

Lesson Text

2 Samuel 7:1-6, 8-10, 12-16 (NIV)

¹ After the king was settled in his palace and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies around him, ² he said to Nathan the prophet, “Here I am, living in a house of cedar, while the ark of God remains in a tent.”

³ Nathan replied to the king, “Whatever you have in mind, go ahead and do it, for the LORD is with you.”

⁴ But that night the word of the LORD came to Nathan, saying:

⁵ “Go and tell my servant David, ‘This is what the LORD says: Are you the one to build me a house to dwell in? ⁶ I have not dwelt in a house from the day I brought the Israelites up out of Egypt to this day. I have been moving from place to place with a tent as my dwelling.’”

⁸ “Now then, tell my servant David, ‘This is what the LORD Almighty says: I took you from the pasture, from tending the flock, and appointed you ruler over my people Israel. ⁹ I have been with you wherever you have gone, and I have cut off all your enemies from before you. Now I will make your name great, like the names of the greatest men on earth. ¹⁰ And I will provide a place for my people Israel and will plant them so that they can have a home of their own and no longer be disturbed. Wicked people will not oppress them anymore, as they did at the beginning.’”

¹² “When your days are over and you rest with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, your own flesh and blood, and I will establish his kingdom. ¹³ He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. ¹⁴ I will be his father, and he will be my son. When he does wrong, I will punish him with a rod wielded by men, with floggings inflicted by human hands. ¹⁵ But my love will never be taken away from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you. ¹⁶ Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever.”

Today’s Lesson Aims

- **Learning Fact:** To summarize the key points in God’s covenantal promise to David.
- **Biblical Principle:** To explain how Jesus brings that promise to its ultimate fulfillment.
- **Daily Application:** To express a personal desire to serve God and be open to His plans.

Power Hour Lesson
Summary for
October 22, 2017

“God’s Covenant with David”

Lesson Text:
2 Samuel 7:1-6, 8-10,
12-16

Background Scripture:
2 Samuel 7:1-16;
Psalm 89: 1
Chronicles 22:6-8

Devotional Reading:
Psalm 89:1-15

INTRODUCTION

Lasting Legacies

Presidents of the United States have many avenues for leaving legacies. One such is by means of the Presidential Libraries Act of 1955. This act established a system of libraries operated and maintained by the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). At the beginning of 2016, the 13 presidential libraries that are maintained by the NARA contained over 400 million pages of printed materials, about 10 million photographs, over 15 million feet of motion-picture film, and nearly 100,000 hours of audio and video recordings.

It's natural to want to leave our mark on earth in some lasting way. King David himself had a plan as to how he would do that. But the fact that he had "shed blood abundantly" as a "man of war" (1 Chronicles 22:8; 28:3) meant that God had a different idea.

LESSON BACKGROUND

Time: about 1000 B.C.

Place: Jerusalem

David was in very ordinary surroundings when Samuel came to Bethlehem to anoint a replacement for King Saul. The youngest of eight brothers, David's viability as a candidate to be king was not seriously considered by his father, so Samuel pushed the issue: after none of David's seven brothers proved to be God's chosen, David was sent for and anointed as Israel's next king (1 Samuel 16:1-13).

After Saul's death, David became king of only the tribe of Judah, which he ruled for seven and a half years. When Saul's son Ishbosheth was murdered, the way became clear for David to become king over the entire nation (2 Samuel 5:1-5). David proceeded to conquer the city of Jerusalem and bring the ark of the covenant there (5:6-10; 6:12-23). He also defeated the Philistines who had been a thorn in Israel's side for some time (5:17-25).

While the above achievements were steps David took to solidify his reign, the lesson text records what God did to solidify that reign in a way David never could have imagined.

Plan Denied: 2 Samuel 7:1-6

1. What concern did David voice to the Prophet Nathan? (2 Samuel 7:1-2)

That David wanted to build a house for the Lord doesn't surprise us, because David was a man after God's own heart and longed to honor the Lord in every possible way. During his years of exile, David had vowed to the Lord that he would build Him a temple (Psalm 132:1-5), and his bringing the Ark to Jerusalem was surely the first step toward fulfilling that vow. Now it troubled David that he was living in a comfortable house with cedar

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paneling while God's throne was in a tent (2 Samuel 6:17; 1 Chronicles 16:1), and he shared his burden with Nathan the prophet.

To David, this is just not right! The Ark of the Covenant represents the presence of Israel's true king, the Lord God Almighty, with His people. David realizes that the Lord deserves better than this.

2. What was Nathan's initial reaction to David's desire to build a house for the Lord? (2 Samuel 7:3)

Nathan's initial reaction is to agree wholeheartedly with David. One gets the impression that Nathan does not consult the Lord at all. He seems to assume that the idea is a good one; what could be wrong with building such a structure for the Lord?

3. How did the Lord respond to Nathan's approval of David's plans? (2 Samuel 7:4-5)

Nathan has spoken in haste. His earlier words of approval were his own, not the Lord's, and the Lord revealed His will to Nathan "that night."

God told Nathan to tell David, "Are you the one to build me a house to dwell in?"

Years later at the dedication of the temple, King Solomon will recall what the Lord had told David about his desire to build a house for the ark: "You did well to have it in your heart to build a temple for my Name" (2 Chronicles 6:8). David's intentions are good, but it is not God's desire that he should be the one to carry out this noble task.

4. How did God feel about His dwelling place throughout Israel's history before the building of the temple? (2 Samuel 7:6)

For God to have the kind of house that David desires to build has never really been high on God's list of priorities. To this point the tabernacle and the tent that covered it, as prescribed by God to Moses centuries earlier (Exodus 26), have sufficed.

At the dedication of the temple, Solomon, David's son, will cite the words of the verse before us (see 1 Kings 8:16). He then will note in the same verse that while God was not concerned about choosing a city in which to dwell, He was concerned about choosing a person. This is what the Lord addresses in the next part of His message given through Nathan.

Past Described: 2 Samuel 7:8-10

5. What did God remind David of? (2 Samuel 7:8-9)

The Lord calls attention to what He has done for David. David did not work himself up from the position of shepherd to become king of Israel. Rather, it was God who took him

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from *tending the flock* and set him apart to become an infinitely greater kind of shepherd: *ruler over my people, over Israel* (compare Psalm 78:70, 71).

When Samuel anointed David to be king of Israel, “from that day on the Spirit of the Lord came powerfully upon David” (1 Samuel 16:13). Not long afterward one of Saul’s servants said of David, “the Lord is with him” (16:18). That became the key to David’s greatness (2 Samuel 5:10).

The Lord goes on to list specific blessings that have resulted from his being with David. The first is the defeat of David’s enemies. Second, the Lord has given David a great name, like the names of the greatest men on earth. This is reminiscent of what God had promised to Abraham (Genesis 12:2). 1 Chronicles 14:17 states, “So David’s fame spread throughout every land, and the Lord made all the nations fear him.”

6. What was God’s desire for His people Israel? (2 Samuel 7:10)

The greatness God has granted to David was not for David’s benefit alone. The Lord is concerned for his people Israel. God desires not only to give David “rest” (2 Samuel 7:1, above) but also to give his people a home of their own and relief from those who have afflicted them in the past (as, for example, during the time of the judges as noted in 7:11, not in today’s text). God did indeed desire a place—not for himself but for His people.

But that was only the beginning of God’s intentions. At the end of 2 Samuel 7:11, the Lord elaborates on his desires for David: “The Lord declares to you that the Lord himself will establish a house for you.” God has asked David, “Are you the one to build me a house to dwell in?” (7:5). The Lord’s answer is, “No, you are not going to build me a house. I am going to build you a house!” (paraphrase of 7:11).

Promised Defined: 2 Samuel 7:12-16

7. When would God fulfill His promises to David? (2 Samuel 7:12)

Here the Lord sketches the “when” and “through whom” regarding the promised house and kingdom. The first two phrases of the verse before us establish the when: it will happen after David’s death (another kind of “rest”). After that becomes reality, God will work through David’s offspring to fulfill the promise. But to whom does the word offspring refer?

8. Through whom would God’s “forever” promise to David come to pass? (2 Samuel 7:13)

The first phrase in this verse and history as it unfolds seem at first to indicate that David’s son Solomon is the one to build a house for the Lord. But the second phrase must give us pause since our knowledge of history reveals that the promise is not limited to fulfillment via Solomon. Rather, Jesus Christ is the ultimate seed of David through whom God’s *forever* promise comes to pass.

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This fact begins to be established in the New Testament when the angel Gabriel tells Mary that “the Lord God will give [Jesus] the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob’s descendants forever; his kingdom will never end” (Luke 1:32, 33). On the Day of Pentecost, Peter ties the fulfillment of the promise to the resurrection of Jesus (Acts 2:29-32; compare Acts 13:23; Galatians 3:16-19).

Though many in Jesus’ time thought of the kingdom primarily in political terms, Jesus’ kingdom is a spiritual one (John 18:36). It is the church, comprised of those who have come out of the “darkness” of sin (Colossians 1:13) into His “wonderful light” (1 Peter 2:9).

9. What other promises did God have in store for David? (2 Samuel 7:14-15)

In verse 14 there is a double fulfillment in the words “I will be his father, and he will be my son.” The immediate and primary reference is to God’s blessing upon and direction of Solomon in his building of the Temple and his rule over the temple of God. But other Scriptures reveal this promise to David as being fulfilled in Jesus Christ, who is the Son of God in the highest sense (Psalm 89:34-37; Luke 1:32-33, 69; Acts 2:29-36; 13:22-23; 2 Tim. 2:8).

If we didn’t have supporting Scriptures, the second portion of the promise in 2 Samuel 7:14 would raise questions, especially since we have already proposed a fulfillment in Jesus. One might ask, how can sinless Jesus be the fulfillment when it is possible for this son of David to do wrong? If the promise refers to Solomon, how can God say that my love will never be taken away from him? (v. 15). We recall that God judged Solomon for his foolish acceptance of the gods of his many wives who turned his heart away from the Lord (1 Kings 11:4, 9-13, 31-33).

It is clear from a study of Old Testament history that not all the kings who descended from David were men after God’s own heart as David was. Some of them, such as Ahaz and Manasseh, were guilty of great wickedness against God (2 Kings 16:1-18; 21:1-16). Those kings who behaved in this manner were disciplined by the Lord. He used *a rod wielded by men*—the nations and armies of Assyria and Babylon—to bring judgment upon the kings who failed to trust and obey the true king of God’s people.

None of these instances of rebellion by kings who were descendants of David nullified the covenant promises to David recorded in our text. The promise “I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever” (v. 13) remains intact.

10. How is the essence of God’s covenant made with David summed up in (2 Samuel 7:16)?

This verse summarizes the essence of the covenant God has made with David. The house that God will build for David will be far more wonderful and enduring than any house David could ever build for God. Even when Solomon’s magnificent temple falls to ruins before the Babylonian army, God’s promise to David remains unshakable. That

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house, that kingdom, is the church of Jesus. And what Jesus said of His church remains as true today as on the day He said it: “The gates of Hades will not overcome it” (Matthew 16:18).

What Do You Think?

- What should a genuine concern for things of God look like today?
- What are some ways to correct the wrong thinking of someone who has good intentions?
- Why is it important to remember what one’s condition was before becoming a Christian?
- What strategies can we use to ensure we stay focused on the spiritual nature of God’s kingdom?

POINTS TO PONDER

- As the people of God, we should have a genuine concern for the things of God (2 Samuel 7:1-3).
- Our plans may be God-honoring, but they may not be God’s plans (vs. 4-6).
- God’s plans are infinitely greater than ours, and we can’t beat God’s giving! (vs. 8-10).
- God’s kingdom is a spiritual one – established in Christ for all eternity! (vs. 12-13).
- We can be citizens of God’s kingdom in Christ Jesus, Who will rule forever! (vs. 14-16).

CONCLUSION

We Are David

In a sense all Christians can say, “We are David.” True, few of us have had any experience watching sheep or fighting wild animals in defense of sheep. But what the Lord said to David in 1 Samuel 7:8, 9 could be applied to His treatment of any of us. God took us from what we were (lost, sinful) and made us part of His family. We did nothing to deserve such a status; what we deserved was condemnation. But Jesus, who had done nothing to deserve death, gave His life for us at the cross.

Paul states the contrast first by describing humanity’s sorry status: “dead in your transgressions and sins, . . . gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts” (Ephesians 2:1, 3). Then comes the welcome remedy: “God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ” (2:4, 5). This is the same mercy that took David from the humble task of watching sheep to become Israel’s greatest king and the recipient of a very special covenant indeed.

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While few of us have had any experience watching sheep, we have all had experience acting like sheep by “going astray” (1 Peter 2:25). And we have all been rescued by the good shepherd.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, thank You for the mercy You have shown us in Christ Jesus. We are so unworthy of such treatment; Your faithfulness is such a stark contrast to our unfaithfulness. May our lives each day reflect our awareness that we are not our own; we have been “bought with a price” (1 Corinthians 6:19, 20). In Jesus’ name, amen.

THOUGHT TO REMEMBER

What God builds with us endures. What we build without Him does not.

ANTICIPATING THE NEXT LESSON

Next week’s lesson is **“God’s Covenant with the Returned Exiles”** and tells how the returning exiles reflected on their past and recommitted to their covenant relationship with the Lord God. Study Nehemiah chapters 9 and 10.

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