

Dr. Jeffrey Niehaus, Biblical Theology, Session 8, The Davidic Covenant

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This is Dr. Jeffrey Niehaus in his teaching on Biblical Theology. This is session 8, The Davidic Covenant.

Now, as we recall, when we talked about the Abrahamic covenant, that covenant embodied in itself entailed the foreshadowing, shall we say, of three different covenants.

That is to say, the whole special grace program. The Mosaic Covenant and the Davidic Covenant implied kingship in Genesis 17 when the Lord said that kings would come forth from Abram and Sarah. The New Covenant implied by both the embodiment or the inclusion of the Genesis 12 promise that in Abram's seed, all the families of the earth would be blessed, repeated in Genesis 22, and by the Lord's passage between the pieces in Genesis 15, symbolically foreshadowing the cross where the Lord would take on himself the punishment for the seed of Abraham.

And so specifically then, the Davidic Covenant anticipated in the Abrahamic. It is important to understand that the Davidic Covenant, as we said, David is also a covenant mediator prophet, but a mediator of a very unusual covenant in that it's focused on the royal line. That's all it has to do with.

David himself was still under the Mosaic Covenant. Indeed, it would become a problem for Israel later. In Jeremiah, for instance, in Jeremiah 17, what is sometimes referred to as the Temple Sermon, Jeremiah has to say, or the Lord says through him, don't be misled by deceptive words, namely the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord.

When the Lord made that covenant with David, he promised that David's offspring would build a temple, which Solomon did. But the people misunderstood this to think that, well, now we've got the temple, we're all set. The Lord's never going to leave his house, and so Jerusalem can never be conquered.

And indeed, when Sennacherib invaded Judah and conquered everything but Jerusalem, it looked as though that was going to be the way of it. So, Jeremiah has to tell them in that chapter that you can't go on committing all these sins and then come and think you're forgiven and then go out and do them again just because you got the temple. What they didn't understand was that the Mosaic Covenant trumped the Davidic Covenant, shall we say.

It was the governing covenant, and the kings themselves had to be obedient to it. So, but nonetheless, David did mediate a covenant, but it was a narrowly focused covenant on the royal line. Well, it's anticipated, as we said, by the promise of kings in Genesis 17.

We know that David was a prophet, just not think even yet of being a covenant mediator prophet, but we know he was a covenant prophet because in we have here in the, what happens with Samuel anointing him, he takes the oil of, the horn of oil and anoints him in the presence of his brothers. And from that day on, the spirit of the Lord came upon David in power, and the Lord spoke through David. Incidentally, it's an interesting statement here: from that day on, the spirit of the Lord came upon David, came to David, is a Hebrew, actually.

But the point is this: sometimes people will think, well, before Pentecost, maybe there were some people under the old covenant who actually had the Holy Spirit as we do. And I suppose if you wanted to point to someone you thought might be a good candidate for that, David would certainly be the one. But we're told here that the spirit would come to him.

And so, you're never told that the spirit dwelt in him. And you're never told that the spirit dwelt in anyone under the old covenant. No one's called a temple under the old covenant for that reason.

And so, but it's a great thing to have the Holy Spirit come to you every day. That's not a bad thing at all. He's with you.

He guides you. He gives you wisdom and so on. The spirit did speak through David.

A great example of that is what's sometimes called the last words of David after, after all, what we read in the scripture here. These are the last words of David. The oracle of David, son of Jesse, the oracle of the man exalted by the Most High, man anointed by the God of Jacob, Israel's singer of songs.

He says the spirit of the Lord spoke through me. His word was on my tongue. So David was certainly a prophet.

Indeed, the spirit speaking through him is the same as his, the Lord's word being on David's tongue, which points to a New Testament reality that Jesus makes very clear. Jesus says the words I speak to you are spirit. So, the words a prophet speaks or writes are actually the Holy Spirit taking the form of words, giving us words.

While the New Testament calls David a prophet, Peter here at Pentecost explains what's going on. He says, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried, and his tomb is here this day, but he was a prophet, and he knew that

God had promised him on oath that he would place one of his descendants on the throne. Seeing what was ahead, he spoke of the resurrection of Christ, that he was not abandoned to the grave, nor did his body see decay, alluding to Psalm 16.

Peter explained that what they see at Pentecost is because of what Christ has done. Well, as a prophet, we talked about how warfare is waged, and then a covenant is made, and we see that pattern with the Davidic covenant, too. David has these various campaigns, and then in 2 Samuel 7, after them, we read, okay, the Lord is settled in his palace, and the Lord had given him rest from his enemies all around him.

That sets the stage for what follows. And this is an interesting passage in terms of what a prophet might or might not hear. We understand that David is a prophet.

Nathan is also a prophet. And so, David is saying to Nathan, after this military, this series of military successes, he says, here I am living in a palace of cedar while the ark of God remains in a tent. Nathan replied to the king, whatever you have in mind, go ahead and do it, for the Lord is with you.

Now, that might seem a little vague to a modern reader, but I think it's even clear enough to a modern reader. But in the ancient Near Eastern context, it's very obvious. In the ancient world, if a king and the pagan animals were full of this sort of thing, they would go out, have war, have victories, and come back home.

They're going to do one thing, one of these things. They're going to at least dedicate some of the spoils of war to the God they thought gave them the victory. Or if God's temple needs to be refurbished, they'll do that.

Or if it seems a new temple to God is in order, they'll build a new temple. So, when David says this, he's making this oblique statement, but it's really saying, look, here I am in a palace of cedar—the Lord's in a tent.

Let's build him a palace of cedar. In fact, the word for palace in Hebrew and palace and temple are the same. Heikal is the word.

It's really a loan word. It's a transliteration that goes back to Sumerian. It means a big house.

That's why it can be a palace or a temple: because the king has a big house and palace. The Lord has a big and he's God; he has a big house, a temple. Another word that's used for both is simply the word for house.

And that's the word that occurs in this passage. So, David is saying a house. And so, Nathan, this is what I love about it, because Nathan's a prophet.

And so, what is his answer to David? Nathan, at this point, answers out of what he understands from the world that he lives in. God has given our king a victory. Of course, we build a temple for the God.

So, he is speaking out of his cultural expectations. So, he says, sure, go ahead and do it, whatever you got in mind. But then what? Well, the Lord speaks to Nathan that night and says, no, no, that's not what's going to happen.

That's not what I have in mind at all. Go and tell my servant, David, this is what the Lord says. Are you the one to build me a house to dwell in? I've not dwelt in a house from the day I brought the Israelites up out of Egypt to this day.

I've been moving from place to place with a tent as my dwelling. Wherever I've moved with the Israelites, did I ever say to any of their rulers whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, why have you not built me a house of cedar? Now then, tell my servant, David, this is what the Lord Almighty says. I took you from the pasture and from following the flock to be ruler over my people, Israel.

Interestingly, this is the same thing that Amos says later in the Northern Kingdom. He says, the Lord took me from following the flock and brought me up here to prophesy. It's a statement clearly of the Lord's sovereign election of someone to an office.

So the Lord says, I took you from the pasture and from following the flock to be ruler over my people. I've been with you wherever you've gone. I've cut off all your enemies from before you.

Now, I will make your name great like the names of the greatest men of the earth, and I will provide a place for my people, Israel, and I will plant them so that they can have a home of their own and no longer be disturbed. Wicked people will not oppress them anymore as they did at the beginning and have done ever since the time I appointed leaders over my people, Israel. I will also give you rest from all your enemies, and then the Lord declares to you that the Lord himself will establish a house for you.

When your days are over, and you rest with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you who will come from your own body, and I will establish his kingdom. He is the one who will build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his father, and he will be my son.

When he does wrong, I'll punish him with the rod of men with floggings inflicted by men, but my love will never be taken away from him as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you. Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me. Your throne will be established forever.

Nathan reported to David all the words of this entire revelation. Okay, well, there are a couple of things here. First of all, again, the interesting thing about this is Nathan is a prophet, and so Nathan's first response as a prophet, as a man to David, is well, go and do whatever you have in mind, the Lord's with you.

But at that point, he's just speaking as a man out of his own cultural expectations. Later, the Lord shows up and tells him, no, I have something different in mind. So, the fact that he's a prophet doesn't mean that every word he says is from the Lord.

He just expressed his thoughts as a man. The Lord had something different in mind, and the different thing is that the Lord is going to build David's house, and so there's a play on the word house here because David wants to build the Lord's house, meaning temple. The Lord says I'm going to establish your house, your household, your dynasty, and however your offspring will build a house for my name, the name meaning the essential nature, the essential character, the being of the God, of the Lord in this case.

And that was the understanding. So incidentally, when you read in John 14:24, until now, you've not asked for anything in my name. Ask, and you'll receive, and your joy will be complete.

Well, what's the meaning of that? I think we understand it's not; well, may a Maserati with the title and the keys show up in my driveway tomorrow morning in Jesus' name. It's not some kind of magic formula. It's if we're asking according to his nature, then he's going to do it, and our joy will be complete because we're on the same page with him.

We get the joy of asking for what he wants to do. We get to be part of that. But anyway, the Lord is going to have this house built, but it'll be David's offspring, who we know is Solomon, who's going to do it.

I will be his father. He'll be my son. We understand that's an adoptive sonship.

The Lord is not saying that David, your son, is going to be, and your offspring is going to be born from above, a supernatural birth. But he does promise that even if he sins, my love and the Hebrew word there is *hesed*, which I would rather translate as grace, but will never be taken away from him as I took it away from Saul. That's a pretty heavy statement because that word that is translated as love is really part of a covenant word pair in Hebrew, love and truth or grace and truth, as I would translate it.

That shows up in John 1, too. The law came through Moses. In Jesus, we have grace and truth.

I'd say in Jesus, we have the guts of the covenant, what it's really all about, the covenant relationship. And so that's a pretty heavy statement about Saul. But the Lord is saying he may sin, but I'm not going to take that away from him.

And then there's this promise: your house and kingdom will endure forever, and your throne will be established forever. That's where Israel went wrong because they thought, well, that's it. We're guaranteed.

The Lord has painted himself into a corner here. It doesn't matter how badly we sin. Jerusalem will never fall. Zion will never fall.

And of course, the thing is that this has a supernatural, a superterrestrial reality because the son of David, namely Jesus, always was king over Israel and always is. That throne endures forever, and his kingdom endures forever, but that's not the earthly throne or kingdom that people naturally probably had in mind when they heard this. Well, although the word covenant doesn't appear here, this is understood to be the making of the Davidic covenant.

Psalm 2 later reflects this, and I've tried to outline the corresponding parts here. So both of these, you know, in 2 Samuel 7, you have security from the foes that are talked about, and the Lord establishes his throne. The Lord is going to be like the Father.

The king is going to be like his son. It's an adoptive sonship. And there's the chastening.

You know, I will punish him with the rod of men, but I will not take my grace away from him. Psalm 2 some people think, and I think this is a likely thing, that Psalm 2 had to do with the occasion of Solomon's accession to the throne. And so, these things come into play.

And so, when in verse 7 we hear, or we read, you are my son this day, I have begotten you, the understanding is, well, this is an adoptive sonship, and that's fine. But later, this is picked up in the New Testament in Hebrews 1 as part of the discussion that the son is superior to angels. To which of the angels did he ever say, you are my son this day, I have begotten you.

And, of course, in the case of Jesus, that's a genuine, real beginning of the virgin birth, as we know. The chastening is mentioned here. It's not mentioned in Psalm 2, I think probably the reason for that if we understand that as a poem about Solomon's coming to the throne, is that Solomon's accession to the throne would be a festive occasion.

And you're probably not going to say, oh, and by the way, if you flub up, this is what's going to happen. So that's probably why that kind of note does not sound there. But anyway, there you have it.

This, of course, is what Gunkel called a royal psalm, which had to do with a contemporary king in Israel. And that's fine, as far as it goes. What he wouldn't acknowledge is that the use of it later in the New Testament was actually because it did foreshadow the Christ, which is something we understand was the case.

Well, it wouldn't do any harm to think a little bit about the covenant and the covenant idiom here, covenant cutting idiom, because, as we said, the term covenant doesn't even show up in this passage, although it's universally recognized as enshrining the Davidic covenant. And incidentally, one thing that's true about 2 Samuel 7, as is true about all the other reports of the divine-human covenant-making in the Old Testament, is that they are narratives that contain the components of a covenant or a treaty, whereby we understand that a covenant is being made. Like Genesis 1, you have a covenant being made in 2 Samuel 7, and the term covenant doesn't show up.

Unlike Genesis 1, you do later have a reference to covenant-making with regard to David. And so, just some examples here: 2 Chronicles 7, I will establish your royal throne as I literally cut with or cut for David, your father, when I said, you shall never fail to have a man rule over Israel. And let's drop down to a few others here.

David, because using the idiom, cut for 2 Chronicles 21; nevertheless, because of the covenant, the Lord had made with or cut for David. So here you have the term covenant and cut. The Lord was not willing to destroy the house of David.

He had promised to maintain a lamp for him and his descendants forever. And I'll talk about that note, not lamp, but yoke, in just a moment. But it's worth noting here that the term cut of covenant, which from Genesis 15, we know, has to do with the literal cutting of animals and passing between them.

The term is used for the Davidic covenant, but there's nothing in history at all that tells us that David, there ever was such a ritual in the case of the Davidic covenant. So, it would seem that later then, with regard to the Davidic covenant, you could use the term to cut a covenant without actually having the cutting of the animals. But still, you know, this is a divine covenant.

The Lord's giving the covenant. He's doing it. What about the lamp and yoke? Well, the word for lamp in Hebrew is nir, and n-i-r, you could spell it.

And that looks like that's the word for lamp. And so, this has been translated as a lamp, typically. Some years ago, a scholar wrote an article pointing out that there is

an Assyrian word, niru, which means yoke, and argued that what's been going on here is not lamp but yoke.

Actually, that makes very good sense because the term niru or yoke was used all the time for the yoke of suzerainty, the yoke of kingship. The Assyrians would boast, I impose the heavy yoke of my suzerainty upon some vassal. And so probably the nir here is not that he promised to maintain a lamp for him, but a yoke for him.

In other words, he promised to maintain kingship for him and his descendants. That idea, incidentally, and the concept of the yoke was used in Jesus' day, too. The Romans used their term yugum, which is yoke, for the same sort of thing.

And so, it's kind of interesting when Jesus says, take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I'm gentle and humble of heart, and you'll find rest for your souls, for my burden is easy, my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. My yoke is easy, and my burden is light. If we think of that against the Assyrian background, I impose the heavy yoke of my suzerainty upon the vassal.

I think there may be a connection there, and just in the tradition. Just as Jesus says, you know, the pagans, they lorded over people. So, Jesus is saying, you know what, take my yoke upon you. That's a good thing for you to do.

I am your suzerain, but my yoke is easy. It's not a heavy burden. And there's all this stuff about Jesus being our yoke fellow, you know, with like two oxen going along.

There may be something to that. The term can be used more than one way at the same moment. But I think there's plenty of background here to help you understand the suzerainty with regard to the yoke.

There are other examples here, so I don't need to read through all of them. You have them here. But the point is to sum this up: covenant without a literal cutting.

So clearly, in later usage here, to cut a covenant did not necessarily mean an oath passage or a sacrifice, but it always had the sense of ratifying or bringing into existence something as a legal arrangement. And we recall that the Noahic covenant is another one that was identified as such without a cutting ceremony. Okay, so part of the deal with the Davidic covenant is there's going to be this house in the Lord's name.

There's going to be this temple presence. It's going to be by David's offspring. That's what's promised in the covenant and the covenant narrative.

And that's what we see fulfilled in 1 Kings when Solomon builds the temple. So, if we relate this at this point to the major paradigm, we can do that. There'll be some variations, as we'll note.

But God works by his spirit through the word, a prophet figure. It's clear enough from the Old Testament data that David was a prophet, but in Acts 2, Peter labels him as such and identifies him as such. He works through that prophet figure, David, to war against and defeat his foes as we've noted.

He then establishes a covenant. It's in brackets because it's not with a people, but it's with David himself and then the royal line. And likewise, with regard to establishing that people as God's people, it's establishing David as his king with his successors.

And then, the establishing a temple among his people, again, is establishing the temple, but because of the work of the king's offspring, he's going to reside among them. So it's just important to understand the variations, though. He's not establishing, and God is not establishing Israel as his people here.

He's already done that in the Mosaic covenant. He does assure them of peace, though. And the Davidic kingship has something to do with this.

It's going to bring some benefits to the people. And that's what we've already read. He does establish the Davidic line as royal.

And that's as we have read about. So, this is its focus. He's focusing on David and the royal line.

And one of the things he's going to be doing as part of this, too, is to magnify David's name. We note, ironically, Genesis 11, where the builders of the Tower of Babel said, let's build ourselves a city so that we may make a name for ourselves and not be scattered over the face of the earth. Well, make a name for yourself.

What does that mean? That means you're pretty significant, and people will probably not come and take you on. And so, you wouldn't be defeated and scattered. But there's quite a difference between making a name for yourself and having the Lord make a name for you.

This is Old Testament material, but it certainly has modern applications. If you or I hope to have a great name, I would kind of question the desire for that in the first place, but if you wanted that, it better be the Lord who does it. Because if you or I try to do it, it's not very healthy.

It's not spiritually healthy at all. It's in the direction of wanting to be like God. I want to make a name for myself.

No, let the Lord make your name whatever he wants it to be. If you're a pastor of a megachurch, if you're a pastor of a 50-member church in Vermont or something, whatever it may be, let the Lord be doing it. And of course the Lord is promising the son as the royal heir.

And we've talked about that. Isaiah 9:5 is, of course, the passage that really articulates that this child who's going to be born is going to be called the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. And if we look at Jesus saying, he who sees me sees the Father, we see the realization of that.

This Davidic son's promise is ultimately being realized in Christ. After that naming in Isaiah 9:5 about this one who's going to be incarnate, his name will be, this child will be born, and his name will be the mighty God. We read of the increase of his government and peace, and there'll be no end.

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. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this. And so, we're looking now at this Davidic king as we see him mentioned here and there in the prophets.

And there's certainly a lot of that in Isaiah. In love, a throne will be established; in faithfulness, a man will sit on it, one from the house of David, and so on. In Isaiah 22:22, interestingly, in the house of David, a servant in the house of David, Eliakim, son of Hilkiah, who will replace Shebna as the steward of the palace because he made a costly grave for himself and shored up Jerusalem's defenses and was part of revelry in the face of coming judgment.

He's heard from Jeremiah the Babylonians are coming, or rather from Isaiah, the Assyrians are coming. He's heard there's judgment coming. But he's still done all this in the face of all that.

So, the Lord brings a judgment on him. And he's placing the key to David's house on Eliakim. What he opens, no one can shut, and what he shuts, no one can open. That just finds a fascinating analog, I think, in Matthew 16, when Jesus says to Peter, I'll give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven.

So, here's Jesus of the household of David, giving words to a servant of the household of David, just as here. I'll give you the keys of the kingdom, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. So, a little bit of a typology, even under the Christology of David and Jesus.

This passage, incidentally, so that we understand, has been badly misunderstood. And I don't even know why it gets translated this way because what it says in Greek

is that whatever you bind on earth will have been bound in heaven. And whatever you loose on earth will have been loosed in heaven.

So, Jesus here is not saying, Peter, I'm giving you this commission, this authority, whatever you say, we'll back you up. He's saying whatever you say is something that will already have been decided in heaven. So, he's saying, I'm giving you this privilege of prophetic statement and utterance.

So, this is not up to Peter. He's simply the servant who is reporting, in effect, putting into effect what has been bound or loosed in heaven already. Well, Isaiah 55 is a very famous passage, too.

Give ear and come to me. Hear me so that your soul may live. I will make an everlasting covenant with you. My faithful love promised to David.

See, I've made him a witness to the people, a leader and commander of the people. I think this looks forward to what we read later about Jesus in Revelation 1:5. He is the faithful witness, and certainly, he is the leader and commander of the people. This reflects on the Davidic covenant, but it speaks to somebody who is coming after, right? The faithful love promised to David, the hesed, the grace promised to David is going to come.

And you read here, I will make an everlasting covenant with you. And it's going to be through this one who's going to be a witness, who's of the household of David. So, this is a prophecy.

This is a messianic prophecy. And so, I would say here, we've talked about the term everlasting. Every divine-human covenant that is called a covenant is called an everlasting covenant, but they don't all last forever.

As I hope we remember, we've talked about this. The Noahic covenant is called an everlasting covenant. For instance, Genesis 9:16 is the first time the term is used in the phrase, but we're going to have a new heavens and earth.

So, there will come a day when the Noahic covenant is legally dead. So it's not everlasting, but the word *olam* translated everlasting has the idea that it's so far in the past or so far in the future, it's out of sight. However, the covenant being implied here talks about the new covenant as going to be an everlasting covenant.

Hebrews 13, the blood of the everlasting covenant is an everlasting covenant because it never ends. The new covenant through whom through which we have a new humanity, namely us and a new heavens and earth, that is forever. That's it.

That's the last special grace covenant, and it is everlasting, and we can be glad it is. So that's the Davidic theme here connected with that in Isaiah 55. Jeremiah 23 prophesied this messianic figure, too, that I would raise up to David or, for David, a righteous branch, a King who would reign wisely.

And Jeremiah 30, they will serve the Lord, their God, and David, their King, whom I will raise up for them. That is also characterized as a sprout from David's line. And so, David will never have failed to have a man sit on the throne of the house of Israel.

So how can this one who's coming be called the branch, the sprout of David, the descendant of David, but also David? And we'll come to this because this issue also shows up in Ezekiel. But the point is this: the term David, the Hebrew term, the name David, is a passive form, and it comes from a root that means to love. And so, the passive concept of love is beloved.

And so, when you, we read these things about, I'm going to, they're going to, David will be their shepherd. I'm going to raise up David for them. We're not talking about a resurrected David who's going to rule Israel.

We're talking about the beloved who is going to be the branch, the sprout of David, and so on. So, we'll come back to that, but that's what's going on there. And a similar sort of promise in Jeremiah 33.

Ezekiel 34, I will place over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he will tend them. Ezekiel 34, I, the Lord will be their God. My servant David will be prince among them.

I, the Lord, have spoken. Ezekiel 37, my servant David will be king over them. They'll have one shepherd.

And Ezekiel 37, David, my servant, will be their prince forever. So, the classic way of looking at these kinds of statements has been, well, this is a kind of Christological or symbolic messianic type, and that's true enough. But as we've said, the real issue here is that the term David, Dawid means the beloved.

And so, when you read these passages, the Lord is really saying a beloved one is going to be their prince. He's going to rule over them. And we learn later, of course, that that is Jesus.

Certain genealogical notices or claims are made here with regard to Jesus. Matthew 1 starts out with this: the genealogy, a record of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. Luke's introduction to him will be great.

And we called son of the Most High, the Lord God will give him the throne of his father David. In the genealogy that goes all the way back to Adam, he's identified as the son of David, and so on. And just to mention here of Matthew's genealogy, there's a Hebrew technique of using numbers.

And when you do, you find out that the genealogy, the three sets of 14 generations in Hebrew lettering, can be characterized by the consonants that form the name David. And so, the idea of David actually underlies the structure of the genealogy. It's called gematria.

And that's something you can look at. You find that online, I think, fairly easily. I've written about it in my own third volume, but it's not an idea new to me. But it's just kind of fascinating that this, the David theme is very important.

David is mentioned many, many more times in the Bible than even Moses, which is interesting. And we'll look at a bit later. So, anyway, in the identification of this Davidic covenant and the importance of David here, in Acts 13, Paul, in his address to the synagogue at Pisidian Antioch, tries to make the point that, listen, this is the one we've been waiting for.

Paul identifies himself as one who's an apostle of the gospel, promised through his prophets regarding his son who, as to his human nature, was a descendant of David. Well, this Davidic king was certainly expected and hoped for, and we see this in popular recognition, too. And again, we'll just kind of blitz through these because you'll have them in the notes.

But Jesus goes on here. He has people, two blind men following him, calling out, have mercy on us, son of David. People are astonished at his miracles and say, could this be the son of David? The Canaanite woman who hopes for deliverance for her daughter says, Lord, son of David, have mercy on me.

The blind men at Jericho here, Lord, son of David, have mercy on us. When Jesus is entering Jerusalem, Hosanna to the son of David, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Of course, this offends the priests and teachers of the law. Blind Bartimaeus, Jesus, son of David, have mercy on me, and so on. Jesus himself makes the argument, what do you think about the Christ? Whose son is he? The son of David, they replied.

Well, if David calls him Lord, then how can he be his son? Jesus here is taking advantage of the fact that Psalm 110 was understood to be a Messianic Psalm. But we know how that starts out. The Lord said to my Lord, sit at my right hand, and I'll make your enemies a footstool for your feet.

Jesus is saying, well, wait a minute. If David is calling this Messianic figure, this son of David, Lord already, how can he be David's son? So, it implies the mystery of the incarnation and what happened. And so, of course, Jesus was fully aware of this.

If we consider the issue of typology, and you remember when we talked about Noah, we talked about typology. And we said the typology, as scholars use the idea, is a matter of office, not necessarily of character. So, Ahab, even as a king in Israel, who was not a very good character at all, still technically could be called a type of Christ because he was a king in Israel.

So, Noah then, as a covenant mediator prophet who's actually worked for the redemption of people too, certainly could be called a type of Christ. He also happened to have qualities that were true later of Jesus. He was righteous.

He was faithful to God and so on. But David is a type of Christ by his offices. He is a king.

He is a prophet. He was a shepherd, sort of as an aside here. But the idea of a king as a shepherd is very ancient in the ancient world.

If you read Egyptian inscriptions, pharaohs are not very often called shepherds. But if you look at the iconography, pharaohs had a shepherd's crook. In Mesopotamia, it was a very common form of speech.

The king is a shepherd. And so, the idea that a ruler would be a shepherd is a standard thing. Why? Well, because you consider the mass of people out there, they're the flock. They need a shepherd.

Moses, interestingly, was a shepherd before he was a ruler, a leader. David was a shepherd before he was a leader. And Jesus refers to himself as a good shepherd in John 10.

So, that figure runs through the Bible. Of course, with Psalm 23, the Lord is my shepherd. We've talked a bit about this.

The name David means the beloved. And so, when Jesus comes out of the baptismal waters, and a voice from the heavens says, this is my son, the beloved, in whom I'm well pleased. If you translated that into Hebrew, you could say, this is my son, the David, because that's exactly what the name means.

And so, Jesus really is all that the name David could be or imply. There, you have the actual incarnation, the realization of the promise, the promises that you get in Jeremiah and Ezekiel, especially about David, who's going to rule over them. We talked about the theme of witness.

I just want to come back to that and tie it to something else here. Isaiah 55, we may recall, said, I've made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander of the peoples. And incidentally, I have made him.

Well, how can you be using this? How can you say I have made him when it's going to be centuries yet before he's born? And that's just worth noting here as a kind of a footnote or whatever. A lot of the prophecy in the Old Testament is spoken as though it's already happened. And S.R. Driver, a pretty liberal scholar in Oxford in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, wrote a book on Hebrew tenses.

And he had the idea, which I think is not far off the mark, of what he called the prophetic perfect. He explained that the idea was so vivid that it was an accomplished fact for the prophet. So he wrote it as something that's already happened.

I think a slightly better way of looking at that is this. If the prophets, as Peter says, were carried along by the spirit, if the words they spoke were the spirit speaking through them, well, the spirit, God, is outside time. He's the Alpha and the Omega at one and the same moment.

That's why Paul can say in Ephesians 2 we have already been seated with Christ in the heavenly realms. For him, that doesn't feel that way to us, but it's done. Paul is reassuring us.

It's done. It's a done deal. And so, for God, before he created the universe, the eschaton was present to him, and it was passed to him.

So, for God, all being outside time, and of course, we live in a space-time continuum, right? Nothing can exist without time as part of the package, the context in which it exists. And so, God created time also. And if he created it, then it seems, by definition, he's outside it.

And apparently, heaven has its own time, and we won't get into that. But although Meredith Klein has written about that, and I have to at the end of my first volume a bit, engaging him, I think the evidence is there. But anyway, God being outside time, all things are present for him.

All things are past for him. All things are future for him, all at the same time. Talk about his thoughts being above our thoughts.

We can't begin to get there. But the point is, if all times are past for God, he can very easily give through a prophet a description or an account of something as though it has already happened. There's nothing simpler.

That's why in 1 Kings 13, I think he can prophesy that a future king named Josiah will come here and do these things. That's why in Isaiah 44 and 45, he can, through Isaiah, prophesy Cyrus, who's not even born yet. So that's not a hard concept, but one does have to acknowledge and agree that prophecy happens, that it's possible, that it is what it is.

It comes from God. And if one accepts that, then everything else follows. But so anyway, I have made him a witness to the peoples.

In Psalm 89, we also read, I will appoint him my firstborn, the most exalted of the kings of earth. This is the Davidic king who is coming. So these themes of Davidic witness and Davidic king, or the David is firstborn, converge in the New Testament.

Jesus Christ, who's the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead. But also, this same faithful witness is the firstborn over all creation. And it's important to understand this concept of the firstborn because the Arians had this idea that, well, look, if he's the firstborn over all creation, then he's really special because he was the firstborn, but that must mean there was a time when he was not.

It's a misunderstanding because in Psalm 89, we read that I would appoint him as my firstborn. In other words, the firstborn here is being used as an appointive status, a technical, a legal concept. The firstborn is the heir.

And the Lord is saying, this king who's coming, this David, I'm going to appoint him the firstborn. In other words, he's going to be the heir of all things, which is what he is. And, of course, in him, we too inherit.

Okay. So, this Davidic covenant entails the building of the temple. This temple is going to be built by David's son.

David's son is Shlomo Solomon. The name means his peace, which I just think is fantastic because the Prince of Peace, the Sar Shalom, the Prince of Peace in Isaiah 9 is this incarnate Davidic son who's coming. And Jesus makes the promise, peace I leave with you.

That's not what the world can give you. I leave it with you. And incidentally, since we're talking about peace at the moment, it's not a bad thing to reflect on the meaning of that word, because I don't think the Greek really captures it.

But if we understand that behind this Greek term, Irenaeus is Shalom, peace. The root idea of Shalom is wholeness, soundness. And that's what Jesus is saying.

He's not saying I'm going to leave tranquility with you because he's already said you're blessed when people persecute you and lie about you because of me, because that's what they did to the prophets. He's saying that by the Spirit who dwells in you, I'm going to make you more whole, more sound. You're going to have Shalom soundness.

And that whatever else happens from the outside, whatever comes your way. And that's much, much better. And that's what the promise is.

And he's the Prince of that. So, this Davidic son, he's going to be king. He's going to be a prophet.

He's going to be a temple builder. And that, of course, that becomes us, the church. And there's a history of temple-related theophany that is consistent with this.

In the tabernacle, Moses completes the tabernacle. And then what happens? The glory cloud, the theophanic cloud, covers the tent of meeting, the tabernacle. The glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle.

Moses could not enter the tent of meeting because the cloud had settled upon it, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. Later, when Solomon finished constructing the temple, the son of David built that temple, while the priests withdrew, and the cloud filled the temple. The priests could not perform their service because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord filled his temple just as the glory of the Lord had filled the tabernacle.

And later, the Lord characterizes this in this way. I have consecrated this temple. I've set it aside.

I've declared it holy by putting my name there forever. So that's another thing. The temple that Solomon built becomes holy, and it becomes holy not because people devote it to the Lord, but because the Lord consecrates it.

His presence makes it holy. If we think back to Exodus 3, when the Lord showed up there and told Moses to take off your sandals because this is holy ground, I think I can guarantee you that once that was all over and the Lord had left, the ground was just ground again. It was just dirt.

There's nothing holy about it. You could have walked all over it with or without sandals. It wouldn't have mattered.

So, it's the presence of the Lord that makes the thing holy, and people have understood this for quite a while. And so that's what makes us holy too. And we, too,

become temples, and we see the New Testament counterpart to this Old Testament tabernacle in this investiture by the Lord.

When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly, a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them.

All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them. So, as scholars often recognize, this is a storm theophany, and this is the Lord coming into the new temple, which he is now creating to be such, now making temples. That is all the people, the temple of living stones as Peter puts it, the individual temples who together make up the corporate temple.

So, I just think it shows a wonderful consistency in the Lord. A temple is prepared, and he enters it, and he makes it a real temple, a real dwelling. And we talked about the meaning of the word temple, meaning a big house or just basically a dwelling.

That's how we can be called temples because a temple doesn't have to mean a building made of stone or whatever, or even a tabernacle or a tent. It can be wherever the Lord dwells in a certain way, really present, and that's what he is in us. So this Davidic son we're talking about here, he is the beloved, he is the David.

He brings his peace and the name of Solomon foreshadows that or prefigures it. And he does build the temple, and so of course Solomon does that, but then the son of David, the greater son, the David, the beloved, builds the church. So, a lot comes out of this Davidic covenant; these promises that we read in 2 Samuel 7 and the New Testament, of course, certainly pull this together for us.

Well, since David is a prophet, it might be worth considering the dynamic of prophecy and what it can entail. And so, I'd like to look at David as a composer or a harpist or a worshiper. And I think the first place that really shows up is in 1 Samuel 16, where you remember the Lord tells David in 2 Samuel 7 that this son of yours, the offspring, is going to build the temple.

If he sins, I will chastise him, but I won't remove my love or my grace from him as I did with Saul. Well, this is what it looks like when the grace is removed. And I think this, so what is it? It's the Holy Spirit; the Spirit of the Lord had departed from Saul.

Well, but that's not the worst of it because then an evil spirit from the Lord tormented him. And I think here incidentally we understand it's not that the Lord has a stable of evil spirits and he lets one go whenever he wants to do, he gives somebody trouble. He's letting an evil spirit come and do what it wants to do.

And he's using that as a judgment on Saul in this case. And so, incidentally later, when David has committed that adultery with Bathsheba and in Psalm 51, he prays, take not your Holy Spirit from me. He knows what that looks like with Saul, and he doesn't want that to happen to him.

And so, that's a very meaningful prayer on his part. And the Lord was faithful to that. He didn't take his spirit away from David, but he took his spirit away from Saul.

And so, Saul's attendants say to him, look, an evil spirit from God is tormenting you. Let our Lord command his servants here to search for someone who can play the liar. He will play when the evil spirit from God comes on you, and you will feel better.

So, Saul said to his attendants, find me someone who plays well and bring him to me. And one of them says I've seen a son of Jesse of Bethlehem who knows how to play the liar. He's a brave man and a warrior.

He speaks well. He's a fine-looking man, and the Lord is with him. So, Saul sends messengers to Jesse and says, send me your son, David, who is with the sheep.

So Jesse takes a donkey loaded with bread, a skin of wine, and a young goat and sends them with his son, David, to Saul. David came to Saul and entered his service. Saul liked him very much.

And David became one of his armor-bearers. Then Saul sent word to Jesse saying, allow David to remain in my service, for I'm pleased with him. Whenever the spirit from God came on Saul, that is the evil spirit that God let come on him, David would take up his liar and play.

Then relief would come to Saul. He would feel better. The evil spirit would leave him.

Possible explanations, psychological or emotional relief. Well, that could be. But I would suggest that you could play some beautiful music anywhere, and it wouldn't necessarily drive a demon away, wouldn't drive an evil spirit away.

So, what's going on here? I think, well, clearly, I use the term deliverance. Saul is being delivered of the spirit. The spirit's attacking him and he gets freed.

He gets delivered of it for a time when David plays. Okay. So, what is going on when David plays? Is he just playing a tune, and does it make Saul feel better? I think there's got to be more than that going on.

Psalm 22, I think, may help us to understand this if we understand it in the right way. The NIV translates verse three, you are the one. You're enthroned as the Holy one. You are the one Israel praises.

I think a better way of taking this would be to say that you are the Holy One enthroned, inhabiting the praises of Israel. And if that's the case, what does that mean? Here's what I think. When real worship of the Lord is going on, the Lord responds.

He honors that. He will present himself. That means that his Holy Spirit is more present there, and people are blessed.

Some people can claim a palpable experience of this. Others don't feel anything, but I think it's going on at any time. And I think that's what this Psalm means.

The Lord inhabits the praises. When people are really him, he's there welcoming it, blessing them. It's not just emotional.

So, as I sometimes tell students, you know, I think you could have two people in two rooms. They're both singing the same hymns at the same time. One of them, they're really worshipping.

They're singing, and they're worshipping in spirit and in truth. The others are just singing the song. One of them is where the real worship is going on; the Lord is present.

He's honoring it. The other one, not so much. I mean, he is omnipresent.

I'm just saying he shows up in a special way. If that's the case here with David, that would mean, well, the Holy Spirit shows up. The evil spirit is not too comfortable with that.

And so he departs for a while. That would explain it. In any case, that is what happens.

We later learn, I mean, talk about David and worship. David's very much involved with it. These passages, as we read about, and the prophetic dimension is there.

David certainly had a lot to do with the worship then later as King of Israel. He arranged for certain Levites to be musicians and so on. The term harps, kind of highlight it because it's involved.

Interestingly here, David sets apart some of the sons of Asaph and so on for the ministry of prophesying accompanied by harps, lyres, and cymbals. That kind of connects the music-making with prophecy. Prophecy happens, of course, because the Holy Spirit is involved in it.

A passage that I think could be linked with this is found in 2 Kings 3. Again, I'm skipping over some of these because they're just along the same lines. The case here is that Moab rebelled against Israel and was a vassal state of the northern kingdom. The King of Israel and Jehoshaphat, who come up from the south, the King of Judah to help him, and the King of Edom come together as allies to go against Moab and try to reconquer them.

Incidentally, this is very typical of what happened in the ancient world. A vassal would rebel, and the suzerain would set out to reconquer them and bring them back under his suzerainty. That's exactly what's going on here.

Well, they lose their way and they begin to think that maybe the Lord has let them come out here to destroy them. He's going to judge them. And so, Jehoshaphat says, well, is there a prophet of the Lord around that we can consult? And they find Elisha.

So, Elisha comes, and he says, as surely as the Lord Almighty lives whom I serve, if I did not have respect for the presence of Jehoshaphat, King of Judah, I would not pay any attention to you, the King of Israel. But now, bring me a harpist. And so, while the harpist is playing, the hand of the Lord comes on Elisha.

And he says, this is what the Lord's, so that's interesting. What is the hand of the Lord? I think this is the term hand in Hebrew. I mean, if you think of it, it's not just simply this, and it's not the whole forearm, but it's like this.

So, it's the, you know, this is what you can do things with. You can wield a sword, and you can make stuff. Sometimes, it's used figuratively for power.

And so, I think that's a good understanding here. The power of the Lord came on him, but that we understand is the spirit. That's how it's the spirit of prophecy.

It's the Holy Spirit who produces the prophecy. So, the yad, the hand, the power of the Lord is the Spirit who comes on Elisha, and he then prophesies. This is what the Lord says.

I will fill this valley with pools of water. You will neither see wind nor rain, yet this valley will be filled with water, and you, your cattle, and your other animals will drink. And this is an easy thing in the eyes of the Lord.

He'll also deliver Moab into your hands and so on. And all this comes to pass. So, what do we make of all this? Well, what do we make of this in particular? Because the instrument and the playing that goes on are the same terms in Hebrew that you get when David is playing before Saul.

And in this case, clearly the playing, why does Elisha ask for that? I think for one thing, if the playing is, again, it's not just music. It's going to be worship. And the Lord responds to it and comes to him and gives him a prophecy.

Now, the Lord doesn't have to have that happen to give a prophecy, right? The Lord can prophesy without having music going on, but he chooses to do it in this case. But here we have an association of the playing, the worshiping, if you will, and the Holy Spirit coming. I think that's probably what was going on when David delivered Saul as well.

So, what conclusions or inferences can we draw here? Music could be an accompaniment of prophecy and worship. And this seems to suggest that worship may invite the spirit for a work of prophecy sometimes. We've talked about this a bit, but we might as well look at it here a little in the languages.

Psalms 22, you, a holy one dwelling or sitting enthroned, that verb can mean sit enthroned or dwell, the praises of Israel. The Septuagint takes that as you dwell among the holy ones, the praise of Israel. And the Vulgate, similarly, you, however, in the holy place, you dwell, the praise of Israel.

Probably the best translation is that you are the holy one, and you dwell among the praises of Israel. You inhabit the praises of your people. So, the tentative conclusion here is that not all prophecy occurs in the context of worship, but a worship context may invoke the spirit of prophecy.

That could be as relevant for the church today as it seems to have been for David when he delivered Saul. So, the Davidic covenant anticipates the new, as we've said, and that's the covenant, the final, and the one remaining functioning, the special grace covenant to which we will next turn our attention.

This is Dr. Jeffrey Niehaus in his teaching on Biblical Theology. This is session 8, The Davidic Covenant.