

National Church Establishments.

(Christ and the Nations 4—Son of David)

The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. (Matt. 1:1)

Question.—*How does the Bible teaching that Christ is the son of David reflect the national character of His work?*

Answer.—The national, not merely individual, character of Christ's work is set forth in the consideration of His work as the son of David. The regal title and royal descent all yield points of similarity and contrast which bear upon His relations to the nations:

First, The last words of David invite a comparison with the coming Messiah, 2 Sam. 23:1. Christ as the second David, or second King of Israel, appears in due time, Gal. 4:4, 5; for the recovering of national Israel fallen, "like Adam," Hos. 6:7; fallen "after the similitude of Adam's transgression," Rom. 5:14; that they might be restored to a *national standing* before God, Rom. 11:26.

Second, It is to be observed that Christ is born expressly to be the King of the Jews, Matt. 2:2. As the son of David, King of Israel, he came to save not merely individuals but the nation and that not only outwardly, but inwardly—as a church as well as a nation, Matt. 1:21. He came as King of the Jews and, the Jews being nationally His people, He came to bring *national* deliverance, Luke 1:68-75.

Third, As a son of Abraham and born King of the Jews, Christ received the sign of circumcision, Luke 2:21; which marked Him specially as linked to the nation of Israel and the promise made to Abraham respecting a holy seed, Rom. 4:11; Gen. 17:4, 7, 8.

Fourth, In His baptism, Christ submitted to the national call to repentance preached by John, Matt. 3:1, 2, 10; in so doing, He acknowledged Himself under all the same guilt which pertained to the nation and parentage of Israel to whom John was sent, Matt. 3:5, 6. At His baptism, a voice from heaven proclaimed Him to be a restoration, not merely of what was lost in Adam (*i.e.*, the second Adam), but what was lost by apostatizing Israel (*i.e.*, a second David), Matt. 3:17; Ps. 2:7.

Fifth, Christ's three temptations paralleled those of Israel—the first with hunger to that of Israel when he first attained the status of kingdom, Deut. 8:3, 4; from which by sin they fell and God swore in His wrath that they should not enter the land, Heb. 4:3. Yet, Christ stood wherein Israel fell, Matt. 4:3, 4. The second temptation proceeded from their standing as a kingdom attained under Solomon wherein they trusted in their privilege, Jer. 7:4. Again, Christ stood in that wherein Israel fell, Matt. 4:5-7. The third (these last two are reversed in Luke's account) temptation which constantly pressed Israel as a nation was the

influence and example of the surrounding nations and their idolatry, to which Israel often succumbed, Hos. 2:5; herein Christ also stood, Matt. 4:8-10.

Sixth, Twice we find that Christ cleanses the temple, wherein He displayed great authority and power, John 2:13-17; Matt. 21:12, 13. Thus, as the King of the Jews, He fulfilled the requirements of a godly magistrate, Ex. 20:8-11. As a godly King He fulfilled all righteousness toward His people, Ps. 40:10. In fact, He identified Himself to His people as their King by His entrance into the city of Jerusalem, Zech. 9:9; John 12:13-15.

Seventh, Jesus finished and crowned His work, as King of the Jews, by dying for them, John 11:50, 51; and thereby removing their iniquity, Zech. 3:9. It was a kingship acknowledged and declared providentially from the lips of His own enemies, Matt. 27:37. The final result being that He shall bring all Israel to salvation, Jer. 23:5, 6.

Eighth, The apostle proclaims that this same national salvation is not restricted to the Jews only, Eph. 3:6; Rom. 15:8-12. Christ's death is to have been undergone on behalf of Gentile nations as well as the nation of the Jews, John 11:49-52. These national sons are contemplated in the answer to a question asked on behalf of the national Jewish son, Jer. 3:19. Thus, of the New Testament era, there is a promised universality of blessing, Joel 2:28; Zeph. 3:9, 10; Hab. 2:14; Ps. 72:17.

Ninth, Christ's redemption, while beginning with Israel, Matt. 15:22-24; yet is not restricted to Israel, Isa. 11:9. His redemption, like His gospel, is a national redemption, a redemption of nations, Isa. 2:4. It is to the Jew first, but also to the Gentile nations, Rom. 1:16. The gospel is leaven for the nations, Matt. 13:33; the Jewish first, Matt. 10:6; then, the Gentiles shall follow, Rom. 11:11-15.

Tenth, Christ is invested with the key, or authority, of the house of David, Isa. 22:22; whereby He is invested with both the national rule of Israel and of the Gentile nations which He shall rule via His church, Rev. 3:7; Matt. 16:18, 19. For through His church all the nations will be made to hear, 2 Tim. 4:17; and His testimonies shall be proclaimed before kings, Ps. 119:46.