



**Sunday School Lesson for October 22, 2006  
Released on October 18, 2006**

**"God's Covenant with David"**

**Printed Text: 2 Samuel 7:8-17  
Background Scripture: 2 Samuel:7:1-29  
Devotional Reading: Psalm 5**

**2 Samuel 7:8-17**

**8 Now therefore so shalt thou say unto my servant David, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, I took thee from the shepcote, from following the sheep, to be ruler over my people, over Israel:**

9 And I was with thee whithersoever thou wentest, and have cut off all thine enemies out of thy sight, and have made thee a great name, like unto the name of the great men that are in the earth.

**10 Moreover I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as beforetime,**

11 And as since the time that I commanded judges to be over my people Israel, and have caused thee to rest from all thine enemies. Also the Lord telleth thee that he will make thee a house.

**12 And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom.**

13 He shall build a house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever.

**14 I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men:**

15 But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee.

**16 And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever.**

17 According to all these words, and according to all this vision, so did Nathan speak unto David.

**Lesson Aims**

After participating in this lesson, each student will be able to:

1. List the major features of God's covenant with David.
2. Explain the importance of God's covenant with David for the New Testament era.
3. State a specific area of personal weakness in which he or she will trust God's promises more fully.

**Introduction - Keeping Promises**

The word *promise* is capable of many shades of meaning. A coach might evaluate a young player by saying, "He shows lots of promise." This implies that the player has potential, in the opinion of the coach. Yet sports fans are well aware that many players who show promise never deliver.

Another form of this word may be seen when a person takes out a loan and signs a promissory note. This indicates an agreement to pay off the loan. If the person defaults on the loan, he or she will still be held accountable and may be forced to pay the money back. This type of promise speaks of obligation, and such obligation may be involuntarily enforced.

Many parents have encountered a third variation on this word when they fail to meet the anticipation of a demanding child. The parent may be confronted with the guilt-inducing complaint, "But you promised!" In this case the word *promise* takes on the idea of "expectation." A hazard of parenting is the failure to live up to the expectations of one's children!

Potential, obligation, and expectation are three components in the range of meaning for the word *promise*. But none of these is adequate to describe the biblical concept of *promise* when applied to God. God always keeps His promises. God's promises are more than potential; they are assurances. God's promises are not simply obligations; they are vows of commitment. God's promises are far beyond expectations; they are declarations of intention. This week's lesson teaches us that God's promise to one man, David, not only blessed David and his descendants but all who find salvation in Jesus Christ. That includes you and me.

**Lesson Background (Historic events of Israel and David)**

During the time of Samuel, a major shift occurred in the history of Israel. Since the death of Joshua in about 1365 B.C., judges had "run the show" in Israel. These were God-ordained leaders who often acted as military leaders or coordinators in times of national crisis. But there was no central government for the people of Israel. The nation of Israel was actually a confederation of the 12 tribes. Participation in national events was dependent upon the cooperation of tribal leaders.

The people of Israel finally rejected this style of government and asked Samuel to give them a king. This turning point was a sad day, for God saw this as a rebuff of Him and His rule over the nation (1 Samuel 8:7). Tragically, the people of Israel demanded this so that they could be "like all the nations" (1 Samuel 8:5). The heartbreak was that Israel became like the nations in more than just its choice of rule by a king; Israel also followed its neighbors in sin. Thus the history of the kingdom of Israel was an ongoing battle against idolatry and failure to be the holy people of God.

This was further compounded by the performance of Israel's first king, Saul. Although chosen by God and anointed by Samuel, Saul did not live up to the heavy responsibilities of making Israel into a godly kingdom. God saw Saul's disobedience as a rejection of His Word, which resulted in God's rejection of Saul as king (1 Samuel 15:26; 1 Chronicles 10:13, 14). Even while Saul was still reigning, God directed Samuel to anoint Saul's successor, a new king who was not Saul's son (1 Samuel 16:1). The dynasty of Saul's house lasted only one generation, approximately 40 years (see Acts 13:21).

David had no royal qualifications to be king. Yet he had personal qualities that added up to the extraordinary credentials that God desired. His bravery was a hallmark (1 Samuel 17). David became a victorious military leader in the service of Saul, so successful that Saul became jealous (18:6-9). David was also a talented musician (see 16:23), the author of many psalms.

Most importantly, though, was the fact that God saw in David "a man after his own heart" (1 Samuel 13:14). Paul explained this phrase to mean that God was confident that David would "fulfill all my will" (Acts 13:22). Although David, like King Saul, failed and committed sin, his response was unlike Saul's response. Saul responded to sin with arrogance, stubbornness, and rationalizing. David, however, came to God in humility and repentance.

After the hideous episode of adultery and murder caused by David's lust for Bathsheba, David wrote, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me" (Psalm 51:10). David was spiritually submissive to God. In fact, David's career was characterized by the strong presence of God's Holy Spirit in his life (1 Samuel 16:13). This week's lesson will help us understand why God's love for David has implications for us today.

## **David (2 Samuel 7:8-9)**

### **1. Through what faithful prophet did God speak to David? (v. 8)**

God's chosen vessel for speaking to David was the prophet Nathan. God wanted to remind David that He, the Lord of hosts, had taken him from the "sheepcote." The

sheepcote, or sheepfold, was usually made of rough stones forming an enclosure to protect the sheep at night and keep out animal and human intruders. Normally, it had no roof. Several flocks could be contained in the pen, and one of the shepherds would guard the door. In the morning, each shepherd would call for his sheep, and the sheep would go to their shepherds since the sheep knew their shepherd's voice. During the day, a shepherd would take his sheep to various pastures.

## **2. Why did God remind David of his humble beginning as a shepherd for his father? (v. 9)**

God was reminding David of his newly beginnings as the youngest son of Jesse of Bethlehem. In Jewish culture, the eldest usually received the greatest blessing in a family. He was chosen by God and anointed by Samuel to eventually become the ruler over the combined kingdoms of Judah and Israel (1 Sam. 16:10-13; 2 Sam. 2:4; 5:3).

## **3. How did God help David in his steady rise to power as king? (v.9)**

It is important that we remember how God deliver us from hardships in our lives. God wanted David to remember how He helped David rise to power as King of Israel. In His review God tells about how He had gone with David wherever he had traveled, especially as he became a fugitive from jealous King Saul and as he fought against the enemies of Judah and Israel. David had divine aid when he went up against foreign warriors. One outstanding episode was his defeat of the Philistine giant named Goliath. David struck him with a stone from his sling and then used Goliath's own sword to decapitate him and send the Philistines fleeing (1 Sam. 17:31-51).

God also took credit for giving David a "great name," similar to men having big reputations on earth. It would be wise to acknowledge that God puts earthly leaders in and out of position. Though we may wonder why God may allow some tyrants to assume positions of power, we must remember that He has his sovereign reasons.

The divine review of David's career up to this point was probably designed to dull the sharp edge of David's disappointment at not being allowed to build a temple for the Lord. It served to humble him at a time when his confidence was high. God was constantly developing character in each of His people, and His treatment of David illustrates this.

## **Israel (2 Sam. 7:10-11a)**

## **4. How does 2 Samuel 7:10 support Genesis 12:7? (v. 10)**

In Genesis 12:7, God had promised to give Canaan to Abraham's descendants. This promise had been confirmed to Isaac, Jacob, and the nation of Israel. Now it was being confirmed to David as well.

Following His deliverance of the Israelites from Egyptian bondage, God planted them in a place of their own. It belonged to them because He gave it to them. It should

still belong to them, despite world pressures for modern Israelis to give part of it away. During the reigns of David, Solomon and other kings, God's people retained their independence.

God used oppressors when Israel sinned against Him. They were used to chastise the nation of Israel and drive them back onto Himself. They were conquered by the Persians, Assyrians, Babylonians, Greeks, and the Romans, and they were scattered. In 1948, the modern state of Israel was born. It has fought off its enemies and survives today under precarious conditions.

The promise contained in 2 Samuel 7:10 regarding God's people being planted in their own place and being free from affliction apparently refers to a time still in the future. The Jews will be regathered to their land from all over the world, they will accept Christ as their Messiah, and they will finally be able to live in peace (cf. Ezek. 39:25-29; Zech. 10:6-12; Rom 11:26).

## **Solomon (2 Sam. 11b-15)**

### **5. What kind of house did God say He would make for David? (v. 11b)**

Note the play on words here. God would not allow David to build Him a house (temple), but God said that He would build David a "house," referring to a dynasty. David already had built himself a house of cedar (vs. 1-2). The "house" God had in mind was the royal line stretching out to eternity. More would be said about that particular aspect later, but at this point God was ready to begin David's royal line with an unshakable promise.

### **6. Whose kingdom was God going to establish when David died? (v. 12)**

God told David that when his life ended and he was buried with his ancestors, the "seed" proceeding out of his "bowels" (the child from his body) would take his place, and his kingdom would be established. This prophecy was fulfilled in a marvelous way, for Israel was never as big, wealthy, and renowned as it came to be under Solomon's reign.

At this point, of course, David no doubt assumed that God was speaking of his son Absalom, for Solomon was not yet born. That would come several years later. Absalom was David's eldest son, and dynastic succession normally went to the eldest. As we know from Scripture, God can and does break tradition from time to time. Remember that David was the youngest of Jesse's sons, yet God chose Him to become king. God had His own plans regarding David's family, as events would later come to show.

### **7. How did God say He would deal with David's heir to the throne if he was wayward? (v. 14)**

The Lord declared that He would have a father-and-son relationship with David's heir. This was to be the all-important consideration for the new ruler, even after he increased in wisdom, strength, resources, fame, and influence in the Middle East.

The new king was never to consider himself so grand that Yahweh could not come down in judgment against him.

God told David that he would discipline his heir if he committed iniquity. This would be done "with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men" (v. 14). As things turned out, this type of divine discipline was apparently minimal, at least during Solomon's reign, for his kingdom flourished with little intimidation or damage done by foreign nations.

### **8. How would God show mercy to David's son when he sinned?**

God stated that He would not withhold His mercy from the next king as He had done with King Saul after he sinned. Saul's death, as recorded in 1 Samuel 31, was ghastly and tragic. In contrast, Solomon, who began his reign well but declined spiritually toward the end of his life under influence of his many wives, had a peaceful demise. God punished Solomon in an emotional way by letting him know his kingdom would be split following his death.

### **Dynasty (2 Sam. 7:16-17)**

### **9. How can God's promise to David of an everlasting kingdom be fulfilled? (v. 16)**

The promise in this verse is most intriguing, considering the fact that David's dynasty disappeared from sight a few hundred years later. At first glance, we might wonder how God could make a promise that went unfulfilled. Could He be accused of telling a lie? According to references such as Titus 1:2 and Hebrews 6:18, that is impossible. This matter needs to be resolved by some other explanation.

When the angel named Gabriel announced the coming virgin birth of a son to Mary, he said of Jesus, "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father (ancestor) David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob (Israel) for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end" (Luke 1:32-33).

Just prior to His ascension to heaven, the disciples of Jesus asked, "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said to them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power" (Acts 1:6-7). Jesus did not disclaim a right to restore the kingdom promised to David and his descendants. He simply said that only God the Father knew when that restoration would take place.

In the detailed genealogy at the beginning of Matthew's Gospel, we discover that Jesus was a direct descendant of David through Joseph, His legal father (1:6, 16). The genealogy of Jesus in Luke 3:23-38 is probably that which is traced through His mother, Mary, who also was descended from David.

When Jesus came to earth the first time, He did not set up a physical kingdom over which He ruled. He came to die on the cross and atone for our sins. He rose from the grave and ascended to His father in heaven.

The second time Jesus comes to earth, He will come as a warrior-king and take control of the kingdoms of this world (Rev. 11:15). The Apostle John wrote, "I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war....And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule over them with a rod of iron:....And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS" (19:11, 15-16).

### **10. How did David react to what Nathan told him? (v. 17)**

The vision from God telling Nathan the prophet what to say to David had come at night (v. 4). Nathan had boldly reported all of God's words to David, no doubt realizing that the divine prohibition against building God a temple would be disappointing to the king. He must have also surmised that David would be thrilled to learn that God would give him an enduring dynasty.

David evidently went into the tabernacle (tent) he had pitched for the ark of the Lord (2 Sam. 6:17). He sat before the Lord to converse with Him, acknowledge His greatness, and ask Him to carry out His promise to establish for him and his descendants a royal dynasty (7:18-29). He was thankful for the covenant God had presented for him.

### **Conclusion - Jesus and David**

God's covenant with David is a major theme in the Old Testament. Not only did the Davidic line of kings continue to reign in Jerusalem without interruption for almost 400 years, but the prophets of Israel began to reveal that a future king would come from David's line to be the redeemer of Israel (compare Luke 24:21).

This future redeemer was referred to in several ways including "my servant David" (Ezekiel 34:23, 24), and the "Branch" of David (Isaiah 11:1; Jeremiah 23:5). This branch image represents the idea of a reborn line of David—new growth from the stump of the tree.

The prophets wrote of future blessings on the "house of David" (Zechariah 12:10). But the most significant of these predictions are the ones that see a coming Messiah (Psalm 132:17; Daniel 9:25). This person has been specially chosen or appointed by God.

The New Testament shows many connections between Jesus and David. Jesus is called the "Son of David" (Matthew 1:1; Mark 10:47, 48), the "King of Israel" (John 1:49; 12:13; compare Matthew 27:42; Zechariah 9:9).

A central conviction of the New Testament authors is that Jesus meets all the qualifications to be the heir of David. Jesus' earthly father, Joseph, is from the house of David (Luke 2:4). Paul is often found arguing with his fellow Jews that Jesus is the Messiah (see Acts 9:22; 28:23). Peter decisively concludes his Pentecost sermon by declaring that Jesus' resurrection confirms that God had made Him Christ (Acts 2:36).

The significance of this is enormous. Our salvation is not an accident of history. Jesus is more than an ordinary man who accomplished extraordinary things. The church is much more than the work of creative geniuses like Paul. God's covenant with David teaches us that God planned the church, that He sent His Son, Jesus, and that our salvation was His intentional design. As believers we should find assurance in God's loving provision for us.

### **Prayer**

Great God, the Father of David and the Father of Jesus Christ, we bow before You and thank You for not forgetting us despite the many sins of humanity. As You remembered David, You have remembered each one of us as Your sons and daughters. To You alone we look for salvation. In Jesus' mighty name we pray, amen.

### **Thought to Remember**

God's covenant with David is fulfilled in Jesus

### **Anticipating Next Week's Lesson**

In our lesson next week, we will explore how God chose David's son Solomon to be the wisest man in all the earth. It was God's gift to him.

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