
The Davidic Covenant

2 Samuel 7:1-29⁶

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Introduction

People break promises. We are in season of the year where the most extravagant and excruciating promises are being made. No one believes them. Most of us have become so jaded at the promises of ads, manufacturers, warranties, most of all, politicians. So who do you trust? Notice how easily we frame that – trust, faith, belief is most directly connected to purposes and promises.

God is a promise making and promise keeping God...

David, unlike Saul, relied on God's prophet to hear from God. He usually showed a reliance on God's Word in his decisions. He wanted to trust God and to obey God. And so, we come to a grand moment of promise and faith.

The King's Problem (v.1-3)

¹ Now when the king lived in his house and the Lord had given him rest from all his surrounding enemies, ² the king said to Nathan the prophet, "See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwells in a tent." ³ And Nathan said to the king, "Go, do all that is in your heart, for the Lord is with you."

His Circumstances (v.1)

David has come to great circumstances. He is in his own house. The Lord had given him rest from his enemies. This idea of rest is very important in the Bible. God completed the work of creation and entered into His rest. Israel entered the Promised Land and Joshua gave them an initial rest in the land. Now God has given David rest from his labors at war.

His Concern (v.2)

But David has a great concern. He shares that concern with Nathan, the Lord's prophet. This is the first time Nathan appears in Scripture. Gad had been David's prophet during his exile (1 Sam. 22:5) After David's coronation, Gad continues to serve God with David. (2 Sam. 24:1-18). Gad served with Nathan to keep the official records (1 Chron. 29:25, 29). He assisted in organizing the worship (2 Chron. 29:25).

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Nathan emerges as the prophetic voice of God to David during his reign. Nathan serves as David's chaplain. [Adapted from (Wiersbe W. W., p. 48)]

David sees himself as at rest, in his house but the Ark of the Covenant is still in the tent. David sees himself as settled into the land and regency. But the Lord's presence is still tenting, tabernacling even though all are settled in.

His Confirmation (v.3)

He seems to be seeking the Lord's approval to do something. He shares that concern with Nathan. He wants to know that what he is thinking pleases the Lord. He receives confirmation from Nathan. David can go ahead do what is on his heart. Has Nathan spoken and not consulted? Seems so...

The Lord's Promise (v. 4-17)

Nathan now learns that he must listen before he speaks. That very night the Lord speaks to Nathan. A rebuke is implied. But more importantly, here is one of the great covenant promises by the Lord. It lays the foundation for the future kingship of the Messiah.

⁴ But that same night the word of the Lord came to Nathan, ⁵ "Go and tell my servant David, 'Thus says the Lord: Would you build me a house to dwell in?' ⁶ I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent for my dwelling. ⁷ In all places where I have moved with all the people of Israel, did I speak a word with any of the judges of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, "Why have you not built me a house of cedar?" ' ⁸ Now, therefore, thus you shall say to my servant David, 'Thus says the Lord of hosts, I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, that you should be prince over my people Israel. ⁹ And I have been with you wherever you went and have cut off all your enemies from before you. And I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. ¹⁰ And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may dwell in their own place and be disturbed no more. And violent men shall afflict them no more, as formerly, ¹¹ from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel. And I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover, the Lord declares to you that the Lord will make you a house. ¹² When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, 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. ¹⁴ I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son. When he commits iniquity, I will discipline him with the rod of men, with the stripes of the sons of men, ¹⁵ but my steadfast love will not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away from before you. ¹⁶ And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me. Your throne shall be established forever.' " ¹⁷ In accordance with all these words, and in accordance with all this vision, Nathan spoke to David.

The Lord's Perspective (v.4-7)

The Lord explains to Nathan His own perspective. That Yahweh lived in a tent was of His own doing. He wanted His people to understand something and to anticipate someone. God never required or commanded Moses nor any of the judges to build the Lord a house.

The Lord's Reminders (v.8-9)

Nathan is to remind David of all that God has done for Him. God has brought David from the sheep fields to the throne. He has moved from shepherding his father's flock to shepherding the Lord's people. He has promoted, provided and protected David.

The Lord's Covenant (v.10-16)

The Lord makes His covenant with David. This is one of the great Biblical covenants. From Noah to Abraham to David, God makes unconditional promises. God simply says, "I will..." Here are the cluster of promises to David.

God will make David's name great. David's reputation will stand as one of the greatest human kings of all time among all the nations. But there will rise a future king whose reputation and name will go down in the grave and rise up from the dead and ascend up into heavens to be the name above all names.

God will establish a place for His people to dwell in. Yes, this initially applies to Israel. But the final fulfillment will when God dwells with His people in the new creation culminating in the new heavens and new earth.

God will bring a full and final rest for His people. Joshua didn't bring it. David and Solomon didn't bring it. But Jesus did. His salvation work brought the rest for His people.

God will establish a forever kingdom and an offspring on the throne. The New Testament Apostles tell us that this offspring will be the Lord Jesus in His resurrection, ascension and return in glory and power.

God will be that King's Father and He will be God's Son. This was fulfilled first with Solomon but points us to the Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

God will deal with that King's sin, chastening him as a father does his son. This is referring to Solomon who did commit his own iniquity and was chastened by God. But Jesus never committed sin but bore our own sins. He bore the wrath of God through the stripes and rod of men.

God will establish the throne of David forever. The throne of David is established through the resurrection and ascension of Jesus.

Now, have you heard the *forever* language? All through here. So a 1,000 year reign of Jesus on the throne of David does not and cannot fulfill this promise. What this promise says over and over is *forever*. An eternal house, an eternal rest, an eternal king, an eternal throne, an eternal kingdom. Jesus whose house, rest, kingship, throne and kingdom is forever and ever and ever, age upon eternal unending age.

All these promises are kept by God. Yes, they have fulfillment in the way David would have expected. But these promises find their fulfillment in Jesus Christ. We don't have time to talk about each one of them. But listen to what Peter says in his sermon: **Acts 2:29–36**

²⁹ “Brothers, I may say to you with confidence about the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. ³⁰ Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would set one of his descendants on his throne, ³¹ he foresaw and spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption. ³² This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses. ³³ Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing. ³⁴ For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he himself says, “ ‘The Lord said to my Lord, “Sit at my right hand, ³⁵ until I make your enemies your footstool.” ’ ”

³⁶ Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.”

So all the promises of God in Christ are “YES” and “AMEN” to the glory of God.

The Lord's Prophet (v.17)

The Lord's prophet, Nathan, is faithful to hear God's words. God has told Nathan what He wants communicated to David. Now, Nathan must be faithful to speak God's words..

All of this reflects the trajectory of redemptive history:

Jesus as the greater David will tabernacle with His people in a human body.

Jesus as the greater Solomon will build His dwelling place with His people

The throne of David:

Begun in David and Solomon - David to Exile

Fulfilled in Jesus - Birth to Ascension

Finished in the New Creation - Resurrection to Culmination

The King's Praise (v.18-29)

In response to God's promise, the King offers up his praise and worship (v. 18-24).

¹⁸ Then King David went in and sat before the Lord and said, “Who am I, O Lord God, and what is my house, that you have brought me thus far? ¹⁹ And yet this was a small thing in your eyes, O Lord God. You have spoken also of your servant's house for a great while to come, and this is instruction for mankind, O Lord God! ²⁰ And what more can David say to you? For you know your servant, O Lord God! ²¹ Because of your promise, and according to your own heart, you have brought about all this greatness, to make your servant know it. ²² Therefore 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. ²³ And who is like your people Israel, the one nation on earth whom God went to redeem to be his people, making himself a name and doing for them great and awesome things by driving out before your people, whom you redeemed for yourself from Egypt, a nation and its gods? ²⁴ And you established for yourself your people Israel to be your people forever. And you, O Lord, became their God.

The King's Humility (v. 18)

I love this imagery of David's humility. He goes in to the tent and sits humbly before the Lord. He is the supplicant. You hear his trust and his thankfulness. And it is infused with awe and amazement – the elements of joy.

The King's Confession (v. 19-24)

David's confession shows a deep understanding of the person and purposes of God.

Of the Trajectory of God's Grace (v. 19)

David glories in the wonder of what God has done for him. What is a great thing for David was but a small thing for God. Yet, it will be an amazing thing for all mankind. Through what God has promised and purposed for David, all mankind will be taught. Here is the teaching purpose of God's covenant promises.

Of the Purposes of God's Sovereignty (v. 20-22)

David affirms his own place before God as a servant. And he rejoices in the purposes of God's sovereignty. What God is doing will put His greatness and His glory on display. Through what God has done and promises to do, God's servants, God's people will come to know personally the uniqueness of God's greatness. What they have heard from God's Word they will now see with their own eyes. As a result, they will praise God for there being none like Him.

Of the Privileges of God's People (v. 23-24)

David confesses and celebrates the privileges of God's people. The language starts with Israel. What God has done in choosing, redeeming and delivering Israel from Egypt is a picture of what God will do in redeeming all of His people down through the ages.

The King's Requests (v. 25-29)

David closes with petitions still aligned with his praise.

²⁵ And now, O Lord God, confirm forever the word that you have spoken concerning your servant and concerning his house, and do as you have spoken. ²⁶ And your name will be magnified forever, saying, 'The Lord of hosts is God over Israel,' and the house of your servant David will be established before you. ²⁷ For you, O Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, have made this revelation to your servant, saying, 'I will build you a house.' Therefore your servant has found courage to pray this prayer to you. ²⁸ And now, O Lord God, you are God, and your words are true,

and you have promised this good thing to your servant. ²⁹ Now therefore may it please you to bless the house of your servant, so that it may continue forever before you. For you, O Lord God, have spoken, and with your blessing shall the house of your servant be blessed forever.”

To Confirm the Promises (v. 25)

God has always given seals, signs or symbols to confirm His promises. God gave Noah, the rainbow; Abraham, circumcision, Moses, the Sabbath and now, what for David? There is no sign of the Davidic covenant. David’s prayer here is simply a believing request. Confirm your promise by doing what you promised. In essence, the sign of the Davidic Covenant is the fulfillment of the Davidic Covenant. Jesus Christ on David’s throne forever is the confirmation that God did and will do what He says.

To Magnify God's Name (v. 26)

Why? Because has declared that He will magnify His own Name. God’s commitment to glorify Himself by keeping this promise is its confirmation. In this covenant, we reach an apex, a high point in God’s promise making. There is one left to make. (I believe that the covenant with Solomon is not a new covenant but a re-confirmation of the Davidic covenant.) What will be sign of the New Covenant? A simple meal of bread and wine where the outpoured life of Jesus is represented in the fruit of the vine in the cup of our Lord.

To Bless David's House (v. 27-29)

So David asks God to bless David’s house and God’s people. This is the kind of praying and asking and pleases God. David has received God’s promise and has rejoiced in God’s purposes. Now he prays in faith believing those promises. His prayer is one of faith; he is asking God to do what God will surely do. This is truly praying and asking in faith.

Reflect and Respond

Praise God for His faithfulness to keep His covenants. A descendent of David will sit on David's throne and in his house forever and ever. This will not be Solomon or any other sinful man. This will be Jesus who is both God's Son and David's descendent. Jesus has been crowned with glory and authority in His resurrection and ascension. What David was promised Jesus has begun to fulfill. But not yet. There will come a day, glorious day, when with a name above all names, Jesus will be seated forever to rule and reign in the new creation over the new heavens and new earth for all the everlasting ages as each one rolls upon the next.

It was not yet time to build a house instead of a tent. The picture was needed to point to Jesus' living in the tent of human body before He would dwell among His people in a spiritual Temple made up of living stones. And so, sometimes we have a great concern and desire to see God accomplish something or even to be the instrument of that work. But maybe it is not time yet. And maybe it will not be time in our life time. One of the tests of our eternal perspective is a willingness to build, prepare, invest and wait in hope and patience for God's time.

May our praise and petitions follow the short and long trajectories of God's promises and purposes. May His aim to magnify Himself be a sufficient confirmation for our faith and cause in our hearts so that we our praises and prayers rise up like fragrant incense before the eternal, forever, Davidic, throne of Jesus.

