

Advent Reading for Saturday, December 23, 2017 “The Davidic Covenant Confirmed” (Isaiah 55:3)

One of the keys to understanding the Bible is to be familiar with its covenants. Most people are aware of the Old and New Covenants, though we generally refer to them as *Testaments*, since our Bibles contain these two divisions. The 39 books in the Old write of events which occurred before Jesus came. The 27 books in the New begin with Jesus' birth, and move to the events which happened as a result of His life, His teachings, His ministry, His crucifixion, His resurrection, His appearances, and His ascension. It also includes the birth and expansion of His church, along with astounding news about events that are yet to come.

But within the Old Testament are other important covenants with far reaching implications. One of these is the covenant God made with Abraham. God promised to make Abraham's descendants into a great nation, with their own land. But God also gave to him an unconditional promise to bless all of the various people groups of the world through one of his descendants. God, of course, was speaking of His Son whom He would send into the world in the fullness of time. (*This is the event we will celebrate in the next two days.*) Within the Old Testament is another significant covenant, the one God made with King David; we refer to it as the Davidic Covenant. Like God's covenant with Abraham, it too was unconditional. It was first introduced in II Samuel 7:8-16, and then reiterated in several other places. One is included among Isaiah's many prophecies. Here it is: *“Incline your ear and come to Me. I will make an everlasting covenant with you, according to the faithful mercies shown to David”* (55:3). The unconditional promise is that one of David's seeds, one of his descendants, would rule over Israel in an everlasting kingdom (See Psalm 89:27-29; Luke 1:32-33).

Once again, as we have been observing during this Advent season, what makes Isaiah's relatively simple statement highly significant is how it is utilized in the New (Covenant) Testament. In this case, it was the Apostle Paul who connected Isaiah's 700 year old promise with the resurrection of Christ: *“As for the fact that He (God) raised Him (Christ) up from the dead, no longer to return to decay, He has spoken in this way: ‘I WILL GIVE YOU THE HOLY AND SURE BLESSINGS OF DAVID’”* (Acts 13:34). Paul's point was that the resurrection was essential in the

fulfilling of God's promise to David. If the Father had not been fully satisfied in His Son's atoning death, Christ would not have risen, and it would not have been possible for him to eventually sit on David's earthly throne. But He did rise and He will, in God's time and in accordance with other promises concerning Israel, fulfill His kingly role, one spoken about so frequently in Scripture.

While we are celebrating the birth of Christ and His many claims to deity, it is important to remember that all of the truths foretold by the prophets were verified through His resurrection. *"God promised beforehand through His prophets in the holy Scriptures, concerning His Son, who was born as a descendant of David, according to the flesh, was declared to be the Son of God with power through the resurrection from the dead"*

(Romans 1:4). The Old Testament covenants find their ultimate fulfillment in our Lord Jesus Christ!

Giving Thanks – Again we thank You for the beauty of Your plan, and for graciously calling us to be part of Your eternal kingdom!