

Promises We Can Count On

Session 5

July 7, 2024

God's Promise of a King

The Point: God promised an eternal King and kingdom.

Session Passage: 2 Samuel 7:8-16

The setting for 2 Samuel 7. David desired to build a house for God—the magnificent temple David believed God deserved—so David consulted the prophet Nathan. The Lord responded through Nathan that David was not to build the temple. Instead, the Lord gave David a promise that He would build a dynasty for David, a dynasty that culminated in the promised Messiah. This is called the Davidic covenant.

2 Samuel 7:8-9

Connection to the Point. God is at work in our lives.

This is what you are to say Now therefore so shalt thou say unto (v. 8). This clause signals the beginning of a new word from the Lord. God was giving Nathan the words to deliver to King David. Nathan was tasked as God's prophet to announce the next revelatory step in God's plan for His covenant people. Nathan, like Moses earlier, was not to editorialize or augment anything to what the Lord had spoken.

My servant David (v. 8). In spite of his failings, David served God faithfully, so much so that he became the measuring rod for all future kings. The term *servant* (*ebed*) elsewhere in Scripture was used in reference to the patriarchs (Gen. 26:24; Ex. 32:13; Deut. 9:27), Moses (Ex. 14:31; Num. 12:7-8), Israel (Isa. 41:8), and the Messiah (42:1; 49:5; 52:13).

LORD of Armies LORD of hosts (v. 8). This name for God "designates God as King and Ruler of Israel, its armies, its temple, and of the entire universe."¹ God's words that followed detailed His grand purposes for David and his offspring.

I took you from I took thee (v. 8). God began by reminding David of how He had been present in and worked through David's life. The Lord had blessed David tremendously up to this point, and God wanted David to remember everything. "I" is emphatic, emphasizing it was all God's blessing, favor, and initiative that had charted David's course from a shepherd in the fields of Bethlehem to a king ruling over God's people from the city of Jerusalem. Through His actions on David's behalf, God had demonstrated to David His abiding presence in David's life. God could use David not because of his intellect or military/political skills but simply because David was His faithful servant.

The pasture, from tending the flock From the shepcote, from following the sheep (v. 8). God had chosen David to be king in place of Saul when David was still a shepherd of his father's sheep. David literally had to be brought in from the fields around Bethlehem so he could be anointed by God's prophet Samuel (1 Sam. 16:1-13).

Ruler (v. 8). This term (*nagid*) refers to a commander who goes before his people; it also has the meanings of captain, chief, governor, leader, noble, prince, and ruler. God chose David to be the second king of Israel, replacing the faithless Saul (1 Sam. 13:13-14).

My people Israel Over my people, over Israel (v. 8). God had delivered Israel from out of Egyptian slavery. He had chosen and set them apart from all other nations to be His people (Ex. 19:4-6). Even though God made David king over Israel, ultimately Israel was God's people, and David was answerable to God for how he ruled God's people.

I have been with you wherever you have gone I was with thee whithersoever thou wentest (v. 9). The events of David's life had not been coincidence or happenstance. God's providence had been at work. God had been with David wherever

he went, even though at times David may have felt alone. Just as God had accompanied Israel on their journeys, he had also been with David, guiding and protecting him. When David went against Goliath (1 Sam. 17), stood against the Philistines (1–2 Sam.), fled from Saul (1 Sam. 19–31), and ran from his son Absalom (2 Sam. 13–19), God was with him. God had never abandoned David, and now He promised him the greatest assurance of all in relation to his son Solomon and his future descendants.

I have destroyed all your enemies before youHave cut off all thine enemies out of thy sight (v. 9). This section concludes God's history lesson as He prepared to deliver to David three great promises for the future. The Lord had destroyed all of David's enemies. Although David may have been the human instrument, there was no doubt that it was by the hand of God that his enemies had been eliminated.

I will (v. 9). God's repeatedly stating "*I will*" throughout verses 9-16 emphasizes that it was God who was making this covenant with David and His descendants, and it was God who would bring to pass the promises of the covenant.

Make a great name for youHave made thee a great name (v. 9). A person's name expressed who that individual was. "To know the name of a person was to know that person's total character and nature."² These words are a direct reference back to the promise God made to Abraham (Gen. 12:2), linking the Abrahamic and Davidic covenants. The Lord intended to fulfill what was fulfilling that promise to Abraham through David, by making his name great. This verse perhaps serves as a contrast with David's original plan—to build a great house for the Lord. God indicated to David that He did not need such an impressive earthly structure; He already had a living building in which He would dwell, namely the life of David.

Like that of the greatest on the earthLike unto the name of the great men that are in the earth (v. 9). David's name (his reputation as a great king) would be made great like the names of the greatest men who ever lived. It would be through David and his descendants that the Messiah would come (Matt. 1:1-17). So, although many aspects of this particular promise have been fulfilled already, it still carries an eschatological thrust which will culminate in the eternal reign of Jesus Christ (Rev. 19:11–22:5).

2 Samuel 7:10-11

Connection to the Point. God establishes His people.

Designate a placeI will appoint a place (v. 10). This is another link to the Abrahamic covenant. God had promised to Abraham and his descendants that they would dwell in the land of Canaan (Gen. 12:1; 15:7-15; 17:8).

My people Israel (v. 10). God's focus shifted from "youthee" (David) to *Israel*, and will shift again in verse 11 to focus on David's descendants. Again, while David may have been the ruler over Israel, ultimately they were God's chosen people.

Plant them . . . live thereWill plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own (v. 10). The children of God would no longer be sojourners, as they had been during the years of the exodus. God would establish them in the land He had promised to them through the patriarchs. The idea of planting has horticultural implications. God's people would be planted where they could lay down roots, growing and flourishing under the guidance and protection of the Lord. They would live as God's covenant people in the land that He had given them to possess (Gen. 17:8).

Not be disturbed againMove no more (v. 10). A cursory look through Israel's history will reveal that several times over their existence, Israel was conquered and scattered. God's promises to Abraham and David were unilateral and unconditional. God was going to ultimately deliver on His promises. But to Abraham and David's descendants there were stipulations (Deut. 28). They had to walk in the Lord's way and keep His commandments. When they failed, they were taken into captivity. So, the promise that God's people would *not be disturbed againmove no more* has not yet been fulfilled. This verse has its ultimate fulfillment in the eternal reign of Jesus Christ.

EvildoersThe children of wickedness (v. 10). These are the pagan nations that would attack, subdue, and enslave the Israelites when they chose not to live by God's words and ordinances. The Israelites' possession of the promised land was conditional on their obedience to living holy lives before God (Deut. 28).

Will not continue to oppress them as they have doneAfflict them any more, as beforetime (v. 10). During the time of the judges and throughout their history as a nation, the Israelites experienced conflict and war with other nations. Although during the time of Solomon and the kings of Israel and Judah the people experienced periods of relative peace interspersed between conflicts and wars, a lasting, eternal peace is still a future event.

JudgesSince the time that I commanded judges (v. 11). During the time of the judges, various enemy nations would inflict punishment and judgment on Israel. In fact, a cyclical pattern developed. The people would sin, God would use a pagan nation to oppress them, the people would cry out to God, and God would raise up a judge to deliver the people. God promised a day when that would no longer be the case.

Ordered . . . to be over my people IsraelCommanded . . . to be over my people Israel (v. 11). Though humans carried out His will, it was God who placed the judges over His people.

Rest (v. 11). God's promise of rest echoes His words in the previous verse. Although David did experience periods of peace during his reign, the promise here also refers to a future period of extended peace for God's people during the reign of God's Messiah (see Isa. 9:7; 16:5; Jer. 23:5-6; 33:14-16).³

The LORD declares . . . The LORD himself will makeThe LORD telleth thee (v. 11). What God promised to David God Himself would bring to pass. The Lord is all powerful and all knowing. He knows the end from the beginning (Isa. 46:9-10; see Ps. 139:16; Isa. 44:6-8; Rev. 1:8; 22:13). He can be trusted to do what He says He will do.

Make a house for youWill make thee an house (v. 11). This conversation began with David desiring to build a house for the Lord. David had wanted to build a grand structure, a temple in which God could dwell. Solomon would eventually construct such a place (1 Kings 5-7).

2 Samuel 7:12-16

Connection to the Point. God will place His King over an everlasting kingdom.

When your time comesAnd when thy days be fulfilled (v. 12). David would eventually run his race, finish his course, and his life on earth would come to an end.

Rest with your ancestorsThou shalt sleep with thy fathers (v. 12). This is a euphemism for death.

I will raise up after you will set up . . . after thee (v. 12). God promised that David's kingdom would not end with his death. He promised that David's dynasty would endure. This verse also emphasizes the involvement of God in historical times and events.

Your descendantThy seed (v. 12). The Hebrew term (*zera*) here refers to seed in the sense of one's posterity. The term can be translated as child, offspring (singular or plural), descendant, or race. The same term is used in Genesis 15:5, where God promises that Abraham's "offspringseed" (*zera*) would be as numerous as the stars of the sky. This reference's immediate fulfillment appears to be Solomon and by extension David's line. In this verse, part of what God promised related to Solomon, some to the rest of David's descendants, and ultimately to Jesus (Matt. 1:1-17).

Will come from your body Shall proceed out of thy bowls (v. 12). Most scholars believe the Davidic covenant was given to David later in his life meaning Solomon would have been alive. Perhaps what God meant was that Solomon would come from David in regard to succeeding him on the throne.

I will establish his kingdom (v. 12). To *establish* (*kun*) is literally translated “to erect.” Through David, God had firmly established the nation of Israel. Through David’s son Solomon, God would extend the borders of Israel even farther. The establishment of this kingdom continued the promise God originally made to Abraham (Gen. 12:2).

He is the one He shall build (v. 13). God here is referring to David’s son Solomon, who would eventually construct the first temple in Jerusalem (1 Kings 5–7).

House (v. 13). A reference to Solomon’s temple.

My name (v. 13). In biblical thought, an individual’s name referred to the very essence of that individual. In this context, this term refers to the very presence of God. Solomon would build the temple in which God’s presence would reside among His people (1 Kings 8:10).

Throne (v. 13). The term *throne* (*kisseh*) literally refers to a chair upon which a monarch sat. However, here the word figuratively refers to one’s right to rule.

Kingdom (v. 13). In its broader sense, *kingdom* refers to the people of Israel and their land. The house, kingdom, and throne are the three elements which make up the Davidic covenant—a house for David, a throne for David, and a kingdom for David.

Forever For ever (v. 13). God promised a house, or a dynasty, whereby David’s descendants would always sit upon the throne of Israel. The word translated *forever* (*ad*) *For ever* emphasizes the fact that this particular dynasty of David’s offspring would never end. To be clear, it didn’t mean the line would be without breaks. The Babylonian captivity and the scattering of Jews were interruptions in the line. However, the Lord promised that the privilege of ruling Israel as a king would always belong to David’s descendants. Ultimately this points to Jesus Christ. Jesus is the fulfillment of everything that was promised to David. He is the eternal King that was promised (Matt. 1:6-16), He is a descendant of David (Luke 3:23-31), and He will reign forever for ever on the throne of David (Luke 1:31-33; Acts 2:30; 13:22-23).

Father . . . son (v. 14). The question of how this kingdom would be eternal is answered comparing it to a father-son relationship. The broad promise made to Abraham and his descendants was now centered around David and his descendants. God had narrowed the focus whereby the promises made to Abraham concerning Israel were now directed toward a king of Israel who would be a descendant of David. On the surface, these verses pointed squarely at David’s son and heir, Solomon. However, the use of the qualifier “forever for ever” in the preceding verse makes it clear that God’s promise also pointed well beyond the years and reign of Solomon to the Messiah who would come from the line of David.

When he does wrong If he commit iniquity (v. 14). *He* does not specifically refer to only Solomon or one of the other Davidic kings but to the entirety of David’s dynasty who would occupy the throne. This group of monarchs made up the “house” of David. They were men, flawed men who would not always walk obediently in the ways of the Lord.

I will discipline him I will chasten him (v. 14). The Lord intended to work out this relationship in the lives of each of the kings, starting with David himself. They would be directly accountable to God for their actions as stewards over the people of Israel. When they committed iniquity, as they would do, God would punish them just as an earthly father would discipline his own children.

Rod of men . . . blows from mortals The rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men (v. 14). God would use human agents (men, rulers, armies) to deliver His divine chastisement of Israel’s kings and people. This reality is demonstrated by the nation’s history. The Assyrians would eventually take the Northern Kingdom of Israel into captivity

in 722 BC (2 Kings 18:9-12), while the Babylonians would do the same to the Southern Kingdom of Judah in 586 BC (25:1-21).

My faithful love will never leave him But my mercy shall not depart away from him (v. 15). Although David and his descendants would sin and thus incur God's discipline, God's *faithful love/mercy (chesed)* for them would never cease. The Hebrew word *chesed* means loving-kindness, commitment, or covenant faithfulness. While the king's and people's sins may have resulted in temporary alienation from God, God would not remove His love from them. It would never cease.

I removed it from Saul As I took it from Saul (v. 15). God removed His *chesed* from King Saul due to his disobedience to God's commands. God rejected Saul because Saul violated (and allowed his soldiers to violate) God's command that he destroy completely the Amalekites and all their possessions (1 Sam. 15:1-3; see vv. 7-11). "God's rejection of Saul's position of authority was caused by Saul's rejection of God's authoritative Word."⁴ God took the throne from Saul and gave it to David (1 Sam. 15-16). Like God's promise to David in these verses, God promises believers that nothing can separate us from His love for us in Christ (Rom. 8:31-39).

Whom I removed from before you Whom I put away before thee (v. 15). Saul's kingship ended in a battle with the Philistines on Mount Gilboa in which he and his three sons were slain. Ultimately it was God who ended Saul's rule using the Philistines as His human agents of judgment against Saul (1 Sam. 31).

Will endure before me forever . . . will be established forever Shall be established for ever . . . shall be established for ever (v. 16). The Hebrew term for the first occurrence of *established (aman)* literally means to build up or support. Figuratively it means to render firm, sure, steadfast, or permanent. It carries the connotation of strength, reliability, trustworthiness, and faithfulness. The Hebrew term for the second occurrence of *established (kun)* is literally translated "to erect." The kings of the nation of Israel failed, and their reigns ended. However, this promise was and is fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ, the last and greatest of King of David's line who will sit upon the throne of David and reign over His kingdom for ever and ever. The "house," "kingdom," and "throne" of David will endure for ever. The Hebrew word for *endure (aman)* literally means to build up or support. Figuratively it means to render firm, sure, steadfast, or permanent. It carries the connotation of strength, reliability, trustworthiness, and faithfulness. *Established (kun)* is the same word used in verse 12. The kings of the nation of Israel failed, and their reigns ended. However, this promise was and is fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ, the last and greatest King of David's line who will sit upon the throne of David and reign over His kingdom forever and ever. The "house," "kingdom," and "throne" of David will endure forever.

1. Brad Creed, "Names of God," in *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, gen. ed. Chad Brand, rev. (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2015), 1144.
2. Kandy Queen-Sutherland and Chad Brand, "Naming," in *ibid.*, 1145.
3. Robert D. Bergen, *1,2 Samuel*, vol. 7, *The New American Commentary* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 1996), 339.
4. *Ibid.*, 173.