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**The Davidic Covenant**

**2 Samuel 7:1-17**

Psalm 15 asks who will dwell with God and then answers it with several descriptions of the righteous person. In verse 4, such a person is described as one “that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not” (15:4). In other words, God has high regard for those who commit to something and see it through, even when it costs them. The reason God desires that is because God is a God who follows through on what he says he will do.

***What have we seen in this study so far?***

We saw a couple weeks ago that there is a battle that will take place between the ultimate seed and the serpent. God narrowed the focus of that seed to Abraham. Humanity had rebelled against God and that rebellion just kept spiraling in Genesis 1-11. God’s response was to pick one man out of this rebellious horde and start making incredible promises to him. Abraham was promised descendants who would become a great nation, the land of Canaan, and the prospect that through his seed the whole world would be blessed. The seed would come through Abraham. This is the Abrahamic covenant.

After making a deal with Abraham, God reiterated that promise to his son Isaac, and his son Jacob, and then eventually to the nation that came from Jacob. In fact, God saved this nation from slavery in Egypt and entered into a covenant with them (more on that next week). Israel would eventually demand a king, and would receive one.

Sadly, Israel’s first king disqualified himself from having a covenant because of his disobedience (1 Samuel 13:13). David, a man after God’s own heart would replace him, and despite David’s own (future) sins, God makes a covenant with him that he promises never to break. The seed would come through not just any Israelite, he would be a son of David.

Today we will see how this covenant applied, not just to David, but to all Israel and eventually to the entire world! And then we are going to see this promise threatened, and ultimately fulfilled. The promises made to David become a very important part of the Bible’s story for how God will redeem fallen man.

***Why do you think God took so long and made so elaborate a plan for salvation?***

1. **The context – David’s desire to build a house for God (2 Samuel 7:1-7)**

The story of God’s incredible and future shaping promise to David actually starts with David’s display of love for God in a very practical, concrete, tangible way.

1. **David’s position (2 Samuel 7:1)**

David was at his peak. After years of running from king Saul for no other reason than Saul’s paranoia, David had finally become king. Then began the long war between David and Saul’s descendent Ish-bosheth. Eventually, David won the day and all Israel was united under him. His enemies were defeated. His power was cemented. The nation was prospering. Everything was going his way. And it was during this time that he noticed that his palace was impressive, but there was no such beautiful structure for the Lord, which was a tent built a long time ago. This bothered David and motivated him to do something about it.

***Why does peace and ease often have the opposite effect for many people? Why does smooth sailing cause us to forget God?***

***Why do you think David ending up worshipping rather than forgetting God?***

1. **David’s petition (2 Samuel 7:2-7)**

At first Nathan is impressed by the king’s heart and tells him to go ahead with it. But then God gives him a message: “You won’t build my house, your son will.” (Scripture would later clarify that this was because David was a man of bloodshed and war, see 1 Chronicles 28:3) But God was so pleased that David had wanted to build his house that he in turn made David a promise.

***What can we learn about a love for God from David’s example?***

***How practically can we show a similar love for God today?***

1. **The promise – David would have an enduring dynasty (2 Samuel 7:8-16)**

There is a clever play on words here in this passage. David wants to build a house for God (i.e. a temple), but God doesn’t allow it. Instead, he promises to build a house for David (i.e. a dynasty, like the House of Tudor or the House of Windsor). God says that David’s son will build the temple, and that David’s line will forever rule.

***How do we apply this truth? How do we keep from the dangers of a health and wealth gospel while also acknowledging God’s blessings for faithful followers?***

1. **The person who was promised.**

So was God talking about Solomon or about someone else? After all, God promises to discipline David’s son if he goes away from God, but God assures David he will never quit on his offspring (2 Samuel 7:14-15). That doesn’t sound like Jesus. But then he says that David’s line will never end. That doesn’t sound like Solomon (spoiler: Solomon dies).

The answer to this perplexing question is yes. Often prophecies are given in the Old Testament with a near and partial fulfillment, but that leave us thinking, “Wait, is that it?” Israel is promised a glorious return to the land a temple that would far outshine Solomon’s. When they returned, though, it wasn’t everything they expected. God gave them a return, but that return points to the ultimate return.[[1]](#footnote-1)

Similarly, this prophecy relates to Solomon, and to some degree to all of David’s descendants who rule. God never gave up on David’s dynasty, and when they did wrong he disciplined them for it. But ultimately, only Jesus will rule everlastingly over Israel.

***How can knowing that God will not quit on his plan for David be an encouragement to believers?***

***How can we be comforted and at the same time warned as we look at the life of David’s descendants?***

1. **The response to this promise.**

This promise becomes a major theme of much of what follows in the Old Testament. Many of the prophets will look back to this covenant and remind the Israel to look forward to the day when God would finally and fully fulfill this promise to the people.

* Hosea mentions that when Israel was restored they would look for God and for “David their king” (Hosea 3:5).
* Ezekiel prophesied that when God restored the nation of Israel, David would be their king (Ezekiel 37:24).
* Amos prophesied that God would fix the fallen land of Israel by calling it the “booth of David that is fallen” (Amos 9:11)
* Jeremiah said that only when the sun stopped rising would he fail to come through on his promise with David (Jeremiah 33:19-22).

God wants his people to know his promises and to hold him to them!

***What are some promises in Scripture that modern day believers can hold to and claim?***

1. **The danger – David’s line constantly threatened**

But remember, the serpent hates the seed, and will do whatever he can to keep the seed from coming (cf Revelation 12:3-4). As God narrows the focus of his mission, the devil narrows the focus of his attack. Reading the rest of the history of David’s descendants, we see that threat coming at a couple of key points.

1. **David’s own sin (2 Samuel 11-12)**

Once David is at his peak militarily, politically, and spiritually, he sins in a big way. The wickedness of David in this instance is hard to stomach, and yet despite his great sinfulness, and initial obstinacy, God forgives him and still chooses to bring the promised seed through him.

***How can this be a comfort to us? How do we balance that with the warning of David’s life?***

1. **The close call of Athaliah (2 Kings 11:1-16)**

Athaliah was a wicked queen in the southern kingdom of Judah, a daughter of Ahab and Jezebel, and was married to the Jehoram king of Judah (2 Kings 8:18). When her ruling son Ahaziah died, she sought to consolidate power by wiping out all the remaining true heirs to the throne so that she alone could rule (2 Kings 11:1). That means this sick woman murdered her own sons and grandkids so that she could have power. Had she succeeded, there would be no seed of David left, and God’s promise would have failed. But it didn’t, because God won’t fail. Godly men and women worked together to preserve one of Ahaziah’s sons – Joash – and staged a coup that ended in the death of Athaliah (2 Kings 11:2-3, 13-16).

1. **The close call of the exile**

Eventually no one was left to rule Judah. Judah temporarily stopped existing as a self-governing nation. By the end of the Old Testament, we are left wondering whatever happened to David and his never-ending dynasty that seems to have ended. Israel returns from the exile – kind of – but it’s not the glorious return they were promised, and the Davidic line is not reestablished. By the time we get to the New Testament, the ruler is a man named Herod, who isn’t even Jewish! So what happened to God’s promise that the prophets all felt so sure was a done deal.

***Can you think of some other times in Scripture where it seems impossible that God’s promises could be carried out?***

***Why would God allow such close calls? Why does God allow close calls in our lives?***

1. **The answer – Jesus**

The first verse of the New Testament was carefully chosen by the Holy Spirit. When the New Testament was arranged carefully over many years, it just so happens that in the providence of God the first verse of the New Testament is “The book of the generation [genealogy] of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.” The Abrahamic covenant and the Davidic covenant both come to fulfillment in the person of Jesus Christ.

Jesus has the right lineage, a fact that Matthew and Luke both point out in their gospel narratives. In several other very important places the New Testament reminds us that Jesus is the Son of David (Matthew 9:27; 12:23; 15:22; 20:30-31; 21:9; 22:42-45; John 7:42; Acts 14:16) and on several occasions it even uses our very important term “seed” (Romans 1:3; 2 Timothy 2:8).

Jesus is the rightful king and will one day reign over this earth (Revelation 20:4). He is the head of the church, and God has a plan in place to make Christ the ruler of everything, not just the church and not just Israel (Ephesians 1:10). God sent Jesus to be the ruling son of David, and to fulfill the promises that he made to David several hundred years ago.

***How should thinking of Christ as being the future reigning king impact me today?***

1. This is something theologians call “prophetic telescoping.” It means that when a prophet sees the future two related events are merged so that a near, partial fulfillment and a later, ultimate fulfillment are combined so that find where one part begins and the other ends can be a real challenge (see, for example, Christ’s quotation of only part of Isaiah 61:1-2 in Luke 4:16-21). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)