

“Who am I, O Lord”
2 Samuel 7:18-23
(Preached at Trinity, March 10, 2019)

I'm supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord's Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I'll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. God had blessed David richly. He chose him as His king and elevated him over all Israel. David had grown in strength because God was with Him.
2 Samuel 5:10 NAU - "David became greater and greater, for the LORD God of hosts was with him."
2 Samuel 7:9 NAU - "I have been with you wherever you have gone and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make you a great name, like the names of the great men who are on the earth."
2. Then God set forth His Covenant with David—that his throne and his kingdom would never end.
2 Samuel 7:12-13 NAU - "When your days are complete and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your descendant after you, who will come forth from you, and I will establish his kingdom. ¹³ "He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever."
2 Samuel 7:16 NAU - "Your house and your kingdom shall endure before Me forever; your throne shall be established forever."
3. Human beings respond to God's goodness in various ways.
 - A. Most receive from God but give Him little honor or recognition. This is the heart of fallen man. They take from God but give not glory to God.
Romans 1:21 NAU - "For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened."
 - B. Others express gratitude, but there is a sense of entitlement. Most people feel they deserve the good things they have received. When they experience difficulties they complain, indicating they feel they are not getting what they deserve.
 - C. Then there are those who are truly humbled by God's goodness. This is the heart of the believer. We know we only deserve God's wrath and judgement. Instead, God had blessed us with His mercy and grace. We are overwhelmed by God's goodness towards us.
This was David's heart. David's response was to go before God in prayer. But, David's heart was amazed and humbled by God's blessings because they far exceeded what he deserved.
2 Samuel 7:18 NAU - "Who am I, O Lord GOD, and what is my house, that You have brought me this far?"
4. Let us look for a moment at the nature of David's prayer before God

- I. David was humbled by God's past blessings - "Who am I, O Lord GOD, and what is my house"
- A. David entered into the presence of God
1. He went "before the Lord." This was a frequent expression in the OT. It speaks of the condescension of God in His immanent presence before men. The godly man is humbled by God's presence.
 2. In **Chapter 6** the Ark was synonymous with the presence of God. David went before the Ark of God but he knew it was before God that he came. We are told that David rejoiced before the Lord.
2 Samuel 6:5 NAU - "Meanwhile, David and all the house of Israel were celebrating before the LORD with all kinds of *instruments made of fir wood*, and with lyres, harps, tambourines, castanets and cymbals."
2 Samuel 6:14 NAU - "And David was dancing before the LORD with all *his* might"
 3. In our passage tonight, David had just received an amazing word from God. **Verse 16** - "Your house and your kingdom shall endure before Me forever; your throne shall be established forever."
 Upon hearing these gracious words delivered by Nathan the prophet, David responded by going before the Lord in prayer.
 David had been dwelling in his royal palace – a magnificent structure of stone and cedar. Nearby was a humble tent housing the Ark of the Covenant.
 - a. On one hand, we can see the great contrast between the lavish palace of David and the lowly tent of God.
 - b. On the other hand, we must not fail to see the true contrast. David's throne was the lowly place compared with the throne of God. David left his palace to come before the living God, the true King.
 4. "sitting" is an unusual posture for prayer in the Bible. In fact, this is the only such occurrence.
 "Then David the king went in and sat before the LORD"
 - a. The expected position before God is bowing in holy reverence.
2 Chronicles 20:18 NAU - "Jehoshaphat bowed his head with *his* face to the ground, and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell down before the LORD, worshiping the LORD."
Psalms 95:6-7 NAU - "Come, let us worship and bow down, Let us kneel before the LORD our Maker. ⁷ For He is our God, And we are the people of His pasture and the sheep of His hand."
 - b. Jesus spoke of standing during prayer.
Mark 11:25 NAU - "Whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father who is in heaven will also forgive you your transgressions."
 Jesus knelt in prayer.
Luke 22:41 NAU - "And He withdrew from them about a stone's throw, and He knelt down and *began* to pray,"

- c. But for David to sit in prayer was unique. It could mean that David kneeling, sitting on his heels.
The Hebrew word can mean “sit” or it can also be translated to “settle” or “remain.”
Genesis 4:16 NAU - "Then Cain went out from the presence of the LORD, and settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden."
Regarding Abraham and Lot –
Genesis 13:6 NAU - "And the land could not sustain them while dwelling together, for their possessions were so great that they were not able to remain together."
- d. David’s life was to abide in the presence of God. His prayer was an extension of his life. He sat, humbly contemplating the greatness of God. It was a position of intimate meditation.
The word used here must speak to our own prayer life. David went before God and tarried before Him. Too often our prayer life is more like going through a drive-thru—in and out quickly.
- B. As David looked back, he was humbled that God would choose him, prepare him, preserve him, and prosper him.
2 Samuel 7:18 NAU - "Who am I, O Lord GOD, and what is my house, that You have brought me this far?"
1. Why would God choose David? David was the least in his father’s house. He was the youngest, the least likely to be anointed as king
 2. All of God’s elect are amazed and humbled that God would choose us. There is nothing in us that would attract the favor of God.
Romans 3:10 NAS - "There is none righteous, not even one"
Romans 3:23 NAU - "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God"
Isaiah 53:6 NAU - "All of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way"
 3. The Apostle Paul expressed well the attitude we must all have.
1 Corinthians 15:9-10 NAU - "For I am the least of the apostles, and not fit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. ¹⁰ But by the grace of God I am what I am"
Ephesians 3:7-8 NAU - "I was made a minister, according to the gift of God's grace which was given to me according to the working of His power. ⁸ To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ,"
 4. We are sometimes like the haughty who think they are worthy of every blessing. We are stingy with offering forgiveness when we are offended because we believe we are worthy of worship. Such a heart knows nothing of grace. Most people can’t get their eyes off themselves. Their heart is, “Look at me!” The humble man’s heart on the other hand is, “Who am I?”
 5. May God grant us the words of the psalmist:
Psalms 115:1 KJV - "Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, *and* for thy truth's sake."

- II. David was humbled by God's present blessings - "that You have brought me this far?"
- A. David had gone through many trials
1. Almost immediately after God anointed David Saul determined to kill him
1 Samuel 18:11-12 NAU - "Saul hurled the spear for he thought, "I will pin David to the wall." But David escaped from his presence twice. ¹² Now Saul was afraid of David, for the LORD was with him but had departed from Saul."
1 Samuel 19:1 NAU - "Saul told Jonathan his son and all his servants to put David to death."
 2. David did not forget the despair he felt as Saul pursued him.
1 Samuel 20:3 NAU - "But truly as the LORD lives and as your soul lives, there is hardly a step between me and death."
1 Samuel 27:1 NAU - "Then David said to himself, "Now I will perish one day by the hand of Saul. There is nothing better for me than to escape into the land of the Philistines."
- B. But now, David looks back and sees that God's preserving hand had been with him the whole time.
- Dale Ralph Davis writes: "Bethlehem (1 Sam. 16:1–13) was only six miles from Jerusalem but for David that distance meant twenty-one chapters (and over ten years) of danger, escapes, treachery, folly, despair, and slander. Yet here he was. Amazing: Yahweh had brought him 'to this point'"¹
1. In God's perfect timing David was anointed king. At first, only Judah received him, but by God's hand David was soon reigning over all Israel.
 2. It was all by God's doing. David was a great man. He became a powerful king. But it was all of God's doing.
2 Samuel 5:10 NAU - "David became greater and greater, for the LORD God of hosts was with him."
 3. How is it you have continued in grace? How is it you haven't fallen into apostatizing sin? In spite of the weakness of your flesh, the constant temptations of Satan and the alluring draw of this world, you continue to press on. Do you repeat the words of David?
 "that You have brought me this far"
 4. God's preserving grace must never be taken for granted.
Romans 8:37-9:1 NAU - "But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹ nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

¹ Dale Ralph Davis, *2 Samuel: Out of Every Adversity*, Focus on the Bible Commentary, (Great Britain: Christian Focus Publications, 2002), 98.

- III. David was humbled by God's promise of future blessings - "You have spoken also of the house of Your servant concerning the distant future"
- A. The promise of God's covenant was amazing for David
1. How could it be that David's throne would be established forever?
 2. David had seen the kings of the nations rise and fall. He had seen the first king of Israel rise and fall. Now God is promising David:
2 Samuel 7:16 NAU - "Your house and your kingdom shall endure before Me forever; your throne shall be established forever"
 3. God had already richly blessed David in exalting him to the throne. But now God is directing David's eyes into the distant future.
2 Samuel 7:19 NAU - "And yet this was insignificant in Your eyes, O Lord GOD, for You have spoken also of the house of Your servant concerning the distant future. And this is the custom of man, O Lord GOD."
 4. David knew God's promise was of universal significance. The promise of an everlasting kingdom was not for David alone. It was not for Israel alone. This was a declaration of God's Covenant of Grace upon humanity. David declares:
"And this is the custom of man, O Lord GOD."
 - a. Literally, David is saying, "This is the law (Torah) of man."
 - b. David is referring to God's Divine directive about David's dynasty but impacting all of humanity.
 - c. God's covenant is of a universal, binding nature – God's Covenant blessings are steadfast. As God promised Abraham,
Genesis 22:18 NAU - "In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed"
- B. David's only response was to sing forth the praises of God
2 Samuel 7:22 NAU - "For this reason You are great, O Lord GOD; for there is none like You, and there is no God besides You, according to all that we have heard with our ears."
1. The promises of God for us are beyond our comprehension
Paul described it:
1 Corinthians 2:9-10 KJV - "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. ¹⁰ But God hath revealed *them* unto us by his Spirit"
 2. The truths of the Gospel are beyond the comprehension of fallen man, but God has revealed it unto us.

Conclusion:

1. God chose us in eternity. Saved us by the Gospel in His appointed time. He is preserving us that we might receive the inheritance of eternity. In spite of the many trials and difficulties we face during our Christian journey, we have confidence that we will prevail. This is the surety of God's covenant blessings.
2. This assurance of faith is a wonderful comfort for God's people
2 Timothy 1:12 KJV - "For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day."
3. What amazing grace. These precious promises were upon John Newton's heart.
 Through many dangers, toils and snares
 I have already come;
 'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far
 And grace will lead me home.

The Lord has promised good to me
 His word my hope secures;
 He will my shield and portion be,
 As long as life endures.

Yea, when this flesh and heart shall fail,
 And mortal life shall cease,
 I shall possess within the veil,
 A life of joy and peace.

When we've been there ten thousand years
 Bright shining as the sun,
 We've no less days to sing God's praise
 Than when we've first begun.