

At the heart of the Davidic Covenant was the Lord's determination to build a house for His beloved king. In turn, the divine promise of a house – representing both a Davidic dynasty and the enduring dominion of that dynasty – was to be fulfilled in connection with one of David's descendents. Through this descendent, Yahweh would construct a royal line for David and establish his throne and kingdom forever.

But the Lord had also appointed this same descendent to build a house for Him. Not David, but the promised seed would fulfill David's desire, and the reason was the necessity of Yahweh's house being constructed in the context of peace and rest. Thus Solomon – the man of peace whose kingdom would be defined by “rest on every side” – was to build the permanent sanctuary David longed to see erected in Jerusalem.

- g. David's successor would build the temple, but the ultimate concern in that work was not a physical sanctuary in the new Israelite capital, but its contribution to the fulfillment promised in the covenant. Another son of David would emerge in the future to build an everlasting dwelling for Yahweh, but He, too, would do so in a kingdom defined by peace and rest. It is in this regard that the interweaving of *priestly* considerations with the Davidic kingship becomes most meaningful.

While priestly matters are not directly addressed in the Davidic Covenant, the biblical text clearly establishes the priestly component of David's kingship.

- It is first of all evident in David's actions as Israel's king (ref. 6:13-19).
- But it is also implied in his status as the representative head of the Israelite nation. Israel was collectively Yahweh's chosen and beloved “son,” and David held this distinction in a preeminent way. David epitomized Israel in its covenant relationship to Yahweh, and central to that relationship was the nation's status as a *kingdom of priests* (Exodus 19:1-6); Israel was to express its sonship through consecrated devotion to its Father-God. If Israel was a priestly entity, so also was the king who epitomized Israel.

But the priestly aspect of David's reign arguably finds its greatest biblical articulation in Psalm 110. This psalm is important to the present consideration, not primarily because it's attributed to David and implicates his personal reign, but because of its allusions to the Davidic Covenant with its promise of a royal seed and everlasting dominion for David's house. The covenant presents as the context for that dominion perfect and unending peace associated with the destruction of the enemies of the kingdom (2 Samuel 7:10-11), and this Davidic psalm emphasizes the same theme of the triumph of Yahweh's king (ref. 110:1-3).

When viewed in connection with the Davidic Covenant, Psalm 110 introduces a priestly component to the covenant and its prophetic concern for David's house and kingdom, even as it suggests the priestly quality of David's own kingship. This, together with the recognition of David's status as the epitomizing Israelite, leads William Dumbrell to observe regarding Psalm 110:

“In its contemplation of a priestly kingship, the psalm appears to suggest that in the person of the king, the demand contemplated for all Israel in Exod. 19:3b-6 has been embodied. Only kingship of that character, the psalm seems to imply in its second half, will guarantee the political extension of the Jerusalem kingdom, which it anticipates (Ps. 110:5-7). David’s line is thus to reflect, in the person of the occupant of the throne of Israel, the values which the Sinai covenant had required of the nation as a whole.” (Covenant and Creation)

In this statement Dumbrell is speaking from the understanding that the Sinai Covenant defined Israel – both to itself and to the nations around it; the covenant showed Israel what it meant to be *Israel*, the elect and beloved “son of God.” This national identity was later epitomized in David, whose own identity and role were to be reproduced in a superlative sense in a seed to come from him. Thus, if Israel’s filial identity and covenant fidelity were bound up in priestly concerns, so also were those of the son promised to David in the Davidic Covenant.

In God’s developing revelation of His redemption in Christ, the two primary streams of Old Testament messianism (kingly and priestly) notably converge in the person of David. And having come together in him, they are projected onto the son promised in the covenant. What is not directly evident in the covenant itself is made explicit by its connection with Psalm 110: *The Davidic Branch, in whom Yahweh had determined to establish David’s throne and kingdom forever, would exercise His everlasting reign in the context of a perpetual priesthood.*

In fulfilling the Davidic kingship (cf. 110:1 with Matthew 22:41-45), the Davidic Branch would also fulfill the kingship of Melchizedek – the king of peace (“Salem”) and priest of God Most High (cf. 110:4 with Hebrews 5:5-10 and Romans 8:33-34 with Hebrews 7:1-8:6; cf. also Revelation 5:4-6). As the ultimate David, this son would establish Yahweh’s kingdom and secure its peace through the conquest of all its enemies. But having done so, He would go on to build Yahweh’s house, ruling forever as a priest upon His throne (Zechariah 6:9-15).

- h. The definitive Son of David would one day build an everlasting, spiritual house for the Lord, but in the meantime there was to be a near-term temporal fulfillment of the covenant promise. Thus, after recording the covenant, the Samuel narrative immediately turns its attention to chronicling David’s continuing success in establishing the full bounds of his kingdom (8:1-10:19). The writer specifically recounts David’s military victories over several of Israel’s most important historical enemies: Philistia, Moab, Ammon, Edom and Aram (cf. 1 Chronicles 18-19), and this recounting serves two principal purposes in the narrative:
 - 1) First of all, by giving direct attention to David’s conquest of a group of nations that epitomized the enduring enemies of the Israelite kingdom, the text is emphasizing the fulfillment of what it previously affirmed, namely that, through David, Yahweh had given Israel rest on every side from all of its enemies (ref. again 7:1, 9).

- 2) But there is a second, even more important reason for this record of conquests. Though the Lord had refused David's intention to build Him a house in Jerusalem, He affirmed to His king that such a dwelling would indeed be constructed. Armed with that promise, David redirected his zeal toward preparations for the temple on behalf of the son appointed to build it. In particular, he began accumulating the precious materials needed for its construction, *obtaining them largely from the tribute he exacted from the various Gentile nations he had subjected to his rule* (cf. 8:1-12 with 1 Chronicles 18:1-11, 22:1-16). The significance of this action within the developing salvation history is profound, but is all too often missed because of the failure to view it within the larger biblical storyline.

It has been demonstrated throughout this study that sacred space – the realm and manner in which God is present in relation to His creation – is central to the biblical conception of the kingdom of God. And for that very reason, the notion of *sanctuary* also stands at the forefront of the doctrine of the kingdom.

- In the creational kingdom, the Garden itself served as the divine sanctuary. There the first man and woman communed with their Creator-Father and, as an expression and extension of that communion, were directed to administer His rule over His creation.
- So, too, the Israelite form of the kingdom had its focal point in a divine dwelling in the presence of the image-son (ref. again Exodus 15:11-17, 25:1-8). Yahweh's sanctuary first existed as a portable and impermanent tabernacle, testifying in a tangible way to the unrealized character of the covenant kingdom prior to David. But now David's labors as Israel's king had secured the kingdom's settled fullness, indicating that the time had come for the Lord's sanctuary to take the form of a permanent dwelling.

Despite their notable differences, both sanctuaries shared a crucial point of commonality: *Both were constructed with wealth drawn from the nations.* From the beginning God's intention was that His house should be constructed from a contribution freely given by His people. But in every instance, their contributions would not originate entirely with them; what they offered to Yahweh flowed to them from the nations around them.

This principle, first introduced with the tabernacle (cf. Genesis 15:13-14 with Exodus 11:1-2, 12:35-36), becomes in the biblical storyline a foundational kingdom theme that eventually finds its ultimate fulfillment in Yahweh's true house composed of men from every tribe, tongue and nation (cf. Haggai 2:1-9 with Zechariah 6:9-15; also Matthew 16:13-18 with 1 Peter 2:1-10). And so, even as the text records David's ingathering of the "precious value" of the subjects of his kingdom for use in building the Lord's holy dwelling, it does so conscious that it is pointing prophetically to the day when David's greater Son would Himself repeat and fulfill His father's work (cf. Amos 9:11-15 with Acts 15:1-18).