

2 Samuel 7:1-29 // Your Kingdom Come

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[0 : 0 0] reading is on page 310, 311, and it is, as Martin said, 2 Samuel chapter 7, and we're going to read the first 16 verses. After the king was settled in his palace, and the Lord had given him rest from all his enemies around him, he said to Nathan the prophet, here I am, living in a house of cedar, while the ark of God remains in a tent. Nathan replied to the king, whatever you have in mind, go ahead and do it, for the Lord is with you. But that night the word of the Lord came to Nathan, saying, go and tell my servant David, this is what the Lord says, are you the one to build me a house to dwell in? I have not dwelt in a house from the day I brought the Israelites up out of Egypt to this day. I have been moving from place to place with a tent as my dwelling. Wherever I have moved with all the Israelites, did I ever say to any of their rulers whom I commanded to shepherd my people

Israel, why have you not built me a house of cedar? Now then, tell my servant David, this is what the Lord Almighty says, I took you from the pasture, from tending the flock, and appointed you ruler over my people Israel. I have been with you wherever you have gone, and I have cut off all your enemies from before you. Now I will make your name great, like the names of the greatest men on earth, and I will provide a place for my people Israel, and will plant them so that they can have a home of their own and no longer be disturbed. Wicked people shall not oppress them anymore, as they did at the beginning, and have done ever since the time I appointed leaders over my people Israel.

I will also give you rest from all your enemies. The Lord declares to you that the Lord himself will establish a house for you.

When your days are over and you rest with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, your own flesh and blood, and I will establish his kingdom. He is the one who will build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his father, and he will be my son. When he does wrong, I will punish him with a rod wielded by men, with floggings inflicted by human hands. But my love will never be taken away from him, as I took it away from Saul, who I removed from before you. Your house and your kingdom shall endure forever before me. Your throne shall be established forever. This is the word of the Lord.

Let me add my welcome to Martin's, and though we don't have Amazon Prime production budget, we do have the living word of God. So it would be great help if you'd keep it open at 2 Samuel 7, and let's ask the Lord for help as we come to think about it. Heavenly Father, would you open our eyes in wonder to the amazing truths and promises in your word. Would you help us by the Holy Spirit to see just how brilliant King Jesus is? And as we think upon your word to us today, would you lead us to praise his name, the name of Jesus, above all others. For it's in his name that we pray. Amen.

[4 : 1 0] Well, 2 Samuel 7, one of the high points in all the Old Testament, one of the great mountain peaks, so to speak, in the Old Testament. One commentator reckons it's the most important chapter in the Old Testament. John Woodhouse, in his commentary on 2 Samuel, reckons it's the most important words in the world. So why is 2 Samuel 7 such an important chapter? And I think that for us to see something of its significance, it helps for us to see the big picture, because seeing how it fits into everything will help us to get a better idea of its significance to us. Okay, so last year at Roots, in our Student and Young Workers Ministry, we did a Bible overview, the story of the whole Bible in a year.

This morning we're going to do the whole story of the Bible in three sentences, a Bible overview in three sentences. So number one, God made a perfect world. Number two, we messed it up by our sin. And number three, God fixes the world through Jesus. That's the big picture at its most basic, the story of the whole Bible. God made a perfect world. We messed it up big time, and God fixes it

through Jesus. And you'll see the right-hand side of the diagram there, where it ends up, is even higher than the left-hand side.

It's meant to be like that. The Bible is very clear. The kingdom of Jesus at the end of the Bible is even better than the Garden of Eden at the beginning. So where we get to with Jesus is even better than where we were at the beginning before we messed it all up. So there it is. One, two, three, bish, bash, bash, bash, the story of the whole Bible. But then we can fit into the story of the whole Bible. We can fit into that the story of Israel. And it's a bit like Russian dolls there. It follows the same shape and the same patterns. The story of the Bible is the story of all humanity, the story of a whole cosmos. The story of Israel is the story of just one family, Abraham's family. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and their descendants. One family. And as I say, the story of Israel is just like the Russian doll miniature of the whole story. It follows the same shape and patterns. So God starts by making promises promises to Abraham. Promises of land, seed, and blessing promises to make his name great. And it's a bit like Eden, these promises. So the first high point on the diagram and the story of Israel is on

Mount Sinai when God gives instructions to Moses about the Ten Commandments and the instructions for the tabernacle before leading them into the promised land. That's the first peak. And then the second high point is in the story of Israel, the second peak in the diagram. That's our chapter 2 Samuel 7.

They're in the promised land and God establishes the throne of his forever kingdom. 2 Samuel 7. And so for the original audience reading this, they'd have been looking forward to this with great anticipation, looking out for just the right kind of king that is promised here.

[8 : 13] But for us, actually, in many ways, David's kingdom anticipates the final kingdom when King Jesus returns and wraps up history, so to speak. And so in many ways, we today can learn from this passage in the Bible in miniature what it will be like for the whole world at the end of time. The little crown points forward to the big crown. The little kingdom points forward to the forever kingdom.

We've got two headings this morning. First, God will build the house. So if the Bible wants to grab your attention, one of the ways that it can do that is through repeated words or repeated ideas. And one of the key words for us today in chapter 7 is house. It comes seven times in the bit of the passage that we read, eight times in the original language. And if we zoom out, it's 15 times in the whole chapter. And it's a play on words, both in English and in the original Hebrew. A play on words.

House means different things in this chapter. And maybe if we just go back to the previous slide, West Coast, it's probably a bit hard to see. But at its most basic, house is just that. It's just a place to live, a two up, two down, a dwelling place. But in verse 1, house means palace. That's how they've translated it for us. A big house, a house for a king. But in verse 5, it can also mean temple. That's what we call normally a house for God. But then down in verse 18, house also means family, as in a dynasty or a family line. Again, they've translated it for us in the church Bibles.

So that's like the house of Windsor, the royal family, or if you prefer, Italian fashion houses. So only this week in the news, there was talk of the end of an era, the end of the house of Versace as a family dynasty, when Donatella Versace stepped down as its creative director. Sad times, I suppose, if that's your thing. But we've got all this going on in chapter 7, not the Versace, but house as house, house as palace, house as temple, house as family line. Everything but house music.

And just look with me at verse 1. King David was settled in his house, his palace, and the Lord had given him rest from all his enemies. So you can picture the scene. David's up there on his fancy roof terrace, kicking back with his pal, Nathan the prophet, taking in the view, inhaling the pungent aroma of the cedarwood resins. This house smells good. It's a fire safety nightmare, but at least it smells amazing. And then he remembers, God's in a tent. So he says to Nathan the prophet, here I am living in this fancy house where the ark of God remains in a tent. Oops. It's like he's living in a mansion and God's, he's living in a trailer park. Well, that can't be right. So Nathan says, whatever you have in mind, go ahead and do it. Now come on, Nathan. Nathan is a good guy, but this is bad advice. What you want is not a king who does whatever he wants, but a king who obeys whatever God says. Bad advice, Nathan the prophet. Thankfully, that night, verse 4, the word of the Lord came to Nathan. And so he's going to have to backtrack from his off-the-cuff advice. But at this point, the narrative slows right down and we have this great long speech. And in fact, this is the longest speech from the Lord since the instructions that he gave to Moses on Mount Sinai, the first

peak in that diagram. Basically, God says, no, he doesn't need David to build him a house. He is not a god to be domesticated. That was a lesson of Uzzah last week.

[13:04] Instead, he, the living God, will build David a house, meaning a dynasty. So verse 11, the Lord declares to you that the Lord himself will establish a house for you. Okay, so this isn't the main point of the passage, but just as a little sidebar, when God says no, that can be hard, can't it? It can be hard in whatever sphere that may be, in work, in relationships, whatever it may be. It's hard when God says no. It's hard even when God says not yet. And it's hard particularly so, I suppose, if the thing that God says no to is the very thing we're trying to honor God in so doing, as is the case with David here. It can be hard when God says no. But let's be absolutely clear. God is not a spoilsport. It's not like he's saying, David, this is a really terrible idea. This is a really bad idea.

It's never going to happen. No. Look at verse 5. He asks, are you the one to build me a house? Not a flat-out refusal. In fact, in verse 13, he says it will be David's son who builds it. He is the one who will build a house for my name. And verse 13 is fulfilled and part comes true when David's son, King Solomon, builds the temple. That's what we thought about a couple of weeks ago when we're in 1 Chronicles 29. But ultimately, verse 13 is fulfilled when David's greater son, King Jesus, says a thousand years later, I will build my church. A church being the temple of the Holy Spirit, the dwelling place, the house of God. Jesus is the temple-building king of verse 13. It's what the Lord has been building towards since the very beginning of creation and which will be brought to completion with the coming of the new heavens and the new earth. That's what Jesus is talking about in John 14 when he says, I go to prepare a place for you in my Father's house. There are many rooms.

Here in 2 Samuel 7, the reason that God says no and puts the brakes on David's well-intentioned ambitions. The reason is so that nobody can be in any doubt about who's in charge. Nobody can be in any doubt about who's building what here. So at this point, God puts the brakes on David. He stops David building a house for him. But nobody will be confused. Nobody will be in any doubt as to who's doing what. It is all God's grace. Always is. It's not about our performance. It's never about that. It's not about what we do for God.

It's about what God's already done for us. That's the gospel. God's sovereign grace. And that's what the Lord reminds David about in verse 8. I took you from the pasture, from tending the flock, and I appointed you ruler over my people Israel. It's what the Lord's doing. Same thing in verse 9. I have been with you wherever you have gone. I have cut off your enemies from before you. It's what the Lord's been doing all along, bringing about his sovereign purposes through his people. It's the Lord, verse 6, who brought the Israelites out of Egypt in the Exodus. It's the Lord, verses 6 to 7, who's been with them in their wilderness wanderings. All along, it's been the Lord's doing God's grace all along. That's how it's been up to this point.

[17:33] So it's been up to this point, and that's how it will be going forward. It is the Lord who will establish David's house, verse 9, and not the other way around. So second half of verse 9, read with me these amazing promises. I will make your name great, like the names of the greatest men on earth, and I will provide a place for my people Israel, and will plant them so that they can have a home of their own.

Now, if this sounds familiar, it's because this is what God promised Abraham way back in Genesis chapter 12. Exact same language. I will make your name great. But then this next bit of 2 Samuel 7, it takes us all the way back, all the way back, right back to the Garden of Eden. And they will no longer be disturbed, and wicked people will not oppress them anymore as they did at the beginning, and have done ever since. And basically what the Lord's saying to David through Nathan is that it's going to be through his line. He's going to be the instrument through which God accomplishes all his purposes and all his promises. And the enmity and the oppression that's been about since the beginning, that's going to be removed. That's going to be no more when the Lord himself builds the house of David and establishes the throne of his kingdom. So just imagine what that will be like. A world without violence or oppression, no more trauma, no more trouble, no more hospital appointments, no more family feuds, a world without frustration at work, a world where there's no more badness, no more sadness, a world that's better even than Eden. Just imagine what that's going to be like.

Well, just before we move on to our second heading, one way to think about 2 Samuel 7 is that it's like an hourglass. It's like filtering into this chapter are all the promises and patterns and hopes and expectations of everything that precedes it in the Old Testament, like the sand in an hourglass, all

the grains of sand filtering down as it were into 2 Samuel 7 and then filtering out into the rest of the Bible. And the way that this plays out, we're going to see now, is that the Lord is gathering all these Old Testament promises and then filtering through this one individual, the king of Israel.

So God will build the house and then secondly, he will do it through his forever king.

Now it's time to get those highlighters out again. Don't desecrate the church Bibles, but if you've brought your own Bible, you might just want to take a note of this because the other key word for us in this chapter is forever. There it is, eight times in chapter 7. It's right at the heart of what God promises David, right at the heart of what David prays to God in the second half of the chapter. And it's all about forever. It's all about permanence. God has a forever plan, an unstoppable plan, a plan that will endure through all eternity. So look with me again at verse 11. Second half of verse 11.

[21 : 23] The Lord declares to you that the Lord himself will establish for you a house, a family line. And then in verse 16, your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me. Your throne will be established forever. So it's announced here for the first time in 2 Samuel 7. God's kingdom will last forever.

From David's house, God will establish his kingdom forever. So friends, what we need to be asking ourselves is, how is it? How is it that this kingdom is going to be established forever? Because, you know, right back at the beginning when we stuffed up God's perfect world, the result of sin is death. So that's a pretty big problem for a forever kingdom. Two big problems to overcome, sin and death. How is he going to do it?

How will this be forever? How is God going to bring his plan about a forever kingdom to bear? Well, the forever plan needs to be two things. It needs to be sin-proof and it needs to be death-proof. So first up, verse 12.

Death isn't going to put an end to it. When you die, I will raise up your offspring. Literally, I will raise up your seed to succeed you. And I will establish his kingdom.

So this is big. What we're seeing here is a play between the singular and the plural. It's both and both sons of David plural and the son of David singular. Both a line of kings descended from David because we're talking about a house, a dynasty here. And it's a particular seed that the Lord is going to raise up. His singular kingdom established forever. So think of the hourglass again, the sand filtering in. Believers since Genesis 3.15 have been hoping in the seed of the woman. The seed of a woman who's going to overcome sin, who's going to defeat death, who's going to renew creation. This promise filtering in and finding its focus now in the seed that comes from David's line. And for God's plan to establish a forever kingdom, first it needs to be death-proof, but second it also needs to be sin-proof. And to that end, verse 14, it's because of a new kind of relationship.

[24 : 21] This relationship between God and the king will be like, we're told, the relationship between a good father and a son. And what's so amazing here in 2 Samuel 7 that it carries on like a father-son relationship, even when the king stuffs up. So verse 14, I will be his father and he will be my son.

When he does wrong, I will punish him with a rod wielded by men, with floggings inflicted by human hands, but my steadfast love will never be taken away from him as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you. When Saul rebels against God, Saul is rejected. On the Saul deal, you can be king forever so long as you don't sin, as long as you don't set yourself up as a rival to God. So if we stay on the Saul deal, then we're in big trouble when it comes to David, let alone Solomon or the sons of David that follow. In a couple of weeks' time, we'll see just how spectacularly David sins. I mean, he stuffs up big time. His sin is truly appalling. But it's a new deal now.

David might sin worse than Saul, but David doesn't lose the throne. He almost does. He's disciplined.

As a good father disciplines a son, but the royal line isn't removed. We're on a new deal in 2 Samuel 7. A king who is sin-proof. It's not that there's no consequences. There are. But a king that is sin-proof. There will be a son of David on the throne forever. A sin-proof dynasty.

[26 : 27] But as the sand filters down through the hourglass and we come to King Jesus, the promised seeds from David's line. We go from a sin-proof king to a sin-less king, a sinless king.

And we meet the king, the promised Messiah, the matchless king, the sinless king who is perfectly obedient to the word of God and perfectly does his father's will.

So when Jesus is punished with a rod wielded by men, with floggings inflicted by human hands, when he is pierced for our transgressions, that's him perfectly paying for our sins.

So that, brothers and sisters, we can be in his kingdom forever. His forever kingdom in which we will never be disturbed again, which we will know eternal rest and blessing, in which we will get to meet our forever king. So as we wrap things up, for the original readers of 2 Samuel 7, they'd read this chapter and be yearning for the coming of this king, the son of David, in whom all God's promises are yes and amen. And they'd be encouraged, I think, to pray in line with David's prayer, which we didn't have time for today. But here's the gist of it. David praises God for his awesome promises.

And then verse 25, he prays, And now, Lord God, keep forever the promise that you have made concerning your servant and his house. Do as you promised, so that your name will be great forever.

[28 : 24] In other words, he prays as his son, the King Jesus, later would teach us, his disciples, to pray for your kingdom to come.

Lord, will you do what you said you will do so that everybody will know how great you are? And so finally, as for us, as we see the sand filtered down through to Samuel 7 and into the New Testament, well, we can see why the New Testament writers get just so excited as they do.

The New Testament opens with the genealogy of Jesus, the King, the son of David, the son of Abraham. And that's why later on, later on, when he comes into Jerusalem, the city of David, the crowds cry out, Hosanna to the son of David.

All the patterns, all the promises of Scripture, they filter down and find a fulfillment in Jesus, find a yes and amen in the forever King from the house of David.

Hallelujah. Hallelujah. And so as we come to pray now, we pray with the same yearning for God's forever King, for God's forever Kingdom.

[29 : 46] Let's pray. Father, we marvel at your words. We marvel at the faithfulness to your promises.

We praise you that in King Jesus, the son of David, we find the one to whom all the promises and patterns of Scripture point, the one who defeated all our enemies, the one who conquered sin and death, the one through whom you are establishing your forever Kingdom.

And so we praise you, King Jesus, risen from the grave, established on your throne. And would you build your church here at St. Silas? Would you bring to completion your forever Kingdom?

May your Kingdom come. Would you bring us safe to that place of eternal rest, where there will be an end to strife and suffering? Do as you promised, so that your name will be great forever.

Amen.