a time when the "sun should go down over the prophets". And from the time of Malachi onwards until the coming of John the Baptist, of whom we read in the New Testament, there was no word from God for the people, except what had already been written.

Yet the Jews were, and still are, God's people, and, in our next lesson, we will follow their history right up to the present day.

Summary

1. Thousands of years ago, God chose the Children of Israel to be His own special nation and obey Him.
2. He brought them into the land of Israel, and afterwards He gave them a king.
3. They became divided into two separate kingdoms, one called Israel and one called Judah.
4. Both Israel and Judah were carried away into captivity in foreign countries.
5. After 70 years, Judah went back to their own country, and - as we shall see in the next lesson - were there when Jesus was born among them.

How the children of Israel Fit into God's Plan - 2

WEEKLY READINGS:

Genesis, chapters 21-23

Luke, chapters 22-24.

READING FOR STUDY PAPER:

Deuteronomy, chapter 28

Zechariah, chapter 8.



Between the Old and New Testaments

The Jews had come back from Babylon to the land of Israel after 70 years of captivity. Encouraged by the prophets, they rebuilt the Temple of God in Jerusalem. The last three books of the Old Testament - Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi - were written during these days.

Then there was a long period of time - 400 years - during which the Jews had no direct message from God. The prophet Amos had foretold this time. In Amos, chapter 8, verse 11 we read, "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of Lord."

This period of 400 years comes between the last book of the Old Testament and the first book of the New Testament.

No wonder that when John the Baptist appeared, there was a great stir among the people. After hundreds of years of silence, God had spoken again to His people.

The greatest Jew

But John the Baptist was sent by God to prepare the way for someone even greater. God was about to send His own Son to save His people. And so, in the land of Israel, nearly 2,000 years ago, the Lord Jesus Christ was born. We sometimes forget that Jesus was a Jew.

You know what happened. After hearing His words, and seeing the wonderful things He did, the Jews rejected Jesus. They persuaded Pilate to crucify Him. When Pilate said “I am innocent of the blood of this just person”, the Jews answered.

“His blood be on us, and on our children” (Matthew, chapter 27, verses 24-25).

They could not have committed a worse crime. They had shed the innocent blood of God’s own Son. Yet, by the powerful preaching of the apostles, God gave them another chance. Most of them refused God’s offer of mercy, and punishment had to come. A dreadful punishment it was!

A people without a home

Forty years later, the Roman army came and fought against those men and their children. (You remember they had said, “His blood be on us, and on our children”). It was a time of dreadful suffering for the Jews. The horrors of that war are among some of the grimmest in history. The city was taken by the Romans, and those Jews who survived were scattered among all the nations of the earth.

God had warned the Jews long ago that this would happen if they forsook His ways. You have read in Deuteronomy, chapter 28, verse 64, “The Lord shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other.”

And so, for nearly 2,000 years, the Jews had no land of their own. Worse than this, they have suffered many terrible persecutions, and the dreadful curses of Deuteronomy have been brought upon them. Some of these persecutions have happened within living memory.

Many of us can remember the concentration camps of Hitler, and his persecution, in which over six million Jews were killed with a cruelty that shook the world. Read again Deuteronomy, chapter 28, verses 64-67, and you will marvel that these words, written by Moses over 3,000 years ago, have come to pass in our time.

It is a sad story, and it is not yet ended. We are bound to feel glad when we read from the Word of God that the ending will be a happy one.

Back to their own land at last

Turn to Jeremiah, chapter 30, and read the words of God to the Jews in verse 11,

“Though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee: but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished.”

Again in Jeremiah, chapter 31, verses 10-11, we read,

“He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock. For the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he.”

And now, after nearly 2,000 years, God is gathering Israel. In 1917 the Balfour Declaration was signed. This was a promise that the British would make the land of Palestine (now called Israel) a national home for the Jews.

From that time onward, the Jews have been going back to the land of Israel in great numbers, though Britain has not always been as helpful as she promised to be.

There was another step forward in 1948, when the State of Israel was formed.

Jerusalem - the future capital of the world

Today there is trouble in the Middle East. The little Jewish State has had to fight for its existence against great odds. Even now, surrounded by powerful and well-armed enemies, its future appears black.

But we read in Jeremiah, chapter 30, verse 7,

“...it is even the time of Jacob’s trouble, but he shall be saved out of it.”

When the last great day of battle comes - and we can see from our daily papers that it cannot be far away - the Jews in Israel will be in a desperate position.

And at that time, the Lord Jesus will come again. He will save the land of Israel, and - at last - the Jews will recognise Him and accept Him. The prophet Zechariah tells us,

“...they shall look upon Me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him, as one mourneth for his only son...”
(Zechariah, chapter 12, verse 10).

Under Jesus, their King, the Jews will be the most exalted nation in the world, and the prophecy of Zechariah, chapter 8, verses 22-23, will be fulfilled,

“Yea, many people and strong nations shall come to seek the Lord of hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the Lord. Thus saith the Lord of hosts; In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you.”

This little table may help you

- 1 3,500 years ago God brought the Jews out of Egypt. He gave them the land of Israel to live in, and taught them His ways.
- 2 The Jews forsook God’s way. Instead of showing the nations around how God wanted them to live, they copied those wicked nations.
3. 2,500 years ago God at last punished them by sending them into captivity. The Southern Kingdom of Judah was brought back to the land of Israel after 70 years, but they still went on disobeying God.
4. 2,000 years ago After the crucifixion of Jesus, the Jews were driven out of the land. For nearly 2,000 years they were homeless and persecuted.
5. Today God is again bringing them back to the land of Israel, and will shortly make them “The head (of the nations), and not the tail” (Deuteronomy, chapter 28, verse 13).

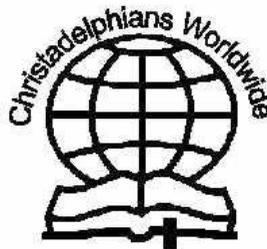
A Law that could not bring Life

WEEKLY READINGS:

Genesis, chapters 27-29
I Timothy, chapters 1-3.

READING FOR STUDY PAPER:

Hebrews, chapters 9-10.



We must have laws

Have you ever thought what would happen in one of our busy towns if ever car driver drove his car just as fast as he pleased, and went anywhere in the road without considering other people? There would soon be many serious accidents.

Wherever men and women live together in towns and villages, they must have laws. They must have good laws, and there must be someone to see that these laws are kept.

The Law of Moses

You will remember how God brought the Jews out of Egypt; and how He gave them the land of Israel to live in. You will remember, too, from lesson 6, how He was their King, and how He gave them laws.

We usually speak of these laws as 'The Law of Moses'; because it was to Moses that God first gave them, and Moses passed them on to the people. Nearly everybody has heard of that most important section of the Law of Moses, called 'The Ten Commandments'. Amongst these was the law of the Sabbath Day.

A law given by God

Because the Law of Moses was given by God, it is quite different from the laws which men make. We can divide the various commandments into two kinds.

First, there were the rules for everyday life. There were rules to say what the people should eat; the kind of clothes they should wear; and the way in which they should behave towards each other. In fact, these rules were to guide them in every way in their everyday life.

But there were other laws besides these. There were many laws telling the people how they must behave towards God, and the way in which they must worship Him.

When the people came to God to ask His forgiveness for their sins, or to offer Him thanksgiving and praise, they had to bring an animal - usually a lamb or kid - and kill it.

The animal sacrifices were to remind the Jews that they were sinners, and deserved to die. They were to remind them, too, that they must worship God in the way in which He commanded, and not in the way they chose themselves.

The Law was hard to keep

The Law of Moses, having been given by God, was a very good law. Paul tells us in Romans, chapter 7, verse 12, that, "The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good."

But men are not naturally good. Many of the Jews didn't even try to keep the law; and even those who did try failed. The more they tried to keep the law, the more they realised that they were sinners.

We saw that the Law of Moses was necessary to govern the nation. But it did something else besides this. It made men realise that they were sinners, unable to keep God's law. And because they were sinners, they deserved to die.

Paul says in Romans, chapter 3, verse 19, "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God."

A better way

The law taught men that they were sinners, and deserved to die. They needed someone to save them from their sins.

The law itself could not save them - it could only show them their sinfulness. So God, in His love, provided something better. God gave His own Son, Jesus Christ, to be a sacrifice for sin. We read in Psalm 40, verses 6-8,

“Sacrifice and offering Thou didst not desire; mine ears hast Thou opened: burnt offering, and sin offering has Thou not required. Then said I, `Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do Thy will, O my God: yea, Thy law is within my heart’.”

Jesus always did the things that pleased God. He was the perfect sacrifice, offering Himself for our sakes.

We no longer have to bring an animal to sacrifice, when we come to worship God.

But we have to come to Him through Jesus who said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me” (John, chapter 14, verse 6).

Lessons for us from the Law

The law helped sincere Jews to come to Christ, because it showed them how hopeless and helpless they themselves were. This is a hard lesson for men and women to learn; but we, too, have to learn it, before we can come to God, and ask His help.

The Law of Moses can help us in this. We are no better than the Jews - we would have failed just as they did. The law can teach us a great lesson: that God is holy, and we are sinful; and we can only come to Him in the way in which He has chosen - through the Lord Jesus Christ.

God does not expect us to keep all the details of the Law of Moses. But He has preserved it in the Bible for us, and, by reading it and thinking about it, we may learn more about His ways.

Summary

- 1 The Law of Moses was a law given to the Jews by God.
- 2 (a) It contained rules covering their daily life.
(b) It also taught them how they must worship God.
- 3 The law was good; but men, being evil, could not keep it.
- 4 God provided a new way in Christ.
- 5 The Law of Moses is in the books of the Bible called Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. There are many things we can still learn from it today.

God's Promises to Abraham

WEEKLY READINGS:

Genesis, chapters 30-32
I Timothy, chapters 4-6.

READING FOR STUDY PAPER:

Genesis, chapter 13;
Galatians, chapter 3.



About 2,000 years before Jesus was born, there lived a man named Abraham, who is spoken of in the Bible as the friend of God (Isaiah, chapter 41, verse 8).

He lived in the town of Ur, which was in the land we now call Iraq, about 800 miles to the east of the land of Israel.

The people of Ur knew nothing of the true God. They worshipped many false gods, chief of which was the moon. The ruins of a temple built to the moon-god have been found there.

A message from God

One day Abraham received a message from God. We can read this message in Genesis, chapter 12, verse 1, "Now the Lord had said unto Abram, 'Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee'."

He was told to leave his own land, and his own people, and travel to a country that God would show him. I wonder how we should feel if we received such a message? (And of course travelling was far more difficult and far more dangerous in those days).

When He told Abraham to do this, God also told him, (verses 2-3) "And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing. 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."

Abraham believed the promises that God had made, and he obeyed Him. The writer to the Hebrews tells us that Abraham, "...went out, not knowing whither he went" (Hebrews, chapter 11, verse 8).

At length he reached the land of Israel with his wife, Sarah, and his nephew, Lot. Now read Genesis, chapter 13, again. You will see how Lot chose the best of the land and Abraham was left to find pastures for his flocks and herds in the more barren parts of the country. But God was with Abraham, and enlarged upon the promises He had made to him in Ur,

"All the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever. And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth" (Genesis, chapter 13, verses 15-16).

A wonderful promise

Did you notice that this time God promised Abraham the land for ever? To possess the land for ever, Abraham would have to live for ever, so God was really promising him eternal life.

Besides this, God promised it to Abraham's seed, or son. At that time Abraham and Sarah had no children. God promised him a 'seed', or son, who should share the land with him. He also promised that Abraham's descendants should become a great nation.

God makes a covenant with Abraham

Turn to chapter 15, and here you will find that God again repeats and enlarges upon His promises to Abraham.

Time had gone by and Abraham was getting old. The promised son had not been given. But once more God assured him that he should have a son, and that his descendants should be as great in number as the stars in the sky.

In verse 6 we read, "Abraham believed in the Lord; and He counted it to him for righteousness."

Abraham, like us, was not free from sin; but he trusted in God and because of this, God was pleased with him. This time we are told that God made a covenant with Abraham - that is a very solemn promise that can never be altered. You will read how this covenant was made in Genesis, chapter 15, verses 8-18. In the time of Abraham, a covenant was made by slaying an animal. Then the dead animal was divided, and

the two people who were making the covenant walked between the pieces. In this case, God Himself did not walk between the pieces, but Abraham saw a burning lamp pass between them. The covenant was sure!

The promised child

Abraham was 100 years old, and his wife 90, when at last God fulfilled His promise and gave them a son, whom they called Isaac.

In Genesis, chapter 22, you will find a wonderful example of Abraham's trust in God. Read the first 14 verses. God told Abraham to offer up his only son, Isaac, as a sacrifice. And yet God had promised that through Isaac Abraham's descendants should become a great nation.

What did Abraham do? He knew that God would keep His promises, and so Paul tells us in Hebrews, chapter 11, verses 17-19, "By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said, 'That in Isaac shall thy seed be called': "Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure."

Abraham was prepared even to offer up his beloved son, knowing that God would restore him to life. No wonder God was pleased with his trust and obedience. Read in Genesis, chapter 22, verses 15-18, the promises which God again made to him.

A greater seed than Isaac

These things happened nearly 4,000 years ago, and at first they don't seem to matter very much to us.

But Abraham had a son who was greater than Isaac. The first verse of the New Testament (Matthew, chapter 1, verse 1) speaks of, "Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham."

Jesus, too, was the promised son of Abraham. Paul tells us this in Galatians, chapter 3, verse 16,

"Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, 'And to seeds', as of many; but as of one, 'And to thy seed', which is Christ."

So the promises made to Abraham - that he should live for ever in the land of Israel and be a blessing to all nations, were also promises made to the Lord Jesus Christ.

When He comes again to rule from Jerusalem, we shall see these promises fulfilled.

We, too, may share the promises

If we believe on Jesus, and do what He asks us, we too may share these promises. For if we belong to Christ, we too are Abraham's seed. We read in the last verse of Galatians, chapter 3,

“And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.”

Then we, too, may share the promises. We may have eternal life, and help Jesus Christ in the great work of bringing happiness to the earth. For you will remember that one of the promises was,

“And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed”

(Genesis, chapter 22, verse 18).

This promise will be fulfilled when Jesus returns to set up the Kingdom of God.

What of Abraham?

But, you may be thinking, “What of Abraham? He never received the promises, and he is dead”.

This is true. But God's promises cannot fail. When Jesus comes again, He will raise Abraham and Isaac from the dead - and many others besides - and they will live for ever upon this earth, enjoying those blessings which God promised them so long ago.

Summary

1. Abraham was called by God to leave Ur and go to an unknown country.
2. This country was the land of Israel, and God promised that Abraham should possess it for ever.
3. He also promised that Abraham should have a son; that his descendants should become a great nation, and that his son would be a blessing to all nations.
4. Abraham had a son, Isaac, born miraculously when his parents were very old. Jesus Christ is also a son, or descendant, of Abraham (and He, too, was born miraculously - of a virgin).
5. If we belong to Christ, we are counted as children of Abraham, and may share the promises made to him.
6. These promises will be fulfilled when Jesus comes back, and sets up the Kingdom of God.

A suggestion

All this about the seed of Abraham is somewhat difficult to understand the first time. But it is very important. Why not read this section through once again - now!

God's Promises to David

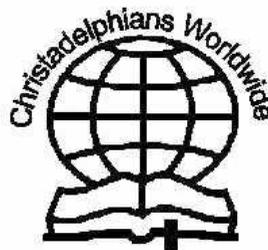
WEEKLY READINGS:

Genesis, chapters 33-35

James, chapters 1-3.

READING FOR STUDY PAPER:

II Samuel, chapter 7.



King David was the second king to rule over the Jews. After many trials and adventures, David 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 II 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 establish 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. But he 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" (II Samuel, chapter 7, verse 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 Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God"

(Luke, chapter 1, verse 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, chapter 1, verses 32-33).

Now we can see how the promise which God made to David was fulfilled when 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?"

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, chapter 15, verse 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.

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, chapter 49, verse 6).

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 II Samuel, chapter 7, verses 18-29.

God has said,

"Thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever BEFORE THEE" (II Samuel, chapter 7, verse 16).

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, verses 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."

David also speaks of these things in Psalm 16. He says, "Thou wilt not leave My soul in hell (that is, the grave); neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption" (verse 10).

Jesus was God's Holy One, and He did not "see corruption". His body did not decay, because God raised Him from the dead after three days.

Something to look forward to

Paul tells us in Hebrews, chapter 11, verses 39-40,

“And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promises: 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.

A key verse

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.

Summary

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