

WHO IS THIS MAN?

A Christological Study in Four Parts

Class 1 — Son of David

The Royal Thread from Bethlehem to the Empty Tomb

Week One — December 27, 2026

PRIMARY TEXTS

Old Testament: 2 Samuel 7:1–17; Psalm 89:1–4, 19–37, 38–45; Psalm 110:1–4; Isaiah 11:1–10; Jeremiah 23:5–6; Zechariah 6:12–13; 2 Kings 25:27–30

New Testament: Matthew 1:1; 20:29–34; 22:41–46; Romans 1:1–4; Revelation 22:16

**Our Saviour Lutheran Church
Baltimore, Maryland**

Questions/Teacher's Edition — scottjones@comcast.net

Opening Prayer

O Lord Jesus Christ, Son of David and Son of the living God, who in the fullness of time was born of the Virgin Mary to inherit the throne of Your father David: open our hearts to the ancient promise and to its glorious fulfillment. Teach us to see Your kingship where the world sees only a carpenter and a cross. Give us the faith of the blind men who called on You by name, and keep us from the blindness of those who had the Scriptures and missed the King. Reign in us by Your Word, that we may confess You as the King whose reign shall have no end; who with the Father and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, now and forever. Amen.

I. Opening and Framing

The Most Politically Dangerous Thing You Can Say About Jesus

To call a man the Son of David in first-century Judea was to say that the throne belonged to him and not to the man currently sitting on it. Herod understood this perfectly, which is why a

question from foreign astrologers about a newborn king emptied the nursery of Bethlehem. The title is a claim about who rules, and Rome executed people over claims about who rules. Modern ears hear it differently. Set beside “Son of God,” the phrase “Son of David” can sound like the modest half of the confession, a genealogical footnote establishing that Jesus had the right ancestors. This session argues the opposite. The royal title is the backbone of messianic expectation, every later title assumes it, and the question Jesus Himself asked about it is the one that silenced the sharpest minds in Jerusalem.

Discussion Question

If the Messiah is David’s son, why does David call Him “my Lord”? And what kind of king turns out to be sitting on the throne God promised?

1. Before we open a text, say what the phrase “Son of David” has meant to you in the past. Has it functioned as a statement about Jesus’ ancestry, about His office, or about His identity? What would change in your reading of the Gospels if the title turned out to be a claim about all three at once?

The series begins here for a reason. Every title that follows assumes and transforms this one. The Messiah is a king; the four weeks ahead ask what kind of king, and the answer will lead us to a throne no one expected.

Key Vocabulary

Mashiach (מָשִׁיחַ): “anointed one,” rendered in Greek as Christos. In the Old Testament it names kings, priests, and once a Persian emperor; by the first century it had narrowed to the expected deliverer from David’s line.

Bayit (בַּיִת): “house.” The pivot word of 2 Samuel 7, meaning both a building and a dynasty, and carrying the whole reversal of the oracle in a single syllable.

Zera’ (זֶרַע): “seed, offspring.” Grammatically singular and semantically flexible, which is why Paul can build an argument on the fact that the promise was spoken to a seed and not to seeds.

Netser (נֶצֶר): “branch, shoot.” Isaiah’s word for the new growth out of the felled stump of Jesse, and the likely wordplay behind Matthew’s note that Jesus would be called a Nazarene.

Ner (נֵר): “lamp.” The image the book of Kings uses for what God preserved of David’s house through six centuries of failure: not a throne, but a light left burning.

II. The Original Gift — The Covenant with David: 2 Samuel 7:1–17

Before the title can mean anything, we have to see what God actually promised, and to whom.
Read 2 Samuel 7:1–17 aloud.

2 Samuel 7:5–7 (ESV)

“Go and tell my servant David, ‘Thus says the LORD: Would you build me a house to dwell in? I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent for my dwelling. In all places where I have moved with all the people of Israel, did I speak a word with any of the judges of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, “Why have you not built me a house of cedar?”’”

2 Samuel 7:12–16 (ESV, abridged)

“I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son. When he commits iniquity, I will discipline him with the rod of men, with the stripes of the sons of men, but my steadfast love will not depart from him... And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me. Your throne shall be established forever.”

Key Hebrew Terms:

Bayit (בַּיִת): “house.” The word carries five senses at once: a household, a family dwelling, the tabernacle or temple as God’s house, a royal palace, and a royal dynasty. It appears six times in God’s oracle and seven more times in David’s answering prayer.
Zera’ (זֶרַע): “seed, offspring.” Grammatically singular, and here the implied subject of a chain of singular verbs: he will come out, he will build, he will be.
‘Olam (עוֹלָם): “forever, perpetuity.” The word does not by itself mean endless duration; it can mean an age of finite length. Context decides, and this context stretches the word past every king who ever sat on the throne.

David has taken Jerusalem, brought the ark inside its walls, and settled into a palace of cedar. His proposal to build the LORD a house looks like piety, and Nathan approves it on the spot without consulting God. That night the LORD reverses the whole arrangement. Watch the word “house” as the oracle moves: David wants to build one, God refuses to receive one, and God builds one instead.

2. God asks David a question that expects the answer no: “Would you build me a house to dwell in?” He then observes that in all the centuries since Egypt He has never once asked any leader of Israel for a cedar house. In the surrounding nations a king built his god a temple and thereby

made himself the god's patron, with the palace above the temple and the king above the priest. What does God's refusal establish about who is the patron and who is the servant in Israel, and why must that be settled before any promise is given?

3. The oracle turns on one word. David proposes a bayit for God, and God announces a bayit for David, using the same noun in two different senses within a single sentence. The Hebrew even fronts the object for emphasis: a house is what the LORD will make for you. What does the reversal say about the difference between what we offer God and what God gives us, and how does a God who declines a house of cedar in order to inhabit a family line prepare us for a God who takes flesh?

4. The promised offspring is Solomon in the first instance: he came from David's body, he built the temple, and he sinned and was disciplined. Yet the same oracle says his throne will stand 'olam, and it says that God's steadfast love will never leave him as it left Saul. Every Davidic king died, and the dynasty ended in the ruins of 586/587 BC. At what point does a promise like this stop being satisfiable by any son born in the ordinary way?

III. What the House Lost — From the King's Chapel to the Fallen Booth

The dynasty God promised to build was dismantled by the men who inherited it.

Read 1 Kings 2:1–4 and Psalm 89:38–45 aloud.

1 Kings 2:4 (ESV)

"...that the LORD may establish his word that he spoke concerning me, saying, 'If your sons pay close attention to their way, to walk before me in faithfulness with all their heart and with all their soul, you shall not lack a man on the throne of Israel.'"

Psalm 89:38–39 (ESV)

"But now you have cast off and rejected; you are full of wrath against your anointed. You have renounced the covenant with your servant; you have defiled his crown in the dust."

Key Hebrew Terms:

Chesed (חֶסֶד): "steadfast love, covenant loyalty." The quality God pledges never to withdraw from David's line, and the quality the psalmist accuses Him of withdrawing.

'Emunah (אֱמוּנָה): "faithfulness, reliability." Paired with chesed through the opening of Psalm 89 and named again in its complaint. From the same root as the word "amen."

Historical Context

Solomon built the temple and then built himself a palace complex around it, and the house of God became one wing among the royal buildings, in effect the king's chapel. By the end of his reign he had enshrined the gods of his foreign wives on the hills east of Jerusalem. The dynasty then split, and the southern kings alternated between reform and apostasy until Manasseh, whose reign the book of Kings treats as the point of no return. Four kings followed the death of Josiah, and none of them lasted. Nebuchadnezzar took Jerusalem, burned the temple, blinded Zedekiah after killing his sons, and carried the survivors to Babylon. No descendant of David has reigned in Jerusalem since.

Psalms 89 is the strangest poem in the Psalter on this subject. Thirty-seven verses celebrate the covenant with David in language nearly as strong as Nathan's oracle, and then the psalm falls off a cliff. The crown is in the dust, the walls are breached, and the psalmist tells God to His face that He has renounced His own covenant. The psalm ends with the accusation still standing.

5. At the succession, David charges Solomon with a promise that has an "if" in it: walk faithfully, and you will not lack a man on the throne. The oracle of 2 Samuel 7 had no such condition attached to the house itself. What is the difference between the throne in Jerusalem, which the kings could forfeit, and the house of David, which God swore never to reject, and why does keeping the two distinct matter for reading everything that follows?

6. Solomon fulfilled the promise by building the temple, and then undid the very reversal that made the promise possible, since the house of God became a chapel inside the king's complex and eventually stood alongside shrines to other gods. Where does the church face the same drift, treating the sanctuary as an asset of the institution rather than the place where God serves us with His gifts?

7. Psalm 89 spends thirty-seven verses on God's oath and then says the crown lies in the dust. The psalm does not resolve. It ends with the complaint unanswered and the covenant apparently broken. Is this a failure of faith, or is it faith at its most exposed, holding God to a promise the evidence has flatly contradicted? What does it cost to pray this way?

8. The two words the psalm repeats are *chesed* and *'emunah*, God's covenant loyalty and His reliability, and the psalmist uses them as the ground of his complaint: You said this, and look. When a congregation has been given a promise and the visible facts run the other way, what is the difference between praying Psalm 89 and abandoning the promise altogether?

IV. The Prophetic Word — David's Lord, David's Priest, David's Branch

The prophets and the psalms do not shrink the promise to fit the ruins; they enlarge it past anything a son of David could be.

Read Psalm 110:1–4; Isaiah 11:1–10; Jeremiah 23:5–6; and Zechariah 6:12–13 aloud.

Psalm 110:1, 4 (ESV)

“The LORD says to my Lord: ‘Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool.’ ... The LORD has sworn and will not change his mind, ‘You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.’”

Isaiah 11:1–3 (ESV, abridged)

“There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit. And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD... He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide disputes by what his ears hear.”

Jeremiah 23:5–6 (ESV)

“Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land... And this is the name by which he will be called: ‘The LORD is our righteousness.’”

Key Hebrew Terms:

Ne’um YHWH la’adoni (נְאֻם יְהוָה לַאֲדֹנָי): “the LORD declares to my lord.” Two different words for lord: the first is the covenant name of God, the second is the title David gives to his own descendant.

Kohen le’olam (כֹּהֵן לְעוֹלָם): “a priest forever.” Sworn with an oath, and to a man of the tribe of Judah, which under the law of Moses had no priests in it at all.

Choter (חֹתֶר) and netser (נֶצֶץ): “shoot” and “branch.” Two words for new growth out of a geza’, a stump, which is what is left when a tree has been cut down.

Tsemach (צֶמַח): “Branch, sprout.” Jeremiah’s and Zechariah’s word for the same figure, used as a title rather than an image.

Tsedeq (צֶדֶק) and mishpat (מִשְׁפָּט): “righteousness” and “justice.” The two marks of the Branch’s rule, and the pair that names what the historical kings failed to deliver.

Three prophetic witnesses stand between the ruined dynasty and the manger, and each one enlarges the promise rather than trimming it. The psalm seats the king at God’s own right hand and makes him a priest by divine oath. Isaiah admits that the tree has been cut down and promises growth from the stump. Jeremiah and Zechariah give the coming king a name and an office that no son of David had ever held together.

9. A. PSALM 110. The first line of the psalm has two lords in it. Yahweh speaks to a second figure whom David calls 'adoni, my lord, and invites Him to sit at the divine right hand. In a culture ordered by descent, a father does not address his own descendant as his superior. Jesus put this in front of the Pharisees as a riddle and they could not answer it. What has to be true about the Messiah for David to speak this way, and what does the riddle rule out?

10. A. PSALM 110. The invitation is to sit, and sitting at the right hand is the posture of shared rule rather than of waiting. The New Testament quotes or alludes to this single verse more often than any other passage in the Old Testament. Why would the apostolic church reach for a seated king so persistently when it was preaching a crucified one?

11. A. PSALM 110. Verse 4 makes the king a priest by divine oath, and the order named is Melchizedek, the priest-king of Salem who met Abraham centuries before Levi existed. Under the law of Moses the offices were kept strictly apart: Uzziah entered the temple to burn incense and left it a leper. Why can the Messiah hold both offices without violating the law, and why does salvation require someone who holds both?

12. A. PSALM 110. The letter to the Hebrews devotes three chapters to this one verse and argues that Jesus became a priest not by physical descent but by the power of an indestructible life, and that God swore an oath about this priesthood and swore none about the Levitical one. What does an oath add to a promise, and what does it mean for us that this particular office was sworn?

13. B. ISAIAH 11. Isaiah does not promise a branch from the tree of David; he promises a shoot from the stump of Jesse. A stump is what remains after the axe. Isaiah also reaches back past David to David's father, an ordinary Bethlehemite with no throne and no palace. Why does the prophet name Jesse rather than David, and what does the stump say about the condition of the promise at the moment it is fulfilled?

14. B. ISAIAH 11. The Hebrew word for branch in verse 1 is netser, and Matthew ends his infancy account by saying that Jesus settled in Nazareth so that the word spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled, "He shall be called a Nazarene." The commentators are divided over how direct the wordplay is. If the connection holds, what is the effect of the Messiah's hometown carrying the vocabulary of a shoot out of a stump?

15. B. ISAIAH 11. The Spirit rests on this king and equips him with wisdom, understanding, counsel, might, knowledge, and the fear of the LORD, and then Isaiah says he will not judge by what his eyes see. That sentence quotes the day Samuel anointed David, when God rejected the tall brother and said that man looks at the outward appearance while the LORD looks at the heart. What kind of justice becomes possible when the judge cannot be deceived by appearances, and why is that comforting rather than terrifying for a sinner?

16. B. ISAIAH 11. The wolf lies down with the lamb, the child plays over the viper's hole, and no one hurts or destroys on all God's holy mountain. This reverses the curse of Genesis 3 and

reads like Eden restored. The Church confesses that the kingdom has already come in Christ and has not yet been consummated. Where do we actually see this peace now, and what damage is done by claiming either too much of it or too little?

17. C. THE BRANCH PROPHETS. Jeremiah promises a righteous Branch for David and then gives Him a name: “The LORD is our righteousness.” The name of the coming king contains the covenant name of God and assigns His righteousness to us rather than describing His own conduct. How does a royal title become a statement about the source of our standing before God?

18. C. THE BRANCH PROPHETS. Zechariah watches a crown placed on the head of Joshua the high priest and hears that the Branch “shall be a priest on his throne, and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.” The two offices that Uzziah could not combine are here fused in one man. Put Zechariah beside Psalm 110 and Jeremiah: what portrait of the coming son of David have the prophets assembled by the time the Old Testament closes?

V. History Vindicates the Promise — The Lamp That Would Not Go Out

The dynasty was cut off in fact and preserved in promise, and the book of Kings ends by showing you the difference.

Read 1 Kings 11:36 and 2 Kings 25:27–30 aloud.

2 Kings 25:27–29 (ESV, abridged)

“And in the thirty-seventh year of the exile of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month... Evil-merodach king of Babylon, in the year that he began to reign, graciously freed Jehoiachin king of Judah from prison. And he spoke kindly to him and gave him a seat above the seats of the kings who were with him in Babylon. So Jehoiachin put off his prison garments. And every day of his life he dined regularly at the king’s table.”

The book of Kings ends with a paragraph that looks like an afterthought and is not. Jerusalem is ash, the temple is gone, and the last king of Judah is a prisoner in a foreign capital. Then the prison door opens, the prison clothes come off, and the son of David eats at a king’s table for the rest of his life. The historian records no explanation and draws no moral. He simply puts the fact down and stops.

19. God had told Solomon’s rival that one tribe would remain to David’s son “so that David my servant may always have a lamp before me in Jerusalem,” and the book of Kings repeats the phrase at two later crises. A lamp is not a throne; it is the smallest possible sign that a house is still occupied. What does God preserve when He preserves a lamp, and what does He decline to preserve?

20. The last four verses of Kings show a released prisoner given a seat above the other kings and a place at the table for life. Nothing is said about a throne, a return, or a restoration. Given that

the exiles reading this had every reason to believe the promise had died with Zedekiah's sons, why would the historian end an entire history on so small a scene, and what were they meant to conclude from it?

VI. The Fulfillment — The Son of David Enthroned on a Cross

The King arrives, and everyone who recognizes Him is someone the world had already written off.

Read Matthew 1:1; Matthew 20:29–34; Matthew 22:41–46; Romans 1:1–4; and Revelation 22:16 aloud.

Matthew 22:43–45 (ESV)

“He said to them, ‘How is it then that David, in the Spirit, calls him Lord, saying, “The Lord said to my Lord, ‘Sit at my right hand, until I put your enemies under your feet’”? If then David calls him Lord, how is he his son?’”

Romans 1:3–4 (ESV)

“...concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord.”

Revelation 22:16 (ESV)

“I, Jesus, have sent my angel to testify to you about these things for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star.”

Key Greek Terms:

Biblos geneseos (βίβλος γενέσεως): “book of the genealogy,” the phrase that opens Genesis 2:4 and 5:1 in Greek. Matthew begins the New Testament with the first words of the Old.

Huios David (υἱὸς Δαβὶδ): “Son of David.” Nine times in Matthew, and never once on the lips of a scribe, a Pharisee, or a disciple.

Kata sarka (κατὰ σάρκα): “according to the flesh.” Not sinful nature here, but human existence in its frailty, and the sphere in which Jesus is David's descendant.

Horisthentos (ὁρισθέντος): “designated, appointed, marked out.” The verb does not mean “declared” in first-century Greek, and the word “in power” attached to it keeps the sentence from meaning that Jesus became God's Son at Easter.

Matthew opens the New Testament with a genealogy and a title, and the whole Old Testament promise stands behind the first seven words. The title then travels through his Gospel in a way no one expects. It is spoken by blind beggars, by a Canaanite woman with a demonized daughter, and by children in the temple courts. The scribes never use it, the Pharisees cannot answer for it, and Pilate finally posts it over a dying man in three languages.

21. Matthew's first line calls Jesus the son of David and the son of Abraham, in that order, and the phrase he uses for "book of the genealogy" is the phrase that opens Genesis. First-century Jewish interpretation had already run the two promises together, the seed of Abraham and the seed of David. What does Matthew accomplish by naming both, and why does a book about a Galilean carpenter begin with a list of names?

22. In Matthew the confession "Son of David" belongs to two blind men on a roadside, a Gentile woman whose daughter is tormented, and children shouting in the temple. The scribes, whom the crowd would have called the experts, never say it. Why does Matthew hand the right answer to people with no standing, and what does that pattern say about how faith actually arrives?

23. Jesus asks the Pharisees whose son the Christ is, and their answer, David's, is correct as far as it goes. He then quotes Psalm 110 and asks how David can call his own descendant Lord. No one answers Him a word. State the answer the Pharisees could not: how is one man both David's son and David's Lord, and what would be lost if either half were dropped?

24. Paul opens Romans with what many read as a creed the church was already reciting: descended from David according to the flesh, designated Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by the resurrection. The two clauses hold the two natures together in one sentence about one person. How does this keep the Church from reducing Jesus either to a political heir of David or to a divine figure with no real place in Israel's history?

25. The last chapter of the Bible has Jesus name Himself the root and the descendant of David: the source the family sprang from and the offspring the family produced. He is David's ancestor and David's heir at once. How does that single sentence answer the riddle of Matthew 22, and what does it say about the God who chose to enter His own creation through a family tree He Himself had planted?

26. The promise to David has been traced from a tent in Jerusalem to a cross outside its walls. Every son of David failed, the throne fell, and the stump stood empty for six centuries. Then a King reigned from a cross under a placard reading "King of the Jews," and the tomb could not hold Him. If Christ is the faithful son David never produced and the Lord David worshiped, does this study end with a throne we must earn a place beside, or with a King who has already made room for us? Explain the difference.

Synthesis and Closing

Text	Contribution to Session Theme	Key Term
2 Samuel 7:1–17	God refuses a house of cedar and builds David a dynasty instead; the promise outgrows every son born in the ordinary way.	Bayit
Psalms 89	The covenant is celebrated and then lamented; faith holds God to His oath while the crown lies in the dust.	Chesed
Psalms 110	The son of David is seated at God's right hand and sworn into a priesthood older than Levi.	Kohen le'olam
Isaiah 11:1–10	The tree is cut down and a shoot rises from the stump, endowed with the Spirit and judging by the heart.	Netser
2 Kings 25:27–30	The dynasty is cut off in fact and preserved in promise; the lamp is not extinguished.	Ner
Matthew 1:1; 22:41–46	The Son of David is confessed by outsiders and shown to be David's Lord.	Huios David
Romans 1:3–4; Revelation 22:16	One person, two natures: David's descendant according to the flesh, David's root and Lord.	Kata sarka

27. Judah believed that the temple in its midst and the covenant in its history made disaster impossible, and the leaders said so out loud while taking bribes. A congregation can hold the same conviction in gentler language: a long heritage, a full calendar, a building that has stood a century. Where are you tempted to treat something true about our church as a guarantee about yourself?

28. For six hundred years the faithful in Israel held a promise with no visible support, and the honest ones prayed Psalm 89 while they waited. Name something you are holding onto now where the promise and the evidence do not agree, and say what it would look like to wait for the God who kept His word to David.

Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of David and Lord of David, root of Jesse and branch from the stump: we praise You that Your throne endures forever, established not by the sword but by the cross. Grant us to hold Your promise when we cannot see it, to confess You with the blind and the outcast who saw what the learned missed, and to rejoice that the righteousness by which we stand carries Your own name. Preserve us in this confession until we see You reigning in glory. Amen.

Soli Deo Gloria

Appendix: Liturgical, Lectionary, and Hymnic Connections

Liturgical Connections

The Davidic promise runs through the daily offices. The Benedictus, sung at Matins, blesses God for raising up “a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David,” which is the language of Psalm 132 placed on the lips of a priest whose son will announce the Messiah. The Magnificat, sung at Vespers, ends on the promise made “to Abraham and to his offspring forever,” the same pairing of the two seeds that opens Matthew. In Advent the great O Antiphons address Christ as O Radix Jesse, O Root of Jesse, on 19 December and as O Clavis David, O Key of David, on 20 December, so that on two successive evenings the Church prays this session’s texts back to the Lord who fulfilled them.

Lectionary Connections

In the one-year lectionary, 2 Samuel 7 appears among the readings for the Fourth Sunday in Advent, the Sunday on which the Church turns from the coming judgment to the annunciation. Isaiah 11:1–10 is the Old Testament reading for the Second Sunday in Advent in the three-year series, paired with the preaching of John the Baptist. Psalm 110 is the appointed psalm for Ascension and returns on the last Sundays of the church year, and Jeremiah 23:5–6 is read on Advent 1 in Series C and again on Christ the King. Revelation 22:16 falls within the readings for the Seventh Sunday of Easter and for the final Sunday of the church year, which is where the series will eventually point.

Hymnic Connections

LSB 357: “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” — the metrical O Antiphons; stanza four is “O come, Thou Branch of Jesse’s tree,” which is Isaiah 11:1 sung.

LSB 359: “Savior of the Nations, Come” — Ambrose by way of Luther, on the descent of the King into our flesh.

LSB 384: “Of the Father’s Love Begotten” — confesses the eternal origin of the Son who enters the Davidic line, holding both halves of Romans 1:3–4 together.

LSB 331: “The Advent of Our King” — the King comes in humility, which is the shape of the whole session.

LSB 380: “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing” — “born to raise the sons of earth, born to give them second birth,” the root and the descendant in one line.

A note on dates. This series prints the fall of Jerusalem as 586/587 BC. The double date reflects a disagreement about how the regnal years were counted, not any doubt about the event itself.