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David as a Type of Christ in Peter's Pentecost Message

Eric Snow, sermonette, June 11, 2011, UCG-Ann Arbor, Michigan

How do we know that Jesus of Nazareth was the prophesied Messiah of the Old Testament? Suppose you talked with a Jewish neighbor or skeptical coworker who claimed the Christian interpretation of its prophecies wrongly took verses out of context. How would you use the Old Testament to prove Jesus was the predicted

Savior of humanity? Both Peter and Paul had to evangelize Jews and gentiles who didn't assume Christ was the Savior. Both quoted a verse about David's death and resurrection that was also about Jesus' death and resurrection.

S.P.S. King David's death and future resurrection served as a type of Christ.

In order to understand Peter's and Paul's problems when evangelizing better, pretend that you were a Jew who lived nearly 2000 years ago in the Roman Empire. How would you know that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah and Savior? Would you just believe what some stranger said who showed up for the first time one day at your neighborhood synagogue after the reading of the law? Probably not.

David served in general as a type of Christ. That means that what he did and was foreshadowed what later Jesus was to do and be. Skeptical Jews will point out

differences between any type Christians find in the Old Testament and its fulfillment in Christ. However, a type's characteristics need not completely fit what will fulfill it. Hence, Jesus didn't literally have to have wool and four legs to be the lamb of God spiritually.

A type is something, such as an animal, ritual, or object, that will symbolically represent something else as a forerunner of what is to come, but which doesn't make any direct, specific predictions verbally. For example, the Passover lamb was "an unblemished male" (Ex. 12:5), which pictured Jesus, the sinless God made fleshly man who died for humanity's sins.

How does King David's life relate to Peter's Pentecost sermon? Notice that Peter used King David's death and anticipated resurrection as foreshadowing what Christ's miraculous experiences would be.

Acts 2:23-28

Peter makes clear that the Messiah died, just as King David did. Also correspondingly, He also was a physical descendant of King David. The Pharisees and many other Jews had expected the Messiah to be a Conquering King who will take over rulership of the world from the pagan gentile Romans.

Notice that this verse wasn't fulfilled by David's death, since his flesh did see corruption, i.e., his body did rot. Someone else later had to come along to fulfill it.

Verse 33:

Having received the Holy Spirit, Jesus shared this gift with the rest of us.

Verses 34-35:

Jesus' enemies not yet fully defeated. They aren't yet a footstool even today.

Paul cited similar verses and reasoned similarly when giving his initial presentation at the synagogue in Antioch.

Acts 13:22+

Verse 27

The Jewish leaders didn't recognize their own Messiah when He came, despite having the Word of God that described Him centuries in advance.

Ironically, they fulfilled Scripture by condemning Him!

Verse 33

Jesus was "born again" at the resurrection (other definition).

Verse 36-37

David's corpse saw corruption, but not Christ's. David hasn't yet been resurrected, but Jesus was.

So in conclusion: The death and future resurrection of David foreshadowed the death and resurrection of Jesus. The Old Testament predicts what's fulfilled in the New Testament. May we rejoice that God planned so long and carefully in advance the means of our salvation!

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