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**The Old Testament's Contribution to the  
Baptism of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew**

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

### Statement of the Problem

This paper affirms that Christ's deity is firmly established in Scripture. See, for example, Matthew 1:23; Mark 2:5, 12; John 20:28; John 10:30; Acts 20:28; and Colossians 2:9, which suggest the deity of Christ.<sup>1</sup> However, Scripture also confirms Christ's humanity (cf. Is. 9:6-7 & 1 Tim. 2:5). Both Christ's divinity and humanity must be acknowledged if the whole voice of Scripture is to be accepted. However, difficulties may arise when seeking to understand when Jesus is identified within Scripture as deity, as man, or possibly as both. An example of this interpretative problem, understanding how a passage identifies Christ, is the Baptism of Jesus.

There are several interpretations of what the Baptism experience and its various elements signify. Some interpret Christ's Baptism in light of Christ's divinity, meaning that the Baptism revealed Christ's divine Sonship. Louis A. Barbieri claims that the Baptism was a confirmation of the Godhead, as it confirmed to John that Jesus was the "Son of God."<sup>2</sup> He understands "my beloved Son" (Mat. 3:17) to mean Son of God. In this context, Barbieri interprets the Son of God term as a reference to deity.<sup>3</sup>

A second interpretation focuses on Christ's ministry as a man, and asserts that the purpose of the Baptism was for Christ to identify Himself with the sinners for whom He would soon die. Gerhard Barth illustrates this argument as he states that Jesus humbled Himself with

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<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise noted, all biblical passages referenced are in the *King James Version*.

<sup>2</sup> Louis A. Barbieri, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary (NT): Matthew*, edited by John Walvoord and Roy Zuck, (Colorado Springs, CO: David Cook Publishing, 1983), 25.

<sup>3</sup> Further aspects of Barbieri's assertions will be presented below.

sinners and acted in their stead in His baptism.<sup>4</sup> An additional element within this interpretation suggests that Christians should then be baptized, in order to imitate Jesus' example. Barbieri concurs with Barth, arguing that the Messiah must identify with sinners before he can provide righteousness for sinners.<sup>5</sup>

J. Dwight Pentecost reports that baptism by John the Baptist was “a sign of confession and repentance” with forgiveness of sin being in view.<sup>6</sup> Thus, by “the nature of John’s baptism” Jesus was eliminated as an “eligible candidate for such a baptism.”<sup>7</sup> This can be understood due to the fact that Jesus was sinless (1 Pet. 1:19), and was not baptized in order to cleanse Him from any sinful action. Moreover, James D. G. Dunn asserts that the NT never presents Jesus’ Baptism “as a model for Christian baptism.”<sup>8</sup> Therefore, Christ’s Baptism must be viewed in a different light in comparison to the baptism of believers.

This problem can be observed to be an in depth theological issue. The potential key to interpreting the Baptism may lie in the OT references cited at the Baptism (Mat. 3:17). Therefore, there is a need for deeper investigation into the Baptism and its OT references in order to provide a stronger understanding of the meaning and significance of Christ’s Baptism. Although there is some debate over identifying the OT passages, Dunn states that there “is large

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<sup>4</sup> Günther Bornkamm and Gerhard Barth and H. J. Held, *Tradition and Interpretation in Matthew*, trans. by P. Scott, (London, England: SCM Press, 1963), 140.

<sup>5</sup> Barbieri, *Bible Knowledge: Matthew*, 25.

<sup>6</sup> J. Dwight Pentecost, *The Words and Works of Jesus Christ* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing, 1981), 93.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> James Dunn, *Jesus Remembered: Christianity in the Making, volume 1*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 2003), 373.

consensus” that the voice from heaven (Mat. 3:17) pronounced a combination of Psalm 2:7 and Isaiah 42:1.<sup>9</sup>

The main focus of this investigation seeks to answer what was revealed at the Baptism of Jesus. As affirmed in this paper, the Bible clearly confirms Christ’s divinity, but it will be argued that Christ’s Baptism event, which includes His baptism, anointing of the Spirit, and the voice from heaven reveals Christ’s humanity more than His deity.<sup>10</sup>

### Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this project is to perform careful exegetical examination of Matthew’s Baptism passage and relevant OT passages to understand how Christ’s humanity is portrayed at His Baptism. The importance of interpreting Christ’s Baptism in light of OT passages may reveal an interpretation and understanding held by the early Jews and Christians regarding Jesus’ ministry and prophetic fulfillment. Furthermore, Christ’s anointing and walking in the Spirit can inform how modern Christians should also walk and minister in obedience under God’s anointing.

Prior scholarship has addressed this event in Christ’s life, but this project hopes to synthesize that information into a concise record. In addition, some prior works do not address the OT texts adequately. If the heavenly voice is identifying Jesus with the passages of Psalm 2 and Isaiah 42, then misunderstanding or disregarding those contexts can yield a wrong interpretation of Christ’s Baptism, and potentially a wrong view of Jesus Himself. A strong

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 374.

<sup>10</sup> This paper acknowledges that Jesus was not a mere man that was chosen to be the Son of God, but was God manifest in the flesh, and it is as a man that Jesus fulfilled OT prophecy.

interpretation would include observing both OT and NT information in order to discover the meaning of the Text in question. This is a hermeneutical issue, and a proper hermeneutic requires observation of the whole of Scripture, and understanding how Scripture may use other Scriptural passages.

#### Statement of Importance of the Problem

An important element of this study focuses on the humanity of Jesus. A major theme found within Scripture is God's redemption of humanity. As sin destroyed man's relationship with the Creator, reconciliation was imperative. The OT reveals God's plan for salvation over the centuries, instituting sacrifices, the priesthood, and the Tabernacle and Temple. All of these elements look forward to the ministry of the man Jesus. The NT teaches that Jesus fulfilled what the OT spoke of, namely, the need of a mediator, an atoning sacrifice, and someone to inaugurate God's kingdom. All of these OT roles were fulfilled in the man Jesus, and their significance can be observed due to their place in salvation history. Therefore, this investigation and the stress on the humanity of Jesus are essential for gaining a greater appreciation and comprehension for the work of the man Jesus within God's historical plan for salvation.

#### Statement of Position on the Problem

This study will seek to clarify three specific arguments. First, that Christ's Baptism does not attempt to identify Jesus as associating Himself with sinners. Second, Christ's Baptism does not attempt to reveal Christ's divine nature. It should be noted that this second point is not denying Christ's Divinity, but rather stating that it is not revealed in this specific event. Third, that Christ's Baptism does reveal the humanity of Jesus and the ministerial roles He would fulfill



as a man, namely, that Jesus was the Davidic King coming to inaugurate God's Kingdom through first becoming the Servant of Yahweh.

#### Limitations/Delimitations

There will be limitations and boundaries within this study due to its extensive nature. The Baptism of Christ can be observed in each Gospel account (Mat. 3:13-17, Mk. 1:9-11, Lk. 3:21-22, & Jn. 1:29-34); however, Matthew's Gospel will be this project's main focus. The other three accounts will not be completely ignored, but primary attention will be given to Matthew.

In connection to the Gospel of Matthew, this investigation will direct readers to D. A. Carson and Douglas Moo for issues regarding Matthew's authorship and dating.<sup>11</sup> Carson and Moo also write extensively about the so-called Synoptic Problem, which cannot be addressed within this investigation.<sup>12</sup>

For the purpose of this study, it will be accepted that the identity of the Servant of Yahweh in the Book of Isaiah (Is. 42 & 53) is Jesus Christ. Debate over the Servant's identity is largely between Christian and Jewish groups, but the NT confirms the Servant of Isaiah 42 and 53 to be Jesus Christ (Mat. 12:18, Acts 8:32-33, & 1 Pet. 2:22).<sup>13</sup>

The issue of Dispensationalism versus Replacement Theology must also be set aside. Although relevant, due to the question of whether the Messiah will establish God's Kingdom as a Jewish or Christian state, this theological debate would need to be carried out as a sequel study to this current project. Dispensationalism holds to God's promises to the Jews in Scripture (Gen. 15

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<sup>11</sup> D. A. Carson and Douglas Moo, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2005), 140-156.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 77-133.

<sup>13</sup> For further research of the issues regarding the identification of the Servant, see Darrell Bock and Mitch Glaser, *The Gospel According to Isaiah 53: Encountering the Suffering Servant in Jewish and Christian Theology*, (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2012).

& Rom. 11) and how God will create a Jewish Kingdom through David's Son (Is. 2 & 11).<sup>14</sup> However, Replacement Theology asserts that the Church has replaced Israel, and that those Scriptural promises were fulfilled, or will be fulfilled, through the Church.<sup>15</sup>

An additional historic debate within theology is identifying the moment when Jesus was conscious of His divinity and kingship. The study in focus will observe how Jews and Christians viewed Christ's Baptism, and not how Jesus Himself understood the Baptism.

Although the OT has numerous prophecies regarding Christ and His ministry, this study cannot inspect all of them. The passages which will be included in this project will be directly connected to the Baptism of Christ, either through references found during the event or through fulfillment of an OT text. There are also various titles from the OT that are applied to Jesus throughout the NT. However, this paper cannot examine each title that the NT uses, nor can this paper analyze each title within Matthew specifically.<sup>16</sup> The central focus of this investigation, regarding the titles of Jesus, will be the Son of David, Messiah, Son of God, and Servant.

A final important element that must be limited, is the analysis of the Baptism in light of Jesus' ordination into the priesthood. Leviticus 8 depicts the high priest being washed, anointed, and ordained for ministry. Mark Rooker argues that this priestly washing symbolized

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<sup>14</sup> See Charles C. Ryrie, *Dispensationalism Today*, (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1965).

<sup>15</sup> For thorough analysis of Covenant and Replacement theology positions see Guy P. Waters and J. Nicholas Reid and John R. Muether, eds. *Covenant Theology: Biblical, Theological, and Historical Perspectives*, (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2020), accessed February 19, 2022, ProQuest Ebook Central, <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/lib/liberty/reader.action?docID=6362031&ppg=432>.

<sup>16</sup> For example, Son of Man would be of importance for an extension on the study of the Servant. Relevant passages include Mat. 18:11 and 20:27-28. These illustrate the salvation mission of the Son of Man, and reveal the Son of Man taking on the task of the Servant. For thorough analysis of the Son of Man title, see Cullmann, *Christology*, 137-192.

purification, and can be comparable to baptism.<sup>17</sup> Both Leviticus 8:6 and 16:4 connect to Matthew 3 as Jesus was washed, anointed, and prepared for His priestly role. Throughout Hebrews, Jesus is depicted as the perfect high priest (cf. Heb. 7). This additional study would be significant to further the understanding of Christ's earthly ministry, as high priest, but can be set aside for this project.

## **Method**

### Research Method

This is a biblical and theological study. This paper intends to analyze Matthew's Gospel, Davidic Covenant texts, and Servant of Yahweh texts in order to demonstrate that Christ's Baptism primarily focuses on His humanity. Research will include collecting information from multiple biblical passages and historical texts.

Investigation will begin with Matthew's Gospel, which will be the central focus of NT study. Examination of Matthew includes the Gospel's background, themes, and use of OT. Analysis of OT texts will follow Matthew and will help lay the foundation for understanding Matthew's account of the Baptism event. OT texts will concentrate on the Davidic Covenant, Messianic passages, and a Servant of Yahweh passage. Historical sources will be interwoven into the research as well, and will primarily include Second Temple Jewish texts. Secondary sources from modern scholarship will also be considered, in order to provide the interpretations and expertise of scholars throughout history. Finally, the Baptism itself will be examined, and then

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<sup>17</sup> Mark Rooker, *Leviticus: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture*, (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2000), accessed December 4, 2021, ProQuest Ebook Central, <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/lib/liberty/reader.action?docID=729932&ppg=125>, 125.

interpreted in light of the OT texts mentioned above. Through the lens of the OT, this project hopes to clarify and contribute to the meaning and significance of Christ's Baptism.

### Data Collection

Data collection will include online library resources, such as digital books, dissertations, and journal articles. Additional data will be drawn from physical works such as commentaries and other scholarly works. No questionnaires or tests will be used within this research. A questionnaire would be beneficial for future studies desiring to understand how various denominations, age groups, cultures, etc, interpret Christ's Baptism. However, the goal of this current project is biblical-historical analysis, therefore, a mass questionnaire would not be appropriate.

### Data Analysis

Analysis will include research from biblical and historical works. The authors and their interpretations will be compared to the evidence found within Scripture. This project adheres to a strong position on the inerrancy of Scripture, therefore, sources will be assessed based upon how their assertions and evidence aligns with Scriptural evidence.

### **Precedent Research**

#### Matthew 3:13-17

13 Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him.

14 But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?

15 And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer *it to be so* now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him.

16 And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:

17 And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

A description of Matthew's Baptism account is necessary before continuing into a report of precedent research. The event begins with Jesus leaving the region of Galilee, and traveling to the Jordan River (Mat. 3:13). At the river, Jesus sought John the Baptist to baptize Him, but John initially refused (Mat. 3:13-14). Jesus urged John to reconsider, stating, "for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness" (Mat. 3:15). After John baptized Jesus, Jesus came "up straightway out of the water" and the "heavens were opened" and Jesus "saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him" (Mat. 3:16). As the Spirit was descending, a voice from heaven declared, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Mat. 3:17). Thus, ends the event and the chapter. The following chapter, Matthew 4, records Satan tempting Jesus, and Jesus beginning His ministry in Galilee.

### Survey of Scholarship

Twentieth century scholarship has provided much insight into the Baptism. Joachim Jeremias states that at Christ's Baptism the man Jesus was taken into God's service, and equipped and called into His ministry.<sup>18</sup> Dunn confirms the Baptism is where "the primary emphasis lay...about the beginning of Jesus' mission."<sup>19</sup> Although Rudolf Bultmann asserts that this event is a "faith legend," he argues that the Baptism centers around Jesus as Messiah, or

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<sup>18</sup> Joachim Jeremias, *New Testament Theology: The Proclamation of Jesus*, (New York, NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1971), 55.

<sup>19</sup> Dunn, *Jesus Remembered*, 373.

“Son of God.”<sup>20</sup> Specifically observing Mark’s account, Bultmann states, “Son of God” was understood as a title for the “messianic king.”<sup>21</sup>

Leander Keck, after analyzing historical documents and ancient contexts, postulates that the meaning of “descending like a dove” (Mat. 3:16) points to “the Spirit coming with dove-like descent,” not that the Spirit appeared in dove form.<sup>22</sup> However, Stephen Gero, although denying that the Spirit and dove were originally linked together in Jesus traditions, argues that the dove’s presence was to signify Christ’s royal “dignity” to the world.<sup>23</sup> Alexey Somov connects the Spirit and dove symbolism to numerous texts, including Genesis 1:2 and 4Q521. Somov states that the imagery of the Spirit and dove “is connected with the description of how God’s spirit hovers (like a bird) over the righteous.”<sup>24</sup> Furthermore, commenting on Mark’s Baptism account (Mk. 1:10), Somov suggests the Spirit-dove image may symbolize “the beginning of a new creation or the new age of the Messiah” in connection to Genesis 1:2 and 4Q521.<sup>25</sup> Bultmann shows support for the notion of similarities between ancient kingship sagas and the Baptism, where a king is confirmed or chosen by the appearance of a bird sent from the gods.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Rudolf Bultmann, *The History of the Synoptic Tradition*, trans. by John Marsh, (New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1963), 247-248.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 248n.1.

<sup>22</sup> Leander E. Keck, “Spirit and the Dove” *New Testament Studies* 17, no. 1 (October 1970): 41–67, <https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=lsdar&AN=ATLA0000721895&site=ehost-live&scope=site>, 63.

<sup>23</sup> Stephen Gero, “The Spirit as a Dove at the Baptism of Jesus” *Novum Testamentum*, 18, no. 1 (1976) 17-35, [https://www-jstor-org.ezproxy.liberty.edu/stable/1560595?origin=crossref&seq=1#metadata\\_info\\_tab\\_contents](https://www-jstor-org.ezproxy.liberty.edu/stable/1560595?origin=crossref&seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents), 19.

<sup>24</sup> Alexey Somov, “The Dove in the Story of Jesus’ Baptism: Early Christian Interpretation of a Jewish Image” *The Bible Translator*, 69, no. 2 (August 2018): 240–51. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2051677018778740>, 242.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 250.

<sup>26</sup> Bultmann, *The History*, 248.

In contrast to kingship interpretations mentioned above, Joachim Jeremias and Jeffrey Gibbs oppose the concept of Christ's Baptism revealing His kingship. Gibbs argues that the Baptism reveals Jesus as "Servant and Israel" and not the Davidic king.<sup>27</sup> Jeremias claims the connection of Son and kingship to be a later development within Christology.<sup>28</sup> However, Dunn asserts that kingship is an important aspect of the Baptism.<sup>29</sup> As stated above, Dunn articulates the consensus view, that the voice (Mat. 3:17) combines Psalm 2:7 and Isaiah 42:1.<sup>30</sup> These passages and their contexts refer to kingship and servanthood.

David Hill, focusing on Matthew's use of Isaiah and the Servant of God, argues for the "Spirit-endowment" of Matthew 3:16-17, 12:18, and 17:5 to refer "primarily to Servanthood."<sup>31</sup> He contends that the concept of Jesus as Servant lays the foundation for other Christological titles.<sup>32</sup> Therefore, the image would be Jesus fulfilling the role of the obedient Servant and then being exalted. Oscar Cullmann, making note of John's Gospel, states that the author understood the use of Isaiah 42:1 to be addressed to the Servant of Yahweh, and that the "calling of Jesus at his baptism was a summons to fulfill the task" of the Servant.<sup>33</sup> Cullmann contends the phrase

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<sup>27</sup> Jeffrey A. Gibbs, "Israel Standing with Israel: The Baptism of Jesus in Matthew's Gospel (Matt 3:13-17)" *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 64, no. 3 (07, 2002): 511-26, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fscholarly-journals%2Fisrael-standing-with-baptism-jesus-matthews%2Fdocview%2F220235036%2Fse-2%3Faccountid%3D12085>, 512.

<sup>28</sup> Jeremias, *New Testament Theology*, 54-55.

<sup>29</sup> Dunn, *Baptism in the Holy Spirit*, (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1970), 27, and *Jesus Remembered*, 373.

<sup>30</sup> Dunn, *Jesus Remembered*, 374.

<sup>31</sup> David Hill, "Son and Servant: An Essay on Matthean Christology" *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 2, no. 6 (November 1979): 2-16, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0142064X7900200601>, 7.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 6 and 15.

<sup>33</sup> Oscar Cullmann, *The Christology of the New Testament*, trans. by Shirley Guthrie & Charles Hall, (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1959), 73.

“fulfil all righteousness” (Mat. 3:15) and the heavenly voice (Mat. 3:17) to convey Christ being “baptized in view of his death,” as Jesus took on “himself the sins” of Israel and all mankind.<sup>34</sup>

### Conclusion of Chapter One

Chapter one of this study has provided the purpose of the goal at hand; to contribute to the understanding of Christ’s Baptism and His humanity, through analyzing OT texts and the Gospel of Matthew. Further information was given regarding the limitations, method, and precedent research of the study. Chapter two will analyze the background of the relevant biblical passages.

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 67.



## Chapter 2: Biblical Background

### Gospel of Matthew

Matthew is the primary Gospel of study within this project. By examining the Gospel's themes, Christological titles, and use of the OT, a foundation will be laid for the context of the Baptism of Jesus. This will assist the investigation by understanding the historical and theological context of the Baptism event, and how Matthew used the OT to show his understanding of the identity of Jesus.

### Themes and Background of Gospel

R. V. G. Tasker summarizes Matthew in one sentence stating, "Jesus is the Messiah, and in Him Jewish prophecy is fulfilled."<sup>35</sup> This concept can be observed in the first verse of Matthew, as the Gospel begins with the author connecting Jesus to both Abraham and David (Mat. 1:1). Matthew portrays Jesus as the long-awaited kingly figure, the Messiah, who would bring about God's kingdom. Tasker further notes that the best single word to describe Matthew is "royal," as the concepts of Messiah and God's kingdom are central to the Book.<sup>36</sup> For example, Jesus is depicted as a descendent of David's kingly line (Mat. 1), the infant Jesus revealed as the genuine Davidic king, in contrast to King Herod (Mat. 2), and the first sermon words of John the Baptist and Jesus commanding repentance, because "the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Mat. 3:2 & 4:17). Even one of Satan's temptations specifically focused on kingship (Mat. 4:8-9).

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<sup>35</sup> R. V. G. Tasker, *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries: Matthew*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1961), 18.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 19-20.

R. T. France observes Matthew’s “extensive” prologue and that Matthew supplies rich “material for scripturally-based meditation on the origin and nature of the Messiah.”<sup>37</sup> One aspect of the identity of the Messiah is the use of the term Son of David. Matthew 1:1 clearly identifies Jesus as the “Son of David,” and evidence is set forth throughout the rest of the Gospel to reveal the significance of this declaration. Craig Blomberg notes that Matthew’s use of the term Son of David is one of the “most distinctive titles” in the Book.<sup>38</sup> According to David L. Turner, Matthew uses the title more than any other NT work.<sup>39</sup> There are ten Son of David references in Matthew, nine of which are directed at Jesus. After the Gospel’s declaration in 1:1, the first acknowledgement of Jesus being the Son of David comes from two blind men as they seek Jesus to heal them (Mat. 9:27). According to D. A. Carson, the Son of David title often comes from the “lips of the needy and the ill, who anticipate relief from him who will bring in the Messianic Age.”<sup>40</sup>

The Son of David title does not merely express descent from King David, although descent is significant. It is a royal phrase, connecting King David’s descendants to the OT concept of a blessed Davidic dynasty that would rule Israel. In this regard, asserts Blomberg, the Son of David term is “synonymous” with the terms “Christ and King of the Jews.”<sup>41</sup> The Greek

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<sup>37</sup> R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2007), accessed February 12, 2022, ProQuest Ebook Central, <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/lib/liberty/detail.action?docID=4860095>, 70.

<sup>38</sup> Craig L. Blomberg, *Matthew: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture*, (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 1992), accessed February 13, 2022, ProQuest Ebook Central, <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/lib/liberty/reader.action?docID=680791&ppg=18>, 23.

<sup>39</sup> David L. Turner, *Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament: Matthew*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008), ProQuest Ebook Central, <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/lib/liberty/reader.action?docID=3117026&ppg=1>, 33.

<sup>40</sup> D. A. Carson, *The Expositors Bible Commentary: Matthew*, ed. by Frank E. Gaebelein, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1992), 26.

<sup>41</sup> Blomberg, *Matthew*, 23.

Χριστός (Christos) means “anointed one,” and therefore, is the equivalent to the Hebrew term Messiah. Donald J. Versepunt states, “Matthew has from the beginning to the end of his Gospel thrust the image of Jesus as the royal Davidic Messiah to the forefront.”<sup>42</sup>

According to Donald A. Hagner, Matthew includes more than twice as many OT quotes compared to the other Gospels.<sup>43</sup> In addition, Matthew uses numerous OT allusions which are difficult to number. Hagner explains Matthew’s “heavy dependence” on the OT as reflecting “Matthew’s interest in the gospel of the kingdom as the fulfillment of the OT expectation.”<sup>44</sup> This is in reference to the aforementioned Messianic Age.

More will be examined below in regard to Matthew’s use of the OT, but Matthew 11 provides an illustration of Messianic expectation and Matthew’s OT dependency. John the Baptist is in prison at the beginning of this passage (Mat. 11:2), and sends two of his disciples to inquire of Jesus of His identity. John had heard of the works of “Christ” (Mat. 11:2) and asks if Jesus was “he that should come” (Mat. 11:3). Jesus responded to this question by making statements that echo Isaiah (Is. 35:5-6 & 61:1), that the “blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them” (Mat. 11:5). France comments that Isaiah 35:5-6 references the “coming of God himself to judge and save,” and Isaiah 61:1 records the “manifesto of the one anointed by God to proclaim his salvation.”<sup>45</sup> Isaiah 35 depicts the healing of the blind, deaf,

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<sup>42</sup> Donald J. Versepunt, “The Role and Meaning of the ‘Son of God’ Title in Matthew’s Gospel.” *New Testament Studies* 33, no. 4 (October 1987): 532–56. <https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=lsdar&AN=ATLA0000979242&site=ehost-live&scope=site>, 536.

<sup>43</sup> Donald A. Hagner, *Word Biblical Commentary: Matthew 1-13, Volume 33A*, (Grand Rapids: HarperCollins Christian Publishing, 2015), accessed November 13, 2021, ProQuest Ebook Central, <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/lib/liberty/detail.action?docID=5608050>, liv.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> France, *Matthew*, 321.

lame, and dumb as a sign of the coming of God and the peace of His reign in Zion (cf. Is. 11). Therefore, by using the OT, Matthew is revealing that the Messianic Age has now begun through the work of Jesus Christ. Looking forward in this paper, this royal messianic context informs the Baptism. At Christ's Baptism, it will be observed, that Jesus is declared to be the messianic figure, and that this event is the beginning of the Messianic Age.

An additional title used in Matthew is the Son of God.<sup>46</sup> Son of God is often spoken in Matthew by those in opposition to Christ, as His adversaries either acknowledge or question whether or not Jesus is the Son of God. For example, Satan (Mat. 4:3), demons (Mat. 8:29), and Caiaphas (Mat. 26:63) all seek Jesus to respond to this title. Son of God is also used of the disciples in their "worship" of Jesus (Mat. 14:33), Peter's confession (Mat. 16:16), and the acknowledgement of the identity of Jesus by the Roman centurion (Mat. 27:54).

Jack Kingsbury asserts the significance of the Son of God term within Matthew, asserting that the phrase proves "to be the central Christological title of the first Gospel."<sup>47</sup> Although Kingsbury's claim has undergone scrutiny,<sup>48</sup> it can be recognized that Matthew does give great weight to the title. In regard to the Baptism, the voice declares Jesus to be "my beloved Son" (Mat. 3:17). Therefore, at the Baptism Jesus is declared to be the Son of God.<sup>49</sup> France labels the Baptism event as, "The Messiah Revealed as the Son of God" and articulates this as a

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<sup>46</sup> This paper is not focused on an entire study of how Christological titles are used throughout the Bible. The primary focus is on Matthew's Gospel and how Matthew used various titles. However, it is noteworthy that, although more work would need to be done on the Baptism and Resurrection, Matthew and Paul (Rom. 1:3-4) acknowledge Jesus as the Son of David according to His birth, and also understood Jesus to be declared as the Son of God.

<sup>47</sup> Jack Dean Kingsbury, "The Title 'Son of God' in Matthew's Gospel," *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 5, no. 1 (February 1975): 3-31, <https://doi.org/10.1177/014610797500500101>, 5.

<sup>48</sup> See David Hill, *Son and Servant: An Essay on Matthean Christology*.

<sup>49</sup> Kingsbury, *Son of God*, 5.

“rounded portrayal of the Messiah as not only Son of David but also Son of God.”<sup>50</sup> France admits that the exact title Son of God is not used in Matthew 1-3. However, Matthew’s explanation of the “supernatural conception of Jesus,” the “scriptural title ‘God with us,’” and the “calling” of God’s “son” out of Egypt (Mat. 2:15), all indicate that the “Messiah is much more than only a ‘son of David.’”<sup>51</sup> Matthew 3:17, France continues, is where Jesus will be explicitly “declared to be God’s Son.”<sup>52</sup>

For Kingsbury, Son of God carries the meaning of one’s origin being in God (Mat. 1:20), therefore, the term expresses divinity.<sup>53</sup> However, analysis of the Son of God title becomes complex as examination of its historical and theological use reveals. It may be possible for the term Son of God to carry meaning of both divinity and humanity. A survey of Matthew’s use of Son of God, specifically in regard to the title’s use at the Baptism of Jesus, is inconclusive on its own, therefore, it is necessary to observe how the title is used in the OT. This will be done in the sections following Matthew’s Gospel.

Dunn seeks to understand the phrase from its “context of meaning,” which observes how the title was used throughout its history.<sup>54</sup> More will be examined below, regarding the historical and theological uses of the term, but for present purposes we can note that Dunn desires to understand the title in its first century context. He states the importance of “shutting out the voices of early Fathers, Councils and dogmaticians” in hopes of analyzing and understanding the

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<sup>50</sup> France, *Matthew*, 86 and 137.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 99.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>53</sup> Kingsbury, *The Title ‘Son of God’*, 10.

<sup>54</sup> James D. G. Dunn, *Christology in the Making: A New Testament Inquiry into the Origins of the Doctrine of the Incarnation*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 1989), 13.

earliest voices and their use of the Son of God.<sup>55</sup> Verseput concurs, also speaking of the “context of meaning,” and stating, “Given the apparent ‘Jewishness’ of the composition, it is to these roots that we must turn first.”<sup>56</sup>

Dunn points out that the phrase Son of God was used in the OT and Qumran community for the “expected royal Messiah.”<sup>57</sup> One document, reports Dunn, is 4QpsDan A, which describes an individual being hailed as a mighty king, the Son of God, and the “Son of the most High.”<sup>58</sup> Kenneth Pomykala also makes note of 4QFlorilegium 1:10-13 (4Q174), which dates to near the first century B. C., and is an interpretation of the Davidic “dynastic oracle” (2 Samuel 7).<sup>59</sup> Portions of the document quote from 2 Samuel 7:11-14 but omit portions of the OT text, such as the Godly king coming from David’s own body, and that the offspring would “build a temple for God’s name.”<sup>60</sup> One key element that remains, as observed by Craig Keener, is that the messianic figure would be God’s son.<sup>61</sup> Pomykala asserts that the concern of the author of 4Q174 is focused on God establishing David’s house, “raising up David’s seed” or a Davidic figure to rule over an eternal kingdom, and “that the Lord will be a father to him and he a son to

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid., 13-14.

<sup>56</sup> Verseput, *Role and Meaning*, 537.

<sup>57</sup> Dunn, *Jesus Remembered*, 709.

<sup>58</sup> Dunn, *Christology*, 15-16.

<sup>59</sup> Kenneth Pomykala, *The Davidic Dynasty Tradition in Early Judaism: Its History and Significance for Messianism*, (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1995), 191-192.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 194. The absence of the king coming from David himself may be an attempt to allow for the coming of a Davidic king without being directly related to David. The historical context of the first century B. C. shows that power was not with the Davidic dynasty but with Roman power. Therefore, a Jewish king was needed to reestablish the Jewish kingdom, but allowance must be made in case that king was not from the Davidic line. Matthew combats this by showing that Jesus was not only a Davidic figure, but truly from the Davidic line.

<sup>61</sup> Craig S. Keener, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament*, (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2014), ProQuest Ebook Central, <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/liberty/detail.action?docID=3316816>, 86.

the Lord.”<sup>62</sup> Next, the author combines the Davidic figure with the concept of a priestly figure, and how this messianic priest would “save Israel,” which may indicate salvation from Israel’s enemies.<sup>63</sup>

Peter’s confession, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God,” (Mat. 16:16) incorporates both the titles Christ and Son of God (cf. Lk. 4:41, Jn. 1:49, 11:27, & 20:31). This does not necessarily mean that the terms are synonymous, yet Keener sees it as natural for these titles to be connected by Matthew, as “David’s royal line was adopted by God,” therefore the Messiah would also be “called God’s Son,” which was observed by “a few Jewish interpreters in this period,” in reference to 4Q174.<sup>64</sup> Also, as Matthew has showed that Jesus was birthed through the work of the Spirit (Mat. 1:20), Peter’s use of “Son of the living God” may be an acknowledgement of Christ’s divine identity. This may illustrate that the term Son of God may carry elements of both divinity and humanity.

In addition, Dunn notes that in OT and historical Jewish texts a son or sons of God were those with special relation or favor from God, someone who “reflected God’s character” and “who fully did God’s will” (cf. 2 Sam. 7:14 & Sir. 4:10).<sup>65</sup> Verseput reports the “frequent Jewish usage of the Son of God” as it is “applied to individuals” shows it is “one’s faithfulness to the will of God who elicits the designation of ‘son’, and that faithfulness in turn is rewarded by the loving response of the Father in heaven.”<sup>66</sup> Jewish texts that use the Son of God term are

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<sup>62</sup> Pomykala, *The Davidic Dynasty*, 194.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 196.

<sup>64</sup> Keener, *Bible Background*, 86.

<sup>65</sup> Dunn, *Jesus Remembered*, 711.

<sup>66</sup> Verseput, *Role and Meaning*, 538.

connected to the righteous man (Wisd. 2.16, 18; 5.5, Ps. Sol 13.8, & Sir 4.10), “the one blessed by God” (Joseph and Asenath 6.3, 5, 13.10, & 21.3), or one endowed with the Spirit (Honi, *m. Taan* 3.8, Hanina ben Dosa, *b. Ta'an* 24b).<sup>67</sup>

Dunn draws the conclusion that Son of God was not used in the NT for Christ’s divinity.<sup>68</sup> Opposing this viewpoint, Verseput concludes that Matthew’s use of Son of God is both divine and messianic.<sup>69</sup> Verseput argues that Matthew 22:43-46 denotes Christ’s sonship and reveals that “the son of David is also the Son of God.”<sup>70</sup> The aforementioned Matthew 16:16 makes a similar case. Furthermore, Jesus’ vineyard parable (Mat. 21:33-39) bears an unmistakable point, “the rejected Son of David was the divinely sent Son of God.”<sup>71</sup> Again, Matthew also reveals divine sonship through the work of the Holy Spirit (Mat. 1:20).

Matthew’s overall use of Son of God, according to Verseput, is that “Jesus was the Davidic Messiah, who as God’s Son was the perfect expression of the will of his Father even unto the cross.”<sup>72</sup> This must be viewed in the context of “Jesus as the obedient Son of God” who fulfilled “the messianic mission.” Therefore, according to Douglas D. Scott, “Jesus is the Son of God by position” (2 Sam. 7:14 & Mat. 1:1), but also Son of God in divinity (Mat. 1:18, 20, & Lk. 1:35).<sup>73</sup> Edmund J. Fortman comments on Jesus being not only the Son of God, but the

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<sup>67</sup> Ibid., and see Dunn, *Jesus Remembered*, 710-11.

<sup>68</sup> Dunn, *Christology*, 22, 32, 46, 55-56, and 64.

<sup>69</sup> Verseput, *Role and Meaning*, 541-42 and 546.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., 546.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., 545.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., 549.

<sup>73</sup> Douglas D. Scott and Leo Percer, *Is Jesus of Nazareth the Predicted Messiah?: a Historical-Evidential Approach to Specific Old Testament Messianic Prophecies and Their New Testament Fulfillments*, (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2018), 179.



unique Son of God.<sup>74</sup> Other sons of God were human or angelic, but Jesus was the unique Son of God in His humanity and divinity (cf. Jn. 1:12 & 3:16).

Further exploration of the Son of God will be conducted below, specifically within the OT, but it can be observed that there are aspects of how the term Son of God may relate to Jesus, both within His human ministry and His divinity. This inquiry seeks to find which aspects are more accurately attested to at the Baptism, in that the voice declared Jesus as God's Son (Mat. 3:17).

### **Matthew's Use of the OT**

As noted above, Matthew relies on the OT to convey the work and mission of Jesus. Tasker understands Matthew's Gospel as revealing Christianity, not as a new religious invention, but the "true consummation of the religion of Israel as embodied in the sacred records of the Old Testament."<sup>75</sup> Blomberg concurs, stating, "Virtually every major theological emphasis of Matthew is reinforced with Old Testament support."<sup>76</sup> Furthermore, Matthew, in comparison to the other Gospel accounts, has the "the greatest number of links with Judaism and the Old Testament."<sup>77</sup> The significance of this detail lies upon the fact that Matthew uses the OT in varied ways. The following research will be noteworthy in assessing the Baptism, as it is thought that Matthew recorded the voice from heaven referencing two OT passages, yet without formally introducing the two references as originating from the OT.

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<sup>74</sup> Edmund J. Fortman, *The Triune God*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1972), 11.

<sup>75</sup> Tasker, *Matthew*, 18.

<sup>76</sup> Blomberg, Craig L. *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, ed. by G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson, (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), accessed February 13, 2022, ProQuest Ebook Central, <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/lib/liberty/reader.action?docID=3117030&ppg=30>, 1.

<sup>77</sup> Blomberg, *Matthew*, 18.

The number of explicit OT quotations in Matthew ranges from fifty to sixty. Blomberg argues for “approximately fifty-five references,” which “prove close enough in wording” to be labeled as “quotations.”<sup>78</sup> There are nearly sixty-five OT quotations in the other three Gospels combined.<sup>79</sup> In addition to formal quotations, Matthew carries many OT allusions, many of which can be difficult to identify. The explanation for difficulty is that an allusion usually does not carry an OT reference point, such as the name of a prophet. The allusion may only be a short phrase which may connect to one or multiple OT passages.<sup>80</sup> Blomberg notes that Matthew’s entire Gospel contains “numerous allusions and echoes” to the OT, “roughly twice as often as in Mark, Luke, or John.”<sup>81</sup> In studying OT allusions, one may be assisted by observing the OT context of the possible allusion and how it relates to the passage of examination within Matthew. This is one method that will be used below, as possible OT references will be linked to the Baptism.

There are many variations of how Matthew introduces the OT, therefore, one specific method cannot be exclusively identified. Carson acknowledges this by stating, “The ways the events surrounding Jesus are said to fulfill the OT varies enormously and cannot be reduced to a single label.”<sup>82</sup> This reveals the diversity and complexity of understanding how Matthew uses quotations and allusions throughout his Gospel. Again, the significance of this concept connects

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<sup>78</sup> Blomberg, *New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, 1.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> For a list and explanation of OT quotes, allusions, and echos see Jeannine K. Brown, *Teach the Text: Matthew*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2015), accessed March 2, 2022, ProQuest Ebook Central. <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/lib/liberty/detail.action?docID=3425707>, 19.

<sup>81</sup> Blomberg, *New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, 1.

<sup>82</sup> Carson, *Matthew*, 28.

to the Baptism as Matthew withholds a formal OT quotation, but provides OT allusions throughout the Baptism event.

There are numerous examples to illustrate Matthew's use of the OT. He introduces OT references by attributing the quote to "the prophet" (Mat. 1:22, 2:5, 3:15, etc). At times Matthew will identify a prophet by name, such as Jeremiah the prophet (Mat. 2:17), or "the prophet Esaias" (Mat. 3:3, 4:14, 8:17, etc). Jesus also speaks of OT individuals and their OT contexts, such as David (Mat. 12:3-4), Solomon (Mat. 12:42), Jonah (Mat. 12:39-41), and Daniel (Mat. 24:15). Jesus specifically attributes a quote from Psalm 110:1 to David (Mat. 22:43-45).

Individuals within the Gospel will quote or allude to the OT by beginning with the phrase, "it is written" followed by the OT passage. Jesus uses this method referring to Deuteronomy 8:3 (Mat. 4:4), Satan uses Psalm 91:11-12 (Mat. 4:6), and Jesus again in quoting Malachi 3:1 (Mat. 11:10). Jesus also cites Mosaic Law by stating "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time" (Mat. 5:21) and "It hath been said" (Mat. 5:31).

There are also cases of implicit OT references, without the mention of an OT author, made by Jesus and others throughout the Gospel. For example, Matthew 1:1 does not present an OT quotation, but does present Jesus as being the descendent of both Abraham and David. Blomberg notes that this may allude to the fulfillment of both Genesis 12:1-3 and 2 Samuel 7:11b-16.<sup>83</sup> Turner states that this passage appears to also draw on other OT references (Ps. 91, Jer. 23:5, 33:15).<sup>84</sup> Hagner describes Matthew 1 and Jesus' ancestry as the author grounding "his narrative upon several OT quotations and provides a strong sense of fulfillment."<sup>85</sup> Next, Jesus

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<sup>83</sup> Blomberg, *New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, 3.

<sup>84</sup> Turner, *Matthew*, 57.

<sup>85</sup> Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, 2.

commands the Pharisees to “go ye and learn what *that* meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice” (Mat. 9:13, 12:7), which belongs to Hosea 6:6 but without directly mentioning the prophet by name. In addition, the disciples reference Malachi 4:5 by asking, “Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come?” (Mat. 17:10).<sup>86</sup>

Some texts of Matthew may carry potential for multiple OT allusions. Matthew 20:28, according to Blomberg, “may echo Exod. 30:12 and/or Ps. 49:7–9 and probably alludes to the fourth Servant Song of Isaiah” (Is. 53).<sup>87</sup> Hagner notes Jesus’ reliance on the Shema (Deu. 6:4-5) as He responds to a lawyer’s question (Mat. 22:35-37), but Jesus’ response may also be an “elaboration on the first commandment of the Decalogue” (Ex. 20:3).<sup>88</sup>

Furthermore, Blomberg observes that Matthew 26:28 “continues important Passover allusions.”<sup>89</sup> In addition to images from Exodus, Jeremiah 31 may also be in view. Jesus speaks of the “new testament” which may be “alluding to Jeremiah’s ‘new covenant’ (Jer. 31:31).”<sup>90</sup>

Also, while on the cross, Jesus cries out, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” (Mat. 27:46). According to France, these words were “taken directly from the opening of Psalm 22,” which Matthew has used for additional allusions (cf. 27:35– 36, 39, 43).<sup>91</sup> Psalm 22 denotes the “spiritual desolation of a man” who must continue to keep faith in God, despite

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<sup>86</sup> Blomberg, *New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, 56.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 62.

<sup>88</sup> Donald Hagner, *Word Biblical Commentary: Matthew 14-28, Volume 33B*, (Grand Rapids: HarperCollins Christian Publishing, 2015), accessed February 4, 2022, ProQuest Ebook Central, <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/lib/liberty/detail.action?docID=5607809>, 647.

<sup>89</sup> Blomberg, *New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, 90.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>91</sup> France, *Matthew*, 713.

enemy hostilities.<sup>92</sup> The Psalm ends in “joyful thanksgiving for deliverance.”<sup>93</sup> Hagner argues that through quoting this Psalm it can be “clearly” observed that Jesus “feels abandoned.”<sup>94</sup> There may also be elements of trust embedded into the use of Psalm 22 while on the cross, as the Psalm concludes with God’s vindication of the former abandoned man. This quotation is significant due to the lack of identifying the OT reference, although Psalm 22:18 is indicated in Matthew 27:35.

Another aspect of Matthew’s inclusion of OT texts is how Matthew understands the OT to be fulfilled through events in the life of Jesus. Hagner explains that Matthew made use of a “specialized introductory formula containing the verb πληροῦν,” which means “fulfill.”<sup>95</sup> Blomberg notes that Matthew employs the word “fulfilled” a total of twelve times.<sup>96</sup> Examples of this method include the description of the fulfillment of the virgin giving birth (Mat. 1:22 & Is. 7:14), the weeping of Rachel for her children (Mat. 2:17 & Jer. 31:15), and Jesus riding the donkey into Jerusalem (Mat. 21:4 & Zech. 9:9). Matthew uses the fulfillment method in regard to Jesus (Mat. 2:15) and for others (Mat. 2:17-18). Therefore, the fulfillment method is used in connection to other individuals and not limited to Jesus Himself.

There is debate regarding how to interpret Matthew’s employment of “fulfilled.” Some scholars assert that Matthew uses OT proof texts to prove a point. This may include ignoring the context of the OT passage or relying on other ancient non-biblical sources in order to prove his

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid., 714.

<sup>94</sup> Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, 844.

<sup>95</sup> Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, liv.

<sup>96</sup> Blomberg, *New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, 1.

point.<sup>97</sup> Examples of Matthew supposedly interpreting the OT out of context can be found in Matthew 2:15 (Hos. 11:1) and Matthew 27:9-10 (Jer. 32:6-9 & Zech. 11:12-13).

However, Turner combats Matthew's twisting of contexts by stating that "fulfillment in Matthew has as much to do with historical patterns as with prophetic predictions."<sup>98</sup> Historical events are understood by Matthew as God working out His salvation plan.<sup>99</sup> France further contends that Matthew does not only see "the explicitly predictive portions of the OT" as being fulfilled in Jesus, "but also its historical characters, its narratives and its cultic patterns, even the law itself (5:17; 11:13)."<sup>100</sup>

Jeannine K. Brown concurs, stating that "through the genealogy" Matthew reveals how "Jesus completes Israel's story," and further shows that "Jesus is the fulfillment of Israel's Scriptures."<sup>101</sup> In order to understand Matthew's portrayal of Jesus, continues Brown, one must "follow the trail from Matthew back to the Old Testament via his frequent citations and allusions."<sup>102</sup> Furthermore, Brown suggests that in observing the connection between Jesus and Israel, one "would do well to follow Matthew's lead and see the messianic importance of various Old Testament roles and figures."<sup>103</sup> Carson explains this concept as typological, or a fulfillment of a historical-salvation pattern. He states that "Jesus, it is understood, must in some ways

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<sup>97</sup> See Peter Enns in *Three Views on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, eds. Kenneth Berding and Jonathan Lunde, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2008) and S. Vernon McCasland, "Matthew Twists the Scriptures." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 80, no. 2 (1961): 143–48, <https://doi.org/10.2307/3264204>.

<sup>98</sup> Turner, *Matthew*, 22.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> France, *Matthew*, 75.

<sup>101</sup> Brown, *Matthew*, 19.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

recapitulate the experience of Israel or of David.”<sup>104</sup> However, “typology varies considerably” and is debated among scholars, yet for Matthew, it remains that the “OT was preparing the way for Christ.”<sup>105</sup> Osborne confirms Matthew as depicting Jesus as having “completed or ‘filled up’ the meaning of the OT.”<sup>106</sup> See Turner and France for further examination of Matthew’s fulfillment and typological methods.<sup>107</sup>

While Matthew reveals OT fulfillment through the πληρῶν formula, he does not use this method exclusively when revealing OT fulfillment. For example, the passage regarding the birth of Jesus concludes with confirmation that His birth was a fulfillment of “Emmanuel” (Mat. 1:22-23) from Isaiah 7. However, Matthew merely states the fact that Jesus was “the son of David, the son of Abraham” (Mat. 1:1) without any fulfillment reference. Nor does Matthew speak specifically of Jesus fulfilling the Abrahamic or Davidic covenants.

The illustration of Matthew 11:5, discussed above, reveals Jesus using Isaiah 35 to provide OT evidence for His identity, but without a direct reference or a “that it might be fulfilled” statement.<sup>108</sup> Furthermore, Jesus asserts that John the Baptist is “of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee” (Mat. 11:10), which is a reference to Malachi 3:1, but without the fulfillment formula (cf. Mat. 17:12-13).<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> Carson, *Matthew*, 28.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

<sup>106</sup> Grant R. Osborne, *Exegetical Commentary on the NT: Matthew*, (Grand Rapids, MI: HarperCollins Christian Publishing, 2010), accessed March 2, 2022, ProQuest Ebook Central, <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/lib/liberty/reader.action?docID=5397370&ppg=1>, 36.

<sup>107</sup> Turner, *Matthew*, 22-25 and France, *Matthew*, 75-77.

<sup>108</sup> See Scott, *Is Jesus of Nazareth*, 160.

<sup>109</sup> Blomberg, *New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, 38-39 and 56.

It can thus be observed how Matthew uses the OT in various methods, and does not hold to a single process for introducing or using OT passages or fulfillments. France asserts that “even without direct verbal allusion,” Matthew’s use of the OT and his depiction of Jesus, “is designed to bring to mind OT people, events or institutions which may serve as models for understanding the continuity of God’s purpose” through the work and ministry of Jesus.<sup>110</sup>

The point of all this, then, for the purpose of the argument is that the OT references at the Baptism, which may be defined as OT allusions without exact indicators, are not out of the ordinary for Matthew. Blomberg affirms that there are two OT allusions at Jesus’ Baptism, a conjunction of Psalm 2:7 and Isaiah 42:1.<sup>111</sup> These two combinations identify Jesus in “his roles as messianic king and Suffering Servant.”<sup>112</sup> This would remove any limitations placed upon Matthew and his OT usage, and reveal the probability of Matthew using the two OT passages in his Baptism account.

Through examining Matthew’s themes it has been established that Matthew focuses on Jesus as the fulfillment of OT Scripture and upon His royal status. This is also confirmed through the Christological titles within the Gospel, such as the Son of David, Christ, and Son of God. Finally, Matthew’s use of the OT varies, but consistently asserts that Jesus and the events surrounding His life completed what the OT pointed to.

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<sup>110</sup> France, *Matthew*, 75.

<sup>111</sup> Blomberg, *New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, 14.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, 14 and 55.



## OT Background of the Spirit and the Dove in the Baptism Narrative

Investigation of the relevant OT passages is necessary before drawing conclusions about Christ's Baptism. The texts in question will focus on Son of God terminology, the Davidic Covenant, the Messiah, and the Servant. This analysis will allow for clearer historical and theological contextual understanding of the Baptism event.

### **Son(s) of God terminology in OT and ANE**

Son of God terminology was discussed at length in regard to Matthew's Gospel, but it is necessary to direct further exploration towards the OT and other historical texts. Both in the OT and NT, God is portrayed as a father figure (Deu. 32:19, Ps. 103:13, Isa. 1:2, Mal. 2:10, Lk. 3:38, & Rom. 8:15). Dunn states that the Son of God designation was not "such an exclusive title" within the pre-Christian era, but was used in multiple ways within the OT and ancient world.<sup>113</sup> Explicit examples of the son(s) of God are displayed in various ways in the OT, some of which are difficult to define (cf. Gen. 6:4).<sup>114</sup> Clear identities of the son or sons of God are angels (Job 1:6 & 38:7), the Israelites (Ex. 4:22 & Hos. 11:1), and the king (2 Sam. 7:14, 1 Chron. 28:6, Ps. 2:7 & 89:26).<sup>115</sup>

Cullmann understands the OT's use of the Son of God in three categories. He states that the nation of Israel, kings, and those called with a "special commission from God" are identified as "Son of God" at various times throughout the OT.<sup>116</sup> Within each of these three examples,

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<sup>113</sup> Dunn, *Jesus Remembered*, 709.

<sup>114</sup> For a brief summary of the debate over Gen. 6 and the identity of the sons of God therein, see John E. Hartley, *Genesis*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1995), accessed March 27, 2022, ProQuest Ebook Central, <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/lib/liberty/reader.action?docID=5249380&ppg=84>, 83-84.

<sup>115</sup> See Dunn, *Christology*, 15-16 for further examination of historical Jewish texts.

<sup>116</sup> Cullmann, *Christology*, 272-73.

Cullmann points out, God can be seen as choosing and commissioning a particular Son of God to “participate in divine work,” which must be accomplished through “strict *obedience* to God.”<sup>117</sup>

In regard to the Israelite nation, Douglas Stuart argues that Hosea 11:1 should be read through the lens of Exodus 4:22.<sup>118</sup> Both passages understand the nation of Israel’s adoption by God through “the liberation from Egypt,” focusing on the “very first encounter of Yahweh with his infant nation.”<sup>119</sup> This sonship of Israel carries on throughout the Pentateuch and the rest of the OT (Deu. 14:1, 32:6, Jer. 31:20, & Mal. 2:10). Hosea and God calling His son, according to Stuart, bears imagery of covenant language from Deuteronomy, and also depicts “divine guidance and protection.”<sup>120</sup> This connects together all the concepts of covenant relationship, sonship, and divine protection. Hosea continues the passage revealing Israel to be a rebellious son, disregarding God’s call and disobeying God’s covenant (Hos. 11:2-12). Through Matthew’s Gospel it will be discovered that Jesus is the obedient covenant son, obeying God’s call and covenant obligations.

The issue of the king’s sonship will unpacked below, but it is worth noting, as Gerhard von Rad states, that Israel did not perceive the “king’s sonship to God” in a mythological sense.<sup>121</sup> The king’s sonship was rooted in a “historical legal act,” as the “king was summoned”

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<sup>117</sup> Ibid., 273-275.

<sup>118</sup> Douglas Stuart, *Word Biblical Commentary: Hosea-Jonah, Volume 31*, (Grand Rapids: HarperCollins Christian Publishing, 2014), accessed March 9, 2022, ProQuest Ebook Central, <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/lib/liberty/detail.action?docID=5397258>, 177.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid., 178.

<sup>121</sup> Gerhard von Rad, *Old Testament Theology: Volume I*, trans. by D. M. G. Stalker, (New York, NY: Harper and Row Publishers, 1962), 320.

into a unique relationship with the Lord.<sup>122</sup> Hendrikis Berkhof concurs and asserts that heavenly beings, Israel, and kings, although all are called Son(s) of God, are not depicted as relating to God in a physical way.<sup>123</sup> Berkhof joins Cullmann in arguing that the sonships of Israel and kings to God were a “matter of a covenantal relationship of mutual love and ... of obedience.”<sup>124</sup>

Differences and similarities may be discovered upon comparing the OT use of Son of God terminology and usage from other ancient cultures. According to John Watson, Mesopotamian kings, which include the kingdoms of Sumer, Akkad, Babylon, and Assyria all understood their rule as “divine decrees.”<sup>125</sup> Watson also reports that ancient Near East monarchs were thought to have a “filial relationship” with their city’s deity.<sup>126</sup> This can be observed in the Canaanite king, Keret, being styled as the son of El, numerous Mesopotamian kings claiming “divine heritage,” and in Syrian kings displaying their divine connection through their throne names.<sup>127</sup> In ancient Egypt, adds von Rad, the pharaoh was considered to be “physically begotten” by a deity.<sup>128</sup> In contrasting ancient Israel and other ancient kingdoms, Watson identifies the major difference being the Israelite king becoming sons of God “on the basis of a covenant,” not “sons by nature” or myth as in the other kingdoms.<sup>129</sup>

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<sup>122</sup> Ibid.

<sup>123</sup> Hendrikis Berkhof, *Christian Faith*, trans. by Sierd Woudstra, (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1979), 282.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid.

<sup>125</sup> John Watson, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament*, (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), ProQuest Ebook Central, <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/liberty/detail.action?docID=2029824>, 518.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid., 518-519.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid., 519.

<sup>128</sup> von Rad, *Theology: Volume 1*, 320.

<sup>129</sup> Watson, *Bible Background*, 519.

## **The Davidic Covenant: 2 Samuel 7:11b-14**

11b Also the LORD telleth thee that he will make thee an house.

12 And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom.

13 He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever.

14 I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men:

The context of 2 Samuel 7 finds David sitting in his palace, free from warfare due to God giving David rest from his enemies (2 Sam. 7:1). King David sought to build a house for God to dwell in but the Lord rejects this desire. Instead, God makes a set of promises to David. These promises are labeled as the Davidic Covenant.

God's covenant to David states that God will establish David's royal dynasty, David shall have a son, and God will establish that son as the king after David. Furthermore, David's son shall build a house for God's name, and the son's kingdom will be everlasting. David's son will have a special relationship with God, that of a father and son. Thus, the king would be God's son through the covenant promise. To conclude the promises, God lists the eternal state of David's house, throne, and kingdom (2 Sam. 7:16).

According to Ronald Youngblood, the Davidic Covenant receives much attention in the OT, and is only second, in terms of emphasis and importance, to the covenant at Sinai.<sup>130</sup> Arnold A. Anderson understands this chapter "without a doubt" as the "theological highlight of the Books of Samuel," and possibly even the theological highlight of the post-Deuteronomy

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<sup>130</sup> Ronald Youngblood, *The Expositors Bible Commentary: 2 Samuel*, Frank E. Gaebel ed., (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1992), 881.

writings.<sup>131</sup> Youngblood points to 2 Samuel 7 as the source of Messianic hope for OT prophets and psalms.<sup>132</sup>

von Rad describes the Covenant promises consisting of God establishing the king's authority, to "offer him a father-son relationship," God will be "father to the anointed, and the latter is to be a son to him."<sup>133</sup> This concept connects to more than merely a single son of David, as God declared that He would create David a "house" (2 Sam. 7:11b). Therefore, God's Covenant promises extend beyond David to his descendants. von Rad explains that it was at the accession that David's son entered "into a filial relationship" with God.<sup>134</sup> This is not to be viewed in a mythological sense, in comparison to the Egyptian pharaohs, but von Rad states that Israel understood "it in the sense of an historical legal act," as the "king was summoned" in to a special covenant relationship with the Lord.<sup>135</sup>

David's son, Solomon, succeeded his father as King of Israel, but did not succeed to fulfill the entire Davidic Covenant. Solomon became the king, built the house for God's Name, but he did not have an everlasting kingship. Solomon and many later Davidic descendants sinned, and were chastened by the Lord. Anderson explains that, according to the Davidic Covenant, God would discipline the son, but the punishment would be temporary, and "not like that of Saul and his house." (2 Sam. 7:15).<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>131</sup> Arnold A. Anderson, *Word Biblical Commentary: 2 Samuel, Volume 11*, (Grand Rapids, MI: HarperCollins Christian Publishing, 2000), accessed March 5, 2022, ProQuest Ebook Central. <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/lib/liberty/detail.action?docID=5607921>, 112.

<sup>132</sup> Youngblood, *2 Samuel*, 881.

<sup>133</sup> von Rad, *Theology: Volume 1*, 310.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid., 320.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid.

<sup>136</sup> Anderson, *2 Samuel*, 122.

To conclude this section, it is understood that due to the failures of David's sons and apparent destruction of the kingdom (cf. 2 Kings 25), God's promises to David "still retained its relevance for future generations."<sup>137</sup> Anderson states that Jews remained "confident that Yahweh would fulfill his promises," either in a current Davidic descendant, like Zerubbabel, or "in a future messianic figure."<sup>138</sup> Psalmists and prophets will look back to 2 Samuel 7 and the Davidic Covenant and then look forward in prophecy to the one who would fulfill the promises made to David.

### **Messianic Passages: Psalms 2 and 89 and Isaiah 11**

Although research could be directed at many messianic texts, this study will emphasize three passages. These texts connect to the Baptism of Jesus through the concepts of Davidic sonship, divine sonship, and the anointed figure.

#### Psalm 2

The context of Psalm 2 begins with pagan kings aligning themselves against God and God's anointed (Ps. 2:1-2). God mocks these kings for their foolish rebellion, and then turns against the kings with His wrath (Ps. 2:4-5). God will set up His anointed king in Zion, and declares to the king, "Thou *art* my Son; this day have I begotten thee" (Ps. 2:6-7). The king shall rule over the whole earth, and all shall serve this Son of God (Ps. 2:8-12).

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<sup>137</sup> Ibid., 123.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid.

Willem A. VanGemenen argues that there is “no general agreement on the historical context of this psalm.”<sup>139</sup> However, VanGemenen suggests the “language, style, and theology fit an early monarchic date.”<sup>140</sup> Peter Craigie agrees, stating that Psalm 2 is a “royal psalm and must be interpreted in association with the Hebrew monarchy.”<sup>141</sup>

Joseph Lam reports that Psalm 2 has been distinguished as the “quintessential royal psalm,” and is “regarded by a majority of scholars as a coronation ceremony for the Judean king.”<sup>142</sup> Likewise, Psalm 2 is labeled as a coronation psalm by Craigie, and further reports that the NT makes frequent use of the psalm.<sup>143</sup>

According to VanGemenen, Psalm 2 should be read in light of the Davidic Covenant (2 Sam. 7).<sup>144</sup> This can be observed through the concepts of the king’s sonship to God and the king receiving his kingdom from God. Even though Israel had a human king, the supreme king was God. In addition, the Lord is often portrayed as the universal king over the earth. Lam understands Psalm 2 as God disinheriting the earthly rulers, adopting His king as His son, and granting His son the earth as an inheritance.<sup>145</sup> Craigie notes that Psalm 2 reflects the joint rule of the Israelite state between God and His representative on earth, the Davidic king.<sup>146</sup>

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<sup>139</sup> Willem, A. VanGemenen, *The Expositors Bible Commentary: Psalms*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelein, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1992), 64.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid.

<sup>141</sup> Peter Craigie, *Word Biblical Commentary: Psalms 1-50, Volume 19*, (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1983), 64.

<sup>142</sup> Joseph Lam, “Psalm 2 and the Disinheritance of Earthly Rulers: New Light from the Ugaritic Legal Text RS 94.2168” *Vetus Testamentum* 64, no. 1 (January 2014): 34–46, <https://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=hlh&AN=94282165&site=ehost-live&scope=site>, 34-35.

<sup>143</sup> Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 64 and 68.

<sup>144</sup> VanGemenen, *Psalms*, 64.

<sup>145</sup> Lam, *Psalm 2 and the Disinheritance*, 34.

<sup>146</sup> Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 68.

Craigie identifies the “human king” as “God’s *anointed*,” and understands this “royal title” to originate from the king being anointed on his coronation day (1 Kgs. 1:45 & 2 Kgs. 11:12).<sup>147</sup> The concept of God’s anointed king will result in the title of Messiah, which will be discussed below, to describe God’s anointed ruler. Gilsun Ryu sees the Messiah as an exalted king, exalted to the extent that his “authority is considered to be divine.”<sup>148</sup> This is due to the ruler receiving his power and kingship from God, who has “anointed, exalted, and installed him as king.”<sup>149</sup> Defined by Craigie as “divine appointment,” God announces that His king is set up in Zion, and it is God Himself that establishes and installs the new ruler (Ps. 2:6).<sup>150</sup>

Derek Kidner argues that “this day” (Ps. 2:7), meaning the time of the coronation, marks “the moment when the new sovereign formally took up his inheritance and his titles.”<sup>151</sup> It is at this installment or coronation of the new king that God declares the status of the king to be that of God’s son. Connecting Psalm 2 and 2 Samuel 7 together, Craigie asserts that the central issue of the Davidic Covenant is sonship.<sup>152</sup> God’s declaration that David’s son would be God’s son, and that God would be his father (2 Sam. 7:14), is shown to be carried out in Psalm 2:7. According to 2 Samuel, the Davidic Covenant was everlasting (2 Sam. 7:13, 16), however, Craigie understands this royal Psalm to be the renewal of the Davidic Covenant with each new

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<sup>147</sup> Ibid., 66.

<sup>148</sup> Gilsun Ryu, “Messianism and Kingship in the Gospel of John: A Comparison Between the Fourth Gospel and the Royal Psalms 2, 72, and 110,” *Journal of Religious & Theological Information*, 16:4, (2017), 125-140, DOI: 10.1080/10477845.2017.1317187, 127.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid., 128.

<sup>150</sup> Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 66.

<sup>151</sup> Derek Kidner, *Psalms 1-72*, (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2014), ProQuest Ebook Central, <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/liberty/detail.action?docID=2033981>, 67-68.

<sup>152</sup> Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 67.



king's coronation.<sup>153</sup> He states, "the divine words, 'you are my son' mark a renewal of the relationship between God and David's house in the person of the newly crowned king."<sup>154</sup>

To conclude, this passage sees the continuation of the Davidic Covenant through the kingship of the descendants of David and the faithfulness of God. Psalm 2 also looks forward to the day when God will install His anointed son as the king and then grant the king a great inheritance (Ps. 2:6-8). Below, this Psalm will be specifically connected to Jesus and His Baptism. For this present moment, it is noteworthy that Psalm 2 connects to the Baptism in God's declaration of sonship and kingship, God's anointing of the king, and the king ruling over God's kingdom.

#### Psalm 89

The first section of this Psalm gives glory to God for His mercy and faithfulness (Ps. 89:1-2), followed by a remembrance of God's promises to David (Ps. 89:3-4). Next, the psalmist acknowledges God's power and greatness (Ps. 89:5-19), and God's power and faithfulness are displayed in His covenantal mercies towards David, who was God's anointed servant (Ps. 89:20). The anointed servant shall be strengthened and protected by God (Ps. 89:21-25), and "He shall cry unto me, Thou *art* my father, my God, and the rock of my salvation" (Ps. 89:26). Furthermore, God "will make him *my* firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth" (Ps. 89:27). This section concludes with thankfulness for the covenant and its everlasting nature (Ps. 89:28-37).

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<sup>153</sup> Ibid.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid.

However, Psalm 89:38 begins the second section, with a change in tone. Tremper Longman III explains this “radical shift” as the psalmist “accuses God of breaking the covenant by allowing Israel’s enemies to defeat them and to shame the Davidic king.”<sup>155</sup> The author states that God has cast off His anointed (Ps. 89:38), which made the covenant “void” (Ps. 89:39). The chapter ends with imagery of destruction (Ps. 89:40-45), pleas for God to remember His covenant to David (Ps. 89:46-51), and a final praise and blessing to the Lord (Ps. 89:52).<sup>156</sup>

It can be observed that 2 Samuel 7 and Psalm 2 are foundational passages for understanding Psalm 89. Kidner asserts that Psalm 89 is “a commentary on Nathan’s prophecy to David in 2 Samuel 7.”<sup>157</sup> The beginning of Psalm 89 demonstrates this detail as God is seen as establishing the eternal Davidic Covenant (Ps. 89:3-4).

Psalm 89:20 carries the significant concept of God “anointing” His servant. Kidner states that “more important than any crown was the fact of being *anointed*,” showing that the individual was “set apart for a sacred office.”<sup>158</sup> OT anointing of God’s Spirit can be seen upon judges, kings, prophets, and priests (cf. Jud. 6:34, 11:29, 1 Sam. 11:6, 2 Chron. 15:1, 24:20, & Is. 45:1). Claude J. Peifer asserts that the purpose of the Spirit’s anointing “was to confer strength... to carry out the will of God.”<sup>159</sup> The will of God could include warfare, ministerial rites, sacred

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<sup>155</sup> Tremper Longman III. *Psalms: An Introduction and Commentary*, (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2014), ProQuest Ebook Central, <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/liberty/detail.action?docID=2033987>, 322.

<sup>156</sup> For thorough analysis of Psalm 89 see John Goldingay, *Baker Commentary on the Old Testament Wisdom and Psalms: Psalms, Volume 2, Psalms 42-89*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007), accessed March 16, 2022, ProQuest Ebook Central. <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/lib/liberty/reader.action?docID=3117028&ppg=1,979-1032>.

<sup>157</sup> Derek Kidner, *Psalms 73-150*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2014. ProQuest Ebook Central, <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/liberty/detail.action?docID=2033982>, 351.

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid.*, 355.

<sup>159</sup> Claude J. Peifer, “Anointing in the Old Testament.” *Worship* 35, no. 9 (October 1961): 577–86. <https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=lsdar&AN=ATLA0000678070&site=ehost-live&scope=site>, 585.

oracles, or administrative duties. However, out of those various positions, only the king would be declared to be God's son through the Spirit's anointing. According to Longman III, this "endowment with the Spirit" was given to David for the "task" of kingship, enabling David to succeed as king and warrior.<sup>160</sup> As mentioned above, the anointing of God's son and ruler "gave rise...to the title Messiah or Christ."<sup>161</sup>

The element of sonship returns in Psalm 89:26. In the texts analyzed above, it was God declaring the king's sonship to God, "he shall be my son" (2 Sam. 7:14) and "Thou *art* my Son" (Ps. 2:7). However, Psalm 89 reveals the son-king making a declaration of his own. The king proclaims, "Thou *art* my father" (Ps. 89:26), and also acknowledges his Father as his God and salvation. This carries into the following verse, as David is said to be God's "firstborn" son (Ps. 89:27). As noted above, Israel is called God's son (Hos. 11:1), even God's "firstborn" (Ex. 4:22). Yet, God states that He will "make" David God's firstborn (Ps. 89:27). This concept looks back to Psalm 2, in that the king, as God's son, will receive an inheritance from God (Ps. 2:8). Part of this inheritance is dominion over all the kings of the earth (Ps. 2:8-12), and, as Kidner notes, the use of *'elyôn* (Ps. 89:27) normally depicts God as the "Most High," but here may reveal "that what God is to the powers of heaven, David is appointed to be to those of earth."<sup>162</sup> Therefore, through God's son, the king, God's authority and sovereignty is represented to the earth.

The eternal nature of this covenant does not limit these aspects to David alone, but these promises would carry on to his descendants. However, the psalmist laments the fact that a son of

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<sup>160</sup> Longman III, *Psalms*, 324.

<sup>161</sup> Kidner, *Psalms 73-150*, 355.

<sup>162</sup> *Ibid.*, 355f98.

David is not ruling (Ps. 89:38-45), and it appears that God has not kept His promise (Ps. 38:49). This may portray the Israelites' longing for the day when God's anointed would sit on David's throne. VanGemenen reveals a challenge within the royal psalms, that God's people must keep their trust in God and "look forward to an era in which all aspects" of the Davidic Covenant would be fulfilled.<sup>163</sup>

In conclusion of Psalm 89, numerous concepts from 2 Samuel 7 and Psalm 2 have been reinforced. It has been observed that the Davidic king was anointed by God, and that the king would be given a kingdom from God, acting as God's representative on earth. Furthermore, as the anointed king, he is also acknowledged to be God's son, God's firstborn son. These elements will be shown to be relevant to the study of the Baptism below, as Jesus is declared to be God's son and servant, and is anointed as the king to rule over God's kingdom.

#### Isaiah 11

Isaiah 11:1-9 anticipates an anointed figure coming from the line of Jesse (Is. 11:1-2). He will rule the entire earth with righteousness (Is. 11:3-5), and he shall bring peace through judgment and slaying of the wicked (Is. 11:4-9). This passage contrasts with the previous chapter (Is. 10), in that Israel is unrighteous, having no justice (Is. 10:1-2), and the nation of Assyria is used of God to bring judgment (Is. 10:5). Assyria will destroy a forest and leave the trees, representing God's people, desolated (Is. 10:6-19).

It is this anointed figure of Isaiah 11 that will bring restoration to Israel. Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner explain that "rod" (Is. 11:1) refers to the shoot of a plant, and "out of

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<sup>163</sup> VanGemenen, *Psalms*, 65.

the stem” refers to a “shoot sprouting from a stump.”<sup>164</sup> Therefore, the imagery suggests God reviving an old dead tree stump amongst the dead trees of Israel (cf. Is. 10:18-19).

Restoring Israel, defeating the wicked, and ruling God’s kingdom on earth would require this figure to be given power from God to perform this task. von Rad states that Isaiah does not attribute the “paradisaal peace” and restoration of the king’s reign to a contemporary anointed monarch, but the prophet looks forward to “one who is to come in the future.”<sup>165</sup> Furthermore, in reference to the “stem of Jesse” (Is. 11:1), von Rad proposes that Isaiah is not merely writing about a descendant of David. Rather, in speaking of Jesse as the father, a “new David” is in view, through whom God “will restore the glory of the original Davidic empire.”<sup>166</sup>

In contrast to other ancient kingdoms, von Rad reports, only in Israel was the monarch’s call and authorization from the Lord “inseparably connected with the bestowal of the Spirit.”<sup>167</sup> Furthermore, it was Isaiah who wrote of the anointed figure being spiritually endowed from God, which enabled him to “make the divine will for justice prevail in his kingdom.”<sup>168</sup> The future figure became known as the Messiah, which comes from the Hebrew מָשִׁיחַ, meaning “anointed one.”<sup>169</sup> This “anointed” terminology is used throughout the OT for kings, priests, and a savior-figure (Lev. 4:3, Ps. 2:2, Is. 45:1, & Dan. 9:25).<sup>170</sup> Here, Isaiah uses the concept of God’s

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<sup>164</sup> William Holliday, *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament: based on the work of Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1988), 59

<sup>165</sup> Gerhard von Rad, *Old Testament Theology: Volume 2*, translated by D. M. G. Stalker, (New York, NY: Harper and Row Publishers, 1962), 170.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid.

<sup>167</sup> von Rad, *Theology: Volume 1*, 323.

<sup>168</sup> Ibid., 323 and 375.

<sup>169</sup> Holliday, *Concise Hebrew*, 218.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid., 219.

anointed king to reveal how God will deliver Zion and His people. Geoffrey Grogan points out that the Spirit's anointing of the Messiah is shown to empower the king for every aspect of rule, and that the king would lack nothing in regard to knowledge and power from God.<sup>171</sup> The current monarchs of Judah have failed and not produced what the Davidic Covenant spoke of, but Israel's salvation lies in the future, and von Rad states that God will save Zion by raising "up the anointed one, the new David."<sup>172</sup>

Jewish hopes of a future deliverance brought by the Messiah can be observed in Second Temple Period texts. Specifically, three Second Temple documents may demonstrate how Isaiah 11 was used as a foundation for Jewish messianic expectations. Although there are more than three documents that use Isaiah 11, Psalm of Solomon 17, 4Q174, and 4Q246 will reveal that Jews relied on Isaiah 11 to interpret the role and success of the Davidic Messiah.

Pomykala reports that Psalm of Solomon 17 dates to near 60 B. C. and is a communal lament.<sup>173</sup> The author complains about the state of Israel's subjection to foreign powers, recalls God's promise to David, and pleads for God to intervene by sending the Messiah.<sup>174</sup> Through these details it is easy to observe the similarities with Psalm 89.

Furthermore, Kenneth Atkinson asserts that the Messiah, described in Psalm of Solomon 17, is "closely fashioned after Isa. 11:2-4" as he "is portrayed as a warrior, judge, and a man of

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<sup>171</sup> Geoffrey W. Grogan, *The Expositors Bible Commentary: Isaiah*, Frank E. Gaebelein ed., (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1992), 88.

<sup>172</sup> von Rad, *Theology: Volume 2*, 175.

<sup>173</sup> Pomykala, *Davidic Dynasty*, 159-160.

<sup>174</sup> *Ibid.*, 160-162.

purity who will rule over a perfected Israel.”<sup>175</sup> Atkinson explains that the author transformed the language of Isaiah 11 from “rod of his mouth” and “breath of his lips” into a “literal sword, the ‘iron rod.’”<sup>176</sup> Pomykala adds that the concept of the Messiah’s universal rule is also present in the psalm (cf. Is. 11:3-5), as the Davidic king “will be served by gentile nations” and Jews alike.<sup>177</sup> This assists in understanding a possible Jewish mindset, regarding a powerful and victorious Messiah, from the Second Temple era.

In connection to Psalm of Solomon 17, 4Q246 describes an individual called the Son of God in “nearly identical” fashion to the “militant messiah of Ps. Sol. 17.”<sup>178</sup> Although the phrasing “Davidic king” and “Messiah” are absent in 4Q246, that does not negate the connection to an Isaiah 11 Messiah. John J. Collins confirms that multiple titles refer to the Messiah, even when the exact term is absent. For example, Collins notes, Branch of David and Son of God are other terms used to denote the Messianic king.<sup>179</sup>

Furthermore, Atkinson reports that 4Q161 connects Branch of David (Jer. 23:5) to Root of Jesse (Is. 11:1-5), and that there can be “little doubt that he is an eschatological Davidic

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<sup>175</sup> Kenneth Atkinson, “On the Herodian Origin of Militant Davidic Messianism at Qumran: New Light from Psalm of Solomon 17,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 118, no. 3 (Fall, 1999): 435-60, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fscholarly-journals%2Fon-herodian-origin-militant-davidic-messianism-at%2Fdocview%2F214615217%2Fse-2%3Faccountid%3D12085>, 444.

<sup>176</sup> Ibid.

<sup>177</sup> Pomykala, *Davidic Dynasty*, 164.

<sup>178</sup> Atkinson, *Herodian Origin*, 446.

<sup>179</sup> John J. Collins, *Apocalypticism in the Dead Sea Scrolls*, (London, EN: Taylor & Francis Group, 1997), accessed March 19, 2022, ProQuest Ebook Central, <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/lib/liberty/reader.action?docID=168791&ppg=89>, 72.

king.”<sup>180</sup> The king of 4Q161 also shares similarities with the king of Psalm of Solomon 17, as “both will be sustained by the Spirit of God” and will “also wield a sword.”<sup>181</sup>

Isaiah 11, in conclusion, portrays a figure that subsequently became understood as a futuristic king. His many titles and descriptions include the Son of David, Son of God, anointed king, Root of Jesse, and Messiah. Jewish hopes abounded that this future king would come to defeat Israel’s enemies and restore David’s kingdom.

### **The Servant of Yahweh: Isaiah 42**

Isaiah 42:1 Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, *in whom* my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.

There is little debate that Isaiah 42:1 is referenced at the Baptism of Jesus. In addition to the Baptism, Matthew uses Isaiah 42 to illustrate Jesus as the Servant in two other passages (Mat. 12:18 & 17:5). Hill notes that Matthew 12:18-21 expresses the “longest citation from the Old Testament in the entire Gospel of Matthew” (Is. 42:1-4), which may indicate the weight of importance that the Apostle placed on this OT passage in relation to Jesus.<sup>182</sup>

Isaiah 42 is considered the first servant song within Isaiah.<sup>183</sup> It begins by drawing attention to God’s chosen “Servant” (Is. 42:1), often called the “ebed of Yahweh,” which Cullmann suggests is at “the heart of New Testament Christology.”<sup>184</sup>

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<sup>180</sup> Atkinson, *Herodian Origin*, 448.

<sup>181</sup> Ibid.

<sup>182</sup> Hill, *Son and Servant*, 9.

<sup>183</sup> For a brief background of the history of identifying servant songs see Allan Harman, *Isaiah: A Covenant to be Kept for the Sake of the Church* (Scotland, UK: Christian Focus, 2001) 283f3.

<sup>184</sup> Cullmann, *Christology*, 51.



Isaiah 41 shows the power of God as He encourages and strengthens a weak Israel (Is. 41:1-14), and it will be soon revealed (Is. 42:1-4) that the anointed Servant will be God's instrument to bring security to God's people and God's rule upon the earth. The Servant is well-pleasing to God, and the Lord anoints the Servant with His Spirit (Is. 42:1). The Servant will bring covenantal judgment, and he "shall not fail" until he has brought judgment to the entire earth (Is. 42:3-4). Moreover, the Lord says that He has called the Servant "in righteousness" and the Servant himself will be given "for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles" (Is. 42:6). Along with bringing judgment and establishing a covenant, the Servant will "open blind eyes" and set prisoners free (Is. 42:7).

Allan Harman describes the opening verse as assurance from God that He will "watch over and empower" the Servant (Is. 42:1).<sup>185</sup> Just as the messianic king, the Servant will not rely on his own power but power that comes from God. John Oswalt states that the mission of the Servant is unmistakable: "he will bring justice to the nations" (Is. 42:1, 3-4).<sup>186</sup> Justice or judgment comes from the Hebrew *mišpāt* (מִשְׁפָּט). Oswalt describes מִשְׁפָּט in this specific context as depicting God's salvation in the "broadest sense," moreover, judgement of the Servant will be "life-giving order which exists when the creation is functioning in accordance with the design of its Lord."<sup>187</sup>

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<sup>185</sup> Harman, *Isaiah*, 284.

<sup>186</sup> John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 40-66*, (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1998), accessed March 23, 2022, ProQuest Ebook Central. <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/lib/liberty/reader.action?docID=4860094&ppg=1>, 96.

<sup>187</sup> *Ibid.*

When the Servant arrives, notes Harman, he will not come with “royal pomp” or glamour, but he will “come quietly and with modesty” (Is. 42:2).<sup>188</sup> Referencing Isaiah 42:2, Matthew confirms the Servant’s meekness through the actions of Jesus (Mat. 12), which displays the power and anointing of Jesus (Mat. 12:15) and also His humility (Mat. 12:16).

The anointed (Is. 42:1), humble (Is. 42:2), and steadfast Servant (Is. 42:4) will bring judgement and also a new covenant (Is. 42:6). It would be through the work of the Servant that the relationship between God and humanity would be re-established. Although debate surrounds the meaning of the phrase, Cullmann understands “give thee for a covenant of the people” (Is. 42:6) to mean literally that the Servant himself is the covenant.<sup>189</sup> This may be why Jesus states at the Last Supper that the cup and wine are symbols of “my blood of the new testament” (Mat. 26:28).<sup>190</sup> Oswalt highlights the Lord calling the Servant for his task (Is. 42:6), which may point to God delivering “people of the earth” through the Servant, “from that theological darkness in which they are bound by their own self-idolatry.”<sup>191</sup>

#### Conclusion of the Servant of Yahweh

Putting all the various elements together, the Servant is called and empowered by God, brings deliverance and justice to the earth, and re-establishes the relationship between God and humanity. Isaiah returns to many of these concepts later in his work (Is. 61:1-2), and Luke also records Jesus revealing His ministry in light of the Servant of Isaiah (Lk. 4:18). Both Isaiah

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<sup>188</sup> Harman, *Isaiah*, 286.

<sup>189</sup> Cullmann, *Christology*, 65.

<sup>190</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>191</sup> Oswalt, *Isaiah 40-66*, 102.

passages depict the Servant receiving the anointing of God's Spirit (Is. 42:1 & 61:1), and Oswalt acknowledges that the Servant "will not function in his own strength," but the Servant is "supported by God, and God finds the deepest satisfaction in him."<sup>192</sup> Oswalt connects the Servant passage (Is. 42) to Jesus' Baptism (Mat. 3:13-17) as he states, "The description of Jesus' baptism was unquestionably intended to remind us of this passage."<sup>193</sup>

### Conclusion of Biblical Background

Examination of the biblical background of Christ's Baptism has produced details of both a kingly and servant figure. Although the OT and Jewish texts do not conclusively combine these figures into one individual, the NT reveals Jesus to fulfill both positions (Mat. 12:17-21, Lk. 4:1, & Acts 13:33). Unifying the details from the above examined texts, the OT expresses that Jesus would be the Son of David or messianic king, Son of God, anointed with God's Spirit as king and servant, and would initiate God's kingdom. Upon completion of the analysis of biblical background and relevant passages, the next step is to make conclusions regarding Christ's Baptism in light of the OT foundation.

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<sup>192</sup> Ibid., 96.

<sup>193</sup> Ibid.

### Chapter 3: The Baptism Event

It has been observed that Matthew has shown Jesus to be divine through the work of the Spirit (Mat. 1:20) and the name Emmanuel (Mat. 1:23). God's pronouncement of Christ's sonship (Mat. 2:15) reveal Christ's unique relationship with God, which is further defined at the Baptism.

Prior to the Baptism event, John is introduced as he is preaching and baptizing "unto repentance" (Mat. 3:2 & 11). Upon the bidding of Jesus, John baptized Jesus in order to "fulfill all righteousness" (Mat. 3:15). Thus, in a simple but non-descriptive manner, it may be said that Jesus was baptized to fulfill all righteousness. However, that does not explain at what moment or in what method Jesus would bring about righteousness. The voice from heaven and the dove will grant further insight. Here we turn to the Baptism event itself, to study the concepts found therein. Most elements were discussed above, but there remains a few noteworthy issues to consider.

#### To Fulfill All Righteousness

Some argue, as does Pentecost, that "Jesus was baptized to identify Himself with sinners" in order to fulfill all righteousness (Mat. 3:15).<sup>194</sup> As sinners came to confess their sins and be baptized, Jesus came to "identify Himself with sinners so that through that identification He might become their substitute."<sup>195</sup> Thus, fulfilling all righteousness has justification through the cross in view (cf. Is. 53:11). However, Carson objects, asserting that Matthew does not use "righteousness" in terms of justification as Paul does.<sup>196</sup> Carson states that Matthew "always"

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<sup>194</sup> Pentecost, *The Words*, 94.

<sup>195</sup> Ibid.

<sup>196</sup> Carson, *Matthew*, 107.

uses righteousness as a way to express “conformity to God’s will.”<sup>197</sup> Furthermore, he asserts that “us” (Mat. 3:15) links John and Jesus together, thus making “righteousness” and representing sinners in light of the cross unlikely.<sup>198</sup>

Hagner understands “righteousness” as a “key concept in Matthew,” as the Apostle associates it with “the accomplishing of God’s will in its fullness” (Mat. 5:20 & 6:33) and with “the coming of the kingdom” (Mat. 5:6, 10).<sup>199</sup> Moreover, Hagner asserts that most agree that Matthew has a “salvation-historical perspective” at the Baptism, therefore, righteousness (δικαιοσύνην) should not be understood as “moral goodness but as the will of God in the sense of God’s saving activity.”<sup>200</sup> Brown concurs, stating that righteousness “in this context” is used “to signal God’s work of salvation now being inaugurated in Jesus the Messiah.”<sup>201</sup>

The next step requires an answer as to what Jesus is confirming to, or what the Father’s will is calling Jesus to accomplish. This may connect back to God declaring to the Servant, “I the LORD have called thee in righteousness” and that the Servant would be given “for a covenant of the people” (Is. 42:6). Therefore, the issue of fulfilling all righteousness may be connected to the calling and task of Jesus to fulfill the will of God, in order to bring about the saving plan of God. This will be accomplished as Jesus steps into His roles as the Davidic King and Servant of Yahweh. Frank Stagg confirms this by stating that the voice and dove “not only authenticated

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<sup>197</sup> Carson, *Matthew*, 107.

<sup>198</sup> Ibid.

<sup>199</sup> Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, 137.

<sup>200</sup> Ibid.

<sup>201</sup> Brown, *Matthew*, 31.

Jesus but pointed to his task. . . It is thus . . . that he ‘fulfils all righteousness.’”<sup>202</sup> Therefore, fulfilling righteousness would begin at the moment of obedience as Jesus steps into the roles of King and Servant.

### The Voice from Heaven

Matthew 3:17 And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

Although the voice is recorded after the anointing and the dove (Mat. 3:16), Carson states that the “Spirit’s descent. . . needs to be understood in light of” the declaration of the voice.<sup>203</sup> Therefore, the Spirit’s anointing will be explored after the voice from heaven.

Dunn has already reported that most scholars maintain the voice to utter a combination of Psalm 2 and Isaiah 42.<sup>204</sup> Jeremias disagrees, arguing that servant (παῖς) was the original wording and that son (υἱός) was a later development (Mat. 3:17 & Mk. 1:11).<sup>205</sup> Therefore, Jeremias rejects Psalm 2 in favor of an exclusive focus on Isaiah 42 and the Servant at Christ’s Baptism.<sup>206</sup> However, Moo confronts Jeremias’ position by asserting that there is no evidence of the NT replacing υἱός with an “earlier παῖς.”<sup>207</sup> Furthermore, following the accounts of Matthew and Luke, the Son of God emphasis in the wilderness temptations “renders it likely that the category

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<sup>202</sup> Frank Stagg, *New Testament Theology*, (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1962), 216. Stagg understands the voice to confirm Jesus as the Servant and perhaps also as the Davidic King, more on this below.

<sup>203</sup> Carson, *Matthew*, 110.

<sup>204</sup> Dunn, *Jesus Remembered*, 374 and *Baptism*, 27. It is suggested by some that Genesis 22:2 is also in view, but this is a minority position.

<sup>205</sup> See Jeremias, *New Testament*, 54-55 for complete argument.

<sup>206</sup> Cullmann agrees, see *Christology*, 66.

<sup>207</sup> Douglas J. Moo, *The Old Testament in the Gospel Passion Narratives*, (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 1983), 114.

of sonship has already been introduced in the stories of the baptism.”<sup>208</sup> Thus, for the purpose of this study, it will be accepted that the voice does indeed refer to both Psalm 2 and Isaiah 42.

The background of Psalm 2, noted above, relies on the Davidic Covenant (2 Sam. 7). The royal context, in regard to a coronation of a descendant of David, of Psalm 2 being referenced at the Baptism, may indicate the acknowledgment that Jesus is the Son of David, the Messiah, who also carries the identity of the Son of God. As Matthew already established the link between David and Jesus in the genealogy (Mat. 1), the Baptism provides a clear public announcement from heaven that Jesus is both Son of David and Son of God. This may be labeled as the coronation of Jesus as the messianic king, with a typological view of Psalm 2. God, in Psalm 2, installs His king-son upon the throne, and announces the king’s sonship (Ps. 2:6-7). The king is also described as God’s anointed (Ps. 2:2). From the OT context it is understood that the anointed one, the Messiah, would inaugurate God’s kingdom and be God’s kingly representative on earth. Therefore, the Baptism event contains the announcement, as Dunn states, that the messianic age has now begun.<sup>209</sup> John the Baptist’s inquiry, of whether or not Jesus was the Christ (Mat. 11:2-3), and Jesus’ response (Mat. 11:4-5), show that Jesus saw Himself as fulfilling Isaiah’s prophecies about the messianic kingdom (Is. 11 & 35). Therefore, the heavenly voice authorizes and announces the identity of Jesus as the king-son, which may be connected back to the concepts of 2 Samuel 7, Psalm 2, and Isaiah 11.

Another passage in Matthew may shed more light upon this issue. Matthew 17 records the Transfiguration event, where Jesus was transfigured and His face and clothing began to shine

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<sup>208</sup> Ibid.

<sup>209</sup> Dunn, *Baptism*, 25.

brightly (Mat. 17:2). Hagner describes this as Jesus' "transcendent glory."<sup>210</sup> Furthermore, Moses and Elijah appear and are seen speaking with Jesus (Mat. 17:3). Then, a voice from a "bright cloud" declares "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him" (Mat. 17:5).

Carson states that the voice at the Transfiguration "is largely a repetition" of the Baptism declaration, "stressing that Jesus is both Son and Suffering Servant."<sup>211</sup> Hagner understands the Transfiguration in the context of Peter's declaration of the identity of Jesus (Mat. 16:16), and of Jesus revealing His death, resurrection, servanthood, and kingship (Mat. 16:21, 24-28). This is significant, asserts Hagner, because the words at the Baptism concerning Jesus were spoken at a "crucial point at the beginning of his public ministry" and now the same words are spoken "at the major turning point of the initial open announcement of his death."<sup>212</sup> In other words, at the beginning of Jesus' public ministry the announcement pointed towards the work and task of Jesus, and at the Transfiguration it is revealed that the time has come to finish His task.

This may be reinforced by the appearance of Moses and Elijah. Hagner suggests that Moses and Elijah may represent "both the law and the prophets, as well as the imminence of the end of the age" (cf. Mat. 17:10), and that this may portray "the unity of the work of Jesus with the meaning of the OT."<sup>213</sup> Jesus will finally reach one of His main objectives, to fulfill the law and the prophets (Mat. 5:17).

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<sup>210</sup> Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, 490.

<sup>211</sup> Carson, *Matthew*, 386.

<sup>212</sup> Hagner, *Matthew 14-28*, 491.

<sup>213</sup> *Ibid.*, 493.



Cullmann states that the voice emphasized sonship and servanthood, presenting Jesus as the “only Son,” who will “fulfil the role of the ebed of Yahweh.”<sup>214</sup> As the Son, Jesus could “depend upon miraculous divine power only if he is obedient to his divine commission.”<sup>215</sup> Berkhof emphasizes that Jesus was the perfect covenant man, walking in obedience to God’s will. This allowed the man Jesus to fulfill the role of Servant and die a sinless death for a sinful people (cf. Is. 53:12 & Lk. 22:37).<sup>216</sup> This concept connects to the above mentioned point regarding the Son of God fully following God’s will.<sup>217</sup> Christ’s obedience is also one way that shows the difference between Jesus Himself and other sons of God. Hagner condenses these issues by stating that “God is well pleased . . . in his ‘only beloved’ Son, who in obedience takes upon him self the mission of the Servant who brings salvation to the nations (Isa 42:1, 4) and who ultimately in his death bears the iniquity of his people (Isa 53).”<sup>218</sup> Therefore, the voice confirms that the figures of Messiah and Servant are unified in the man Jesus.

Hill shows that Matthew expands on the Servant concept in Matthew 12:17-21, which is a more full quotation of Isaiah 42 in comparison to Matthew 3:17. As noted above, Matthew 12:18-21 is the longest OT citation in Matthew, which depicts Jesus as the chosen, anointed, humble, and loved Servant of God. Hill asserts that this Matthean passage presents “the role of Jesus as Servant” and the “nature of his ministry” as being obedient to God and merciful to humanity.<sup>219</sup>

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<sup>214</sup> Cullmann, *Christology*, 284.

<sup>215</sup> Ibid.

<sup>216</sup> Berkhof, *Christian Faith*, 283 and 287.

<sup>217</sup> See pages 30-31.

<sup>218</sup> Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, 59.

<sup>219</sup> Hill, *Son and Servant*, 12.

## The Dove and the Anointing of the Spirit

Matthew 3:16b . . . the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:

The words from Psalm 2 and Isaiah 42, then, announce Jesus as the messianic king who will be obedient to the call and task of the Servant. This is clarified by the dove and the anointing of the Spirit. Isaiah characterizes both the messianic king and the Servant as being anointed by the Spirit (Is. 11:2 & Is. 42:1). Psalm 89:20 also connects the king and servanthood to God's anointing. The very reason Jesus is called Christ is because of His anointing. Barbieri, in addition to understanding the Baptism as a revelation of Christ's deity, admits that the Spirit's descent reveals Jesus as Messiah, in reference to Isaiah 11.<sup>220</sup> Dunn states that the Spirit "equipped Jesus with power and authority for his mission to follow," and that this fulfilled Isaiah's prophecies about an anointed Messiah (Is. 11:2 & 61:1).<sup>221</sup> Hagner asserts that the Baptism and "the accompanying anointing by the Spirit," reveal "John and Jesus together ('for us') inaugurate the fulfillment of God's saving purposes" (Mat. 3:15).<sup>222</sup>

To possibly advance the concept of a coronation taking place at the Baptism, the anointing of a king finds precedent in the OT. There is evidence of kings being anointed with a declaration of their soon-coming kingship (1 Sam. 10:1, 16:13, & 2 Kgs. 9:6), and also kings being anointed at their coronation (2 Sam. 5:3, 1 Kgs. 1:45, & 2 Kgs. 11:12). It is worth noting that at David's first anointing, the scene entails God's confirmation of David's kingship (1 Sam. 16:1, 12), the prophet anoints David, and then the Spirit of the Lord came upon David (1 Sam.

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<sup>220</sup> Barbieri, *Matthew*, 25.

<sup>221</sup> Dunn, *Baptism*, 24 and 27.

<sup>222</sup> Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, 137.

16:13). This is a similar comparison to that of the Son of David's Baptism and anointing scene (Mat. 3:13-17). This is significant because the anointing of Jesus follows patterns of the anointing of kings discovered in OT events.

The issue of the dove also presents possible evidence of Christ's ministry. As noted above, Somov compares the Spirit "descending like a dove" to the Spirit "hovering over the waters" at the beginning of Creation (Gen. 1:2), and interprets the dove at the Baptism as symbolizing the "beginning of a new creation or the new age of the Messiah."<sup>223</sup> Dunn agrees and adds that the dove may carry links to "the dove sent out by Noah after the Flood."<sup>224</sup>

Both circumstances show God creating new beginnings, and both events are followed by some form of covenant relationship with humanity. After Creation, the first humans would live in harmony with God as long as they were obedient to His commands (Gen. 2:16-17). After the Flood, humanity would begin afresh with Noah, and, just as with Adam, God sets forth new commands which humanity must adhere to (Gen. 9:1-17). In either case, in relation to Creation or Noah, Dunn suggests that "the dove would mean a new beginning, a new epoch in God's dealings with creation, even a new covenant. . . *the* new covenant."<sup>225</sup>

This is plausible due to Jesus exemplifying the new humanity through His obedience. Berkhof states that Jesus was the "perfected covenant man, *the* new man, the eschatological man," which models how humanity can live through the new covenant.<sup>226</sup> Brown explains a

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<sup>223</sup> Somov, *The Dove*, 250.

<sup>224</sup> Dunn, *Baptism*, 27.

<sup>225</sup> Ibid.

<sup>226</sup> Berkhof, *Christian Faith*, 287.

central idea of the Baptism as announcing “the restoration of God’s kingdom through Jesus’ own covenant faithfulness for all those who will repent.”<sup>227</sup>

It is worth noting that the occurrence of the dove is not suggesting that Jesus did not have the Spirit before the Baptism. France acknowledges Matthew attributing Christ’s birth to the Spirit, but at the Baptism the Spirit has publicly and “visibly equipped and commissioned him to undertake his messianic mission.”<sup>228</sup>

### Conclusion of the Baptism

This paper has attempted to show that the Baptism of Jesus revealed Christ’s work as a man, as the event announced His kingship and servanthood.<sup>229</sup> The Baptism showed the anointing and calling of the man Jesus to fulfill OT prophecies. The OT contexts focused on human kings and their relationship to David and to God, and on the Servant and his mission from God (2 Sam. 7:14, Ps. 2:7, 89:20, 26-27, Is. 11:1 & 42:1).<sup>230</sup> The heavenly voice and the dove confirm that the figures of Messiah and Servant are unified in the man Jesus. Jesus was the obedient man in covenant, and in His obedience He fulfilled the role of the Servant of Yahweh.

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<sup>227</sup> Brown, *Matthew*, 28.

<sup>228</sup> France, *Matthew*, 139.

<sup>229</sup> Again it must be noted that Jesus, as God manifest in the flesh, stepped into His roles as a man to fulfill OT prophecy. This is the uniqueness of Jesus as He is both God and man.

<sup>230</sup> See Acts 2:30, Rom. 1:3, and 2 Tim. 2:8, where Jesus is described as the Messiah or Son of David according to the flesh. Also, see Phil. 2:7-8, where the humanity of Jesus is shown as He fulfills the role of Servant, taking “upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient...” There may be argument that Phil. 2 desires to show deity, however, the main emphasis is the man Jesus as obedient servant. This connects to Heb. 5:7-8, which depicts Jesus as the obedient Son, who prayed and learned obedience in the days of His flesh.

In addition, Jesus would also inaugurate God's kingdom as the Messiah.<sup>231</sup> In short, the Baptism revealed Jesus to be the beloved Son, who through obedience and suffering as the Servant, would also become the messianic king and initiate the Kingdom of God. Thus, the Baptism is the starting point of Christ's ministry.

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<sup>231</sup> Is. 9:6-7 confirms that the Messiah would also be the "mighty God" and sit upon David's throne, but the specific title "Son of David" and the anointing of the Spirit are both absent. This passage was not neglected with the intent of ignoring messianic data, but this paper focused on the Baptism and relevant OT texts. Is. 9:6-7 is not relevant due to the missing features listed above. Furthermore, the NT confirms specifically that Jesus was the Son of David "according to the flesh" (Rom. 1:3, etc).

## Chapter 4: Application

There are three specific points of application that may be gleaned from the Baptism. The first point focuses on obedience. Christ fulfilled righteousness through His obedience to the will of God. Righteousness requires obedience, and Christians must follow Christ's example of walking in obedience to God's will (cf. Luke 22:42 & John 5:30). This does not mean that saints should labor to be declared righteous in a legalistic sense, but that saints have an obligation to walk in obedience before God. This conformity to God's will can be accomplished through active obedience, thus mirroring Christ's example of redemptive obedience (cf. Heb. 5:7-9).

The second point is similar, in that obedience and submission should lead to a Christian's identity as a servant. Jesus is the perfect example of a servant, and His Baptism shows Him to be in complete submission to the will of God. Jesus is the Messiah, but it was through servanthood that He would be the king and initiate God's kingdom. Christians are tasked with the same objective, to be a servant (cf. Mat. 20:27 & 25:23) and build God's kingdom.

The third and final point illustrates Christ being empowered by the Spirit. Through relying on the Spirit Christ fulfilled His ministry. Furthermore, Paul writes that those that are "led by the Spirit of God" are the sons of God and call God their Father (Rom. 8:14-15). It is through the Spirit that Christians are adopted as sons of God and also how Christians will be witnesses of the kingdom of God (cf. Jn. 1:12 & Acts 1:8).

The Baptism of Jesus need not exclusively be a passage of theological debate, but it can yield practical applications for Christians to observe. Thus, Christians, through following Christ's example of obedience, may be called servants, sons, and witnesses of God's kingdom.

## Chapter 5: Conclusion

### Suggestions for Future Study

There are topics and questions that would further contribute to this study. Future investigation of Christ's sonship would be appropriate. This could be done through examining NT books outside of Matthew, since Matthew was the central book of focus in this paper and not much space was given to other NT works. Examination could look upon how the NT depicts Jesus as Son of God, and compare that to Matthew's Gospel.<sup>232</sup> In relation to this issue, it would be helpful to understand the concept of Jesus being specifically the only begotten or unique Son of God, in connection to how the OT views sonship. Also in the realm of sonship is Jesus as the Son of David. Observing how the larger NT identifies Jesus as the Davidic son may yield helpful results. In relation to Jesus as Servant, additional work on the relationship between the Servant and Son of Man may bring more understanding as to the various roles and tasks that Jesus fulfilled.

Although the concept of Jesus representing sinners at His Baptism was rejected, there is more to study regarding Jesus as representing obedient Israel. Matthew established Jesus' connection to Israel as a Son (Mat. 2:15 & Hos. 11:1), and the wilderness temptations (Mat. 4) reveal Jesus to be the obedient Son in contrast to disobedient Israel.

### Final Comments

The purpose of this paper sought to demonstrate the humanity and ministry of Jesus at the Baptism. The examined OT and historical texts were revealed to lay a foundation for the Baptism

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<sup>232</sup> An example of this is John 1:32-34. God told John the Baptist that the Spirit would descend on the one who would baptize with the Holy Ghost, then John "bare record" that Jesus was the Son of God. More work could be done here and comparisons drawn to Matthew's account.

event, in which the concepts derived from those texts were applied to Jesus, and revealed His roles and tasks as King and Servant. The heavenly voice and the dove confirm that the figures of Messiah and Servant are unified in the man Jesus. It is here, at the Baptism, that Jesus would begin both His messianic and Servant ministries and would soon bring about the new covenant in fulfillment of OT prophecy.



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