

Jesus of the Old Testament

Matthew 20:29 - 21:11

This afternoon I want to emphasize something that has been obvious throughout the book of Matthew, namely that Jesus is a perfect and complete fulfillment of everything that the Old Testament points to. Jesus is the object of Old Testament prophecy. He is the subject of Old Testament instruction. He is the one pictured from the very beginning of the Bible, the seed of the woman who would put away the seed of the serpent.

So let me take those obvious connections, and use them as the structure for my sermon this evening, pointing you to Jesus from the gospel of Matthew and from broad references in the Old Testament. We will actually combine, then the last section of chapter 20 with the opening of chapter 21, the triumphal entry, so that the emphasis is upon Jesus.

I'll not not spend too much time on this additional miracle of healing that ends chapter 20, but I don't want to take it for granted, either. I don't want to miss the huge impact and significance of this miracle, or miss the point of where Matthew puts it in his gospel. As an introduction to the triumphal entry into Jerusalem, one week before his resurrection, Jesus is shown to be the son of David.

I. JESUS, SON OF DAVID.

This is one of the chief promises and predictions of the whole of the Old Testament.

20:29-34

We've seen miracles before. We've seen blind men healed. We've seen appeals for mercy. But don't let all of that diminish the impact of what we see here. A demonstration of supernatural

power. An immediate, instantaneous and complete healing of two blind men. Notice how they addressed Jesus.

v.30 "Have mercy on us, O Lord, Son of David!"

All the way back at the beginning of the gospel, in the genealogy, this identity was made known. Matthew makes it known prominently and immediately.

Mat. 1:1 "The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham."

We see it frequently throughout the record of Jesus' ministry, and we will see it in the triumphal entry into Jerusalem,

v.9 "Hosanna to the Son of David."

So what's the point? What is the meaning? Why this emphasis upon the Son of David? And the simple, straightforward answer is that the son of David is,

A. An everlasting king.

It is one of the preeminent promises of the Old Testament, and perhaps one of the easiest examples of how we can clearly see Jesus' fulfillment of all of those Old Testament promises. God promised a king in the line of David, and he would be an everlasting king.

The history of Old Testament Israel certainly demonstrates the foolishness of most of the kings, and it demonstrates the mortality of all of the kings. They all died, some very soon after they became king. The dynasty was anything but stable, as king after king came and went. Indeed, David's own dynasty ended quickly. Perhaps, it might seem, this promise of an everlasting king went unfulfilled.

And, of course, it did. Which is why the people of Israel were

constantly anticipating the arrival of a great king who would accomplish and imitate in even greater measure the military successes of King David.

2 Sam. 7:8 “Now therefore, thus shall you say to My servant David, ‘Thus says the LORD of hosts: “I took you from the sheepfold, from following the sheep, to be ruler over My people, over Israel. 9 And I have been with you wherever you have gone, and have cut off all your enemies from before you, and have made you a great name, like the name of the great men who are on the earth. 10 Moreover I will appoint a place for My people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own and move no more; nor shall the sons of wickedness oppress them anymore, as previously, 11 since the time that I commanded judges to be over My people Israel, and have caused you to rest from all your enemies. Also the LORD tells you that He will make you a house. 12 “When your days are fulfilled and you rest with your fathers, I will set up your seed after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. 13 He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.”

2 Sam. 7:16 “And your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. Your throne shall be established forever.”

Consider,

Ps. 89:3 “I have made a covenant with My chosen, I have sworn to My servant David: 4 ‘Your seed I will establish forever, And build up your throne to all generations.”

Ps. 89:19 “Then You spoke in a vision to Your holy one, And said: “I have given help to one who is mighty; I have exalted one chosen from the people. 20 I have found My servant David; With My holy oil I have anointed him, 21 With whom My hand shall be

established; Also My arm shall strengthen him. 22 The enemy shall not outwit him, Nor the son of wickedness afflict him. 23 I will beat down his foes before his face, And plague those who hate him. 24 “But My faithfulness and My mercy shall be with him, And in My name his horn shall be exalted. 25 Also I will set his hand over the sea, And his right hand over the rivers. 26 He shall cry to Me, ‘You are my Father, My God, and the rock of my salvation.’ 27 Also I will make him My firstborn, The highest of the kings of the earth. 28 My mercy I will keep for him forever, And My covenant shall stand firm with him. 29 His seed also I will make to endure forever, And his throne as the days of heaven. 30 “If his sons forsake My law And do not walk in My judgments, 31 If they break My statutes And do not keep My commandments, 32 Then I will punish their transgression with the rod, And their iniquity with stripes. 33 Nevertheless My lovingkindness I will not utterly take from him, Nor allow My faithfulness to fail. 34 My covenant I will not break, Nor alter the word that has gone out of My lips. 35 Once I have sworn by My holiness; I will not lie to David: 36 His seed shall endure forever, And his throne as the sun before Me; 37 It shall be established forever like the moon, Even like the faithful witness in the sky.”

Let me read a couple other cross references as well,

Is. 9:6 “For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. 7 Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.”

Indeed, the very announcement to Mary of the incarnation of Jesus had this promise to David embedded within,

Luke 1:26 “Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, 27 to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin’s name was Mary. 28 And having come in, the angel said to her, “Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!” 29 But when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was. 30 Then the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. 31 And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS. 32 He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. 33 And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end.”

Jesus is the son of David, the descendant of David who would reign on David’s throne forever. The King forever. So the incarnation is not about the cute impressions of a baby born in a manger. The incarnation is about the fulfillment of God’s promise to provide an everlasting king. And that kingdom is not an earthly kingdom; it is no longer the nation of Israel. The kingdom is within us, and the kingdom is made visible by the church, the body of Christ. Jesus reigns and rules as king. he was born to be king, an everlasting king.

So why is this so important? First, and I think foremost, because it is Jesus as King whom we worship and adore. Especially with all the sentimental and nostalgic, even sappy ways in which Jesus is portrayed during this Christmas season, it is particularly important for us to recognize the fullness of his glory and power as we worship him, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. I should note that theme of worship will carry into heaven,

Rev. 19:11 “Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and

in righteousness He judges and makes war. 12 His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. 13 He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. 14 And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. 15 Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. 16 And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.”

That’s the Jesus whom we worship. And that is important also because he rules as king even now, and that is very heart of the gospel that was preached at Pentecost.

Acts 2:29 “Men and brethren, let me speak freely to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. 30 Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, He would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne, 31 he, foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption. 32 This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses. 33 Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear. 34 “For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he says himself: The LORD said to my Lord, “Sit at My right hand, 35 Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.” 36 “Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.”

And so I proclaim King Jesus to you, and urge you to confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord. Jesus is King. Let that be

your great encouragement also, no matter what the circumstances of your life might be!

Let me go back to Matthew 20, with this note of emphasis that Jesus the Son of David was also,

B. A merciful and powerful king.

Power to heal, that's why the two blind men sought his help. They knew he had supernatural power. And they cried out for mercy!

v.30

They would not give up,

v.31

They received the blessing they sought, and the Scriptures specifically tell us of Jesus' mercy, his compassion or pity.

v.32-34

Why did Jesus heal? Certainly, as a display of his power. But also, here it is noted, because of his compassion. So the power of King Jesus is inseparably joined with his goodness. His authority to rule is inseparably joined with his mercy to help those in great need. And that combination of power and goodness is the bedrock of our faith, and of our encouragement.

You and I ought often to cry out with these two blind men, "Have mercy on us, O Lord, Son of David!" Secondly, in our text this afternoon, we see,

II. JESUS, MOUNTED UPON A DONKEY.

This seems to be a contradiction, because a king wouldn't ride a donkey. A king would ride a horse. A king would ride in triumph and glory, demonstrating by his very presence that he is a

victorious ruler. But a donkey? We don't have to wonder what image that presents.

21:1-5

Here the prophecy is from,

Zech. 9:9. "Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, Lowly and riding on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey. 10 I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim And the horse from Jerusalem; The battle bow shall be cut off. He shall speak peace to the nations; His dominion shall be from sea to sea, And from the River to the ends of the earth.' 11 "As for you also, Because of the blood of your covenant, I will set your prisoners free from the waterless pit. 12 Return to the stronghold, You prisoners of hope. Even today I declare That I will restore double to you. 13 For I have bent Judah, My bow, Fitted the bow with Ephraim, And raised up your sons, O Zion, Against your sons, O Greece, And made you like the sword of a mighty man."

The picture is of,

A. The coming of a king.

That's why I read a bit of the broader context. The emphasis of the king is retained, but this king, mounted upon a donkey, comes with the image of humility.

B. The humility of a king.

That is what is so astounding here. "Behold, your King is coming to you, Lowly, and sitting on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey."

So what's the point? As we studied last week,

Mat. 20:28 "...even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Jesus came not to exert his power and authority, but to lay down his life for your sins. He did not come to exalt himself, but to humble himself.

Phil. 2:6 "...who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, 7 but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross."

It is he whom we worship. It is he whom we serve. It is he whom we follow, even imitate. He took the form of a servant. He presented himself in all humility. So he calls us to put to death any pride or self-advancement that we might find in our own hearts as well. To follow him, Jesus calls us to take up our cross. He calls us to deny ourselves.

Luke 9:23 "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. 24 For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it."

This call to humility is at the very center of Christian discipleship. And this example of humility is at the very heart of Jesus' own presentation. He didn't come to exalt himself, but to deny himself. He came with the humility to take the form of a servant, "he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death."

He rode into Jerusalem on a donkey. But notice as well, he came to be worshiped nonetheless.

21:6-11

So the promised king was also the promised savior.

III. JESUS, PROMISED SAVIOR.

Look at the words of,

v.9

Hosanna. That's another one of those many Hebrew words you are actually already familiar with. The meaning of the word is somewhat simply, "Save now!"

A. Hosanna: Save now.

The crowds used that expression as a demonstration of their worship. Note the obvious evidence of their honor which they gave to Jesus,

v.8

Outwardly, and with their words, this was an amazing declaration. And it was a realization of the salvation of God which had come to hear. Save, now! That's an imperative. A request. A demand, even. The word was repeated for emphasis in verse 9, with reference first to David, and then much more broadly, "Hosanna in the highest.

The people didn't come up this word on their own nor did they use it without understanding. The reference is to Psalm 118, a psalm of salvation!

Ps. 118:14 "The LORD is my strength and song, And He has become my salvation. 15 The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tents of the righteous; The right hand of the LORD does valiantly. 16 The right hand of the LORD is exalted; The right hand of the LORD does valiantly."

That sense of joy and delight in the salvation of the Lord is made clearer,

Ps. 118:19 "Open to me the gates of righteousness; I will go through them, And I will praise the LORD. 20 This is the gate of

the LORD, Through which the righteous shall enter. 21 I will praise You, For You have answered me, And have become my salvation. 22 The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone. 23 This was the LORD's doing; It is marvelous in our eyes. 24 This is the day the LORD has made; We will rejoice and be glad in it. 25 Save now, I pray, O LORD; O LORD, I pray, send now prosperity.”

Save us now! Hashan Na. Save now! The language is strong. The grammar is strong. It is a burdened request. This is the day that the Lord has made, the day of salvation. This is the day of redemption, let us rejoice and be glad in it. Save us now, O Lord. Now! That's an urgency that we often don't feel. That's an urgency that we might neglect, but there is no neglect here. The people of Jerusalem understand the significance of Jesus' presence. He is the promised Savior of the Old Testament. And he is,

B. A prophet to be worshiped.

v.10-11

Thus we read in,

Mat. 2:23 “And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, “He shall be called a Nazarene.”

Jesus was born and lived as a man in order to fulfill all that the Old Testament had promised of him. And so we come to worship him as well today. We come to proclaim his name as well,

Acts 4:12 “Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”

We proclaim the gospel of salvation, salvation only through

faith in Jesus Christ. And we come to worship the king, the king who sits upon the throne of David.