

ACN  
2 Samuel 7  
DAVID - The Triumph and Tragedy of a Leader - Accepting God's Plan  
Rev'd Lynda Johnson

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Never had the privilege of building a house and living in it. When I was a kid, I saw my Dad design and build his and mum's dream house. Exciting to see the project develop, and we moved into that house when I was 7.

Had the joy of seeing friends build houses, and all three of our kids have built their own houses and now live in them. So I have an experience of the process, the pain and the joy of doing it, even though it is vicariously through others.

David was living in his own house. A very grand one. In ch 5, we heard about David conquering Jerusalem and taking it from the Jebusites, the surrounding nations were in awe; in fact that the King of Tyre sent craftsmen and resources to build a house for his neighbouring king. This was part of David being truly established as the King of Israel, settled in Jerusalem, and that God had blessed him.

Last week saw David's two attempts to bring the ark of the Lord into Jerusalem, the first one spectacularly and tragically unsuccessful, and the second one was successful.

Chapter 7 begins by saying that David was settled in his palace, he was enjoying his house.

2 Samuel 7 is one of the key passages in the Old Testament. Think of 2 Samuel 7 as a marker chapter.

This chapter talks about the future of Jerusalem and about David's kingship. Both of these were vital to the nation of Israel for centuries.

Through the prophet Nathan, God made lasting and profound promises to David, and these promises are the key to an everlasting covenant. David knew that. Dying words - 2 Samuel 23:5 -

*"If my house were not right with God, surely he would not have made with me an everlasting covenant, arranged and secure in every part."*

So how do we get to this everlasting covenant?

Chapter 7 is two speeches. No story to explore, but there is history and theology.

The chapter begins stating David was settled, he was living in his house, and that there was peace in the kingdom. This indicates the passing of significant time.

This chapter is also a spiritual breather. The previous few chapters are full of activity, storyline and drama.

This chapter is all about thinking, praying and talking. Another indicator that the Lord had given David a time of rest, a time of settledness in the kingdom.

So while David is having this time of rest, he has a great idea. Perhaps you remember David's great idea that we looked at last week. Didn't go so well.

Thankfully, his first port of call is to his prophet Nathan, God's representative for him.

And he says to Nathan, "I'm living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwells in a tent."  
Now the import of this is that David's actually saying, there is something not right about that.  
And Nathan says, Go for it. God's with you.

But God has a chat to Nathan, and gives him some news to pass on to David. Which he does.

And isn't it interesting what God is saying....

Are you the one to build me a house?  
Have I ever expressed the desire for a house?  
I've never been in a house, but always, ever since Egypt, I've been in a tent. Have I ever asked  
any of the leaders over the years, to build me a house?

God says, that's what you're saying, here's what I'm saying.

He gets David to look back and to look forward. Big picture stuff.  
Looking backward, He reminds David of everything that he has done for him since childhood,  
since he was a shepherd boy. He reminds David of his faithfulness to him.  
And then he gets David to look forward, and God makes promises of blessing for the future.

And with a play on the word 'house', he tells David that it is to be God, in fact, that will build a  
house for David, not David building a house for God. Big difference is that this won't be a physical  
house, to live in; but it will be a spiritual house, in fact it will be a dynasty, a kingdom, not just a  
worldly kingdom, but a forever kingdom. And not only will God be faithful to David, but he's also  
promising to raise up offspring to take this dynasty forward. Not everything is going to be rosy,  
there'll be punishment and judgment, but through it all, God's love will never leave this household,  
this eternal dynasty. And to make that point even more vivid, he refers to Saul, pointing out the  
huge difference there was between Saul and David. God's love was removed from Saul, his line  
was ended. God is saying, David's line will not end.  
These are God's words declared to David through Nathan the prophet.

And he also says ... and about the house you want to build for me, you'll have a son who will do  
that. So he's not saying 'no' to David, rather, he's giving him something so much better than what  
David was wanting to do for God, but he also accepts David's gift, to be given through his son.

Let's drill down into what God is saying.

In the Hebrew text of this passage, there are 10 'I will' statements or promises by God. Translated  
into the English, you don't get the same sense of it as you read, but listen to this passage  
summarised in this way ...

I will make your name great v.9  
I will provide a place for my people v.10  
I will plant them v.10  
I will give you rest v.11  
I will establish a house for you v.11  
I will raise up your offspring v.12  
I will establish his kingdom v.12  
I will be his father v.14  
I will punish v.14  
but .... I will love forever v.15

A covenant with God always involves great promises of God.

The second half of this chapter is more talking. This time it's David talking to God. We have an  
incredible peek into this personal time of prayer that David has with God.

So David has listened to Nathan, and his response is .....  
He goes in and sits before the Lord.  
He sits before the Lord.

And this prayer, begins with humility, and it ends with humility.  
And the middle section is declaration and praise.

David expresses a sense of overwhelming unworthiness, and in the midst of that, he is so convinced of God's promises, so confident in them, that he makes bold requests of God to fulfil those promises. And he can do that because he knows God will. He trusts him.

Now where do we presume David is, as he 'goes in to sit before the Lord'?  
Well, presumably he's in the Tent that he wanted to do away with.  
He comes into the tent that is anything but grand, and he says, 'who am I?' I am nothing, you are everything. He has come from his great house of cedar, into the presence of God covered by canvas.

It's as if he's saying, I get that I don't have to build you a house, and I'm utterly overwhelmed that you want to do it for me. And just as God made David look back into history and forward into the future, David's prayer does that too. David repeats the great stories from Israel's history, the Exodus and the establishment of the nation.

And he expresses his desire is for God's name to be great, not his own.  
vv. 25-26 - Lord Almighty, God of Israel, keep forever the promise you have made concerning your servant and his house. Do as you promised, so that your name will be great forever. Then people will say, The Lord Almighty is God over Israel."

This is in stark contrast with the previous chapter.  
We had David getting it wrong, then when he got it right there was dancing, noise, exuberant worship. Here we have David getting it right. Enquiring of the prophet, listening to God, and then quiet personal prayer. Very different, but both valid.

This chapter is a marker in history.  
It's a marker in Israel's history, it's a marker in overall salvation history.  
It's a marker in your history and your future; and a marker in my history and my future.

In the short term of course, this immediate promise of God to build David a house, is fulfilled in Solomon, who at this point is not born.

But, the long term lead to the Messiah, to Jesus.

Hebrews 1:5, which is about the absolute supremacy of Jesus -  
For to which of the angels did God ever say,  
"You are my Son; today I have become your Father"?  
Or again, "I will be his Father, and he will be my Son"?

This is a reference to 2 Samuel 7:14. The covenant with David, is pointing to Jesus.

And we too, are swept up and into this covenant when we join ourselves to Jesus.  
In 2 Corinthians 6:18, Paul picks up these words when he talks about us belonging to the Body of Christ, the body of believers

Paul quotes:

“I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.”

End of first portion of this series on David, looking at the Triumphs of David as leader.

David being loyal to God’s anointed, whatever the cost to himself.

David waiting for God’s time to be right in him becoming King,

David respecting God’s holiness when he wanted to bring the Ark into Jerusalem,

and today, responding to God being the One to build the house, a totally different type of house to what he wanted to build.

The triumphs of being a leader.

Next week we see a turn of events, and the other side of life, the other side of leadership. We’ll see the tragedies of David, and what lessons we learn from those.

But today, David at his best. David is a leader, showing leadership.

But he knows he is a leader under authority. This is David showing true servant leadership just as Jesus did.

Just as that great hymn declares

Hail to the Lord’s anointed

Great David’s greater Son.

Amen.