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Romans 13 Declared to be Son.

Romans 1:3-4, *concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, ⁴and declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.*

This is a vital statement.

A contrast to what we have in the previous statement.

It is parallel as well as a contrast!

First, *'concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh'*.

Another side to Paul now states.

He has been *'declared to be the Son of God with power'*.

This word 'declared' is one which we must contrast with the word 'made' in verse 3.

He was 'made of the seed of David, according to the flesh', but He has not been 'made' the Son of God with power.

He has been 'declared' that not 'made'.

The importance of emphases.

He 'began to be' of the seed of David, according to the flesh, but He never 'began to be' the Son of God.

Why?

Because He always was.

Pay close and very careful attention to every single word as we are study the Scriptures.

Christ is not something new in history.

Here, He has been 'declared to be the Son of God with power'.

What does this mean?

The word 'declared' is a word that was originally used to mark off the limits of a field.

How do we identify our property?

By setting up the boundary of the property.

Either fencing is done, or border line is been set.

There is a line drawn.
That is the idea behind this word.

Originally it means marks off a field or a piece of property. It is the definition of certain limits.

So that you can use the word 'proved' that is how It is translated in Tamil. He was 'proved to be the Son of God with power' - instead of 'declared'.

Or again, we can think of it in terms of the declaration of a poll. Election time the votes are counted, and after they have been counted, a 'declaration' is made. It is not the declaration that elects a man to Parliament. It is the number of votes that does that. But the number of votes that a candidate has obtained is declared at the declaration of the poll.

Now according to the Apostle, what happened to our Lord at the resurrection was something like that. He was not made the Son of God by the resurrection, but He was declared to be the Son of God by it.

- ✓ It is a declaration.
- ✓ It is a proclamation.

It is something that is defined, clearly stated, de-limited, set forth, in a perfectly clear manner.

What is happening at the resurrection is that He is 'declared' in this way so that we may know. He is only defined as far as we are concerned.

He was here on earth in this world among men.

1 Corinthians 2:8, *which none of the rulers of this age knew; for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.*

They did not recognize Him, because of the Fall.

But here he says, with reference to our knowledge of Him, that a declaration, a definition, has been made and given.

So, the word 'declared', which we contrast with 'made'.

What has been declared?

Jesus Christ has been 'declared to be the Son of God with power'.

Now the term 'Son of God'

The statement does not say that He was made a Son of God. He was declared to be the Son of God.

He is God's only Son.

Hebrews 1:1-2, *God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, ² has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds;*

The only Son. The same thing is implied here- the Son of God.

But what is interesting is this statement, 'with power'.

The gospel is concerning His Son, the eternal Son, who 'became' of the seed of David, according to the flesh, but now He is 'declared to be the Son of God with power'.

What is this expression 'with power'?

There are many who have thought that this is an expression which qualifies the declaring.

He was 'declared in a very powerful manner to be the Son of God'. But surely that is not what Paul is saying. That view does not do justice to the contrast between this statement and the statement in the previous verse.

What Apostle Paul is concerned to say is not so much that our Lord was declared to be the Son of God 'in a powerful manner', but that He was declared categorically and absolutely to be the Son of God.

Obviously, that must be powerful, so it is unnecessary to say that it was said in a powerful way.

What does it mean then?

The Lord Jesus Christ in the resurrection was declared to be the Son of God with power.

He was the Son of God before.

He is always Son of God.

He was Son of God before the incarnation and from all eternity.

He has never been anything but Son of God.

He was with the Father in the beginning.

There is no variation in that.

Where then is the variation?

It is in the form that He assumes.

V 3, concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh

When Jesus came into this world did, He come as the Son of God with power?

No!

He came as a helpless babe.

Though He was still the Son of God,

- He was weak,
- He was helpless,
- He had to be nursed as every other child,
- He had to be fed and cared for,
- He happened to receive everything that happens to every other child.

He was not 'Son of God with power' lying helplessly in the manger.

Was He Son of God?

Yes!

But not Son of God with power.

When He came as a babe, the power of the Son of God was veiled in the flesh.

He is veiled in flesh but in the resurrection, He is 'declared to be the Son of God with power' this is what Apostle Paul amplifying to us.

Now this is a statement is made in other places in the Scripture.

John 17:2, *as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him.*

The Great Commission gives us clearly.

Matthew 28:18-20, *And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.*

The result of the resurrection is that the power is manifested.

2 Corinthians 13:4, *For though He was crucified in weakness, yet He lives by the power of God. For we also are weak in Him, but we shall live with Him by the power of God toward you.*

Jesus was weak in the flesh - 'of the seed of David', but now, as the result of the resurrection, Son of God with power.

What a tremendous thing!

The resurrection enables us to see Jesus as He really is and for what He is. While He was here in the flesh, much was hidden.

When God sent His only Son into this world to work out this grand redemption, He sent Him incognito, as it were. So that as you looked at that babe, unless you were inspired by the Holy Spirit as ancient Simeon and Anna the prophetess were, you would see nothing but a babe.

Jesus took upon Him the form of a servant. He humbled Himself as **Philippians2:5-9** puts it across.

He worked as a carpenter. He is still Son of God eternal, in all His powers, but He has laid aside the signs of His glory for this purpose. He is like a king/celebrity who is travelling incognito. When the king or Prime minister or a celebrity travels as a different person to witness incognito.

They are still the same person they are not changed their being or their position, but they are travelling incognito.

Similarly, Jesus was eternally God, yet He came as a helpless babe but now He was declared with power as Son of God.

But the moment you come to the resurrection the glory comes back. The power return - Son of God with power now. That is what the resurrection declares.

What was veiled while He was here on earth, is now fully revealed. A proclamation!

So how important it is, then, that we should take these words in the right way. It is not a mere description of the power of the resurrection. Of course, the power of the resurrection is the power of God Himself. But what Paul is contrasting here is the form of a 'servant' and the form of 'God'.

A servant with apparently no power at all because of that He became a stumbling block to the Jews. The Jews said that 'How can that be the Messiah?' They took Him, arrested, condemned Him, and crucified Him in weakness.

The weakness was the offence, but now 'Son of God with power.'

'declared to be the Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness'.

It is a very interesting term 'according to the spirit of holiness'. It is the only time in the New Testament that this term is used at all.

So, we must be careful, therefore, to observe that it says the 'spirit of holiness', and not the 'Holy Spirit', for the very good reason that the term 'Holy Spirit' is reserved for the third blessed Person in the Holy Trinity.

But still the emphasis is upon 'spirit' - a spirit which is holy. A spirit of holiness does really mean a holy spirit- not the Holy Spirit, not a Person, but a spirit which is holy.

What does this mean?

Remember our parallelism and the contrast.

We can see that Paul is still carrying on in his mind.

V 3, concerning *His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh,*

- 'according to the flesh'.
- 'according to the spirit of holiness'

There are two sides of the contrast that he has employed.

Psalms 16:10, *For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.*

That is a Psalm written by David, and if you take it at its face value you would think that David is writing about himself but David is not doing that.

David is there writing as a prophet and prophesying about someone who is to come. Now that is the very thing which the Apostle Peter said in his sermon on the day of Pentecost at Jerusalem.

Acts 2:22-27, *“Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know—²³ Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death; ²⁴ whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not*

possible that He should be held by it.²⁵ For David says concerning Him: 'I foresaw the Lord always before my face, For He is at my right hand, that I may not be shaken. ²⁶ Therefore my heart rejoiced, and my tongue was glad; Moreover my flesh also will rest in hope. ²⁷ For You will not leave my soul in Hades, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.

Peter continued his sermon.

Acts 2:29-31, *Men and brethren, let me speak freely to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. ³⁰ Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, He would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne, ³¹ he, foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption.*

So, what the Apostle Paul is doing in this verse which we are considering is putting into one verse what Peter in his sermon said in a more extended form on the day of Pentecost. It is exactly the same thing.

The Apostle Paul makes use of exactly the same thing in his sermon at Antioch in Pisidia.

Acts 13:35-36, *Therefore He also says in another Psalm: 'You will not allow Your Holy One to see corruption.'³⁶ "For David,*

after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell asleep, was buried with his fathers, and saw corruption;

Exactly the same thing as the Apostle Peter was saying on the day of Pentecost. This surely gives us a hint as to how we are to expound this phrase 'according to the spirit of holiness'.

1 Peter 3:18, *For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit,*

Contrast:

What happened in the flesh and what happened in the Spirit?

- ✓ Put to death in flesh.
- ✓ Made alive in the Spirit.

The same contrast as we have in our verse.

1 Corinthians 15:45, *And so it is written, "The first man Adam became a living being." The last Adam became a life-giving spirit.*

1 Timothy 3:16, *And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh, Justified in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Preached among the Gentiles, Believed on in the world, Received up in glory.*

The same contrast again - flesh and spirit.

Paul is contrasting what was true of our Lord in the flesh with what is true of our Lord in the spirit.

- ✓ In the flesh He was made of the seed of David and came in weakness.
- ✓ In His spiritual being He is Son of God with power and that is proved by the resurrection.

Contrast:

- Our Lord had an existence in the flesh.
- Our Lord has an existence in the spirit.

His existence in the spirit is holy. Even while He was here, the spirit that was in Him was holy - it is the spirit of holiness.

What Paul means?

It is the contrast:

What He was as Son of man, and what He is as Son of God. This difference Paul brings out in terms of flesh and spirit. The spirit that was in Christ is the spirit of holiness. The three blessed persons in the Holy Trinity- their spirits are holy.

- ✓ The spirit of the Father is a spirit of holiness.
- ✓ The Holy Spirit is a spirit of holiness.

As regards His spirit of holiness, He is the Son of God; that is what makes Him Son of God.

Because He is the eternal Son of God, the spiritual part of Him is holy. So that, the parallelism works out quite perfectly.

In the flesh, of the seed of David.

In the spirit that spirit which is holy- Son of God with power.

The angel Gabriel went to Mary at the very beginning said it all in these words.

Luke 1:35, *And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.*

How He is always called, that holy thing?

You will not allow Your Holy One to see corruption.

The spirit that is in Him is holy. He is distinct from man. Our spirit is not holy.

His spirit is holy because He is Son of God. So, there is this perfect contrast then between what He was as the seed of David, and what He is as Son of God.

V 4, *and declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.*

Lord's resurrection as an isolated event.

Jesus rose!

Others are going to rise.

We shall rise because He rose.

He has inaugurated a resurrection from the dead, and that is what you find in the Scriptures.

Acts 26:23, *that the Christ would suffer, that He would be the first to rise from the dead, and would proclaim light to the Jewish people and to the Gentiles."*

Because Jesus is the first it implies that there are others to follow. We will be among the others.

Rising from the dead Jesus is the first. That is what Paul is saying. So instead of saying His resurrection from the dead, he uses the phrase, by arising from the dead, or arising of dead persons and He is the first one.

Romans 8:29, *For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.*

Apostle Paul puts the resurrection of our Lord in such a way that he includes our resurrection with it and he does not merely isolate it.

We, all of us who are Christians, are involved in it. It is this great rising that He has brought about.

Colossians 1:18, *And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.*

What Apostle Paul is saying is that it is the resurrection of our Lord, but it is the first in the series that He has inaugurated.

This is something which is of absolutely primary importance.

Paul was preaching in Athens, Greece.

Acts 17:30-31, *Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent,³¹ because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead."*

That is the assurance. That is the proof He has given that this is to be the Judge.

That is the demonstration, and that is what Paul is really saying here.

When the apostles went and preached saying the important things like, 'Jesus and the resurrection'.

Paul was preaching 'Jesus and the resurrection'.

That was the first preaching. They went everywhere and they preached the fact that Jesus, the carpenter of Nazareth, had risen from the dead, and thereby was proved to be the Son of God and the Messiah.

Paul, therefore, puts it here in this synopsis of doctrine at the beginning of the Epistle to the Romans.

- The Son of God who became the Son of man,
- He was crucified in weakness,
- He was then raised,
- He was declared to be the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead.

Why is this important?

The resurrection substantiates all the claims He ever made for Himself.

Jesus claimed to be the Son of God. The resurrection proves that He is.

Not only that. It fulfils the prophecies that He made concerning Himself.

Jews asked Jesus a sign in John.

John 2:18-22, *So the Jews answered and said to Him, "What sign do You show to us, since You do these things?"* ¹⁹ *Jesus answered and said to them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."* ²⁰ *Then the Jews said, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?"* ²¹ *But He was speaking of the temple of His body.* ²² *Therefore, when He had risen from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this to them; and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had said.*

Jesus was saying that if they did kill Him, He would rise again on the third day. He did it!

Follow the four Gospels through. We will notice that whenever He takes His disciples aside and prophesies to them of His death, He never does it without adding that He is going to rise again.

They did not understand it. They were so horrified at the thought of His death, that they did not hear Him saying that He would rise again. But He always said it.

Therefore, when He rose again, His prophecy was fulfilled; His words were verified. His claims were substantiated.

There would have been no gospel, if Jesus had remained in the grave, He would never have been the Son of God.

He would not have been our Saviour.

Here is the thing that proves to us that Jesus is, and that we are saved by Him, because He is the firstborn from the dead.

Have you forgotten Lazarus?

Lazarus was certainly brought back to life again, but he subsequently died, and was buried, and his body saw corruption in the grave. Lazarus was not resurrected but he was simply brought back to life. That is not resurrection.

The same is true of the daughter of Jairus.

The son of the Widow of Nain also was dead, and they were carrying him on a way to bury him. Our Lord met them, and He raised him up.

Even in the Old Testament to the cases of Enoch and of Elijah, who did not die but were carried to heaven that is not resurrection either, because they did not see death in this sense.

So that our Lord is the first to be 'risen from the dead'.

He is the first born from among the dead.

He is the firstborn among many brothers.

Therefore, the vital fact is that this is the ultimate proof and declaration that He is indeed the Son of God eternal.

Conclusion

How does the resurrection declare this?

What exactly happened there?

The important point is that we realize that this is not a statement to the effect that He was made the Son of God by the resurrection. He did not become the Son of God as the result of the resurrection. He was simply declared to be the Son of God by the resurrection.

There are people, unfortunately who like to say that Jesus achieved divinity. He was not always divine, but because He lived so perfectly in obedience to God, He achieved divinity. That is an absolute contradiction of what the Apostle is saying here.

He was made of the seed of David, according to the flesh; He was not made the Son of God with power by the resurrection but declared to be.

Psalm 2:6-7, *“Yet I have set My King On My holy hill of Zion.”* ⁷ *“I will declare the decree: The Lord has said to Me, ‘You are My Son, Today I have begotten You.*

It is a prophecy we can understand that by what Apostle Paul preached in Antioch in Pisidia.

Acts 13:32-33, *And we declare to you glad tidings—that promise which was made to the fathers.³³ God has fulfilled this for us their children, in that He has raised up Jesus. As it is also written in the second Psalm: ‘You are My Son, Today I have begotten You.’*

We will find that that same statement is quoted twice in Hebrews.

Hebrews 1:5, *For to which of the angels did He ever say: “You are My Son, Today I have begotten You”? And again: “I will be to Him a Father, And He shall be to Me a Son”?*

Hebrews 5:5, *So also Christ did not glorify Himself to become High Priest, but it was He who said to Him: “You are My Son, Today I have begotten You.”*

Psalm where God says, 'This day have I begotten You', and yet the Apostle Paul and the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews say that this is a reference to the resurrection. He became and was begotten as the Son of God on the day of resurrection.

Until then He was a man, but now He becomes Son of God?

Romans 1:4 What is this declaration?

John 17:5, *And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.*

Jesus is asking God to glorify Him. What He is asking for is that He may have back again the glory which He had with the Father before the world was, but which He has laid aside for the purpose of the incarnation and the saving work.

Jesus always was Son of God. He never ceased to be. But He did not appear to be. He asks for the glory back again, and He had it back. That is the statement which is made.

Philippians 2:9-11, *Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, ¹⁰that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, ¹¹and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

What happened in the resurrection is that He is re-installed into this position. He always was this but for the time being He ceased to exercise his prerogatives to appear as having them, but again He is reinstated, as it were, in a public declaration.

Illustration:

Almost like the coming of age of an heir.

There is a special celebration for that coronation.

When the heir of a great estate and of a great family comes of age there is a kind of proclamation, a statement, an announcement, and a banquet is given - a public declaration.

Of course, he has always been the heir, and the fact that he passes from one day to the next and makes no difference to him. But it is a formal occasion, and there is a declaration.

That is what happened in the resurrection.

He is put forward again before men and angels in heaven and earth and under the earth, as the Son of God with power, with this difference - that before the incarnation He was Son of God with power with all His glory, but He was not Son of man then. He is now Son of man and Son of God.

Before the incarnation it was God alone, but now He has taken this human nature and ourselves with Him into the glory, and He has been proclaimed Son of God with power. God and man - the God-Man. This is something new.

He has been installed, as it were, as Mediator. He has been 'declared'. He has been set forth by a mighty declaration.

So, when God look at the Son and tells Him today, I have begotten you then it is declaration from God's part to say that on this resurrection day I inaugurate you to be My eternal who had taken the nature of human nature to meditate between God and man forever. The whole universe is under Your control.

The Son could say, 'All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth'.

The kingdom is His until the work is completed, and then He will hand it back again to the Father.

That is the gospel of God. That is the message of salvation concerning His Son.

Paul says it all in these two verses:

concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh,⁴ and declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.