

Sermon Series “Jesus Now & Then: Heir of David’s Throne –

(Regula A. Brandle, St. Paul’s, Dec.6/2009)

Isa. 9:2-7 and Matt. 1:1-17

Prayer.

What comes to your mind when you think of prophecy?

This is not a rhetorical question but a real question for you. ☺

(foretelling and forthtelling - predicting the future, God’s message (truth) spoken out)

If you were able to be here last Sunday, you know that we have started a new sermon series.

In some ways it is quite a different sermon series than we often have, because we are looking at how the Old Testament spoke about certain truths that may have made sense in the immediate context and yet were only fulfilled when Jesus entered the scene centuries later !

It is a sermon series on the prophetic dimension of Scripture with regards to Jesus.

And our hope is that through this particular way of looking at Scripture our understanding of God and our faith in Jesus Christ is strengthened.

It is not so much a sermon series that aims at helping you directly with your everyday issues, but it is a sermon series that aims at strengthening your faith in the living God Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

You see prophecy is a very important aspect of God’s word.

In fact, God uses prophecy as a way to show us his power, his authority, his love and his care!

I can’t tell you how awe inspiring and encouraging and strengthening the preparation of this sermon was to my personal faith.

I often get bogged down with the day to day issues (and now with kids even more so than ever before!).

But to sit down and reflect on these prophetic words about Jesus has given me new strength for daily life.

And it is my prayer that you will experience the same benefits!

So, let’s get into today’s focus of the prophecy of a righteous king who would rule on David’s throne forever from the reading in the prophet Isaiah (9:7).

The prophecy was given to the prophet Isaiah, about 700 years before Jesus was born. The prophecy was given to him in a time when the nation of Israel was going through a rough time.

Well, it seems Israel almost always went through a rough time, but at that time the kingdom of Israel had been already divided and was declining and threatened by the Assyrian superpower. Gone were the days of the united kingdom of Israel and Judah under king Saul, David and Solomon.

God had repeatedly said that the demise of Israel and Judah was because of their sin and their departure from serving the Lord.

I dare to say that although the people did not repent, they nevertheless yearned for the days when life was good under the anointed kingship of David.

And into this context the Lord spoke the words:

The people walking in darkness have seen a great light....For us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders...he will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever."

King David was once given the following promise from God by the prophet Nathan in: This is what the Lord says....

> 2 Sam.7:8-16

There was the prophetic promise to king David and there was the confirming prophecy by Isaiah, and the people waited a long time.....

And then at the beginning of his gospel, Matthew starts it off by saying, " A record of the geneology of Jesus, The Christ, the son of David.."

I will get to the how do I know it was Jesus in a little bit.

But first I want to share a couple of important facts from this prophecy:

1. The God we believe in is the God of the generations!

I don't know how to say it differently, but Jesus didn't just suddenly appear out of nowhere!

Our texts of Isaiah 9 and Matthew 1 sets Jesus of Nazareth in the context of what God had been doing for his people long before Jesus appeared.

We do not understand Jesus properly if we only read the New Testament.

Or in other words...History is important.

We kind of know that and we kind of are interested in it, especially if we can trace some ancestors, like Pastor Roy did last Sunday in the kids' focus time.

But the importance lies in the fact that we don't get the full picture if we skip what God said, taught and did in the past and think all that matters is now.

That's true about Jesus and it is true for our faith life and life as a faith community. If we only look at what's up today, we won't get the full picture.

We miss how much God cares about his people, we miss that he doesn't change his mind, we miss that he is all powerful and will accomplish what he has set out to do, we miss remembering what he has done, we miss....and you can fill in the blank.

And the result, I believe very strongly, is a faith where something is amiss.

2. Prophecy is proven by its fulfillment!

The dictionary defines 'fulfillment' as 'completed to perfection' or 'the act of consummating something' or 'carry out the processing of an order' and of course there are more ways to define it.

But what I like about the last definition "carry out the processing of an order" is that time and patience are important ingredients in for prophecies and their fulfillment.

In our case, it took 700 years!!!! It took a lot of time and a lot of patience. And even more importantly, the fulfillment is often hidden from plain sight and can only be discerned through the lens of faith with the help of God.

Although we might think it is absolutely clear that Jesus was the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy, others do not. Most descendants from the nation of Israel are still waiting for the fulfillment of Isaiah 9:2-7!

Have you ever been given a prophetic word for your life....it often takes patience and time and the help of God to see its fulfillment.

Personally the biggest example in my life so far, is that the lord told me I would receive twin boys through the adoption process. And most of you do not know that I doubted the fulfillment of that promise more than one time. And now, looking back, I know it was a prophetic word!

I also know that only by God's power did it come to fulfillment. If you doubt it, I would be more than happy to share why I am convinced about that.

3. Back to Jesus.

Here are some few characteristics why we have no doubt that Jesus is the fulfillment of God's prophecy given to Isaiah.

Just a few very interesting 'coincidental' parallels between what God said through Isaiah and then about Jesus:

Isaiah started by saying "the people walking in darkness have seen a great light". That is a metaphor for the saving action of God.

And there are numerous occasions of where God reiterated that Jesus was to be the Saviour>

For example through Simeon, prompted by the Holy Spirit, when he said at Jesus presentation in the temple about Jesus; "My eyes have seen your salvation.." (Lk.2:30)

Then Isaiah said "For us a son a child is born, to us a son is born.." in connection with "he will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever."

And in the gospel of Luke the angel Gabriel used very similar words when speaking to Mary.

> Lk.1:31-33.

And here are some parallels between David and Jesus:

David was the runt of his family, the last choice....and Jesus, born out of 'wedlock' was neither exactly of royal material, or at least what people would expect.

God said of David...that he was not looking at the outward appearance but what was in the heart. Jesus wasn't an impressive personality by looks either, at least we never hear that anyone was impressed by his appearance.

But what God said about Jesus at his baptism, was "you are my son, with you I am well pleased.

In Sam.23:1-7, we have recorded the last poetic testimony of David and the language David used is strikingly similar to the words used by the prophet Isaiah to describe Jesus.

'Anointed' is the same word that comes into the English as 'Messiah'.

And of course, the obvious connection is that Jesus is indeed a descendant, a 'son' of David as Matthew points out as the very first thing in his gospel.

4. But the one most prominent and outstanding characteristic is the prominence of the Holy Spirit in the life of David and of Jesus.

At the anointing of David (anointed for the ministry as king) the Holy Spirit came upon him in power. (1. Sam.16:13).

At the baptism of Jesus (anointed for the ministry) the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove. (Lk.3:22)

Without the work, teaching, direction, intervention, and comfort of the Holy Spirit we cannot comprehend the depth, width and power of God.

And we wouldn't see how God weaves it all together through time and in fulfillment of his loving care!

David's rulership was a tremendous blessing to the nation of Israel.
Jesus rulership is a tremendous blessing to those who trust in him.

God at work through David, God at work through Jesus. The former a foreshadow of the one to come. The fulfillment of what God foreshadowed in and through king David, now established in and through Jesus Christ forever.

God once listened to his people's request for a king....they wanted an earthly king, one they could see and smell and feel.

God wanted to be their king and wants to be our king, but in his ingenious way he accomplished it all step by step – ultimately in Jesus Christ!

What an amazing Lord we have!
Amen.

