

# 2 SAMUEL

IN SEARCH OF A KING PART II



**Week commencing 12 August 2018**

*Notes for next Sunday's sermon on 2 Samuel 7, "Who will build a house for whom?"*

**SOME BACKGROUND:** 2 Samuel 7 is arguably one of the most significant chapters in the Old Testament. It records God's promise of a dynasty to David, sometimes called the Davidic covenant. We are going to concentrate in our studies not on the covenant per se, but on the nature of the God who makes this commitment. We need to know him more and more. What can we observe about him here?

**DAY 1: Read 2 Samuel 7:1-5**

David is troubled by the fact that he now lives in a wonderful cedar palace, while the ark of God still resides in a mere tent (v2). Surely it's not appropriate, considers David, that he lives among cedar, while the sign of the Lord's presence sits among curtains. The prophet Nathan, didn't need to think much about this: he thought that what David proposed was noble, rational and right.

Yet later that night, a direct word from God, rejected such human reasoning. God's word was clear: "Go and tell my servant David, 'This is what the Lord says: Are you the one to build me a house to dwell in? (v5). David's (and Nathan's) plan is to be put on hold.

Here was a reminder that God's plans will often be higher than ours. Sometimes, even what appears to be good and godly to us, will not be God's plan, or won't be God's plan for that particular moment in time. Yes, even God's finest servants, can be deficient in properly discerning his will. This observation should expose our own need, leading us to cry out for the wisdom we lack (see James 1:5), and plead to see beyond the way that seems right to us, to take hold of God's "good, pleasing and perfect will" (Romans 12:2).

**DAY 2: Read 2 Samuel 7:6-7**

See vv6-7, where the Lord begins to explain why David's plans for a temple must wait and as we read, we see a staggering picture of God's humility. He had never lobbied Israel's previous leaders to build him a proper temple! He has been content in fact, to travel around in a tent! He means he has not 'settled' in a house because he has been 'on the go', as we would say. Why? Because his people Israel have been on the move (wandering in the wilderness and enduring the unsettled conditions of the judges' period (see vv10b-11a) and he has 'travelled' or 'wandered' with all the sons of Israel (v7). How can he settle down when they are unsettled?

Do you see what this says about God? He is the God who travels with his people in their topsy-turvy, here-and-there journeys and wanderings. Do his people live in tents? So does he. Are they a pilgrim people on their way to the land of promise? So he is the pilgrim God, sharing the rigors of the journey with them. Perhaps we glimpse now why God wants no cedar temple yet. He must make a secure place for Israel first (v10). He will not rest till he gives rest to his people (see Deuteronomy 12:9-11). Can you see the astounding condescension of our God here? We ought to be overwhelmed by the grace and mercy and humility of the God who stoops down to share the hardships of his people. Deity ("Godness") and humility are not mutually exclusive categories! Consider John 1:14! And Philippians 2:5-8!

### DAY 3: Read 2 Samuel 7:8-17

The theme of these verses is grace! God puts a spin on the term 'house'. It will not be David who builds a house (a place with walls and a roof) for God, but God who will build a house (or family or household – in this case a dynasty) for David! In pagan worship, the common understanding was that in response to perceived previous favour from a god, the people would build a temple and thereby look for future favours from the god. Here, in line with the God of grace, we see past grace from God, present grace, and future grace promised. The temple as such, can wait! God, the giving God, here reviews past grace, lavishes more grace and puts the temple on the back burner!

In vv12-16, we see that God's purposes and promises are indefectible – not liable to fail, end or decay – having no defects – perfect.

1. **Death will not annul God's promises** (vv12-13): David may lie down in death, but God will raise up David's offspring. It is David's offspring Solomon who will build a temple, but God will establish David's throne forever.
2. **Sin cannot destroy it** (vv14-15): The Lord knows there will be failings and they will be met with discipline and punishment and yet, his covenant love will never be removed. God will not allow sin to have dominion over his dominion. Any individual King in the line of David may meet disaster because of their unfaithfulness to God, but that will not overthrow the promised endurance of the Davidic dynasty. And third:
3. **Time will not exhaust it** (v16): *Your throne will be established forever.* This phrase inspired the prophets of old and poets and musicians down through history! And he shall reign for ever and ever, Hallelujah! Hallelujah!". We see this all wonderfully fulfilled in Jesus' reign: *Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this.* (Isaiah 9:7).

Let death, sin, and time do what they will, they will never frustrate God's kingdom plan through David's line. See the inevitability in the promise. God's plan and promise is simply unstoppable. God will overwhelm death, sin and time if need be to bring it about. And he has! The years wore on; everything from foolish failure to blatant wickedness marked the reigns of the Davidic kings; Israel was swept into exile and remained in subjugation to foreign powers. But a child, a Davidic child, is born, a Son is given. In him is no sin. He trampled all over death and has begun his endless reign at the place of supreme power and authority in the universe (the right hand of God - Eph 1:20-23). If the promises to David are so sure; can't we then trust all his smaller promises?

### DAY 4: Read 2 Samuel 7:18-29

David went in and sat before the LORD (v18) – perhaps in the tent which housed the ark of the covenant. David's prayer does not begin with petition but with wonder. He is breathless over God's grace and opens his prayer by expressing his astonishment. He marvels first, over God's *previous* grace – that God has brought him to this point. Why would God's plans centre on him? "Who am I?" Then David goes on to marvel over *promised* grace – the role his line will play in all human history! Finally, David marvels over *sovereign* grace (vv20-21). God's kingdom plan, arises solely out of God's choice and desire, not from any human ingenuity, least of all David's!

David is nearly incredulous that God preserved him 'to this point'; that he has made hard promises about his dynasty, that it will endure the treacheries of history and embrace the whole of humanity; and God has done it simply because he wanted to! "There is no God beside you" he exclaims.

The remaining verses, I will leave you to ponder because I want to leave you with this thought: are you astonished – blown away – by God's gracious mercy to you in the Lord Jesus Christ? Do you ever ask yourself "who am I?" that the God of the universe should send his Son to die for me? Do you ever exclaim in fervent praise "there is no God besides you"?

*Reference: Commentary on 2 Samuel by Dale Ralph Davis.  
(Some parts of these notes use Davis' text word for word or are a summary of his text.)*