

Broomfield



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The Coming Messiah

The Sacrifice of Devotion, Part 14

Daniel's Trust in God

At the turn of the sixth century BC, the Southern Kingdom of Judah experienced three deportations at the hands of the Babylonians: 605 BC; 597 BC; and 586 BC. Among those in the first group to be deported was the prophet Daniel.

As a young man in his early teens, he was selected for “retraining”¹ in Babylonian culture presumably so that he might assist in dealing with imported Jews. And yet far from being brainwashed, he continued to serve God in this foreign land through thick and thin.

Daniel’s service culminated in 536 BC when at the age of 85 he sat down with a copy of the book of Jeremiah in his hands. He read these words with amazement:

Jeremiah 29:10, “For thus saith the LORD, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place.”

It didn't take a brain surgeon to know that it had almost been seventy years since the first deportation which meant that God was about to do something big!

And so do you know what Daniel did?

According to Daniel 9, he set about the work of preparation for the return of God's people!

Can I tell you what I love about this story?

I love that Daniel as an elderly man still read the word of God. He remained faithful to the Lord despite how difficult his life had been in exile. He read one promise from Scripture, and it radically changed him such that he wrestled long in prayer for the people who would soon be returned.

Without hesitation, Daniel took God at His word.

¹ This is what is commonly referred to as brainwashing.

Oh, how I want us to be such a people as this! I want us to be ones who cherish God's word. It is my desire to see us live in light of the Bible's promises. I want us to genuinely say, "Lord, I will follow you wherever you lead!"

This raises some important questions: Where is God leading us? And, what promises are we to claim as our own?

There are many promises contained in God's word that are directed at a specific people or person. So of the many promises found in the Word, which are intended for us?

The passage at which we are looking contains five promises which transcend the ages. I want you to notice that the psalm, at which we are looking, though spoken first by Hannah, was restated by David² and then repeated by Mary at the news of the coming Messiah.³ As such, our text is far more than just the words with which a barren woman coped in the days of the Judges. Rather it contains the words of hope which have formed the basis of the believer's trust throughout Redemptive History!

Last time we saw that the hope that got Hannah through difficult days was that God will triumph over His and our enemies, vindicate His people, and render to all that which is their due.

Strengthen His Representative

Hannah rejoiced in God because He will strengthen His representative.

1 Samuel 2:10, "The adversaries of the LORD shall be broken to pieces; out of heaven shall he thunder upon them: the LORD shall judge the ends of the earth; **and he shall give strength⁴ unto his king**, and exalt the horn of his anointed."

This is an incredible statement in light of what we know about kingship in the Bible. The concept of kingship begins first with God. Throughout Scripture, God is proclaimed as the King of Israel. The Psalmist wrote, "For the LORD is a great God, and a great King above all gods" (Psalm 95:3).

Jeremiah 10:10, "But the LORD is the true God, he is the living God, and an everlasting king: at his wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation."

1 Timothy 6:15, "Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords."

And that is why when God's people requested an earthly king in 1 Samuel 8, God told Samuel, for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them" (1 Samuel 8:7b).

Genesis 49:10, "The sceptre 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."

So Biblically speaking, God alone is King. And yet eight hundred years prior to the writing of Hannah's

² Compare 2 Samuel 22

³ Compare Luke 2:46-55

⁴ עֹז 'oz oze or (fully) עֹזֵז 'owz oze

Psalm, God in His providence anticipated the time when there would be an earthly king over Israel. Accordingly, during the time of Moses, God gave instruction regarding an earthly monarchy.

Deuteronomy 17:14-15, “When thou art come unto the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, and shalt possess it, and shalt dwell therein, and shalt say, I will set a king over me, like as all the nations that are about me; Thou shalt in any wise set him king over thee, whom the LORD thy God shall choose: one from among thy brethren shalt thou set king over thee: thou mayest not set a stranger over thee, which is not thy brother.”

Now when we look at the teaching of God regarding an earthly king, one thing sticks out above all else, he would be God's ruling representative among the people. As such, he was required to live and act according to the word of God. Moses wrote that upon his ascension to the throne, the king was to “he shall write him a copy of this law in a book out of that which is before the priests the Levites” so that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them” (Deuteronomy 17:18-19).

In fact, the formula introducing a prophetic oracle, “Thus says the Lord,” in ancient days was the formula by which a message was announced from a monarch!

Thus don't miss it! The form of God's covenant with His people resembled that of a suzerainty treaty between a powerful king (which in this case was God) and a vassal people (Israel)⁵. Accordingly, the king in Israel was God's representative and so the one through whom God ruled His people. Thus when the prophet said, “Thus says the Lord,” the king understood this to be a proclamation from the King of kings first to himself and then to God's people.

Now our Psalm this morning was written a little less than sixty years before the institution of the Jewish monarchy under Saul. As such it stands, not only as an incredible statement of faith on the part of Hannah for she wrote this when there was no king in Israel, but also an essential promise by which every Israeli king was supposed to live!

And what is that promise?

That God would ever and always “strengthen His king.”

The word *strengthen* is primarily used of God in Scripture for He alone is strong. For a king to be “strengthened” implies that God will draw near to the king.⁶ Conversely, any who would desire strength from God was required to seek the Lord.⁷ In this context it is no surprise to read these words;

Ecclesiastes 7:19, “Wisdom [the application of the word of God in our lives] strengtheneth the wise more than ten mighty men which are in the city.”

In other words, if you want strength, don't appeal to the surrounding rulers; seek the Lord! From this we conclude that the fourth promise of God for which Hannah praised the Lord is the drawing near of the Lord to His king. God will under gird him where he is weak. God will protect his thoughts and inclinations. God will enable him to fulfill the great call that was placed upon him. God will fight for

⁵ The suzerain treaty is actually patterned after God's covenantal agreement with Abram in Genesis 15:7 – 17.

⁶ Compare Psalm 28:7, 81:1, and 118:14

⁷ Compare Psalm 105:4, and 1 Chronicles 16:11

him while he kept silent.⁸ And yet all of this was as the king ate the word of God and thereby depended upon the Lord!

We are Royalty

Now where this promise leaves the realm of academia and intersects with our lives and the lives of God's people is when we recognize that in Christ we are royalty.

1 Peter 2:9, **“But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.”**

It is amazing how Peter linked both the priesthood and the monarchy here in one phrase, “royal priesthood.” In Christ, we not only have been made priest, but we also have become kings! John reinforces this concept in the book of Revelation.

Revelation 20:6, “Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.”

Regardless of your eschatological leaning, this passage is quite clear — in Christ we reign as kings!

Daniel 7:26, “And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.”

The kingdom is given to us! Calvin wrote this, speaking of this verse:

“Hence, we are deservedly called kings, because he (Christ) reigns, and as I have already said, language which is exclusively appropriate to him, is transferred to us in consequence of the intimate communion existing between the head and the members.”⁹

As such, the day will come when we sit on a throne,¹⁰ reign upon the earth,¹¹ and judge the world and angels.¹² And yet don't miss it — that regency has begun today.¹³ Therefore though the promise of our passage was given almost 3000 years ago, it still rings true today. God here has promised to strengthen us because **WE ARE GOD'S REPRESENTATIVES ON THE EARTH TODAY! IN CHRIST WE HAVE BEEN MADE KINGS AND QUEENS!**

Thus, if you are in Christ then on the authority of God's word I can assure you that God will ever and always strengthen you! And based upon this text He will under gird you are weak. He will protect your thoughts and inclinations. He will enable you to fulfill the call that He has placed upon your life. He will fight for you while your keep silent.¹⁴

⁸ Compare Exodus 14:14

⁹ Quoted in E. J. Young's commentary on Daniel, the Geneva Series, p. 162)

¹⁰ Compare Revelation 3:21

¹¹ Compare Revelation 5:10

¹² Compare 1 Corinthians 6:2-3

¹³ Compare 1 Corinthians 6:2 and 1 Peter 2:9

¹⁴ Compare Exodus 14:14

You say, “That’s wonderful! But why don’t I experience or know this strength in my life today?”

Let me ask you, “How did a king in the Old Testament times enjoy the strength of God?”

The king enjoyed the strength of God by trusting the Lord via His word! And as kings we must know this and live thereby!

Slavery

May I share with you an abuse of this?

When Solomon died in 931 BC, the nation of Israel divided into two kingdoms: Israel in the north and Judah in the south. Now all things went along relatively easy for Judah until 734 BC.

Around this time, the countries north of Judah were feeling the threat of Assyria. As a result, they endeavored to join together to form a unified opposition against the Assyrian threat. However Judah (the southern kingdom), under king Ahaz, refused to join. Because of Judah’s refusal to join the coalition, two northern kings, Rezin and Pekah, came against Judah to depose Ahaz and place a king on the throne of Judah who would join their anti-Assyrian league.¹⁵

Now in the midst of the threat of warfare from this northern coalition, Ahaz was met by Isaiah who gave him a very important message.

Isaiah 7:4a, “And say unto him, Take heed, and be quiet; fear not, neither be fainthearted for the two tails of these smoking firebrands....”

Isaiah 7:7, “Thus saith the Lord GOD, It shall not stand, neither shall it come to pass.”

Isaiah 7:9b, “...If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established.”

All that Ahaz had to do was trust God, and the Lord would fight for him. All he had to do was believe the promise of God and the Lord would strengthen him.

Yet, Ahaz refused to trust God and believe God’s promises. Ahaz wanted the seen instead of the Unseen. So Ahaz forsook God and appealed to Assyria. The result was that Judah was delivered from the threat of the North, but the payment was that they now became a vassal state of Assyria.

What foe currently resides on your northern border? And what threats have they leveled against you? What troubles are brewing on the horizon of your life?

Listen, God in our passage has promised to strengthen His king. Thus as His little kings and queens won’t you trust Him? Won’t you take Him at His word? Don’t you realize that whatever you rely upon for deliverance, to this you will be enslaved?

God has promised to strengthen you. Accordingly I exhort you forsake all other allegiances. Rely upon the Lord. And He will see you through!

¹⁵ Compare Isaiah 7:1-6

This doesn't mean that we are called to inactivity and that we are to “let go and let God.” Rather, it means that we do what is necessary to be faithful to God all the while trusting Him to see us through! This is what the life of the Sacrifice of Devotion is all about!

Glorify the Messiah

1 Samuel 1:10, “The adversaries of the LORD shall be broken to pieces; out of heaven shall he thunder upon them: the LORD shall judge the ends of the earth; and he shall give strength unto his king, **and exalt the horn of his anointed.**”¹⁶”

As with the last promise, this also is a most amazing statement. The word for anointed in the Hebrew is Messiah. Literally it means the anointed one. It refers throughout Scripture (excluding 1, 2 Samuel and the Psalter) to the anointed one of God — the chosen one — who would “save His people from their sin.”¹⁷ We first learn about the Messiah by revelation in Genesis 3 when Adam and Eve sinned against God, the Lord made this promise which we and Jewish scholars understand to be a reference to the Messiah.

Genesis 3:15, “And I will put enmity between thee [Satan] and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it [Messiah] shall bruise thy head [a mortal wound], and thou shalt bruise his heel [a mere flesh wound].”

The first promise ever made about Christ includes not only victory, but also an allusion to the strife and warfare that would exist between Messiah and Satan. It is the battle of the kingdom of Light against the kingdom of darkness. It is the battle of the city of peace against the city of confusion. And it is this battle that has raged ever since. David wrote of the Messiah:

Psalm 110:1-2, “The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. The LORD shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies.”

Truly the advent of Christ marked the intrusion of Christ's domain into this world where He made Satan His footstool. And yet built into Psalm 110 is an understanding about the nature and purpose of all earthly monarchies. As an earthly king, David understood that his role was to serve as the vehicle through which God ruled. David understood his role was to serve as the vehicle through which God stretched forth His strong scepter. And that is why the concept of “anointed” or Messiah is used throughout 1 & 2 Samuel and the Psalms as a reference to the earthly king.

And yet this is where it gets interesting!

At the time of the writing of 1 Samuel 2, the monarchy, in which the concept of the king being God's “anointed one,” was still 60 years away! So the question is raised in this context is this: How would the hearers of Hannah understand Messiah? Would they have seen this as an allusion to an earthly king — a link not clearly established at this point in Redemptive History? Or would they view Messiah as a reference which clearly was packed with meaning as Abraham himself longed for the coming Messiah?

¹⁶ מָשִׁיחַ mashiyach maw-shee'-akh

¹⁷ Compare Matthew 1:21-23

John 8:56, “Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad.”

In other words, what was the Messianic hope at this time in Redemptive History? Were the people looking for an earthly king or the advent of their Messiah?

While there are varying opinions, I am of the conviction that Hannah's longing in this text would have been for the Messiah who would be born “King of the Jews.”¹⁸ The One who therefore would deliver His people not from earthly oppression BUT from the oppression and dominion of Satan!

And such obviously was the conviction of Mary as she clearly quoted from Hannah's psalm in her magnificat.¹⁹

In light of this, what is the promise for which Hannah here is praising God?

The promise is that God would “exalt the horn (which we saw in 2:1 is a reference to someone's “strength,” “ability,” or “power”²⁰) of His anointed one — Christ!

Do you understand what this means?

No matter how dark and bleak as may be your path, according to the promise of God in this text, the Lord is in the process of strengthening Christ's dominion and rule on this earth. And thus, we conclude that as kings and queens, we are part of a Kingdom which cannot fail and is currently growing.

Now this isn't to say that there won't be perceived “set backs” on our part. The word is quite clear, the closer we come to the day of the Lord, the greater will be the battle.²¹

Yet listen, in and through it all God is reigning. Christ's Kingdom is advancing. The Church is growing.

Ben Hur

I liken it to the lot of the military commander in Ben Hur. During the battle in which Judah saved his life, the commander's ship was lost. And yet upon being discovered floating on the sea, the commander was informed that his fleet had nevertheless won the battle.

Such is the nature of God's providence on this earth at times we perceive that we have taken three steps backwards, and we become alarmed. As the Psalmist cried “[W]hy do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed . . .” (Psalm 2:1-2).

So also in our fears we cry out to God and wonder what He is doing. We tremble at the prospect of the world opposing Him and therefore us. And yet listen God will exalt the horn of His Messiah. We are part of a Kingdom that will not fail. We are on the winning side!

¹⁸ Compare Matthew 2:2

¹⁹ Compare Luke 1:46-55

²⁰ Compare Psalm 92:11

²¹ Compare Jeremiah 30:7, Daniel 12:1, Matthew 5:10-12; 24:15-25; and John 15:20; 16:33

Roman Triumph

You say, “I don't feel very victorious at the moment!”

Yes well neither did many of Caesar's soldiers after a grueling battle. They would be sore and many would be wounded. Some would be limping. Perhaps others were blinded. And yet, grant them a Triumph in which they would parade through the streets of Rome cheered on by the citizens where they would smell the incense of the priests scepter which was wafted in the air — the fragrance of victory. And though they were in pain, sadness, sorrow, or suffering, nevertheless it all would be replaced with joy!

Family of God, Paul used the above analogy of the Roman Triumph as a picture of the church in this present age.²² The Hebrew writer used a similar analogy as he described the witnesses surrounding us²³ that had gone on before and now know victory. They are trophies of God's victory through grace. And they currently cheer us on to fight the good fight of faith!

From these analogies we conclude yes, in this state of sin and misery at times we feel pain and we hurt with injury. We will look around us and see destruction. And we will have crushed hopes and lost dreams. And we will wonder if in the end God will win. But through the eye of faith we must see that God is “raising the horn of His anointed.” His kingdom work is advancing. The cloud of witnesses still is cheering us on. We are overwhelmingly conquering through Christ Jesus our Lord!

Accordingly with David we say “weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning” (Psalm 30:5).

Brothers and sisters that which led Hannah to sing praise unto God even though her heart was heavy on account of her empty home was NOT the promise that everything was going to be ok BUT the certainty that God not only would strengthen His king — which ultimately is everyone in Christ. Christ also was and is victorious.

²² Compare 2 Corinthians 2:14-17

²³ Compare Hebrews 12:1

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About the Preacher

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