

## CAN GOD KEEP HIS PROMISES?

7<sup>th</sup> in a Series: What Does The Church of the Covenant Mean? --2 Samuel 7: 8-17

April 13, 2014 –Palm Sunday

The Church of the Covenant

Imagine thinking that a promise that someone who you trusted had made to you was utterly impossible to keep. And then imagine what it must feel like when miraculously and against all odds the promise was kept anyway. That's the story of the JOY of Palm Sunday in a nutshell. Pastor Emily and I have been preaching in Lent about the meaning and significance of the covenants in the Old and New Testaments. Today we are considering the covenant with King David set forth in 2 Samuel, the Davidic Covenant, and its impact and import on that very first Palm Sunday, when Jesus Christ road into Jerusalem and road into the very heart of the very temple of His Father in order to reclaim the city and the people and the temple for God.

In order to understand the JOY of that first Palm Sunday first, I think, we need to understand the context in which the covenant with David was fulfilled on that Palm Sunday. God through the prophet Nathan makes a promise, makes a covenant with King David. God says: *"I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, that you should be prince over my people Israel."* (2 Samuel 7: 8) *"I have been with you wherever you went..."* says the Lord. (v. 9) *"I will establish your house..."* promises the Lord to David. (v. 9) God promises David: *"I will establish your offspring's kingdom...I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I shall be his father and he shall be my son...I will not take my steadfast love from him...Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure for ever before me; your throne shall be established forever."* (2 Samuel 7: 16) This promise, this covenant, which God makes to David is unilateral –it is God who makes this covenant with David, not David who makes this covenant with God. It is God reaching out to David in love that makes this relationship, this everlasting covenant with the house and lineage of David. And this promise is unconditional, there are no "if you do what I want , then I will bless your house and lineage forever", about it. No, God promises this to David, no conditions, no strings attached. He promises David –your offspring will always sit on the throne of Israel; someone who comes from you, David, will always be king of Israel. I have made my promise to you –unilaterally, unconditionally, everlastingly, permanently, completely I have promised. I the Lord God have promised and I the Lord God always keep my promises.

Except...except....except...in 721 B.C. Shalmaneser, the Assyrian King comes howling down from the North, defeats a future king of Israel, destroys its cities, carries its people off into captivity, the Northern tribes of Israel never to be heard from again. Israel ceases to exist in 721 B.C. It is true, Judah, the southern kingdom still existed, but Israel is gone and it seems like it is gone forever.

Except...except...except...the kings even of Judah, of the southern tribes of Israel lose their blood relatedness to King David along the way. There is not someone of the house and lineage of King David who sits upon the throne. For example, King Herod, the King of Judea at the time of Jesus, was Idumean, he was from a tribe not related to Israel. There was an imposter and a usurper upon the throne. There was no KING according to the promise. There was no KINGDOM according to the promise. It seemed for such a long time like the promises of God had been broken. It seemed like God had made an everlasting promise and covenant with David that HE could not and did not keep. So it seemed.

But God raised up His only begotten Son, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, to fulfill the long unfulfilled promise that God had made to David. Jesus Christ, as the scriptures attest, was born of the house and

lineage of David, in Bethlehem, the city of David. God raised up a King and Messiah another way. God's plan was to fulfill His promises another way –by sending His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, to be the Lord of Lords and the King of Kings, to reign and to rule over the New Israel, His Church. To have his descendants be as numerous as the grains of sand by the sea –us, the New Israel, the Church, spread out over the face of the globe, fulfilling the covenant, fulfilling the promise God had made to David.

But God also raised up a literal kingdom of Israel once again. In 1948, after the devastation of World War II, after the horrors of the Holocaust, out of the dried bones of the concentration camps, God breathed new life into dead bones (just as the prophet Ezekiel prophesied) and brought a nation dead for more than 2,500 years back to life. O hear the Word of the Lord!

God promised a King and brought the King of Kings, the Messiah and Savior. God promised a Kingdom and brought the Kingdom of God to earth in His Son, Jesus Christ. God promised a throne and sat His only begotten Son, Jesus, upon the throne...and HE SHALL REIGN FOREVER, AND EVER, and ever! HALLELUIA! Halleluia! And Amen! Can God keep HIS PROMISES????? Can God the Maker of every covenant keep HIS COVENANTS????? You betcha. What seemed impossible was possible with God. What is too hard for the Lord to do? What promise is so seemingly impossible that the Lord cannot miraculously fulfill it??????

**The covenant with Adam** –paradise restored that had been lost in the Garden of Eden through the perfect obedience of the Son, Jesus Christ, the second Adam. Paradise regained as the New Jerusalem comes down from heaven as a gift; eternal life restored through the death of His Son. Did God keep His covenant promise with Adam? You betcha.

**The covenant with Abraham** –I will make you a people and a land; I will make your descendants as numerous as the grain of sand by the sea and I will give you this Promised Land as an inheritance forever. Christians all across the face of the earth as descendants as the children of Abraham; today, more Christians on the face of the earth than any other people. A Kingdom come as the inbreaking of a spiritual kingdom established through Jesus. A literal Promised Land reestablished in Israel in 1948. Did God keep His covenant with Abraham? You betcha.

**The covenant with Noah** –I will never destroy the earth again and I will make an everlasting covenant with you and your descendants. “I have come not to condemn the world”, says Jesus, “but that the world might be saved through me”. The Word of God that spoke creation in Genesis became Incarnate in His creation in Jesus Christ. The Creator became incarnate in His CREATION and so fulfilled the promise to Noah. Did God keep His covenant promise with Noah? You betcha.

**The New Covenant announced through Jeremiah the prophet** –I will write the law on their heart. I will be their God and they shall be my people. I will remember their sin no more. God writes His law upon our heart when He writes His Son Jesus Christ there. The Holy Spirit comes to the human heart and places Jesus Christ, the fulfillment of the law there. This spiritual unity between Christ and the believer means that it is God Himself who fulfills the just requirements of the law Himself. We are forgiven and freed from the law because in Jesus Christ our sins are remembered no more. Did God keep His promise of sending a NEW COVENANT in His Son Jesus Christ? You betcha.

So on that first Palm Sunday the people finally realize that the promises and the covenants they thought could never ever hope to be fulfilled, those promises were all being fulfilled *right before their eyes*. The Messiah and King of Kings, Jesus Christ, born of the house and lineage of David, had come to reclaim His

City and make it HOLY once again, Jesus Christ the Lord had come to reclaim His throne from all the imposter kings who seek our allegiance, our love and our worship, Jesus Christ, the Holy One of Israel had come to reclaim His Father's house and make it a house of prayer once again. Every promise made by God, every covenant made by God, the people saw as being fulfilled in the person and the coming of Jesus Christ, Lord and Savior, Messiah and King. And so they hailed HIM. They cried out to Him and to God. They shouted and they worshipped. They praised and exalted the name above every name. They cried out as our scripture of Palm Sunday from Matthew attests: *"Hosanna to the SON OF DAVID! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!" (Matthew 21: 9)* This is the Son of David! This is the Messiah! This is the embodiment, the fulfillment of the hope of all Israel come to reclaim and save His people! Can God keep His promises?? On that very first Palm Sunday the answer was a strong, unmistakable, undeniable YES!!!!!! Did God keep His covenant perfectly? You betcha.

Now what would cause you to have such great JOY today like the first disciples did on that very first Palm Sunday? What would cause you to go a little overboard by shouting your Hosannas a little too loudly today? What would move you from a tepid expression of faith (woo-hoo) to a powerful expression of faith –Hosanna! Blessed is HE who comes in the name of the Lord!!!!!! What if there was a promise you had from God? What if there was a specific promise that you desperately needed in your life right now? What if you knew that you were in everlasting covenant with a God who keeps that covenant everlastingly? What if you knew that whatever else was going on in your life that God was purposing not to harm you but to bless you? What if you knew that whatever life could throw at you the worst it could get is that you inherit eternal life from a NEW COVENANT in the blood of Jesus? What if you knew that whatever you walk through right now that God has promised an everlasting relationship with you through His Son, Jesus Christ? To bless you (no matter what) Not to harm you (no matter what). I will be your God (no matter what) You will be my people (no matter what) I will walk with you through everything in life (no matter what) I will never leave you nor forsake you (no matter what). We have this promise, promised with a surety of the precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, not on the basis of what WE have done, but purely on the basis of what HE Christ has done for us. And if God could keep His promise to David, against all odds, no matter what, don't you believe that God can and will keep His promise to YOU? Can God keep His covenants? Can God keep His promises? Can God keep His covenants and His promises to YOU? You betcha. That, my beloved, on this Palm Sunday, is what it means to be The Church of the Covenant. And Amen.

*By: The Reverend Dr. Stuart D. Broberg, The Church of the Covenant, Washington, PA  
IF THIS HAS BLESSED YOU, PLEASE PASS IT ALONG TO A FRIEND!*