

SEVENTH DAY



BAPTIST®

This Week in the Word

Forever, O LORD, your word is firmly fixed in the heavens. Ps 119:89.



God's Covenant with David **Study Scripture: 2 Samuel 7:1-6, 8-10, 12-16** **Lesson 8, November 21st, 2017.**

Key Verse

And your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. Your throne shall be established forever. 2 Samuel 7:16

INTRODUCTION

Our Study Text looks the picture of a man after God's own heart, a man in whom the Holy Spirit dwelt and who was open and willing to be taught by the Spirit and openly and without excuse repent when he left the path required by the Spirit.

This celebrated ruler of Israel was anointed by God to lead His people but he had to be brought through the school of hard knocks of life before he could finally be brought to a place of rest. In his life, which should quickly remind us of our own life as it pictures the life of the believer with all the warts and wrong attitudes, tempers, and hasty decisions without waiting on the will of God, we can see and learn many valuable lessons.

David, to whom God made great and precious promises, clearly pictures the life of every believer and hold up a mirror for us all. His history shows the call of God, (we believers are also called), his long struggles against many enemies to obtain and consolidate his kingdom, his worship and his victories, his failures and God's forgiveness. He was flawed and imperfect but our Text shows where his heart always was.

Today's text will focus on how God uses His power, His knowledge, His wisdom and His mercy to do good to and for His people.

The Scriptures teach us that God does everything good for those that walk uprightly, who lean on Him, trust Him and who wait on Him. God's Covenants then, is in a sense, God's job description. He makes up that job description and He signs it.

In 2 Samuel 7, we will see promises made to David, as well as to Solomon his son. There is also a promise that a descendent of David and Solomon will do something that is absolutely amazing.

It is important to note that the statements that God made here, has been referred to and amplified in the writings of some subsequent Old Testament prophets, as well as in the New Testament writings. From this, we clearly see that these words are absolutely true and had a tremendous messianic teaching.

Our Text today is so important, that we can never overestimate its value for David, for Israel and for all men. It is called the Davidic Covenant and seen as one of the great covenants of the Bible. This Covenant is firmly linked to the Abrahamic Covenant, amplifying that Covenant, and expanding it to show the importance of the promise of the Land, and the Seed who would have an eternal kingdom that would complete the plan of redemption.

This Covenant was established and guaranteed by God Himself. It is a gift to all mankind for the Lord God took the initiative in establishing all these covenants and guiding all the events toward the completion of the goal of God Himself. It is certain that mankind did not deserve these great promises. So God promises and He guarantees His promise.

The parallel account of the incident we will study today is found in 1 Chronicles 17.

Note that the transfer of the leadership from the house of Saul to the house of David had not been an easy one nor had it been peaceful. There had been much strife between the families. The northern tribes hesitated to recognize David's leadership and even after a long civil war and David moving his capital from Hebron to Jerusalem tensions remained which erupted again with disastrous consequences after David's death and the accession of his son to the throne.

David however finally achieved full authority in the kingdom and after conquering the previously thought unconquerable city of Zion made that his capital as God had wanted. He had attacked and destroyed the Ammonite and other kingdoms. He successfully attacked the Philistine enemy and re-established the worship that had seriously degenerated especially with the removal of the Ark of the Covenant from the Tabernacle and its capture by the Philistines and the disasters they suffered by having it in their territory.

The Ark of the Covenant was really the true center of the Mosaic Sanctuary, but for a long time its keeping place was empty of God's Mercy Seat.

It is very important to note the priority of David to bring the Ark to Zion, and to make this capital the central point of worship for the nation of Israel, and to have the High Priest with the Urim and Thummim close to him.

We remember that the Ark of God had finally been brought closer to David, from Gibeah to Jerusalem, after an ill-fated transfer attempt. We read of this ill-fated expedition in 2 Samuel 6:1-10.

David became very afraid of the Lord during this incident and pondered how he could bring the Ark closer to him in Jerusalem.

When it finally arrived in Jerusalem it remained in a tent as it always had been, and continued to be called the tent of meeting or the tabernacle. This kind of structure was perfectly suited to it being moved around, even though it now had been securely located in Jerusalem.

It is important that we do not provoke God by doing what we think is right irrespective of whether or not we are precisely following God's instructions. Sincerity in serving God is never enough. Things must be done in God's way to accomplish God's will. We must be diligent to correct our efforts and make peace with God. It is not God's job to follow our program and to do our pet projects no matter how nice they sound. It is our job to stay in close relationship with Him and to have the Holy Spirit lead us in His program.

But David had fought his enemies and had won and humbled them. But he wanted to do more for God because God had done so much for him. After bringing the Ark of the covenant home he therefore came up with another idea to please God.

THE TEXT

Verse 1. In the meantime David just like the other Canaanite kings had apparently built for his personal use an expensive, beautiful and ornate, elaborate house of cedar, a most expensive material.

David was probably still smarting from his painful encounter when he first tried to move the Ark, for he had learned to have a healthy respect for God.

Now that he had subdued all his enemies, it begun to bother him that he lived in palatial luxury, while the Ark of the Tabernacle, the central focus of all Israel, rested in a humble structure which consisted of only a frame covered animal skins. (See Exodus 26:14 which describes the structure).

So David was troubled by the thought that he lived in a nicer house than the Ark of the Covenant (1 Chronicles 17:1) and he wanted to do something about it. His mind seemed to have been fixed on a grand gesture. It sounded so good. How could this possibly be a bad idea!

But note that God's ways are not quite our ways. He thinks somewhat differently from us.

Obviously, David's heart was in the right place and he had been thinking how to please his God that has so preserved and blessed him.

Verses 2-3. His trusted spiritual advisor Nathan knew David's spiritual state. So when David expressed his desire to house God's Ark in more sumptuous quarters, Nathan quickly concurred to praise David's intentions. Here Nathan spoke as his friend and not as God's messenger.

Note the prophet's great compliment to David, "*The Lord is with thee*".

Nathan the prophet knew that God loved David, had called him, anointed him and kept him in the 'palms of his hands'. He also knew that Yahweh was the true love of David's life and that his Psalm 42 meant just what it said:

"As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God."

Note however that even good men do not always take into consideration all the elements involved in the will of God. Men are just too limited in their understanding of the mind of God.

Some believe that Nathan's response to David, good and reasonable though it seemed, was presumptuous. The prophet, they reason, answered according to human judgment and common sense; without asking for a word from the Lord.

One writer comments wisely:

"It is of the utmost importance that we should ever test our desires, even the highest and holiest of them, by His will. Work, excellent in itself, should never be undertaken, save at the express command of God. The passing of time will always vindicate the wisdom of the Divine will". (Morgan)

God now had to correct his two servants. He gave Nathan a direct revelation that very night vetoing David's proposal and putting both in their place. David's bright idea did not correspond to God's plan. God put a question to both men which called for a negative reply. It is interesting to note that in 1 Chronicles 17:4, God's response is stated as a flat decree: *"Thou shalt not....."* So the meaning of God's words was clear to all concerned.

God knew the desires of David's heart and that these desires toward him were good, and so God answered him in detail, explaining His heart and will.

This was one of those occasions when David should have gone to God and awaited an answer and Nathan should have sought God's counsel before advising David.

In response to David, God places this king in the proper position that he should have with respect to his God, by calling him his *"Servant"*. A "servant" normally waits for his Master's direction.

The acknowledgment also gives encouragement as well as assurance that a person is in God's favour and that that person is considered a child of God. It tells the world to whom David belonged.

God was being most gracious, for David's attitude was not to find out how little he could get away with doing for God, but how much he could do for God. This is the attitude of mind that believers should have. The only proviso is that we should get God's permission before we attempt to do things for him.

We can contrast David's heart with that of the rich fool in the Parable told by Jesus. That man was wealthy and he had flourished but his heart was concentrating on building bigger storehouses and enjoying his material wealth with no concern about God and what God wanted from him. But this rich fool was unlike David.

David stated in Psalm 132:

“Lord, remember David and all his afflictions; how he swore to the Lord, and vowed to the Mighty One of Jacob, ‘Surely I will not go into the chamber of my house, or go up to the comfort of my bed; I will not give sleep to my eyes or slumber to my eyelids, until I find a place for the LORD, a dwelling place to the Mighty One of Jacob’”.

Preeminent in David's mind were the interests of the Lord God. His wealth and position did not change the bent of his character. He was a man after God's own heart.

Are you like that? Ask yourself that serious question. Will you keep on trying to do the impossible, serving God and Mammon at the same time?

Even though he would not accept David's offer, God honoured David even while turning down his offer.

From the type of question God asked, David now knew that God did not want him to build a temple for Him.

The issue of the value of a temple has been a controversial one. Stephen in Acts 7 addressed this value of the temple as opposed to the tabernacle. He argued that God had given Israel the tabernacle, but the temple was David's idea.

He argued that the Creator did not need a Temple and did not ask for one, for He could not be confined to something that humans had built. This approach was aimed at pointing out that the then present leadership of Israel had not asked God for guidance. They had misinterpreted what the Temple stood for, had corrupted its worship, while at the same time misleading the nation.

Stephen argued that God had allowed the building of the Temple because David wanted it. It was really not God's idea. It wasn't that it was wrong but it wasn't God's idea. Clearly, David had found favor with God. But for Stephen obedience to God by the leadership was a key issue. This they had not done. They had disobeyed Moses and God.

Our chapter agrees with Stephen's argument. We should note that if something is not broken we should not try to fix it. We should be obedient to God in everything and wait on His timing. God can give victory over evil with whatever He provides. We really need nothing else.

Verses 4-7. God responded quickly and bluntly to His servants. He did not wait to correct them. We often wish God would act quickly to correct us and not let the consequences of our errors and our misunderstanding of His will pile up.

God gave the reasons to the prophet Nathan for His position. He would have to communicate His wishes to David. God said He had always preferred to live in a tent among His people, and so had never previously given any instructions to anyone to build a temple to house Him.

There is no question however that God gave unqualified approval to the eventual building of a permanent structure to house the Ark of the Covenant and which we call the Temple.

It is somewhat disingenuous to hold the position that simply because Israel often misbehaved and the Temple was destroyed twice, it meant that the Temple was a false institution. This extreme position gives a negative assessment of the perfect plan and perfect will of God. It also tends to perpetuate a hostile view of Israel and the institutions associated with that nation.

Zion and the House of God have a stellar history among God and His people. So will the Millennial Temple. (Psalm 5:7; 138:2; Ezekiel 40 through 46).

Clearly though and at the same time, we must never forget that our bodies are the temple of the Spirit. Believers together are to be regarded as constituents of a building of God. (1 Corinthians 3:16; 6:19; 2 Corinthians 6:16; Ephesians 2:20-22; 1 Peter 2:5).

In this building is Christ the Head, and He dwells in our hearts (Ephesians 3:17).

God however emphasizes that no blame or negligence could be attached to any previous leader for not building a temple for Him. God was simply not yet ready.

Verse 8. So God, the real King and the real initiator and provider of salvation, and the only one to whom worship and gratitude is due, continues by spelling out from where He had taken David, reminding him of his origins and the great things that He had done for him. David had been stuck in the sheepcote, i.e. the sheep pen. He was a herdsman, a shepherd, a not so glorious position. Note David's brother's reaction and derogatory or sneering description of his job when David came to view the conflict with Goliath in 1 Samuel 17:28.

God was with David and did all this for him from early in his life. His promotion from looking after sheep to being ruler over "*My People*", was a most glorious and auspicious promotion. Nothing like that could ever be matched. No CEO of any large multinational corporation could compare their success with that experienced by David.

God saw to it that David started out in this occupation in order to keep David humble before Him. God was reminding him that humility was important.

He is similarly teaching us a lesson, so that we should remain humble despite all the gifts that God might bestow on us, such as wealth, fame and power.

Verse 9. God assures David that He has always been with him. He had been with him from his humble origins in the field looking after the sheep, to his triumph over Goliath. God was with him in his many trials with Saul, or in putting Israel together as a nation and fighting off other nations so that he might enjoy the peace he now had.

In reciting what he had done, and what he was doing, God was setting the stage for telling him what he would do for him in future.

God made David aware that he had always been protecting and preserving David, and also prospering him and having him succeed everywhere and in everything that he had done. To that end all of David's enemies, which were then God's enemies, had fallen to the side. Saul, the Philistines, and any other enemies around David and Israel had been laid low.

In accomplishing these feats, God had now made a great name for David. Throughout all the lands around he was now known as a mighty King, a mighty warrior, conqueror and most important and significant, Servant of the Almighty God. In this God had accomplished His purpose and intention.

God now promises David a dynasty, otherwise called a house, and a great name

Verse 10. Now God begins to speak of the future and states a promise to David. God promises David to set Israel in a place where they would call their own; where only their people would live and permanent, secure Israel.

It is God who had picked a place for Israel, and it is God who had taken them and planted them in the place He had chosen. It is God who will nurture and protect Israel from all enemies that surrounded them. These promises were made to Israel, and they were made in this extremely important revelation to David.

This was done so that David could realize that all that God had done was for the greater glory of Israel and for mankind. This was done so that they Israel would be happy under the administration of God and under the leadership of David. Under David, God would bring about a permanent, secure Israel, free from the influence of neighbors and of wars begun by their enemies. The wicked would no longer afflict them.

This is quiet, undisputed, permanent, glorious possession. It prefigures the 'rest' for the saints which will eventually be given by God. This 'rest' for the saints would be brought about by a descendant of David, says the Prophets and Apostles.

Israel would understand thereby that David, a godly shepherd, was concerned about the welfare of his people and had been prepared by God for this role.

David and Israel would moreover understand that it was God who gave David all that he had. Now God would give David and the nation much more. See the following and other passages for explicit reemphasis on these promises.

(Isaiah 27:13; 33: 20; 40:2; 49:22; 60:1-22; Ezekiel 20:40 etc).

The question arises as to whether or not these promises have yet been fulfilled, but it seems clear that this is a promise to be fulfilled in its completion, at some point in the future.

It is to be noted that the messianic promises deal with these Davidic Covenant promises. They tell us that fulfillment will occur in the coming Kingdom of God when Jesus subdues God's enemies and initiates His millennial reign on earth.

Verse 11. To ensure that David understands the continuity in God's actions, God goes back to the time of the judges, a time when Israel passed through successive cycles of apostasy, repentance, supplication, and then deliverance because of the mercy of God.

God reminds David through His prophet that He God had watched over Israel through all of this, and had now appointed him, preserved him and had brought him the freedom and the rest which he currently enjoyed. There would in future be a time of peace for Israel.

Obviously, God would not be speaking of the current time as the time of final fulfillment, for David's kingdom and government still faced challenges, and peace was not yet complete. There was a glorious future ahead however, for God was behind Israel.

The stage was now set for God to reveal the essence or core of the Davidic Covenant. God knew that David had it in his heart to build a palatial house for Him, but God in His own heart had determined to build David an enduring house, that is, an enduring dynasty.

This is of course a much more significant gift than the gift of a beautiful, material house for God that David offered.

This was a house and a leadership that was enduring. This was a most glorious promise. Obviously if a king is promised a permanent dynasty in the context of making the nation permanent and secure from all its enemies, this would immediately bring to mind the Abrahamic promises or Covenant. So David knew that he was into something absolutely astounding.

So David in Psalm 89 spelled for us the implications of this short sentence. When we looked at the implications of the promise of a permanent royal house, we know that we are involved in examining the blessings of the covenant to the 'Fathers'.

In the succeeding verses 12 through 16, God spells out the details concerning this house that God will build.

We note that like many prophecies, this one has a near or almost immediate fulfillment, as well as a distant fulfillment. It deals with David's physical offspring that will follow him on the throne, so David knows there would be a "now" benefit for his hereditary monarchy, and then the promise deals with his offspring that will ultimately sit on the throne. Through his "seed" the promises to Abraham would be fulfilled.

This covenant therefore builds on the preceding covenants:

-**the Adamic covenant** and the promise where God said He would send a Deliverer to remove the curse from the earth

-**the Noahic covenant** where God blessed Noah and his sons, and promised never again to destroy the earth and its living creatures with a flood,

-**the covenant with Abraham** where God promises Abraham and his descendants three things, namely, land, seed, and blessing

- **the Mosaic covenant** where the nation of Israel grew out of Abraham's descendants and where God demanded that Israel love only Him (Deuteronomy 6:4-5) with blessings for obedience and cursing's for disobedience and goes all the way down history to the establishment of God's reign on earth. (Daniel 2:44-45).

Verse 12. David is now told that when he dies God will ensure that his son will inherit his throne. This was of course an important promise and reassurance, for God had stated that the family of Saul, the first King of Israel, would become totally extinct, with none of his descendants ever assuming the throne. David would certainly not want his house to suffer the same fate.

There would be a "house" of David, that is, a dynasty in the lineage of David. This is one of the significant ideas in this Covenant. So here God is saying that someone out of his "bowels" would sit on the throne and His kingdom would be established.

Verse 13. The first and immediate descendant of David would build a temple for God. David would not build that Temple.

The promise comes again that the throne of David would be established and would continue forever. His royal line would last.

The idea of a "throne" is a very significant one. It speaks of the authority of a King's rule. So we are told that a King would come and he would have authority and power to rule.

Then we are told of this other significant concept, that of "forever". This emphasizes the eternal and unconditional nature of the promise to David and Israel.

These are all momentous ideas for David, that of a "house", a "kingdom", a "throne", and all described as "forever".

This of course fits in with the reaffirmation of the promise of the land made in the two covenants with Israel, namely, the Abrahamic as well as the Mosaic covenant.

We have a secure, permanent occupation of the promised land, and now a permanent forever "seed" of David. A descendent of David would always be available to sit on the royal throne, specifically the throne established for ever.

Note that the certainty that these promises would be fulfilled rests on God's faithfulness. The certainty of fulfillment does not really have much to do with David's or Israel's obedience, even though we are told that there are consequences for disobedience.

So in this covenant we begin to understand that God's promises to Abraham and the Patriarchs, and those in the teachings of Moses, will now be fulfilled. They would be fulfilled through this "one" that will come through the lineage of David, from the tribe of Judah (Genesis 49 prophecy of Jacob), and he will establish a kingdom that would endure forever.

The Scriptures of course teach that this one is the Lord Jesus Christ, the Messiah.

Verse 14. The immediate descendant of David who would build the “house” for God would be called God's son.

This is an adoption formula, on which all believers rely, and it means that the “son” would have a special relationship with God. By saying that God would be his Father, it is expressly stated by God that he would not reject him when he sins, which he apparently would do. God would then chasten him without rejecting him.

It is because they are Yahweh's sons that both David and his descendants would enjoy the provisions of the covenant, and David was certain that the terms of the covenant of God would never be withdrawn.

Sinning was serious, and David realized this. So when after this he sinned with Bathsheba he had no rest or peace until Nathan came to him as recorded in chapter 12.

Verse 15. It is made clear that the son or sons of David that commit iniquity will be punished, but God would have mercy on them. He would not put them away nor wipe out his relationship with those in the line of David, as he did with Saul. That sad King died out of favor with God and his royal line became extinct. When Solomon sinned, the kingdom was split in punishment for his idolatry and misbehavior. When the other descendants of David sinned they too were punished, and finally the nation went into exile.

The comment about committing iniquity of course is not a reference to that ultimate and final perfect “son” that would sit on the throne of David. The many prophecies of Isaiah and others make that clear. See Isaiah 53 as one example. The only chastisement that this one would suffer is the *chastisement of our peace, for by his stripes we are healed*. This one would have never sinned or committed iniquity. He is the perfect “Servant of Jehovah”.

This of course makes Romans 8:18-23 have special meaning for us who have come to faith in Jesus Christ and become the “sons” of God. ‘Sonship’ is an important concept for all believers, for it explains why we are so blessed by God.

Hebrews 12 tells us, sonship introduces us to the discipline of the Father when we go astray. Discipline, though unpleasant, tells us we are the sons of God.

Verse 16. This verse then summarizes the terms or promises of the Covenant.

Verse 17. Here Nathan the prophet was faithful in telling David what God had told him in a vision. He did not flinch from telling his earthly king the full truth. This is an example that the men of God should follow.

CONCLUSION

Note how God treats His servants gently when they err because their heart is fixed on Him. When they do not desire glory for themselves, +placing themselves before the honour and glory of God, God will do well with His /servants.

The Davidic covenant had immediate as well as far-reaching implications. It speaks about the time when David's son would bring peace and justice to every one, especially to his faithful disciples. The provisions of the covenant show us God's plan. God was unfolding His plan. So now that we have learned about the covenant with David, we better understand Jeremiah 23:5-6. *“Behold, the days are coming, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that they shall no more say, The Lord liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; But, the Lord liveth, which brought up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the North country, and from all countries whither I have driven them; and they shall dwell in their own land.”*

And again:

“For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful , Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.”

We see the fulfillment of all this in Luke 1:31-33.

Jesus Christ does reign on David's throne forever, and he is now building a magnificent house, putting together the temples of God for God's glory and honor and praise.