

# The Great, Humbled God

## 2 Samuel 7:22 - 24

Nutshell: David continues to respond to God choosing his family as the final dynasty of Israel and the world (Jesus is son of David.) David speaks of God's uniqueness and His unique choosing of a people. God is known through His deeds.

I. Context: God telling David that He was the one building David a house.

### II. Text

2 Sam 7:22 For this reason ["upon thus"] You have been magnified, Lord YHWH, for *there is* none as You *are*, and *there is* not a God except You, by all that we have heard with our ears.

Literal Standard Version with modifications

The next four outline items, III. - VI., are based on the 4 uses of Scripture listed in 2 Tim 3:16 AND the 3 depictions of preaching in 2 Tim 4:2.

### III. Teaching

- A. The Book of Kingdoms, our 1 & 2 Sam + 1 & 2 Kings, is the story of Israel's kings, beginning with the prophet Samuel, who anointed both of the first two kings, Saul and David
  - 1. Samuel warned Israel vs. having a king, 1 Sam 10:19, Hos 13:11
  - 2. **Saul** was apostate *man's* version of king. God previewed *His* version via **David**, 1 Sam 13:14
- B. 1 Kings 15:5 tells us that David kept God's commands *except* in the Bathsheba incident. This dramatically shapes our approach to each incident in David's life.
- C. The chronicler presents David as God's chosen king, a *picture* of Messiah, but *not* the Messiah; a *reference point* for all subsequent kings of Judah.
- D. David was anointed king over **Judah**, 2 Sam 2. 2 Sam 2:12-32 showed that the split between Israel (the 10 northern tribes) and Judah (with Benjamin) would only bring harm.
- E. Saul's general, Abner, made Saul's son Ishbosheth king of Israel
  - 1. David's general, Joab, wrongfully (but not criminally) killed Abner (avenging a relative)

2. Assassins killed Ishbosheth, hoping to gain favor with David. He had them executed, 2 Sam 4.
  3. **Israel**'s elders anointed David KING over them, 2 Sam 5:1-5
- F. David finally vanquished Jebus (Jerusalem), 2 Sam 5:6-10, where he had taken Goliath's head, 1 Sam 17:54
1. David rebuffed 2 large-scale Philistine invasions, 5:17-25
  2. David retrieved the Ark from its 'wanderings', 6:1-19;
    - a. first, ignoring God's instructions, leading to a death;
    - b. then properly, with great joy-
    - c. except for David's cynical wife, Michal, 6:20-23, 16
- G. Now David wants to build a **permanent** form for the Tabernacle. This will be the **Temple**, 7:1-2
1. Nathan agreed with David, 7:3
  2. But God first realigned their perspectives: *He* was the one who had established *David*, 7:4-11
  3. God will have David's **heir** build this house, whose kingdom God would permanently establish, 7:12-13
- H. This was a **turning point in the history of Redemption**
1. God had chosen **Abraham** to make a nation from which Redemption would come. That nation had been God's "son," Exod 4:22-23.
  2. Now God said that **David's** seed would be His son, 2 Sam 7:14. The people's fate was tied to their king.
    - a. This is good once that king is Jesus
    - b. Until then, God "corrected" the Davidic kings, starting with Solomon
    - c. Ps 89:26-27 reveal that David was in a Father-son relation with God as well

**Kid-speak:** Who was the man God told, "I'm going to make a **nation** starting with you"? Abraham. And who was the man God told, "I'm going to make **kings**, starting with you"? David.

3. God said that David's house would be permanent, ultimately fulfilled in Christ, "the root and offspring of David" (Rev 22:16), Ps 89:35-37; 2 Sam 7:15-16
4. David responded humbly, 2 Sam 7:18
  - a. recognizing that God's decree was automatically "instruction for mankind," 2 Sam 7:19
  - b. David saw that God was the one bringing this to pass,

2 Sam 7:20, and that He did it freely, according to His own character and thinking, 7:21

5. Bringing us to today's verse

I. 7:22, Let's take the first part last: "By all that we have heard with our ears." This phrase shows two things:

1. That David understood God's main point: that *God* has been the one doing something for *David*, not vice versa
  - a. How does 7:22b demonstrate that?
  - b. In it, David is situating himself among creatures whose personal testimony is limited by their own experience
  - c. From that finite place, David testifies of God
  - d. (Though finite, this is a perfectly legitimate testimony,\* since it lines up with reality)
2. Secondly, that YHWH was actually the superior object of worship on earth and the only true God
  - a. The Israelites knew the other nations' gods. YHWH was superior in every way.
  - b. We naturally form judgements from what we see & hear

**Kid-speak:** David told God, "We've heard about all the other gods that other people have. You are definitely the best God and the only real God."

3. \* David could just as legitimately have stated these 3 things about God *without* the proviso of 7:22b
  - a. That is, God's magnification, His incomparable superiority, and His absolute uniqueness
  - b. Because they are declared without qualification elsewhere, e.g., Ps 96:4
4. Lesson: Because *we* have to initiate our relationship with God each day, it's easy to begin to perceive the relationship as a *human product*- something *we* produce, essentially
  - a. Factually speaking, David already knew that *he* was the subject of *God's* beneficence and that God was not reliant on *him* for anything (just as *we* factually know it)
  - b. *Only by conscious effort do we keep this proper balance and perspective before us*
  - c. God graciously gave David a reminder (not really a rebuke). In it, He gives us a reminder too.
5. What would we say about God from the hearing of *our* own

ear? What *do* we say?

- J. “For this reason”- because God had helped David and Israel for His own purposes, but purposes that *benefited* David and Israel, and potentially all the nations on earth
- K. “You have been magnified/increased”
  - 1. This is the *verb* form of the word for “great.” It could be translated “You are made great.” The normal way to say “You are great” uses the *noun* form.
  - 2. This can be speaking of God’s glorification of *Himself* in His deeds: that His presence and objectives have filled various situations
    - a. Or it can be speaking of *people* magnifying God in response to His deeds and revelations
    - b. Or it can be both

**Kid-speak:** Why do we say God is so great? Because He made us, so He knows all about us, and He helps us when we ask Him- as long as we know that the most help we need is to *not be bad*.

- 3. God has always magnified Himself in His dealing with men. That is, He shows His goodness, mercy, wisdom and justice. He is the best good the universe has. Any other goodness is a reflection of Him.
  - a. But He has especially glorified Himself in the coming of Christ
  - b. And *especially* in Christ’s substitutionary death and in His resurrection. These are the crux of God’s glory and will be forever.
- L. “For *there is none as You are*.”
  - 1. “For/ because” introduces a *further* reason added to the one above (which follows “For this reason”)
  - 2. God is rightly magnified “because” He is *incomparable*. He is one-of-a-kind.
    - a. He is the original Original.
    - b. He has shared attributes with His moral creatures, such as thinking ability and a moral sense
    - c. He has specifically shared wisdom, knowledge, love, justice, etc. with His born-again children
  - 3. But even in shared attributes, none of His creatures can match the depth and breadth of any of God’s abilities

- a. We can see His abilities clearly through what He has made
- b. Technological advances have allowed us to see God's wisdom and power at the microscopic level,
  - i. which should have made men bow to Him,
  - ii. but which actually accelerated their flight from Him, offended at His superior claim to wisdom and power

**Kid-speak:** God made us enough like Him that we can think, "Huh. I'm kind of like God. I can think and talk and make things." But can any of us or even angels be as smart as God? No. And that's why we should listen to God.

4. That's why David loved and admired God. There is no one comparable to Him.
- M. "And *there is not a* God except You"
1. Meaning no real God.
  2. Only one source could have brought everything into being.
  3. Modern atheists have to give gravity God-like power to explain things as they are (Gravity = an idol, conceived as a creator by us)
    - a. But their explanations defy the laws of physics
    - b. Idolatry always has to give something God-like power, for our existence begs explanation
  4. If there is no real God but the Trinity, why are we so easily sidetracked to give created things God-like prerogatives?

**Kid-speak:** What do you have to be to be God? You have to be Creator. You have to be the one who **made** everything. Did anyone but God make everything? Can anyone but God make something out of nothing?

2 Sam 7:23 And who [*is*] as Your people, as Israel- one nation in the earth, whom God has gone to rescue for a people for Himself, and to make for Himself a name- and to do for Yourself the greatness- even fearful things for Your land, at the presence [*face*] of Your people, whom You have rescued for Yourself out of Egypt, *from other* nations and their gods?

N. God is unique, but that makes Israel unique among nations, since the unique God chose them

- O. God rescued them from Egypt to make them His people
- P. God made a *name* for Himself in the process, *defining* who He is by what He did
  - 1. God is indeed in competition with the world's gods & powers
  - 2. Is it a fair competition? God lets them compete, so, yes, but it is certainly an uneven competition
- Q. God did for Himself "the greatness"
  - 1. A form of the word "great" again. This time it's for "Your Land." What was done for the Land was done for the People.
  - 2. This "greatness" is further described as "fearful *things*"-awesome acts "before the face of Your people"
    - a. They were shown so they could know their God
    - b. Both TO trust Him *and* NOT TO trifle with Him
- R. This defining rescue was primarily from Egypt, but also "nations and their gods" in general: all those Israel met coming out of Egypt; all those she battled coming into the Land; all those she was delivered from once in the Land.
  - 1. God acknowledges the nations' gods. In one sense, you can call them nothing, for they don't match the nations' descriptions of them.
  - 2. But they are real, since demonic powers lay behind the idols/gods, 1 Cor 10:20
- S. God is still defining Himself today in rescuing *us*
  - 1. The rescue shows up in how far we get *from* ungodliness and how close we get *to* righteousness
  - 2. That's where the Cross *lays hold of us*

**Kid-speak:** What nation did God choose? Israel. But which nations will God bless? Any nations that do things His way and trust Him.

2 Sam 7:24 Indeed, You **set up** Your people Israel unto You, a people to Yourself **unto perpetuity**; and You, YHWH- You have been to them their God.

- T. David knows that to be a king, you must have a people. In a way, the people are the focus. The king's activities are to benefit *them*, not vice versa.
  - 1. In creating, **God** automatically became king of the world, but was He any less sovereign before He created?
    - a. We always look at God's creative act after-the-fact. Our

- natural reaction is: 1) Well, He didn't have anything else to do before that anyway; and 2) How nice to make a world in which *You* are king!
- b. This reaction shows that we think that God benefited mainly *Himself* by creating and becoming sovereign. We see God's motive, then, as inferior to the ideal for even a human king, such as David.
  2. The reality is that God traded in a perfect existence with perfect fellowship to TIE Himself to a creation forever (since, as a responsible being, He could not create only to discard)
    - a. He knew His creatures would make Him sick at heart, yet He made them, Gen 6:6
    - b. No, God gave up the MOST in becoming a king
  3. Jesus, in particular, gave up the most in becoming a king
    - a. For He also had to share man's nature- our limitations, forever
    - b. And He had to bear in Himself all the meanness of a people that had grieved Him and the Father and the Spirit
  4. Certainly, considering our King, we are beneficiaries as a people more than national Israel (though all of spiritually elect Israel were equally benefited by Christ as King)

**Kid-speak:** When God made Himself **king** of the world, did that make Him better than He was before? No. God had to *give up* a lot just to do the job caring of the world and everything in it.

- U. Here David begins to repeat a word God had used to describe His "setting up/ establishing":
  - the kingdom of David's seed, v 12,
  - the throne of his seed's kingdom, v 13
  - and David's throne in v 16.
 David will use "set up/establish" *again* in v 25 & 26
- V. "Set up" is used with "unto perpetuity" in v 13, 16, 24, and 26. God is the one who "establishes" things so that they remain.
- W. God "set up" Israel for Himself- no terminus
  1. But that includes times He would cast them off- like the present
  2. However, He's always saving a remnant
  3. And He will return them to Himself *wholesale* later, Rom 11:25
- X. Jesus is Israel's God, but they don't recognize Him. He's still their God 'in exile', though it is actually *they* who are in

spiritual exile- blindness.

1. Showing that man is *always* prone to fall back on self-love, self-rightness, and self-dependence
2. We are in just as great a danger, or Paul would not tell us to “fear” as we look at Israel, Rom 11:20

**Kid-speak:** Jesus is king of the Jews, but do the Jews worship Him? No. They decided they didn’t like Him. So now it’s us- (what do you call us?) Gentiles who worship Him. But still, not most Gentiles.

IV. For the Walking Wounded (1 Thess 5:14, “Uphold the strengthless”) God’s greatness is mainly in His humbling. That’s one reason He has an inclination towards the helpless.

V. Conviction (2 Tim 4:2, “Convince, rebuke”): **What have I done wrong? How have I lost righteousness?**  
Do I see God’s greatness in all He has done?

VI. Correction/ Realignment (2 Tim 4:2, “Exhort/encourage”):  
**How will I correct my error? How will I regain uprightness?**  
I will use my study of Scriptures and life to admire God.

VII. Schooling in Righteousness: **How will I avoid the error and follow Christ?**  
Especially in life’s mundaneness, I will remember our most recent *and the* most fearful of all God’s signs: the Cross.

Wrap-up: David would have remembered the Red Sea as a prominent, dread deed by which God claimed Israel from the Egyptians. He would also have remembered the sound of marching at the weeping trees, when God had recently fought for Israel again, 2 Sam 5:24. But David knew that the greatest enemy God defeats is His people’s sin, as pictured in the Tabernacle.

With the defeat of sin accomplished in history at the Cross, we should be a triumphant and joyful people. It just depends on how we esteem the Cross and how much we look to it.