

Promise Keeper

Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah (Jeremiah 31:31 ESV)

For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. (Jeremiah 31:33 ESV)

Your Throne Shall Be Established Forever

December 11th, 2022

2 Samuel 7:8-17

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Introduction:

Good morning! I want to invite you to turn with me in your Bibles to 2 Samuel 7. Charles Spurgeon once said:

Christ is the great central fact in the world's history. To him everything looks forward or backward. All the lines of history converge upon him.¹

We believe that all the lines of history – and we would add – all the threads of promise find their fulfilment in Jesus. This December, we are tracing some of those great Old Testament threads of promise and following them all the way to the manger.

We began our series with the promise of Genesis 3:15 – the promise that God would send a champion who would defeat our enemy.

Last Sunday, we considered Genesis 12:1-3 and the promise was expanded. We learned that the champion would come through the family of Abraham and that through him all the nations of the earth would be blessed!

This morning, as we continue to track with this developing promise, we are going to fast-forward some 730 years from the death of Abraham to the time of King David. Look with me now to our

¹ Charles Spurgeon as quoted by John Blanchard, eds. *The Complete Gathered Gold: a Treasury of Quotations for Christians*. Accordance electronic ed. (New York: Evangelical Press, 2006), paragraph 8075.

passage in 2 Samuel 7. We will be reading verses 8-17. Hear now God's holy, inspired, inerrant, living and active word to us today.

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. (2 Samuel 7:8-17 ESV)

This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

In our text today, we find King David living in an unprecedented time of peace and victory. Standing in his palace, making plans to build a temple for God, David is looking more like the promised champion than anyone we have yet encountered in the New Testament. In this moment of triumph, God speaks to David, and he expands even further upon the glorious promise that we have been tracking. So, as we begin, let's ask the simple question:

What Did God Promise To David?

This promise can be broken into four parts. We'll need to move through these relatively quickly. First, God promised David:

1. A great name

We see this in the second half of verse 9. Look there with me:

And **I will make for you a great name**, like the name of the great ones of the earth. (2 Samuel 7:9b ESV)

If you were paying attention last Sunday, then the wording of this promise should sound very familiar. In our text from last week, Genesis 12:2, God promised Abraham:

And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and **make your name great**, so that you will be a blessing. (Genesis 12:2 ESV)

730 years later, we are supposed to see that the promise to Abraham has not been forgotten! The great name that God promised to Abraham's seed – the fame, and the respect, and the honour – is going to find fulfilment in the line of David.

Second, God promised David:

2. A land of peace

We see this in verses 10-11:

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. (2 Samuel 7:10-11a ESV)

Once again, if you were paying attention last Sunday, this promise should sound familiar. In Genesis 13, as Abraham was standing in the land of Canaan, God said to him:

Lift up your eyes and look from the place where you are, northward and southward and eastward and westward, ¹⁵ **for all the land that you see I will give to you and to your offspring forever.** (Genesis 13:14a-15 ESV)

Again, it has been 730 years, but God has not forgotten His promise. When the promise was made to Abraham, it must have felt like an impossibility. But God plays the long game. Now, as David stands in his royal palace having achieved victory over all the opposing nations that surrounded him, not only is the promise looking possible – it's looking inevitable! A seed of Abraham has been given a great name among the nations, he has laid claim to the land of promise, and he has achieved peace on every border!

Thus far the promise to David sounds like nothing more than a repeat of the promise to Abraham, but God goes on to promise David:

3. An eternal throne

This is a new and significant development. We find this in verses 12-13:

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. (2 Samuel 7:12-13 ESV)

In a world where thrones were frequently usurped and dynasties inevitably came to an end, this was an incredible promise! Now, when David heard this, I don't suspect that he looked at his son Solomon and thought, "You are going to be IMMORTAL!" As God would later clarify to Solomon:

I will establish your royal throne, as I covenanted with David your father, saying, '**You shall not lack a man to rule Israel.**' (2 Chronicles 7:18 ESV)

David, Solomon, and the rest of the Israelites understood this to be a promise – not of immortality – but that the *house* of David would reign forever.

This new development in the promise – this connection with the throne – triggers a change in the story of the Old Testament. From this point forward in your Bible, the line of David is going to become HUGELY significant. That is because, from this moment on, we know that God's promise to restore to us everything that we have lost is going to be tied to THIS throne!

And, lastly, God promised David:

4. A paternal relationship

He promised David that He would relate to the kings in David's line in the same way that a father relates to his own sons. We see this in verses 14-15. God says of David's descendant:

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. (2 Samuel 7:14-15 ESV)

Here, God promises a faithful, fatherly love to the king in the line of David. There would be days when David's descendants would need discipline – and like a father, God would deliver that discipline – but in spite of their sin and in faithfulness to His promise – God would not take the throne away from the house of David.

In summary, God promised David a great name, a land of peace, and eternal throne and a paternal relationship.

Now, while it may not seem like it at first glance, this passage is hugely significant in the storyline of the Bible which means that it is hugely significant for your life! It would be hard to overstate the significance of the promise that we find here. Peter Gentry and Stephen Wellum wrote an important book on Biblical theology entitled *Kingdom Through Covenant*, in which they argue:

The Davidic covenant is the *epitome* of the Old Testament covenants, a point often overlooked. It brings the previous covenants to a climax in the king, who is the representative of Israel, the seed of Abraham, and an Adamic-like figure.²

Let me help you to picture this. As you think about the promises that we have been considering I want you to picture a target – like a dart board. In the outermost ring, we were promised that God's blessing was to come to the world through humanity – that was His agreement with Adam. Then in the next, smaller ring, God narrowed His promise to a particular family – the family of Abraham who became the nation of Israel. But now, we're zooming in on the innermost ring. The champion we have been waiting for will be a king in the line of David.

God has revealed where the promise will land! God's blessing for the nations – God's promise of a champion – the REVERSAL OF THE CURSE – will sit on THIS THRONE. Everything that is wrong with the world will be made right by a King in the line of David. Therefore, from this

² Peter J. Gentry & Stephen J. Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant 2nd ed.* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2018), 700.

moment forward, all the hopes and expectations of the people of God will revolve around this royal family.

At this point, the promise that we've been tracking since Genesis 3 seems to be on the brink of fulfilment. We've identified the family. We've narrowed it down to the throne. Now, it's simply a waiting game.

And, at the time of 2 Samuel 7, most of the Israelites probably didn't think that they would be waiting for very long. The reign of David and the subsequent reign of his son, Solomon, was the HIGH WATER MARK in Israel's history! Promises seemed to be landing, peace was looking very possible, and optimism abounded! How could things possibly get better?

But there was a problem.

The Problem

As we look for the King who will ultimately solve our problem, we need to remember what our ultimate problem really is. If you remember back to Genesis 3, when the curse broke into the world and when everything went wrong, what was the problem?

Our great problem was and is the problem of sin. Therefore, the King that we are looking for must be an obedient King. God says exactly that in 1 Chronicles 28:7. David prays a blessing on his son Solomon and God replies:

I will establish his kingdom forever if he continues strong in keeping my commandments and my rules, as he is today.' (1 Chronicles 28:7 ESV)

The king will only be a blessing in-so-far as the king is obedient to God! A disobedient king – a sinful king – will not and CANNOT be the one to set his people free because sin is what GOT US HERE!

Sin is the reason why we find ourselves under this curse. Sin is the reason why the world is broken. Therefore, the king who will stand as the fulfilment of the promises – the king who will be

our champion and who will reverse the curse – must be a king who can once and for all deal with the problem of sin. Only a *perfectly obedient* son of David can save us.

And, while David was able to subdue the enemies that attacked from outside, David was unable to subdue the enemy that attacks from within.

Just four chapters after God made this glorious promise to David, in 2 Samuel 11, we read the story of David and Bathsheba – a story of horrifying sin and spectacular failure. David won't be the king to reverse the curse. He's just as much a slave to sin as everyone who came before him.

And so, we turn our attention from David and look to his son and, in David's son Solomon, we find real reason for optimism! In 1 Kings 4:34, we read:

And **people of all nations** came to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and from all the kings of the earth, who had heard of his wisdom. (1 Kings 4:34 ESV)

People of all nations were being blessed by this king! Solomon, the son of David, was beginning to look an awful lot like the one we were waiting for! And yet, like his father before him, Solomon succumbed to sin. We read in 1 Kings 11:

So Solomon did what was evil in the sight of the Lord (1 Kings 11:6a ESV)

The line of David continued its descent into ruin. Under the reign of Solomon's son, Rehoboam, the Kingdom of Israel was fractured into two. The northern kingdom was eventually destroyed by Assyria. A generation later, the southern kingdom was taken into exile in Babylon. The temple that Solomon had built for the Lord was burnt to the ground. The last Davidic king – Zedekiah – was captured and brought before the king of Babylon. We read in 2 Kings 25:

They slaughtered the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, and put out the eyes of Zedekiah and bound him in chains and took him to Babylon. (2 Kings 25:7 ESV)

Having murdered his sons, they plucked out his eyes, and the king in the line of David lived the rest of his life in a foreign land. The great name of David had become a joke. The peace that they

had enjoyed was gone. The land that they had been given was ruled by other nations. The promise – by all appearances – had failed. And for 500 years, the throne of David sat vacant.

But then, on one ordinary night, an angel appeared to a young Jewish woman named Mary. I want to invite you to flip ahead with me to Luke 1:26-33 where will find, once again, that our God is a promise keeper.

The Promise Fulfilled

We read:

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, ²⁷ to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, **of the house of David**. And the virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ And he came to her and said, “Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!” ²⁹ But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰ And the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.” ³¹ And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. ³² **He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, ³³ and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.**” (Luke 1:26-33 ESV)

It almost sounds like Gabriel is QUOTING 2 Samuel 7 in this passage! Do you hear the language of fulfillment?

Mary – wife of Joseph who is the descendent of David – you will bear a son and his name will be GREAT!

He will be called the Son of the Most High!

He will be given the throne of his father David, and he will reign FOREVER!

Of his kingdom, there will be no end!

ALL of the expectations – ALL of the longings – were met with the arrival of this miracle child!
And not only were they met, but they were BLOWN AWAY!

David expected that he would always have an heir on the throne, but in his wildest dreams did he ever expect that his descendant would be an IMMORTAL King?!

David knew that his descendent would be treated *like* a son – but in his wildest dreams did he ever expect that his descendent would ACTUALLY BE the Son of God! Conceived by the Holy Ghost! Born of the virgin Mary! Did anyone see that coming!? As the author to the Hebrews writes:

Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, ² but in these last days he has spoken to us **by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things**, through whom also he created the world. (Hebrews 1:1-2 ESV)

And David knew that God was going to place his people in a land of peace – but in his wildest dreams did he ever expect the kind of peace that Jesus offers to us?! He has made a way for us to have rest – but not just a fleeting rest from our enemies – but a deeper, truer SOUL rest that we can even enjoy in the presence of our enemies!

As I conclude this morning, I'm mindful of the fact that there are probably more than a few people in this room who are bored out of their minds. You tuned me out 30 minutes ago, because you don't think you need a king. Before I let you go, I want to humbly suggest to you that you couldn't be more wrong.

My generation has experienced more “rest” than perhaps any other generation in the history of the world. We have never endured a sleepless night worrying about enemies at the gate. We have never faced the threat of captivity or displacement. We have more money than previous generations could fathom, more advanced technology than anyone thought possible, more fun, more sex, more toys, more food – if you could travel back in time and describe your average week to a man living in the ancient world, he would be tempted to think you were describing HEAVEN!

But it's not heaven, is it?

We have everything we thought we needed, and yet we are *restless*.

I have everything the world told me I needed, and yet my health is failing, and my kids are rebelling, and my longings are never satisfied – and that is to say nothing of the destructive habits I can't break, and the selfishness I can't shake, and the discouragement I feel when I look at the man in the mirror. The world declares, "Peace! Peace!" but I don't see it!

And that is because there is an enemy in your life that no worldly king will ever subdue. And until that enemy is dealt with, you will never have rest. As J.I. Packer once wrote:

Where Christ does not rule, sin does.³

You need a King!

You need a king who can overcome the power of the evil one. You need a king who can bring you out from under the curse so that you can receive the blessings of God. You need a king who will lead your life, subdue your enemy, and bring you into true, lasting peace.

The child that was born 2,000 years ago in Bethlehem was the fulfillment of ancient promises and he is the fulfillment of the deepest longing in your weary heart.

You need a King, and his name is Jesus!

So, this morning, I want to issue an invitation to everyone in this room. This invitation is from Jesus himself. He says:

Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and **I will give you rest.** ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find **rest for your souls.** ³⁰ For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." (Matthew 11:28-30 ESV)

Jesus is the only King who can offer that kind of rest because Jesus is the only King who has the authority and the ability to subdue the enemy of your soul. So, come.

Come, let us worship the King!

³ J.I. Packer as quoted by John Blanchard, eds. *The Complete Gathered Gold: a Treasury of Quotations for Christians*. Accordance electronic ed. (New York: Evangelical Press, 2006), paragraph 8071.

Let us declare his greatness!

Let us submit to his leadership!

Let us trust in his provision!

And let us find our rest in him.

To that end, let's pray together.