

JOURNEY

THROUGH

SCRIPTURE

GENESIS TO JESUS



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Something similar happens in the Davidic covenant. Although the Davidic king is the political leader of the people, responsible for the Law, God sends his Spirit upon the prophets—men like Nathan, Isaiah and Jeremiah. The prophets foretell God's restoration of the Davidic kingdom through a messiah. Isaiah 53:4–6 states that the Messiah will not be triumphant by winning a great military battle. On the contrary he will suffer greatly, but through his sufferings he will atone for sins. The Messiah will offer himself as a sacrifice to God. Jeremiah 31:31–34 explains that through the Messiah, God will establish a “new covenant” to restore his family. Through the new covenant God's plan to make us his covenant family will be fulfilled (see Jeremiah 32:36–41).

The future Son of David will defeat evil once and for all. He will restore the kingdom as God's worldwide covenant family. The next lesson will focus on the final stage in God's covenant plan, the new covenant. God fulfills all of his Old Testament promises in Christ—the Son of David, the Messiah!

Review Questions for Personal Study

1. What is the twofold role of David? In what way is he a king and a priest?
2. What are the seven major characteristics of the Davidic covenant?
3. How do these characteristics relate to Christ and his work?
4. What role do the prophets play, and how does it relate to the role of the judges in the Mosaic covenant?
5. How do the prophets describe the victory of the coming Messiah?

Recommended Verses to Memorize

Jeremiah 31:31–33

Matthew 1:1

Luke 1:32–33

LESSON SEVEN

Jesus: Fulfillment of the Promises

Salvation history reveals how God works through the covenants of the Old Testament to make us his family. In the person and work of Jesus Christ in the new covenant, God fulfills his promises to Adam, Abraham, Moses and David. This lesson highlights Jesus' perfect fulfillment of these Old Testament types.

In Christ we have a new creation, a new exodus and a new kingdom.

The New Moses

Jesus' birth parallels Moses' birth. Both Jesus and Moses are born during the reign of a ruthless king; both tyrants kill other Hebrew male children (“the slaughter of the innocents”). Both Jesus and Moses find safety in Egypt. Finally, after the tyrant's death, both come out of Egypt, pass through waters and are led into the desert.

Ministry. Jesus fasts for forty days and forty nights, as did Moses. Jesus is tempted by Satan in the desert, just as Israel was tested in the wilderness. To rebuke the devil Jesus cites the very passages from Deuteronomy 6—8 where Moses explained to Israel why they failed the test they faced in the wilderness. Deuteronomy 8:3 says the people do “not live by bread alone.” Deuteronomy 6:16 says, “You shall not put the LORD your God to the test.” Deuteronomy 6:13 exhorts them to serve God alone. Jesus succeeds where Israel failed.

After his forty-day fast, Jesus begins his public ministry by declaring the new covenant law on a mountain (see Matthew 5—7), the Sermon on the Mount. After his forty days' fast, Moses also gave Israel the law of God from a mountain—Mount Sinai. Jesus' mission is to fulfill God's Word—*not* to abolish the Law and the prophets (see Matthew 5:17). Thus he does not relax the law of Moses; he *internalizes* it and *intensifies* it. For example, while Moses

commanded Israel not to commit adultery, Jesus states that anyone who even looks lustfully at a woman commits adultery with her in his heart (see Matthew 5:31–32).

What Moses gave is great; what Jesus gives is greater (see John 1:17). Jesus challenges the Israelites to allow the Scriptures (and Moses' writings in particular) to bear witness to him (see John 5:39, 46–47).

Signs and Miracles. Throughout his life and ministry, Jesus works signs and miracles. The Gospel of John records Jesus' first "sign" at the wedding feast at Cana (see John 2:1–11). There Jesus turns water in the stone jars into wine. Moses' first sign was turning water into blood, including water in "vessels of stone" (Exodus 7:19).

Another sign Jesus performs is the miraculous feeding of the crowds (see John 6:5–14). Jesus multiplies the loaves of bread and the fish so that twelve baskets are left over (symbolizing the twelve tribes of Israel). Moses fed Israel with miraculous bread from heaven (see Exodus 16:2–30). Unlike Moses, however, Jesus himself is the true Bread from heaven (see John 6:32, 35).

Jesus also demonstrates his power and mercy through healing the sick. An example of this is his curing of a leper (see Matthew 8:2–3). Moses also prayed for a leper, his sister Miriam, and his prayer resulted in her healing (see Numbers 12:10–15).

Friends and Enemies. Though Jesus and Moses both have the Law and miraculous power, they choose coworkers to assist them in caring for God's people. Jesus appoints twelve apostles (see Luke 6:13–16), and later he appoints seventy disciples (see Luke 10:1). Moses also chooses twelve tribal princes (see Numbers 13) and appoints seventy elders to assist him (see Numbers 11). Jesus' inner circle includes Peter, James and John; Moses' inner circle includes Nadab, Abihu and Aaron (see Exodus 24:1; 28:1).

Throughout his ministry the Jewish leaders oppose Jesus. When Jesus casts out demons, the Pharisees accuse him of being in league with Satan (see Matthew 9:32–34). They even plot to kill him. Here again is a parallel with Moses, who was opposed by Israel's leaders throughout the Books of Exodus and Numbers (see, for example, Numbers 12:1–2).

Transfigured on a Mountain. The Transfiguration underlines Jesus' role as the new Moses. Jesus goes up a mountain with three companions (see Luke 9:28), as did Moses (see Exodus 24:1, 15). Jesus' appearance is transfigured in the

midst of God's presence in the glory-cloud (see Luke 9:29), as was Moses' (see Exodus 34:29–35). Jesus speaks to Moses (the giver of the Law) and Elijah (the greatest prophet) about his "departure" (that is, his "exodus"—Luke 9:30–31).

The evangelists clearly see Jesus as a New Moses who leads a new exodus and gives a new law.

The Passover Celebrated and Fulfilled

The Gospels show us how Jesus celebrates and transforms the Passover into the Eucharist (see Matthew 26:26–29). Jesus sends Peter and John to make preparations for the Passover (see Luke 22:7–13). He institutes the Eucharist as a memorial (see Luke 22:19, "in remembrance"), just as the Passover was a "memorial" (see Exodus 12:14). After they finish eating, Jesus tells his apostles to "watch and pray" (see Matthew 26:38, 41); this reflects the Passover as "a night of watching" (Exodus 12:42). Jesus blesses the cup, calling it the "blood of the covenant" (Matthew 26:28), reminiscent of Moses' sealing the covenant with Israel with the blood of the sacrifice, which he called "the blood of the covenant" (Exodus 24:8).

The Gospel of John describes how Jesus fulfills the Passover through his passion and death (see John 19). The soldiers take Jesus to be crucified at the sixth hour—the hour the high priest begins to slaughter Passover lambs (see John 19:14). John explains that the soldiers do not break Jesus' legs—fulfilling the prescription that the Passover lamb have no broken bones or blemishes (see John 19:32–36; Exodus 12:46). Further, John notes that Jesus' seamless garment is not torn, like the robe worn by the high priest (see John 19:23; Exodus 28:32). Finally, the soldiers raise a sponge of vinegar to Jesus' mouth on a hyssop branch, which is the kind of branch used to sprinkle the blood of the Passover lamb (see John 19:29; Exodus 12:21–23).

All of this demonstrates that the Eucharist—which is the new Passover—and Calvary are inseparable. They are one and the same sacrifice!

What Jesus begins in the Upper Room he concludes on the cross. The bread becomes Jesus' body, which is "given for you" (Luke 22:19). The wine is Jesus' blood, which is "poured out for you" (Luke 22:20). Here Jesus evokes the image of the Levitical priests who were instructed by Moses to "pour out" the blood of the sacrifice (Exodus 29:12; Leviticus 4:7). Through the Eucharist Jesus offers himself to the Father (see Isaiah 53:3–12).

The New Adam in the Garden

While the first Adam was disobedient in the garden, Jesus (the New Adam) goes into a garden and prays, “Your will be done” (Matthew 26:42). His obedience undoes what Adam’s disobedience has done.

Adam triggered the curse of the covenant: He was ashamed and naked (see Genesis 3:10); his work became toilsome and not always fruitful (see Genesis 3:18); his labor was difficult and sweat-producing (see Genesis 3:19); and his physical death was inevitable (see Genesis 3:19). Jesus bears the covenant curses redemptively: His sweat is like drops of blood (see Luke 22:44); he wears a crown of thorns (see Matthew 27:29); he is stripped (see Matthew 27:31). Jesus goes to the cross, which is called the “Tree of Life” in the early Church (see Genesis 2:9; Acts 5:30). When he falls into the sleep of death, his bride, the Church, is formed from his side (see John 19:26–35).

The work of salvation is not complete with Jesus’ death for our sins. We are saved by the cross *and* the Resurrection. “Jesus our Lord...was put to death for our trespasses and raised for our justification” (Romans 4:24–25). Without the Resurrection we could not be saved.

The Resurrection is more than resuscitation from the dead or the vindication of an innocent man. In his resurrection Jesus’ humanity is divinized—glorified (see CCC, 651–655); and by uniting ourselves to him, we share in his glorified humanity. In a very real sense, the Resurrection is the climax of God’s covenant plan (see 1 Corinthians 15:20–22, 42–45).

On Easter Sunday Jesus rises from the dead and appears in the garden (see John 20:15). Because of their sin man and woman were banished from the garden. On Easter Sunday Jesus restores humanity, announcing the new creation in a garden. And this grace has entered the world, in part, through the humility of the new Eve, Mary, untying the knot of Eve’s disobedience.

The Son of Abraham

On the third day the Father receives his only beloved Son back from the dead. Through Jesus’ resurrection God fulfills the oath he swore to Abraham in Genesis 22:18 to bless all nations through Abraham’s seed.

Little did Abraham realize that God was using him and his son Isaac to foreshadow the way this covenant oath would be fulfilled. When Abraham offered his only beloved son on Mount Moriah, he told Isaac: “God will provide him-

self the lamb” (Genesis 22:8). Abraham believed that Isaac was the son of promise and that God could resurrect him if need be (see Hebrews 11:19).

The first verse in the New Testament identifies Jesus as “the son of Abraham.” Jesus is the only beloved Son of the Father (see John 3:16). He offers himself as a sacrifice to God on Calvary (one of the peaks of Moriah). Like Isaac, he carries the wood of the sacrifice up the mountain, and there God provides himself as the Lamb. On the third day the Father raises his Son from the dead—just as Abraham received his son back on the third day (see Genesis 22:4). In short, through his death and resurrection, Jesus fulfills God’s promise to Abraham to bless all the nations (see Galatians 3:13–14).

The Son of David

Matthew’s Gospel reflects on the apostles’ experiences with Christ in a new light—in the divine light of the Spirit. They not only understand Jesus as the New Moses and the Son of Abraham, but they also see Jesus as the Son of David come to fulfill the Davidic covenant.

Matthew’s Gospel begins with Jesus’ genealogy: He is the “son of David” (Matthew 1:1). Jesus’ birthplace is the same as David’s, Bethlehem (see 1 Samuel 16:1; Matthew 2:1).

Jesus is the “anointed one,” the true Davidic king. In the last lesson we saw how the Davidic king was always anointed by a Levite (see 1 Kings 1:34; 2 Kings 11:12; 23:30; 2 Chronicles 23:11). Matthew 3 records that Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist, a Levite, and “after the baptism which John preached...God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power” (Acts 10:37–38).

Once anointed, the king was declared the adopted son of God (see Psalm 2:7). Already the eternal Son of God, Jesus becomes the Son of David by God’s grace and mercy. John the Baptist hears the Father’s declaration, “This is my beloved Son” (Matthew 3:17).

Jesus begins his public ministry by preaching “the gospel of the kingdom” (Matthew 4:23). This is his primary theme. His Sermon on the Mount begins with eight beatitudes that begin and end with the promise, “Theirs is the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 5:3, 10).

In Matthew 6 Jesus gives us the Our Father, in which we are to pray, “Thy kingdom come...” (Matthew 6:10). Throughout the Sermon on the Mount

Jesus emphasizes the fatherhood of God, mentioning it seventeen times in three chapters. He also urges the people to seek the kingdom above all (see Matthew 6:33).

In Matthew 7 Jesus describes the ideal disciple in terms reminiscent of Solomon. Solomon built the temple on the foundation stone; here we have the “wise man” who “built his house upon the rock” (Matthew 7:24). Jesus tells us that his wisdom is greater than that of Solomon (see Matthew 12:42).

Solomon taught wisdom through proverbs and parables; in Matthew 13 Jesus teaches about the kingdom through seven parables. He shows us that saints and sinners make up the Church, the kingdom in this world; only on the last day will God separate the “wheat” from the “chaff” (Matthew 13:24–30; 36–43). Further, the Church-kingdom is not an earthly political institution; rather it is a “treasure” hidden in the world. Though it is of the greatest good, the world does not recognize its value (see Matthew 13:45–46).

Matthew records Jesus’ ministry to gentiles as well as Israelites: He heals the centurion’s son (see Matthew 8:5–13) and a Canaanite woman (see Matthew 15:22–28), and he casts a demon out of the Syrophenician woman’s daughter (see Mark 7:24–30). The crowds that gather to hear him include people from outside Israel, “from about Tyre and Sidon” (Mark 3:8).

Jesus does not simply “take” the kingdom away to heaven. The kingdom is present on earth through the ministry of the apostles, especially through Peter (see Matthew 16:18–19). The Greek word for “assembly” (*ekklesia*) translates to “Church” in English. Just as Solomon built the temple on the rock, so Jesus builds the Church on Peter the “rock.”

Jesus also gives Peter the “keys” of the kingdom. Keys in the Old Testament symbolized the prime minister’s authority in the kingdom: He was given the authority to “shut” and “open,” and he was called to be a “father” (see Isaiah 22:20, 22). Jesus employs similar language when he gives Peter the keys: He gives Peter the authority to “bind” and “loose” (Matthew 16:19). Peter is also called to be a father, as *pope* means “father.” Thus, through the Church’s ministry, the kingdom Christ established in heaven is present now on earth.

The Gospel writers understood that on Palm Sunday, Jesus as the Son of David comes to the city of David to restore the kingdom of David (see Mark 11:10; Luke 19:38). Instead of riding triumphantly into Jerusalem, however, Jesus arrives humbly on a donkey—just as Solomon did (see Matthew 21:6–7; 1 Kings 1:38). The people shout, “Hosanna to the Son of David!” (Matthew

21:9), but Jesus’ triumph as the Davidic king will not come through political or military strength.

The Kingdom Banquet

In Luke’s Gospel the Passover meal Jesus celebrates is intimately connected to the coming of the kingdom. Jesus tells the apostles, “I shall not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God” (Luke 22:16), and, “I shall not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes” (Luke 22:18). He also tells them that they will eat and drink at his table and sit on thrones in the kingdom (see Luke 22:30).

The disciples’ dispute about how the kingdom will be administered is placed in the middle of this passage. Jesus challenges them not to lord authority over others but rather to follow his example as a king who serves at the table (see Luke 22:27).

Jesus not only institutes the Eucharist but also ordains the priests who will follow his example and offer this sacrifice “in remembrance” of him. *Remembrance* is liturgical language. As the apostles continue with Jesus through his trials, they receive a call: Jesus appoints (or “covenants”) them to imitate him as king, to exercise royal authority and to extend the kingdom—all of which they will do as they offer the Eucharist. It is significant that the only kingdom “covenanted” in Scripture is the kingdom of David (see Psalm 89:19–37). This is the kingdom that foreshadows Christ’s kingdom.

In the last lesson we saw how David moved the thank offering (the *todah*) to the center of Israel’s liturgical life. We also saw how *todah* (when translated into Greek) is *Eucharist*, meaning “thanksgiving.” On the cross Jesus prays Psalm 22—a *todah* psalm. He appeals to God to vindicate him, to save him. Though he begins with the first verse speaking of abandonment, the psalm concludes with praise to God for his deliverance.

The Last Supper is Jesus’ *todah* meal. Through the Eucharist we share in the *todah* of our Davidic priest-king: We proclaim Christ’s death and resurrection, and we offer ourselves through Christ’s offering. Furthermore, through the Eucharist we enter into the kingdom, the family of God—the Trinity—and thus God’s covenant plan is accomplished. The logic of the kingdom is the logic of the Trinity: life-giving love.

As we offer ourselves to God in the Eucharist, we receive a foretaste of heaven. Wherever the King is, there is the kingdom; and wherever the Eucharist is, there is the King!

The Kingdom Restored

After his resurrection Jesus appears to the apostles, and then he remains with them for forty days. Acts 1:3 tells us that he speaks to them about “the kingdom of God.” The apostles were eager for the restoration of the kingdom (see Acts 1:6). Jesus explains that the kingdom will be restored when they receive the Holy Spirit. The apostles will be “witnesses in Jerusalem and...Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth” (Acts 1:8). This is a map of the Davidic kingdom under Solomon. (Psalm 72:8 describes Solomon’s reign extending “to the ends of the earth.”)

Thus, through the ministry of the Church in Acts, the kingdom is restored. The Book of Acts begins with Jesus and then Saint Peter proclaiming the kingdom. In his inaugural sermon at Pentecost, Peter uses the Psalms to show how the Resurrection and the Ascension represent the fulfillment of the Davidic covenant (see Acts 2:29–36):

- The Lord fulfills David’s prayer for preservation from death—not in David, since he died, but in the Messiah (see Psalm 16:8–11).
- The Lord swore to David that he would establish an everlasting kingdom through him; Jesus’ heavenly reign fulfills this promise (see Psalm 89:3–4; 132:11–12).
- The Lord established the Davidic Messiah at his right hand; through the Ascension Jesus is seated at the Father’s right hand (see Psalm 110:1; Mark 16:19).

At the center of the Book of Acts is the Jerusalem Council, where the apostles deal with the admission of gentiles into the Church. Saint James recognizes that the kingdom of David is restored, for Israelites as well as for gentiles, through the Church (see Acts 15:12–21).

Saint Paul speaks at Antioch in Acts 13, and he uses the Old Testament to show how the Resurrection and Ascension represent Jesus’ heavenly enthronement. Psalm 2, which he quotes, was originally an enthronement psalm, celebrating God’s anointing of the Davidic king and his adoption of him as his son.

Acts ends with Saint Paul’s preaching of the kingdom in Rome (see Acts 28:31). He addresses the Christians in Rome (Israelites and gentiles) with a declaration of Jesus as the son of David and the Son of God (see Romans 1:1–4). Through God’s kingdom his covenant is extended to all nations.

Through the Resurrection the Davidic king conquers death, fulfilling God’s oath to David to establish his kingdom forever (see 2 Samuel 7:13). Through the Ascension Jesus transfers the kingdom to heaven. Hebrews 12:22–23 notes that we “have come to Mount Zion and to...the heavenly Jerusalem.” Established in heaven, the kingdom never will be shaken.

Review Questions for Personal Study

1. Matthew identifies Jesus as the son of which two important Old Testament figures? What is their significance?
2. What is the major theme of Jesus’ ministry? How does this theme reflect the fulfillment of God’s covenant promises in the Old Testament?
3. In what ways does the kingdom restored by Jesus surpass the kingdom of David and Solomon?
4. How is the Eucharist the new Passover?
5. What is the connection between the Passover Jesus celebrates in the Upper Room and the crucifixion?
6. How is the kingdom of God present in the Church’s eucharistic celebration?
7. How does Jesus bear the curses Adam and Eve incurred?
8. How does he bear the curse Israel incurred so that God’s promise to Abraham can be fulfilled?
9. How is the Eucharist a *todah* sacrifice for us?
10. How is Jesus the New Adam? the Son of Abraham? the New Moses? the true Davidic King?

Recommended Verses to Memorize

Luke 22:19–20

John 3:16

Acts 1:8