

2 Samuel 7
September 17, 2023

Open with Prayer

HOOK:

Every Christmas, the hardest decision for me was, “What gift can I possibly give my parents when they can essentially buy anything they want?” And every time I would ask them, they would say, “Honey, we don’t need anything. What’s most important to us is our relationship.” Though it was always a sweet response, I still found myself feeling a little frustrated because I love them and want to give them something meaningful!

Q: Let’s take this up a notch. We love God, our perfect Father, and we want to give Him “something,” even though He doesn’t need anything from us. So let’s play “fill in the blank.”

You and I approach God and ask Him, “What can I give you that would be meaningful for you? God responds....[fill in the blank]

Transition: I think David can relate to this! We are going to see David’s desire to build a temple for God out of his love for God. He notices that he is in a palace and the ark of the covenant lives in a tent! David’s intentions are wonderful. It’s thoughtful. He thinks he is doing something special for God. But it should come as no surprise that God doesn’t need David to build Him a temple. Let’s read the text and see how God responds to David and then how David responds to God.

BOOK:

God’s Promise to David

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

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

⁴That 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? ⁶I 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. ⁷Wherever I have moved with all the Israelites, did I ever say to any of their rulers whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, “Why have you not built me a house of cedar?””

⁸“Now then, tell my servant David, ‘This is what the LORD Almighty says: I took you from the pasture and from following the flock to be ruler over my people Israel. ⁹I 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 of the earth. ¹⁰And 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 ¹¹and have done ever since the time I appointed leaders (traditionally judges) over my people Israel. I will also give you rest from all your enemies.

“The LORD declares to you that the LORD himself will establish a house for you: ¹² When your days are over and you rest with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, who will come from your own body, 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 the rod of men, with floggings inflicted by men. 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.’ ”

¹⁷ Nathan reported to David all the words of this entire revelation.

David's Prayer

¹⁸ Then King David went in and sat before the LORD, and he said:

“Who am I, O Sovereign LORD, and what is my family, that you have brought me this far? ¹⁹ And as if this were not enough in your sight, O Sovereign LORD, you have also spoken about the future of the house of your servant. Is this your usual way of dealing with man, O Sovereign LORD?

²⁰ “What more can David say to you? For you know your servant, O Sovereign LORD. ²¹ For the sake of your word and according to your will, you have done this great thing and made it known to your servant.

²² “How great you are, O Sovereign LORD! There is no one like you, and there is no God but you, as we have heard with our own ears. ²³ And who is like your people Israel—the one nation on earth that God went out to redeem as a people for himself, and to make a name for himself, and to perform great and awesome wonders by driving out nations and their gods from before your people, whom you redeemed from Egypt? ²⁴ You have established your people Israel as your very own forever, and you, O LORD, have become their God.

²⁵ “And now, LORD God, keep forever the promise you have made concerning your servant and his house. Do as you promised, ²⁶ so that your name will be great forever. Then men will say, ‘The LORD Almighty is God over Israel!’ And the house of your servant David will be established before you.

²⁷ “O LORD Almighty, God of Israel, you have revealed this to your servant, saying, ‘I will build a house for you.’ So your servant has found courage to offer you this prayer. ²⁸ O Sovereign LORD, you are God! Your words are trustworthy, and you have promised these good things to your servant. ²⁹ Now be pleased to bless the house of your servant, that it may continue forever in your sight; for you, O Sovereign LORD, have spoken, and with your blessing the house of your servant will be blessed forever.”

Process Observations/Questions:

Q: What did you most like about this passage? What resonated with you? [Let people engage]

Q: What did you least like about this passage? [Let people engage]

Q: What did you find in this passage that you didn't understand? [Let people engage]

Q: What do we learn about Jesus in this passage? [Let people engage]

LOOK:

We should always go to the Lord before making important decisions, or giving counsel to others about important issues. Do not just assume that you know the right answer. Do not just answer with your own opinion, no matter how sure you are of it.

Close in Prayer**Commentaries for Today's Lesson:**

Wiersbe, W. W. (1993). Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the Old Testament (2 Sam 7). Victor Books.

Two phrases in this chapter summarize the main lesson: “your seed” (v. 12) and “your throne” (v. 16). This Davidic covenant (also given in 1 Chron. 17) is important to the program of God, because in it God promises certain special blessings to the Jewish nation through David. In His covenant with Abraham (Gen. 15), God had promised a seed, a land, and a blessing to all nations through Israel. In this covenant, God reveals that the promised Messiah would come through David's line (Rom. 1:3) and would rule from David's throne over the promised messianic kingdom.

I. A Noble Purpose (7:1–3)

The days of exile and danger are over, and David is enjoying rest and blessing in his own house. The king is fellowshipping with the prophet Nathan, and they are discussing the things of the Lord.

David always had a love for the house of God (Ps. 132), and his desire was to build a beautiful house for the Lord. God would not permit this (1 Chron. 22:8), but He would acknowledge David's love, inasmuch as this desire was in his heart (1 Kings 8:18). Nathan did not know God's express will in the matter, so he merely commended David and encouraged him to do what was in his heart. Both David and Nathan kept their hearts open for God's leading; and, when the Lord spoke, they listened and obeyed. We ought always to encourage one another in spiritual matters and provoke one another to good works (Heb. 10:24–25).

David truly was “a man after God's own heart,” for he had the Word of God and the house of God uppermost in his heart. Would that more of God's people were like him!

II. A Wonderful Promise (7:4–17)

Nathan must have been meditating on the Word “in the night” (Ps. 119:55) when God spoke to him. How often God speaks to us when it is dark! See Gen. 15. “You have visited me in the night” (Ps. 17:3). God gave Nathan a message for the king, and this message involved several important factors.

A. *God's grace (vv. 5–10).*

How gracious God was to “dwell in a tent” during the years since the nation had come out of Egypt! He had not asked for an elaborate temple, as housed the gods of Egypt. No, He had “humbled Himself” and dwelt in the tabernacle, journeying with His people and going before them to open the way. John 1:14 says, “And the Word (Christ) became flesh and *tabernacled* among us.” Another evidence of God's grace was His treatment of David. God had called him from the pastures and put him on the throne. God had given him victory over all his enemies. God had brought Israel into a place of blessing and they would not be moved again (v. 10, where the verbs ought to be past tense, “I *have* appointed a place”).

B. *God's purpose (vv. 11–16).*

Please note that the word “house” has a double meaning in this passage: (1) a material house, the temple, v. 13; and (2) a human house, David's family, vv. 11, 16, 19, 25, 27, 29. It is customary to speak of a royal family as a “house,” such as the “House of Windsor” in Great Britain. David wanted to build God a house of stone, but God was going to build David a royal house, a family that would reign on his throne.

The terms of this covenant are important because they involve the purposes of God in sending Jesus Christ to the world. We must note, first, that some of this covenant was fulfilled in Solomon, David's successor on the throne; see 1 Chron. 22:6–16. God did put Solomon on the throne, in spite of the wicked plots of others in the family, and God did enable Solomon to build the beautiful temple. When Solomon and his descendants sinned, God kept His promise (v. 14) and chastened them; see Ps. 89:20–37. It must be noted as well that there are some matters in this covenant that can apply only to Jesus Christ. God states that the throne would be forever (v. 13) and that David's house and kingdom would be forever (v. 16). But David does not have a descendant upon his throne today. In fact, there is no throne in Jerusalem. Did God not fulfill His promises? God states in Ps. 89:33–37 that He would never break His covenant with David, even though He might have to chasten David's children.

The ultimate fulfillment of these promises is in Jesus Christ. Read carefully the message of the angel to Mary in Luke 1:28–33, and note that God promises Christ the throne and the kingdom of David. Some “spiritualize” these verses and apply them to the church today; but if the rest of the angel’s message is to be taken literally, what right do we have to spiritualize the throne and the kingdom? Led by the Spirit, Zacharias states clearly that Christ would fulfill the covenants made to the fathers (Luke 1:68–75). It is our conviction that Christ will fulfill this Davidic covenant when He sits on David’s throne and rules during the millennial kingdom (Rev. 20:1–6). It is then that all the great kingdom promises in the OT Prophets will be fulfilled. The apostles in Acts 15:13–18 understood that God would build David’s house (tabernacle) again *after* God was finished visiting the Gentiles and calling out a people for His name (the church).

III.A Humble Prayer (7:18–29)

David received the message from Nathan, then went in to pray, asking God to fulfill His Word (vv. 28–29). How much more we would receive from lessons and sermons if only we spent time with God afterward and “prayed the message in.”

God enjoys giving His children “exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think.” David had asked permission to build an earthly temple; God responded by promising him an eternal kingdom! This tremendous act of grace left David humbled before the Lord, and in his prayer, the king praises the greatness of the Lord. He realized the privileged position of Israel (vv. 22–24). Oh, that God’s people today would understand how great God is and what great things He has done for His own! Yet David’s concern was not that his name be praised, but that the name of the Lord be magnified (v. 26; see Phil. 1:20–21). “You have spoken; now perform the promises!” prayed David. Like Abraham, David was “fully persuaded that what He had promised, He was able also to perform” (Rom. 4:21).

Was David disappointed because God would not permit him to build the house? Perhaps, however, it was not important to him who built it but that God’s will be done and God’s name be glorified.

Merrill, E. H. (1985). 2 Samuel. In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures (Vol. 1, pp. 464-465) Wheaton, IL: Victor Books

C. The Davidic Covenant (chap. 7)

7:1–2. **After** David had become well **settled** in Jerusalem and was enjoying a period of peace, his thoughts turned to the idea of building a more permanent structure in which the Lord could reside among His people. The **tent**, he felt, was no longer suitable, especially in comparison with his own elaborate **palace of cedar** (cf. 5:11).

7:3–17. Having communicated his desires to the Prophet **Nathan**, whose initial response was favorable, **David** soon learned that his intentions were premature. Since the Exodus **the LORD** had resided among the people in a temporary structure. There was no need now for anything different. In fact it was not God’s will for **David to build Him a house**; instead God would build **a house** for David! (v. 11) God had called **David** from inauspicious beginnings **to be** a shepherd of God’s **people** (v. 8). Likewise, God had gathered **Israel** to Himself and would **plant them** securely in their own land. The house to be built for David would be a royal house, a dynasty of

kings. It would originate with him but would never end (v. 16). The **kingdom** and its **throne** would be permanent, a realm over which the Son of David would reign **forever** (cf. 23:5).

The promise that David and his seed would be kings fulfilled the even more ancient Abrahamic Covenant blessing that the patriarchs would be the fathers of kings (Gen. 17:6, 16; 35:11). To Judah, great-grandson of Abraham, was given the explicit pledge that a promised ruler would come from Judah (Gen. 49:10). Samuel anointed this one from Judah, David himself, of whom the Lord said, “He is the one” (1 Sam. 16:12). David was aware of his election by God and of the theological significance of that election as part of the messianic line that would result in a divine Descendant and King (Pss. 2:6–7; 110; cf. Ethan’s words in Ps. 89:3–4). The prophets also attested to the Davidic Messiah, the One who would rule over all and forever on His throne (Isa. 9:1–7; 11:1–5; Jer. 30:4–11; Ezek. 34:23–24; 37:24–25; Amos 9:11–15).

The promise that the people of the Lord, David’s kingdom Israel, would have an enduring land of their own was also based on earlier commitments of the Lord. The seed of Abraham, God said, would be given Canaan as a home forever (Gen. 13:15; 15:18; 17:8; Deut. 34:4).

As for a temple, David would not be allowed to **build** it, but his son after him would have the honor of doing so (2 Sam. 7:12–13). That this refers to a literal house and not a dynasty is clear from the context, which speaks of the results that would follow if the **son** would be disobedient to the Lord (vv. 14–15). This could not be true of the King who is spoken of as the climactic figure of the Davidic dynastic line. These verses, then, are a good example of an Old Testament passage in which some elements find fulfillment in the immediate future (Solomon and other strictly human descendants of David), while other elements will be realized only in the more distant future (Jesus Christ, the Son of David; cf. Luke 1:31–33).

7:18–29. David’s response to this magnificent revelation concerning the nature of his kingship was to acknowledge the Lord’s goodness in bestowing it (vv. 18–21) and to extol God’s incomparable sovereignty (**How great You are.... There is no one like You**, v. 22). This, David said, was seen especially in God’s selection of **Israel** and His redemptive grace on her behalf (vv. 23–24). Finally he prayed that **the promise** God had made might indeed find fulfillment to the glory of His own holy name—**so that His name would be great forever** (vv. 25–29). Interestingly David addressed God 7 times as **O Sovereign LORD** (vv. 18–20, 22, 28–29), words that translate the Hebrew *’ādōnāy* (lit., “Lord”) *Yahweh*. **David** expressed his humility before God by referring to himself as **Your servant** 10 times (vv. 19–21, 25–29).

Mathews, K. A. (1998). The Historical Books. In D. S. Dockery (Ed.), Holman Concise Bible Commentary (pp. 123-125). Broadman & Holman Publishers.

The Lord’s Covenant (7:1–29). God’s covenant with David followed his humble display before the Lord and the Jerusalem crowds. After securing his kingdom, David showed his concern for the reputation of the Lord, who dwelt in the wilderness tabernacle and not in an impressive temple structure. The Lord, however, would build a “house” for David—not a building but a dynasty. The prophet Nathan instructed David in the Lord’s covenant. The Davidic covenant consisted of three eternal promises: a dynastic lineage, a kingdom, and a throne. The Lord would be as a father to David’s son, the Lord’s representative in the earth. If David’s descendants sinned, the Lord warned of chastening. But He promised never to annul His covenant.

This covenant gave rise to the messianic hope in the Old Testament. Although David's descendants failed, the people clung to the hope of a Greater David. The angel Gabriel echoed the words of David's covenant when he announced the birth of Israel's King, Jesus the Savior (Luke 1:32–33)

David responded with praise, recognizing God's greatness and the blessedness of His favor. He petitioned the Lord to keep His promise forever so that the Lord might be magnified by all nations.

Tatum, S. L. (1972). 2 Samuel. In H. F. Paschall & H. H. Hobbs (Eds.), The Teacher's Bible Commentary (pp. 182-183). Nashville: Broadman and Holman Publishers.

God's Covenant to Establish David's Throne (2 Sam. 7:1–29)

The passage—This is one of the outstanding messianic passages in the Bible. It contains God's covenant with David that he would establish his throne forever. David's response reveals the depth of his spiritual insight and the loyalty of his heart to God's will.

The occasion of the covenant was David's expression of his desire to build a temple for the Lord. It was his plan to provide a proper dwelling place for the ark of God. Nathan, the prophet, at first thought the idea was a good one. He encouraged David to proceed. That night, however, God revealed his will. David would not build the temple, but his son would instead.

God's message to David through Nathan contains some marvelous promises. God declared the values of his moving about with his people to bless them as they were pilgrims on their way to the Promised Land. He reviewed the history of his dealings with David. He had taken him as a poor shepherd lad and had made him king over all of Israel. He promised to make his name great. He declared he would appoint a place for his people Israel.

Instead of David building a house for God, rather God promised to build a house for David. He would establish his kingdom forever and make his name great. He said, "I will not take my steadfast love from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away from before you" (7:15).

David's idea of the special role of Israel in God's plan is important. Later Israel would forget God and take credit to themselves for their blessings. David did not make that mistake. He recognized that it was God who had driven out the enemy. As God had promised to magnify David's name, he in response made a covenant to magnify the name of the Lord forever.

The Holy Bible: New International Version. (1984). (2 Samuel 7). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.