

## 25. DAVID'S THRONE

Amos	9:11-12
Hosea	3:5
Isaiah	4:2, 9:6-7, 11:1-4
Jeremiah	23:5-6, 33:17-22
Daniel	2:35, 44-45
Ezekiel	34:15, 23-24, 37:24-25
Haggai	2:23

During the millennium, the Messiah will dwell among Israel and many nations will join him, agree to be his subjects, and come to Jerusalem to worship. The Lord will inherit Judah as his portion in the holy land and again choose Jerusalem. He will come with his reward and will tend his flock like a shepherd. We are talking about Israel, not the Church.

King David was the most beloved of the Jewish dynasty of kings and all subsequent kings of Judah were his descendants. David's love for women and his polygamy (fourteen wives) brought disaster to his family, and because of his bloodthirsty military career, he was barred from building the first Jewish temple. However, his good character and his love for God, as reflected in the Psalms he composed, endeared him to his people. God also loved him and made a covenant with him, saying that his throne would be established forever. David's son Solomon built the temple and was famous but he was not the promised Messiah who was always referred to as a son (descendant) of David, sometimes as a descendant of Jesse, David's father. Zedekiah was the last Jewish king before the fall of Judah to Babylon in 586 B.C. Subsequent kings of Judea, like the Herodic dynasty, were not in the Davidic line.

The prophecies concerning the restoration of the Jewish monarchy under the Messiah are important because they teach that in addition to the Church that Jesus is currently building, calling out believers from all nations, God still has a separate plan for the Jewish nation as the people of God. The Gospels were written by Christians for Christians and those who seek the truth about God. Most were written by Jewish

Christians who present Jesus first and foremost as the awaited Jewish Messiah. The Church has not replaced God's plan for Israel. The OT prophecies concerning the restoration of the throne of David teach us the following truths:

1. In the latter days Israel will return to their land and seek the Lord their God and David their king (Hos 3:5).
2. In that day, God will raise up David's fallen tent and rebuild it as in the days of old, so that Israel might possess all the nations that bear his name (Amos 9:11-12). This is a restoration of the nation of Israel to the extent that they will have dominance over all the nations that come under Messiah's rule.
3. The Lord will raise up for David a righteous Branch, who will reign as king and execute justice in the land. In his days the Jews, the descendants of Israel, will be free and will dwell securely (Jer 23:5-6).
4. The Lord God himself will shepherd his sheep (Ezek 34:15). He (God) will do this by setting over them his servant 'David' (the divine-human Messiah) (Ezek 34:15, 23-24). The Lord will be their God, and his servant David will feed them as their shepherd, and be among them as their regent king. However, no Scriptures indicate that he will live on Earth outside of the temple.
5. This David will be king over Israel. They will walk in God's ways and live in the land that he gave Jacob, where the patriarchs lived. Israel will dwell there forever under the Messiah. God's temple will be among them and they will be his people forever (Ezek 37:24-25). 'Forever' means the very long period of the Messianic reign which in Revelation is stated to be 'a thousand years.' I will put my sanctuary *among* them forever. My dwelling place will be over them" (37:26-27). The throne of the Father and the Lamb will be *above them* (עליהם) in the New Jerusalem, while his sanctuary (temple) will be among them in earthly Jerusalem.
6. The Lord will make Zerubbabel like a signet ring (Hag 2:23). That seems to mean that he will have royal authority in the

person of his descendant, Jesus, the Messiah. Zerubbabel is a descendant of David and an ancestor of Jesus (Mt 1:12).

7. For to us (Israel) a child (the Messiah) is born, and the government will be on his shoulders. There will be no end to the greatness of his government and peace. He will sit on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing it and upholding it with justice and righteousness (Isa 9:6-7). The identity of the king is not in doubt; he is called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace. This passage is Messianic and still future; the government of the world is not yet on the Messiah's shoulders.
8. A shoot (the Messiah) will come out from the stump of Jesse (the remnant of judged Israel). ... The Spirit of the Lord will be on him. ... He will judge the needy with righteousness and give just decisions for the poor of the Earth. His decisions will strike the inhabitants of the Earth like a rod, the authority of his command will slay the wicked (Isa 11:1-4). The context is the Messianic reign.

When the Messiah reigns from the throne of David, he will not be restricted to the kingdom of Israel. The Lord said:

It is too small a thing for you to be my servant to build up the tribes of Jacob and restore the remnant of Israel. I will also appoint you as a light for the Gentiles so that you might become my means of salvation to the ends of the Earth. ... Kings will see you and stand up, leaders will see you and bow down, because the Lord who chose you, the holy one of Israel, is faithful (Isa 49:6-7).

I have installed my king on Zion, my holy mountain ... Ask me, and I will give the nations as your inheritance, the ends of the Earth as your possession. You will rule them with a rod of iron, you will smash them as one smashes pottery (Ps 2:6-9).

The Lord will extend your mighty scepter from Zion, rule in the midst of your enemies ... The Lord is at your right hand, he will crush kings on the day of his wrath. He will take vengeance on the nations, heaping up the dead and crushing the rulers of the whole Earth (Ps 110:2, 5-6).

In the days of those kings, the God of heaven will establish a kingdom that will never be destroyed. A rock (the Messiah) will be cut out of a mountain (Zion), but not by human hands (by God). It will crush those empires, bringing them to an end, but his empire will endure forever (Dan 2:44).

Where is the throne of David situated? From where will the Messiah reign? Not in heaven. David's kingdom was an earthly kingdom and his throne only has relevance here on Earth. Isaiah had a vision of the Lord sitting on a throne as King in the temple (Isa 6:1) and John interpreted the Lord in that vision as being Jesus (John 12:41). The temple is specific, it is *the* temple at Jerusalem. Heaven is God's throne, and the Earth is his footstool. God's sovereignty extends over the whole universe, so heaven is his throne. His contact with mankind was through his people, Israel, via his temple at Jerusalem, the eternal city of God. Ezekiel had a vision of the millennial temple being filled with the glory of the Lord, then he heard someone speaking:

This is the place of my throne, this is my footstool. I will live here among the Israelites forever (Ezek 43:7).

This throne on Earth does not represent God's sovereignty, it is David's throne, and ultimately the throne of Jesus, the Messiah, God's regent on Earth. His real throne is in New Jerusalem, the footstool of his throne is in the temple in earthly Jerusalem.

Zechariah adds his testimony to this. God said the man whose name is the Branch (the Messiah) will build a temple for him and sit on his throne there and reign in glory (Zech 6:13). Zechariah was not thinking about the Church that Jesus said he would build, although it is true that Christians are called the temple of the living God (2 Cor 6:16). The Lord said: I will shake all nations, and the wealth of all nations will be brought, and I will fill this temple with glory (Hag 2:7). It is at the end of the age when God will shake the heavens and the Earth, the sea and the dry land, and the Messiah will come and fill the temple with the glory of his presence, and the glory and wealth of the nations will be brought to it. He is on the same wavelength as Jeremiah when he said: David will never lack a man to sit on the throne of Israel, nor will the Levitical priests ever lack a man to stand before me and offer burnt offerings, and burn grain offerings and present daily sacrifices (Jer 33:17-18).

## The NT confirms a future throne of David

The angel Gabriel told Mary that God would give her son the throne of David while making this prophecy about him:

He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David, and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever. His kingship will never end (Lk 1:32-33).

Mary, probably a teenager and a godly child who knew the Scriptures well, would have understood these words as a promise that God would one day make her son king over Israel. She would imagine him reigning in Jerusalem, but she didn't know when. The most satisfactory interpretation of Gabriel's prophecy is that after Jesus' return, he will reign over Israel as the Messiah during the millennium. as declared by loud voices in heaven:

The seventh angel blew his trumpet is blown and loud voices came from heaven saying: The kingship of the world has become the kingship of our Lord and his Messiah and he will reign forever. ... for you have taken hold of your great power and have begun to reign (Rev 11:15, 17b).

Jesus promised his disciples that when he sits on *his glorious throne* in the renewal of all things, they would sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Mt 19:28). This renewal is a rebirth or a regeneration of the present world that will be destroyed at the time of Jesus' return and renewed during the millennium. As members of Jesus' monarchy, resurrected Jewish Christians will reign over a newly converted, but still terrestrial Israel.

We need to examine the question of what Jesus meant when he said he would sit on his glorious throne. Is it David's throne that was in his palace, the Lord's throne that was in the temple, or God's throne that is in heaven? As Jesus calls it 'his' throne, we can rule out God's throne in heaven. He shares God's throne now, but at the renewal of all things, when Jesus returns, he will sit on an earthly throne. Ezekiel's detailed vision of a future millennial temple does not refer to a palace, and the two references to "a glorious throne" in the OT both refer to the temple (Jer 14:21, 17:12). Ever since the Tabernacle

was built in the wilderness, the Lord has met with his people from between the cherubim that were on the lid of the ark of the covenant.

The Lord reigns; let the nations tremble! He sits enthroned between the cherubim; let the earth quake! (Ps 99:1).

The NT emphasizes the fact that at the ascension, Jesus sat down at the right hand of God, where he shares God the Father's throne. The significance of this is that a man, Jesus, with a glorified, resurrected, human body, is now on the throne with his Father; humanity has been exalted to deity. So, when he returns to Earth as the resurrected God-man, it is more appropriate for him to reign from the holy of holies in the temple which functions as God's palace. Present-day Israel doesn't have a king, it has a president. It is hard to visualize the resurrected Jesus living in a presidential palace. Prophecies imply that a temple will be built before Jesus returns and that a more glorious temple will be constructed during the millennium. The temple was called God's footstool (1 Chr 28:2) and the Messiah calls it that when speaking to Ezekiel from the millennial temple (Ezek 43:7).

In addition, when Jesus rules the world as a resurrected person, his dwelling place will be primarily in the heavenly realm, making appearances in the physical realm when necessary. οὐρανός, the Greek word for heaven, has two basic meanings; as part of the universe, it means the sky, the place of the clouds, and also the stars. The second meaning is the dwelling place of God and angels and the spirits of the righteous dead. This is an invisible realm, but during the millennium, the holy city comes down out of heaven, and its glory is seen above Israel. The spiritual and the physical realms overlap. The Messiah's dwelling place and throne will be in New Jerusalem, and at the same time he dwells among Israel during the Messianic era as a permanent earth-dweller. A manifestation of his glory will be visible in the Jerusalem temple where Israel and the nations will worship him. The resurrected saints will live in New Jerusalem, and appear on Earth at will according to their role as rulers.

While on Earth, God the Son never left his throne in heaven. Jesus told his disciples that he never did anything on his own initiative; he only did what he saw the Father doing. He even made the bold statement that whatever the Father does, he, the Son, also does. He is God and he reigns forever. Three times in John, Jesus uses the phrase

“where I am” to inform his disciples that even though he was with them in the physical world, he was, at the same time, with the Father (Jn 12:26, 14:3, 17:24) in the spiritual realm. Jesus was always very conscious of the fact that he was one with the Father and a partaker of the glory that he had with him before the world began.

Another important throne passage is Matthew 25:31 ff. When the Messiah returns in his glory with all the angels, he will sit on his glorious throne, from where he will judge the nations. The outcome of the parable is that the righteous inherit the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world, while the unrighteous are consigned to the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. The parable is not about the final judgment that takes place after the millennium (Rev 20:7-15). The righteous are not even mentioned there. The separation of the sheep from the goats illustrates the fact that at the second coming of Christ, mankind will be separated into two groups, the righteous and the wicked. The righteous will be resurrected and will meet the Lord in the air, while many of the wicked are slaughtered at the battle of Armageddon and the rest suffer from the pouring out of God’s wrath on the world. The Antichrist and the false prophet are thrown alive into the lake of fire. The wicked who die depart to Hades, to be raised and judged at the great white throne. All the nations are gathered before the Messiah at the siege of Jerusalem, but that does not include all the unbelievers in the world. There will be millions of survivors who become the subjects of the Messianic kingdom. A kingdom has to have subjects over whom the nobility rules. The righteous are not subjects, they rule with the Messiah as his monarchy. The sovereignty, power, and greatness of all the kingdoms under heaven will be handed over to the saints of the Most High (Dan 7:27). No Scripture suggests that the righteous are subjects in the Messianic kingdom.

The background to the verses about David’s throne is found in several Psalms which elaborate on God’s promise to David in 2 Samuel 7:16 to establish his throne forever. In Psalm 2, God declares that he will set his regent on Zion, his holy hill. He will give him the nations as his inheritance and the ends of the earth as his possession. He will make him the highest of the kings of the earth and his throne will endure forever (Ps 89:27–29). The Lord will extend the Messiah’s mighty scepter from Zion (Ps 110:2), where he will rule in the midst

of his enemies. Evil is subjugated, not annihilated. The armies of heaven, arrayed in their fine linen (the righteous deeds of the saints) are ready to subdue any rebellion from these unregenerate survivors of the nations.

Peter, preaching on the day of Pentecost, said that David was a prophet and he knew that God had promised him on oath that he would put one of his descendants on his throne. Then Peter concluded that all Israel should know that God had raised Jesus, whom they had crucified, from the dead, and made him both Lord and Messiah.

### **First-century Jews were waiting for the Son of David**

The NT affirms that Jesus is the awaited Messiah, the son of David. He was born in Bethlehem of Judea, where David's family lived (1 Sam 16:1, Matt 2:2-5). The people who thought he was born in Nazareth said: "Doesn't the Scripture say that the Messiah is from David's family and from Bethlehem, the village where David lived? (John 7:42).

Matthew continually emphasizes the expectations of the crowds. Their hope was set on the Messiah, the son of David having high expectations that he would soon come and rule them as their king. Seeing Jesus, they believed he was the Messiah.

9:27 Two blind men said: Have mercy on us, Son of David!

12:23 The astonished crowds said: Could this be the Son of David?

15:22 A Canaanite woman lived in that area. She came and cried out to him: Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me.

20:30-31 Two blind men were sitting by the roadside. When they heard that Jesus was passing by, they shouted: Lord, Son of David, have mercy on us.

21:9 The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed were shouting: Hosanna to the Son of David!

22:42 Jesus asked the Pharisees: What do you think about the Messiah? Whose son is he? They answered him saying: The son of David.

Other NT references to Jesus inheriting the throne of David are:

- Mk 11:10      The crowds shouted: Blessed is the person who comes in the name of the Lord. Blessed is the coming reign of our father David('s descendent)!
- Acts 13:34    God raised him (Jesus) from the dead so that he would not experience decay, as he said: I will give you the sure mercies promised to David.
- 2 Tim 2:8     Remember David's descendent Jesus Christ, who was raised from the dead. This is my gospel.
- Rev 3:7        These are the words of him who is holy and true. He holds the key of David; what he opens no one can shut, and what he shuts no one can open.
- Rev 5:5        Don't cry! Look! The lion of the tribe of Judah, the king of David's revived kingdom, has triumphed.
- Rev 22:16     I am the descendant of David, the king of his revived kingdom, and the bright Morning Star.