The Place Called Calvary

Preacher: Rob B.
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References: Genesis 3, Genesis 3:15; Genesis 22:2-4; Leviticus 25:23, 29-31; 1 Samuel 17:54; 2 Samuel 24:18, 23-24; 1 Chronicles 21:25; Matthew 8:20; Matthew 27:32-33; Luke 2:7; John 14:2

The Seed of the Woman

I'd like to turn to the first prophecy concerning the coming Messiah. It's all the way back—we're reminded this morning in our first meeting of the Lord Jesus preparing, preparing, chapter 14:

> [John 14:2 NKJV] - In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

And so we just think of this, this great word to prepare. And, you know, this is Genesis chapter 3. There's people pointed out there's **nothing** accidental in the Word of God. Every jot, every tittle—now, not that I understand how every verse fits together. I don't. This is a lifetime; men make a lifetime of studying the Word and are way advanced beyond my limited understanding, and they would confess and have confessed that they don't understand the magnitude, the depths of the Word of God. But we do agree that there's nothing accidental, that it's there for a purpose.

Then, in addition, we would say that the Bible is not laid out as a dictionary. You can't find all there is on one subject in one area. You have to be a student of the Word. We have to read through the Word of God and begin to, at some level, try to tie these things together.

And so, way back in Genesis 3, the first prophecy concerning the coming Messiah, the first prophecy concerning the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ is verse 15 of chapter 3. This is to the serpent. So the Lord says to the serpent:

> [Genesis 3:15 NKJV] - And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed;

That's the serpent. So that seed there, you notice, her Seed is capitalized. It says:

> He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel.

And so, as students of the New Testament, having the New Testament before us, we know now, as we look back at this, that the Seed of the woman is the virgin birth of the Lord Jesus. He was virgin-born. Now, you know that the Apostle Paul went to great lengths in the book of Romans to prove how important that was, that the Lord Jesus be virgin-born. And so that's the Seed of the woman.

Matthew starts with the virgin birth of the Lord Jesus; that's the first major section. In fact, three times in Matthew chapter 1, it's emphasized that He was not Joseph's son. He was at best Joseph's stepson or foster son; He was conceived of the Holy Spirit. So that's the first part of the prophecy. And then the Gospel of Matthew ends with the death, burial, resurrection of the Lord Jesus. That's where the Gospel ends. In fact, all the Gospels end with His death, burial, resurrection.

And so that's the point here in Genesis 3, verse 15: He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel. Where did that happen? Well, that happened at Calvary. That's what happened. The Seed of the woman, the Lord Jesus, crushed the serpent's head. We know that. We sing that. We think about that. We actually had a song this morning that reminded us of this doctrinal subject—the idea, the principle, the picture, the point that the Lord Jesus crushed the serpent's head at an actual physical place. That place was called Calvary. And so this is important in Scripture, this place. It's not just a New Testament idea.

God's Dress Rehearsal

So we want to just flip through and read some verses. Let's turn to Genesis chapter 22. Genesis chapter 22.

This is, as some have pointed out, God's dress rehearsal—God's dress rehearsal for Calvary. This is a picture of what happened at Calvary: Abraham, Isaac, Mount Moriah. Some have ably pointed out the only difference, the only difference is that to actually sacrifice His Son,

He Himself, God, did do that, but He didn't make His good friend Abraham actually do that. But he got close, and so it was pictured.

And so we just want to pick up a couple of verses. He says in verse 2, chapter 22, then He said:

> [Genesis 22:2 NKJV] - 2 Then He said, "Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love..."

Right away, that Isaac was a picture of the Lord Jesus. Because we know already from the story that Isaac was not his only son. Isaac actually had an older half-brother. So he wasn't Abraham's only son, but Scripture is very exact: he was the son of promise. And so it's a perfect picture of the Lord Jesus.

It's the first mention of love in the Bible. This is remarkable. This is thousands of years after Genesis, and the first mention of love is in the context of Abraham's love for his only son. And then it says:

> [Genesis 22:2-4 NKJV] - "and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you." 3 So Abraham rose early in the morning and saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son; and he split the wood for the burnt offering, and arose and went to the place of which God had told him. 4 Then on the third day Abraham lifted his eyes and saw the place afar off.

So you've heard, no doubt, men take and apply this spiritually, that Abraham and Isaac saw this place afar off. This they've used to prove that Calvary, that that prophecy in Genesis 3 was not an afterthought. It was not because the serpent deceived the woman, the woman sinned, the man sinned, that Calvary was an afterthought. Peter tells us that the Lamb of God, the Lord Jesus, was appointed before the foundation of the world. That ever before the world was created, He was the Lamb of God God appointed.

And so commentators will say, "See here, even in the picture, that this place Abraham saw it afar off." And so it's the emphasis on the place, and it's connected with Moriah, Mount Moriah. And so we know from Bible geography that Moriah is just outside the city of

Jerusalem. That's significant, right? That's significant. It's actually a ridge, a range of mountains. And so Abraham built this altar on Mount Moriah.

The Law of Redemption

So we get that. So now let's turn over to Leviticus. Leviticus chapter 25. Leviticus chapter 25 is God's law and His principles concerning the redemption of land. You know that.

Economists tell us that the cause that will probably potentially break the free world is inflation. And this is a real problem, inflation, and we experience that and you know that today; we see that everywhere we look. Was there inflation in God's economy? Well, actually, no. Real estate didn't go up.

Real estate? Well, first of all, you know, Bill MacDonald points out real estate is not actually real estate, right? You know, our citizenship is in heaven. C. S. Lewis wrote, "This is the Shadowlands; that that's the reality." You know, God said to Moses, "Here's the reality in heaven; make the patterns after the reality." And we know we're talking about real estate, but at the same time, as Christians, we know it's not real estate. Okay, it's been taken away from lots of nations.

And so in God's economy, there was no inflation. Why? Well, property actually went down in value. How? Well, because it stayed in the family. Right? And so you could sell property if you got into a financial jam. You could sell property, but Leviticus chapter 25 is telling us that in the year of Jubilee, every fifty years, the real estate went back to the person who owned it, to the family that owned it.

So it was worked backwards from that. You know, it was worth more in year fifty than in year one—or year one it was worth more than it was in year forty-nine. Because in forty-nine, year fifty, it was going to go back to its rightful owners, to its family. And so that was the opposite of inflation.

So that's what all Leviticus—Leviticus chapter 25 is talking about. It's talking about how you work real estate and the laws concerning it. And so we're not going to read it all, but it's not wrong for God to do this, because in verse 23, He said:

> [Leviticus 25:23 NKJV] - "The land shall not be sold permanently, for the land is Mine; for you are strangers and sojourners with Me.

The land shall not be sold prematurely—or sorry, permanently, for the land is Mine. God owns the land. That's what He's saying. And so men are continually talking about what they're going to do with the land, but actually it's the Lord's land. The land is His.

And so He goes through and talks about how if a person's poor, you can redeem and then the land can go back. But notice this in verse 29, it says:

> [Leviticus 25:29-31 NKJV] - 29 "If a man sells a house in a walled city, then he may redeem it within a whole year after it is sold; within a full year he may redeem it. 30 But if it is not redeemed within the space of a full year, then the house in the walled city shall belong permanently to him who bought it, throughout his generations. It shall not be released in the Jubilee. 31 However the houses of villages which have no wall around them shall be counted as the fields of the country. They may be redeemed, and they shall be released in the Jubilee.

And so again, we say there's nothing accidental in the Word. So we say, what's the point of all this? Well, if it was a city and it had a wall around it and that property was sold, if it didn't get redeemed in the first year, that property could switch families. We read a city lot inside a walled city. But if it was outside of that, outside of the walled city, then it was like the field and that could never switch families. That always had to go back to the rightful owner. And so God is making the distinction. Again, nothing is accidental. This means something.

The Head of Goliath Brought to Jerusalem

So, we have that. Now let's turn over to 1 Samuel 17.

1 Samuel chapter 17 is the most famous, I think to be fair to say, the most famous story from the life of David. I mean, it's certainly the one that the world recognizes. You know, it's the story of David versus Goliath. What is that a picture of? Well, it's a picture of what was prophesied in Genesis chapter 3. Right? That's what it's a picture of. It's a picture of what happened at that place called Calvary. Right?

That David, in his perceived weakness—because it was simply just perceived, right? Scholars tell us David was between fifteen and twenty, fifteen years. He could have been as young as fifteen years old. Well, this comes out in the story because, hey, you know in the story that Goliath was very, very offended that they sent David. Right. You remember how the whole thing transpires.

Saul—you know Saul was the biggest man in Israel. You know that, right? Was he? He was the biggest man in Israel. How do you know that? Well, the Bible says he was a head above everybody else. So really, who should have been down in the Valley of Elah? Well, the biggest man in Israel. But David was taking Saul's place.

Well, that's what happened at Calvary. We're talking about the Lord Jesus dying on the cross. Listen, He took **my** place. He took **your** place.

Okay, so David, a boy somewhere between fifteen and twenty, down in the Valley of Elah, and he, with a sling in perceived weakness, he destroys the giant Goliath. And then notice he uses Goliath's own sword to chop off his head.

Well, what's that a picture of? Well, the Lord Jesus used death. Actually, that's really a picture at Calvary that the Lord Jesus used the Devil's own weapon. How does the Devil keep people living in fear? Well, Hebrews tells us: the fear of death. Right, that's the one weapon he has, the fear of death. He constantly has people living in the fear of death. So that preservation thing that goes on.

So the Lord Jesus uses that at Calvary. He goes down into death, and it says He destroyed him who had the power of death. Well, that's pictured in the story of David and Goliath. And again, so this is a picture somehow of Calvary.

So now notice this. Now remember, nothing is by accident in the Bible. And so in verse 54, it says:

> [1 Samuel 17:54 NKJV] - And David took the head of the Philistine and brought it to Jerusalem, but he put his armor in his tent.

What's strange about that? What's strange about that? Well, I'll tell you what's strange about that: David has no connection to Jerusalem. None. That's right, isn't it? I mean, you know that.

David was born where? He was born in Bethlehem. That's where David was from. Bethlehem was from what province in Israel? From Judah. He was from Judah, Bethlehem, Judah. You know that verse. And so he was from Judah. Jerusalem was in Benjamin. So David has no connection to Jerusalem.

But you know what else? The Israelites in this day didn't even have control of the city of Jerusalem. Right? We know that. We actually know that that doesn't happen until 2 Samuel 5,

until David's king. So he's somewhere between fifteen and twenty in 1 Samuel 17, and he doesn't take over the city of Jerusalem until somewhere around he's almost forty.

I mean, you can put it together. You can read the story and you see that. You know, where he was first king in Hebron, and then he was there for seven years, and then he became king of all of Israel. That's 2 Samuel chapter 5. It says that he was king of all Israel, and then after that, he took over the city, Jerusalem.

So now he's going to take—because this is what the Bible says: David took the head of the Philistine and he brought it to Jerusalem. So what did David do with the head of Goliath? He took it to Jerusalem. Right? I'm not forcing this stuff on you; that's what it says. Do you agree? Do you agree that that's what David did with the head of Goliath—is he cut it off and he took it to Jerusalem? That's what the Bible says.

This is shocking for people. But when we put the picture together, we say, well, it's odd. We know it's not accidental, but we say it is odd, because he has no connection to Jerusalem. So we say, well, actually, he probably didn't go inside the city of Jerusalem because he couldn't. It was controlled by the Jebusites. That's who he took it from in 2 Samuel chapter 5. And it wasn't even his home province; he was from Judah. Jerusalem was from the tribe of Benjamin. So, I mean, there's all these things going on. So what's happening here? What does he do?

The Threshing Floor on Mount Moriah

Well, let's turn to the end of 2 Samuel chapter 24. We have some kind of a picture of things. And so at the end of chapter 24—now this is later, way later in David's life—it says in verse 18:

> [2 Samuel 24:18 NKJV] - And Gad came that day to David and said to him, "Go up, erect an altar to the LORD on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite."

So now this threshing floor would have been outside the gates. We get that. Read the story; that's what we find out, that the threshing floor of Araunah in 2 Samuel—also named Ornan the Jebusite. We know the city was controlled by the Jebusites, that it was outside the gates of the city of Jerusalem. So again, it would fall under the law—remember the law we read in Leviticus chapter 25, that that threshing floor would be outside of the wall of the city. It wasn't inside; it was outside the wall of the city.

And so David comes, and we know this story. It goes through. David wants to make a sacrifice to the Lord. So down in verse—verse 23, it says:

> [2 Samuel 24:23-24 NKJV] - 23 All these, O king, Araunah has given to the king." And Araunah said to the king, "May the LORD your God accept you." 24 Then the king said to Araunah, "No, but I will surely buy it from you for a price; nor will I offer burnt offerings to the LORD my God with that which costs me nothing." So David bought the threshing floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver.

And then it says he built an altar there. So he bought the implements, the oxen, for fifty shekels of silver. That's what it says. So David bought the threshing floor and the oxen.

So now read the parallel passage to that in 1 Chronicles 21. 1 Chronicles 21, it says, verse 25:

> [1 Chronicles 21:25 NKJV] - So David gave Ornan six hundred shekels of gold by weight for the place.

And so people will say, "Oh, see, here's a contradiction in Scripture. The Bible actually contradicts itself. In one passage, it says fifty pieces of silver; in the other, it says six hundred shekels of gold."

Say, no, there's no contradiction! In Samuel, he's buying the oxen, the implements, right? That's what he's purchasing from Araunah/Ornan. But in Chronicles, he's purchasing the place.

So although David, now who's king, he couldn't have owned land from an Israelite in the province of Benjamin because he was from Judah, but he could purchase it from a Jebusite because it wasn't owned by an Israelite. It should have been; Israelites should have taken it over, but they didn't. And so now David purchases not just the implements, as we read in Samuel, but also the place itself.

So he buys that place, and that becomes the place where the threshing floor is on Moriah, the range of Moriah. And that's where the temple will ultimately be built. And so David bought that place. He bought that. He bought it from Ornan the Jebusite.

A Place Called Golgotha

So now turn to the book of Matthew, chapter 27.

And so we have a verse that we read so often, but it's tied to all of these things we're thinking about. Verse 32 says:

> [Matthew 27:32 NKJV] - 32 Now as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name. Him they compelled to bear His cross.

The cross of the Lord Jesus. So this is somewhat of a contrast, or at least a connection back to Genesis chapter 22—you know, the place in Genesis chapter 22. In that story, you remember Abraham made his son Isaac carry the wood. And then we have here the Lord Jesus carrying His cross, and now a man of Cyrene, Simon by name, he's helping. And so it says, when they had come to a place—in Luke's Gospel, it says the place; here it says:

> [Matthew 27:33 NKJV] - 33 And when they had come to a place called Golgotha, that is to say, Place of a Skull,

What is that? Well, you know, some people tell us that it's a skull mountain inside the city of Jerusalem. You say, well, more likely it's connected with Goliath. In fact, John Phillips says Golgotha is a slang of Golgotha, Goliath of Gath. It's a combination. And the skull—what's the skull? It's Goliath's skull!

You know the work of the Lord Jesus, a place called Calvary. We think of it—yes, we think of it as something that happened two thousand years ago. Listen, it's been in the mind of God from a past eternity! And He's been orchestrating and working; it was no afterthought. He's got all these key pictures, stories we love to read. We love to read the story of David and Goliath, because as a standalone story, it's thrilling! But we see that God in His Word, He's emphasizing the blessed work of His beloved Son at the place called Calvary, that all of Scripture is pointing to that place, to that work. It's the most important event in eternity.

Sir Robert Anderson points out that we don't know much about eternity; we don't know much about heaven. We know very little, hardly nothing about a past eternity. He said we know one thing about a past eternity, from Peter: that before the foundation of the world, the Lord Jesus was the Lamb of God appointed before the world was ever made. And then Sir Robert Anderson goes and says we know very little about a future eternity, but we know this:

that for all of eternity, we will be in the presence of the Lord Jesus as the Lamb of God, and as John says in the Revelation, pictured as a Lamb freshly slain.

The Rightful Heir

The importance of Calvary—it's in all of Scripture. And then we could actually make a point, too; we could, if we had time, we could prove that people will sometimes emphasize that the Lord Jesus had nowhere to lay His head, because He said that. He said:

> [Matthew 8:20 NKJV] - And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head."

He didn't have a home, but He should have! He was the rightful heir to the throne of Israel. The threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite, according to redemption law from Leviticus chapter 25, should have been His property. He should have, when He came to Bethlehem, He should have had a house there. He should have had Boaz's house; He was a descendant of Boaz. Boaz had a nice house in Bethlehem. We don't know where it was, but he did. He should have had that. He should have had the house of David. David's family had a house in Bethlehem; the Lord Jesus should have had that.

So it's a wonder of Scripture. We turn to the beginning of Luke, and it says when He came to the city of Bethlehem, the town of Bethlehem—an unwalled city, by the way, not walled, an unwalled city—that they found no place for Him in the inn:

> [Luke 2:7 NKJV] - And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

It was probably His own house. But men eventually found a place for Him, a place called Calvary, and there they crucified Him.

But we're grateful that through that tragic—as we were reminded this morning, that tragic event that the Lord Jesus Christ suffered, He bled, and He died for sin, and on the third day He was resurrected. And as He said in the institution of the Lord's Supper, the third day He died for sin, He said, "Do this until I come." He is coming back! And so we look forward to that day.

Let's close with a word of prayer.

Father, we're grateful for Your Word. And we're just thankful for how all of Scripture points to the person and the work of the Lord Jesus. Father, we want to have eyes to see Him, to be reminded of the grace and mercy and the riches of the Lord Jesus, and how He has, as we were reminded this morning, that He who was rich became poor for us. We're grateful, Father, for that reminder. We're grateful for how Your Scripture, how Your Holy Scriptures point to the Savior. We ask that You would help us in our own lives every day as we read Your Word, that we might see the Lord Jesus, and that we may be changed by beholding. We pray and give thanks in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

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