



Provided by the Church of the Lutheran Confession - Board of Missions

A Systematic Study of Bible Teachings (Dogmatics)

Lesson 6.7.3.1 – The Doctrine of Jesus, Son of God, Messiah (Christology)

The Office of Jesus as King

Besides prophets and priests, kings also were anointed in the Old Testament. Jesus, as the Messiah, the Christ, the Anointed One, combines all three of these offices in Himself. He is Prophet, High Priest, and King. In the Old Testament the coming Messiah was more often pictured as a king than as a prophet or priest. It was to King David that God gave the promise of a dynasty that would last forever: **“I will set up your seed after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish His kingdom. He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of His kingdom forever. I will be His Father, and He shall be My Son... Your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. Your throne shall be established forever”** (2 Samuel 7:12-16). David’s son, Solomon, built the temple as a house of God, but David understood that this prophecy did not refer only to Solomon. In reply David said: **“You have spoken of Your servant’s house for a great while to come”** (2 Samuel 7:19).

This prophecy of the coming King as a Son of David was repeated many times by the prophets. Several psalms refer to this King, for example: **“I have set My King on My holy hill of Zion”** (Psalm 2:6). **“I recite my composition concerning the King”** (Psalm 45:1). **“He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth”** (Psalm 72:8). **“The LORD shall send the rod of Your strength out of Zion. Rule in the midst of Your enemies!”** (Psalm 110:2).

The prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and Zechariah also wrote of the coming King: **“Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given... Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David and over His kingdom”** (Isaiah 9:6-7). **“I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness; a King shall reign and prosper”** (Jeremiah 23:5). **“David My Servant shall be king over them, and they shall all have one Shepherd”** (Ezekiel 37:24). **“In the days of these kings (the Roman kings) the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed”** (Daniel 2:44). **“I was watching in the night visions, and behold, One like the Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him. Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom the one which shall not be destroyed”** (Daniel 7:13-14). **“Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! 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”** (Zechariah 9:9).

There is abundant evidence in the New Testament that Jesus, Son of Mary from Nazareth, is the fulfillment of these prophecies. The angel Gabriel came to the virgin Mary to tell her about the Son she was going to bear, who was conceived in her by the Holy Spirit: **“You will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS, 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. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end”** (Luke 1:31-33).

On the Sunday before His death and resurrection, Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey, as Zechariah had foretold, and the people cried out: **“Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the LORD!”** (Luke 19:38). Almost from the beginning of Jesus’ ministry His disciples recognized Him as the Messiah King. Andrew told his brother Peter: **“We have found the Messiah”** (John 1:41), and Nathanael met Jesus and said to Him: **“You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!”** (John 1:49).

When He was on trial before Pontius Pilate, Jesus explained that He was not an earthly king, but then He explained: **“You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice”** (John 18:37). Jesus is a King who rules by means of His voice, that is, His words and His teaching.

God arranged events in such a way that when Jesus was hanging on the cross, the title on the cross clearly proclaimed: **“JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS”** (John 19:19). On the day of Pentecost and on the days that followed, Peter and the other apostles testified to the world that Jesus was the Son of David, the promised King: **“Let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ”** (Acts 2:36). Every time the apostles called Jesus “Lord”, they were confessing Jesus to be the promised King. Paul wrote to the Christians in Colossae: God **“has delivered us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins”** (Colossians 1:13-14).

Jesus and His apostles spoke often of the kingdom of God or of Christ. In the New Testament, “kingdom” generally does not refer to a piece of land or a portion of territory, but the exercise of kingly authority. We need to keep this primary meaning in mind when we read the Bible. When we hear “kingdom”, we should think “kingship”, that is, the ruling activity of the king. For example, the words **“the kingdom of God is at hand”** means that God or Christ is acting in connection with His gracious plan of salvation. The kingdom of God in Scripture does not refer to the subjects of the King, that is, the Church of Christ, nor any earthly or visible organization, but to God’s rule.

Jesus Himself gave a good illustration of what is meant by **“kingdom of God”** when He said: **“If I cast out demons with the finger of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you. When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own palace, his goods are in peace. But when a stronger than he comes upon him and overcomes him, he takes from his all his armor in which he trusted, and divides his spoils”** (Luke 11:19-22). In His earthly ministry Jesus often drove out evil spirits from. When Jesus battled Satan in this way, it was the coming of the kingdom of God, that is, the King was active in carrying out His work.

In a similar way the apostle Paul said: **“The kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit”** (Romans 14:17). When the Holy Spirit is active in preaching the Gospel through Christ’s ambassadors, and brings sinners to faith in the forgiveness of sins and gives them peace of conscience and the joy of salvation, this is the kingdom of God in action; this is the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit in action.

Jesus, as God, was always active in the on-going work of God in carrying out His plan of salvation. But when the Son of God became incarnate, this ruling power of the king was given also to His human nature. The angel Gabriel told Mary that God would give to her Son the throne of David, and thus He was King from the moment of His conception (Luke 1:31-33). When the Wise Men from the east visited Jesus as a small Child, they worshiped Him and called Him King (Matthew 2:1-11). When Jesus was on trial before Pontius Pilate, He did not say: “I shall become a king,” but He said: **“You say rightly that I am a king”** (John 18:37). In fact, as He was suffering and dying on the cross, He was carrying out His kingly activity as the Stronger Man, taking away the power of the strong man, Satan. For it was by His death that Jesus took away the power of the devil (Hebrews 2:14).

Because Jesus’ human nature has been given kingly authority and dominion, the risen Christ said to His followers on the mountain in Galilee: **“All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth”** (Matthew 28:18). Peter announced on Pentecost: **“Let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ”** (Acts 2:36). We understand that at this very moment Jesus, our ever-living Savior, is at God’s **“right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come”** (Ephesians 1:20-21). **“We see Jesus...crowned with glory and honor”** because God has **“put all things in subjection under His feet”** (Hebrews 2:8-9).

What does this mean for us who trust in Jesus? **“Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ”** (1 Corinthians 15:57).

Questions

1. For what three offices were persons anointed in the Old Testament?
2. What promise did God give to David about the future of his family?
3. What are some examples of how later prophets enlarged on this promise to David?
4. What did the angel Gabriel say to Mary about her Son's kingdom?
5. How did God call attention to the fact that Jesus was the promised King?
6. How did Jesus explain what is meant by the coming of God's kingdom?
7. What is the primary meaning of the kingdom of God in the New Testament?
8. When was the kingdom given to Jesus' human nature?
9. How is Jesus functioning as our King at this very moment?