

Series: Building the Bridge

April 22, 2018

Title: Lord and Christ

[Slide 1]

Text: Acts 2:25-36

David the King (Acts 2:25-30)

Peter's Challenge:

How do you get from King David to King Jesus?

This was the challenge facing Peter when he stood in front of thousands of fellow Jews in the Temple during the Jewish festival of Pentecost. They had gathered here in Jerusalem to celebrate a key moment in Israel's history with her God: the giving of the Law at Mt. Sinai. It was at that moment that God formed an everlasting covenant with Israel, making them His Chosen People.

For a brief moment in history it seemed that the blessings promised in this covenant had finally come to pass. A young man from a small town called Bethlehem had risen to power and established Israel as a formidable power in its corner of the Middle East. His name was King David.

Now Peter's task was to announce the arrival of another, even greater King, the long-awaited Messiah. He needed to build a bridge from what people knew to what they could never have imagined. It would be a bridge that connected Israel's story with the story of Jesus.

David the King:

All Peter had to do to evoke the stories and grandeur of King David was simply say his name. His audience could fill in the rest.

David was the shepherd boy who killed a giant with a stone and a sling. He was the hero who time and again defeated the dreaded Philistines to the east. He was the desert warrior who successfully evaded a king's army for 10 years. He was the newly anointed king of Israel who captured a city that had been thought impregnable: Jerusalem. He was the ruler who expanded Israel's borders and subjugated surrounding kingdoms.

David was also known as a “man after God’s own heart.” He brought the Ark of the Covenant out of exile and into Jerusalem, dancing in wild celebration all the way. He was Israel’s greatest song writer, crafting the psalms that we sing and pray to this day.

No wonder, then, that Peter’s listeners were avidly looking for a new King David! They were waiting for God to raise up a son of David who would slay the giant of Rome, liberate the Holy City of Jerusalem, and bring the Presence of God back to His Temple.

And that is why the road to King Jesus had to go through King David.

David the Prophet:

Peter introduces David by quoting one of his psalms:

[Slide 2]

Acts 2:25-28 NIV

“David said about [Jesus]:

“I saw the Lord always before me. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken.

“Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will rest in hope, because you will not abandon me to the realm of the dead, you will not let your holy one see decay.

“You have made known to me the paths of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence.”

Then Peter points out the obvious: these glorious words about victory over death could never be applied to King David:

[Slide 3]

Acts 2:29 NIV

“Fellow Israelites, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried, and his tomb is here to this day.”

Instead, Peter uses David’s psalm as a pointer to the long-awaited Messiah:

[Slide 4]

Acts 2:30-31 NIV

"But he was a prophet and knew that God had promised him on oath that he would place one of his descendants on his throne. Seeing what was to come, he spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, that he was not abandoned to the realm of the dead, nor did his body see decay."

Yes, David was a great king; but he himself prophesied the coming of an even greater King, the Messiah.

Jesus the King (Acts 2:31-36)**Messiah:**

Ever notice how sometimes it's hard to let go of something familiar, even if that means embracing something that turns out to be far better? I can relate to the commercial that shows a support group of middle-aged people sitting around, lamenting that they are becoming like their parents. One guy holds up a flip phone and says, "Why should I get rid of it? It still works!"

This is Peter's challenge: to move from the familiar King David to an utterly *unfamiliar and unlikely* Messiah: Jesus of Nazareth. He connects the dots between David and Jesus this way:

[Slide 5]

Acts 2:32 NIV

"God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of it."

"This Jesus"? The guy who rode the donkey into town just before Passover, then created a riot right here in the Temple? The guy the Temple police arrested and brought to the Roman governor on charges of rebellion against Rome? The false prophet that was crucified just outside of the city walls? That guy?

Peter says, "Yes. That's the one. We saw him with our own eyes after God raised him from the dead. You may have convicted him as a blasphemer and false prophet, but God overturned your verdict and declared him not only innocent of all charges, but rightful King of the world!"

He and he alone fits David's prophecy. He is the one who was not abandoned to the realm of the dead. His body was not left to decay in the garden tomb. He has opened the way to the "paths of life."

Jesus is Messiah, the King!

At God's right hand:

Peter goes on to point out that Jesus is no ordinary king in the line of David. He has been enthroned in Heaven itself:

[Slide 6]

Acts 2:33 NIV

"Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear."

Peter's sermon began with an explanation of the outpouring of God's Spirit and the gift of the disciples speaking in other languages. This, he said, was proof that the Day of the Lord, the time in which God would come and rescue His people, was at hand.

Now Peter refers once again back to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, linking it to Jesus having been enthroned in Heaven at God's right hand. King Jesus is the One who has the sole authority to pour out the Holy Spirit in all of God's creative and saving power. This is *how the New Creation happens. And it's happening NOW! This Jesus is now King of God's New World.*

Lord of all:

Once again, it was King David who prophesied that this would happen. Peter quotes David:

[Slide 7]

Acts 2:34 NIV

"For David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said,

"The Lord said to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.""

The Lord speaks to “my Lord.” Peter reminded his audience that this could not possibly apply to King David; he never ascended to heaven. But it does apply perfectly to the greater king, King Jesus:

[Slide 8]

Acts 2:36 NIV

“Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah [Christ].”

The name “Lord” means more than “King. It refers explicitly to Israel’s God: Yahweh. Peter referenced Yahweh in the very beginning of his message when he quoted the prophet who said: “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” (Acts 2:21 NIV) Now he announces that Yahweh, the Lord, came as He had promised, and He came in the Person of Jesus the King. Jesus is Lord and King.

Lord and Christ

Yellowstone, 1988

[Slide 9]

In the summer of 1988 Yellowstone National Park experienced its worst fire season in history. 36% of the park were affected by the forest fire – totally almost 800,000 acres. The fires left nothing but blackened stumps and ash covered ground.

[Slide 10]

But as soon as the fires burned out and the ground had a chance to cool, the recovery began. Wildflowers bloomed profusely for the next 5 years. And many plants regrew from existing sprouts which had survived the heat of the fires. Lodgepole pine cones, which actually require fire in order to disperse their seeds, popped open and reseeded the lost forests. And new plants meant lots of grazing for the park’s animals.

A fire that had seemed an unmitigated disaster, became the starting point for new life.

The coming of the King:

I wonder how often we see the forest fire sweep through our lives or our community and wonder if God will ever come and make things right? Will He ever restore His broken, burned out world? And if He were to come, wouldn't it be like a mighty King, trampling down his enemies?

But Peter helps us see that God *did* come. He came in the Person of King Jesus. The fire did its worst. God's only Son lay dead in a borrowed tomb. But on Easter morning, the first shoots broke through the ash and soot. The fire had cleared the way for a whole new world: God's New Creation.

And when we call on His name, we are rescued. We are saved!

Lord and Christ:

Now it's our turn to discover King Jesus. It means leaving behind our earthly kings. It means putting our total trust in a king who died on a cross, rejected by the world around Him. It means believing the eyewitness reports of those who saw Him raised from the dead. It means daring to believe that He, and He alone, is King in Heaven. And most of all, it means seeing that He is God Himself made known to us.

King Jesus is here in the power of His Holy Spirit. He is here to rescue us. He is here to save. All you have to do is make your "spiritual 911 call."

Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved!