

# Study Notes: 2 Samuel 7:1-29

December 4, 2011

## God's Promise to David (2 Sam. 7)

### *Background / Context*

- Application: “What counts is not David’s aspiration to build a house for the LORD, but what the LORD aspires for David.” Our best intentions are often overrated! We tend to focus on our plans. Here, divine blessing is not based upon performance, but upon God’s Sovereign Decree. God wanted to do it! Just like Abraham’s calling out of Ur (See Genesis 12).
- Fulfillment: “The historical David, for all his faults, came to stand for the idealized King (Baldwin, 37).” This is “the title deed of the Davidic house to the rule of Israel and Judah (Gordon 86, p. 235)
  - Matthew 1:1: “Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham”
  - Revelation 22:16: “I am the root and the offspring of David”
  - Luke 1:28-33
  - 2 Tim. 2:8
- NT Quotations:
  - 2 Cor. 6:18--2 Samuel 7:8 That we are sons and daughters (Hebrews 12:7)
  - 2 Samuel 7:14--2 Cor. 6:18
- NT Allusions/Parallels:
  - 7:2-16 – Acts 7:45–46
  - 7:12 – John 7:42
  - Acts 13:2b-23
  - 7:12-13 – Acts 2:30
  - 7:12-13 – Luke 1:32-33
  - 7:14 – Hebrews 12:7; Rev. 21:7 “the one who conquers” God’s discipline = proof of sonship
  - 7:16 – Luke 1:32-33
- The NT writers saw this promise to David as being fulfilled in Jesus. But also saw imbedded in this promise a template for the Christian’s relationship with Christ! See 2 Corinthians 6:18; Hebrews 12:7; Revelation 21:7
- What about the simple fact that the dynasty was broken with the Babylonian defeat?
  - His booth would be repaired Amos 9:11
  - A Davidic child would establish his throne with justice and righteousness. Isaiah 9:6
  - A branch from the stump of Jesse would yet create an ideal kingdom Isaiah 11:1-9
  - This is the source for Messianic hope in the Old Testament “what angels long to look into...”
- God didn’t wake up one day and say, “Hey, I think I’ll send my son!” See Galatians 4:4. 1 Peter 1:10-12: “Even angels long to look into these things.” The prophets in the Old

Testament wrote more than they knew! At one and the same time, they were speaking truth to their contemporaries aimed at the context of the day and yet... they also spoke in language which would carry a richer and fuller fulfillment in the future. They wrote about a conquering King—a king who would rule with an iron sceptre! They wrote of a king whose dynasty would never end. But they also wrote of a servant who would suffer greatly for his people. A conquering king and a suffering servant—the Advent of Christ! We want to become like Simeon and Anna (Luke 2:25-40) who worshipped and told others about this king.

- Simeon (vv. 28-32) OT obedience/faith
- Anna (vv. 37b-38) Telling others about Jesus

### ***David's Initiative (vv. 1-3)***

- “had given him rest” Taken word for word from Deuteronomy 12:10. The promise was made that the land would belong to the 12 tribes and they would enjoy safety on all sides. And yet... (see v. 11) rest vs. more rest?
  - The Sabbath rest (Exodus 16:23; 31:14-17)
  - Rest in the Lord (Joshua 1:13/21:43-45) fulfillment / foreshadowing
  - 2 Samuel 7
  - Future rest (Hebrews 4)
- Instruction for the construction of the tabernacle was given to Moses by God on Mt. Sinai (Exodus 26:1ff.).
- Housing the local deity would have been the duty of the king according to Canaanite custom. Anything less would be an insult to the god who brought him victory. David clearly wanted to house the ark in a structure that was more in keeping with the style and permanence of his own dwelling. His heart was in the right place but even in our best intentions, God's ways are higher than ours. Nathan initially goes along with this “no brainer” scheme. The prophet's initial agreement sets up the tension for God's response.

### ***Divine Intention (vv. 8-16)***

- The LORD's response is shocking because we are so taken by our own “spirituality”. The LORD responds, “Are you the one to build me a house?” (If not David then who??) “I've been living in a tent (tabernacle) ever since I brought you out of Egypt.” “I've never once asked of Israel's shepherds to build me one.”
- Isaiah 66:1-2: “Thus says the LORD: "Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool; what is the house that you would build for me, and what is the place of my rest?" “I don't live in a box! I'm not homeless!”
- 1 Kings 8:27: “But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain you; how much less this house that I have built!”

- But more to the point:
  - Are you David the one to build Me a house? To which we would say, “Yes!”
  - But to God, David is just a man. Does the LORD need a house? What can man do for Me? I own the cattle on a thousand hills (Ps. 50:10-12) Heaven is My home, the earth is My footstool!
  - God is not held captive to human initiative. See Tozer, pg. 32 Let’s not imagine that God needs or is dependent on us in any way! God doesn’t pout or fret in heaven...
  - God is not the kind of person who needs a suggestion!
  - “NO!”
- You’ve told me what you desire to do for me... now let me tell you what I want to do for YOU.
- Divine agency and initiative are unquestioned here.

*This is what I’ve already done (vv. 8-9a):*

- “My servant David” is an honouring title. David, king, surrounded by servants, a man who commands armies, a man who has songs written about him, is never the less “My servant”! Jesus is foreshadowed in the Old Testament by a servant image.
- God plucked David from the fields “following sheep” and placed him in this palace shepherding God’s flock. God had granted to David His Divine Presence, His protection, and David owed his military success to the LORD. David was not in a position to “Do” anything for the LORD... the LORD had done it all in the first place. David had only ever benefited from the unmerited favour of God!

*Here is what I’m going to do (vv. 9b-11):*

- I will make your name great (Genesis 12:2; Abraham)
- I will provide a safe-house for “My people”. (Gen. 15:18-21; Deut. 11:24)
- I will give you “rest”.
- You build a house for Me?! I will build you a house for you—an eternal house—an everlasting Dynasty! The LORD makes an enduring, unconditional promise sworn on Divine oath! (v. 11b)
- The immediate fulfillment of this promise will be that Solomon, the love-child of David and Bathsheba, will be the one to build the LORD’s temple.
  - Solomon will enjoy the blessing of sonship! Sonship comes with the trappings of parenthood—Fatherly discipline.
  - Solomon will also enjoy the “steadfast love” of the LORD. The LORD promises “my love will never be taken away from him, as I took it away from Saul...”  
Heed God’s unconditional favour/steadfast love. “The steadfast love of the

LORD never ceases.” (Lam. 3:2) This is a unconditional promise that transcends Solomon’s performance.

- Ultimately, this promise will find its fulfillment in the Eternal Kingdom of Jesus Christ, the son of David/Son of God. Jesus will “pitch His tent” among us (John 1:14). “The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us.” God is both the living God who delivers his servants from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear, and so proves He is with His servants, and yet remains the sovereign LORD.” (Baldwin, 216)
  - Israel will have some pretty lame kings... and not all of them will have “a heart after God’s own heart”. In fact, very few of them will, including David’s own son Solomon who will require Fatherly discipline (14b). Human failure is foreseen here and yet it will not thwart God’s purposes. Here is the answer to the ultimate question. How can the covenant stand between God and men when humans break faith with God? Here is a mystery and tension between promise and judgement.
  - In the end, David receives far more than he could have hope to give!
- Is Christmas a season for giving? Feeling guilty that you’ve got nothing to give to the God who has everything? Here is a clue as to the exact nature of our relationship with Yahweh. It is a relationship originated in, steeped in and sustained in God’s divine favour, not in our religious performance!!
  - Eph. 2:8-9: “...by grace you have been... this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.” How well we would tolerate and even welcome a sermon... In all your giving this Christmas... don’t forget God! A: Time, B: Money, C: Obedience!! After all He’s given to you, shouldn’t you give something back?? But such a sermon would do a gross injustice to the heart of the Good News of Jesus coming to earth:
    - The heart of the manger scene is this: Humanity is in a major predicament. We are wholly unable to extract ourselves from the hole we’ve dug for ourselves. But God is so powerful, so wise, so generous and so sovereign that He will solve humanity’s greatest dilemma through the birth of a tiny newborn!!
    - God’s “weakness” is greater than our so-called “strength”.
    - When you look at a manger scene, is it the strength of God or the weakness of God that is on display? (Wonder... Worship!)

### ***David’s Reaction (vv. 17-29)***

- Here is David’s prayer in a nutshell: “O Sovereign LORD, do what You are going to do!”
- His prayer reasons this way: v 28
  - You are God!
  - Your words are true!
  - You have promised!

### ***Praise in Questions!***

- David asks:

- “Who am I, O Sovereign LORD, and what is my family, that you have brought me this far?”
  - “Is this Your usual way of dealing with man... ?”
  - “What more can David say to you?”
- 7X David calls God “Sovereign LORD” and 10X David makes himself “thy servant”
- “God not only makes great plans for His servants but He also graciously makes His plans known.” (Baldwin, 217) It has been granted to us to see the fulfillment of these great promises to David.