

2 Samuel 7

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[0 : 00] I know that we shouldn't say any chapter of the Bible is better than another. I think it is probably the best chapter up till now in the Old Testament.

! It's the peak and the pinnacle of the story of God and creation of His world. And in this chapter, what we see is that God reveals His eternal commitments to us. It is wider, it is bigger, it is higher. It's a very key passage about Jesus and we love this passage. It's very precious to the church because it's for all people. But what you have hopes for your background in verse 19, 2007? David says, and yet this was a small thing in your eyes, O Lord God. You have spoken also of your servant's house for a great while to come. And this is instruction, this is teaching for mankind. Literally, this is law for humanity. Good for all. In other words, the promises in the first half of the chapter that God makes in David's mind are like a charter, they're like a constitution.

[1 : 14] For what God is going to do with all humanity. And all creation. It doesn't matter what you believe as you come to this, whether you're an atheist, in the New or Muslim. It doesn't matter what you really think in David's view.

In the Bible's view, this is good news for you. Good news for the whole world. The chapter opens in verse 1-3. Previously on 2 Samuel.

And do you remember? We've seen that King David, he now reigns over at the Hall of Israel. He is the undisputed king who reignites with Israel.

He is living in a big lavish house. In his fortress city with gifts from all the nations around. And the presence of God he danced in front of as the harp is brought into his city.

He danced. He wore an ephod. And when I preached on it, I didn't dance. I didn't wear an ephod. But verses 1-3. Now when the king had lived in his house, and the Lord had given him rest to all his surrounding enemies.

[2 : 21] The king said to Nathan the prophet, see now I dwell in the house of cedar. That's posh wood. But the ark of God dwells in a tent. That's the contrast. And Nathan the prophet said to the king, go and do those in your lap, for the Lord is with you.

You've got to love David, I think. He's fabulously successful and in his humble. You can resent people who are successful but not at all.

But he knows, doesn't he, that his success has come from God. And he is ambitious for God's name on his own. And he says, I'm living in this house, it's worth millions, it's got huge marble bathrooms, but the ark of God is down in a dingy tent.

The people of God have got no cathedral, no temple to worship in. It's very tempting to stop here and preach a sermon on building projects and giving.

That we're all politely concerned with ourselves and our own housing and the cost of living. And it's a mark of the spirit to be interested in the affairs of God. And that would be a great sermon to preach but it's nothing to do with 2 Samuel 1.

[3 : 30] It's true that David wants to put his man where his mouth is, where his faith is. He doesn't feel good that he has it all while the cause of God seems to be in a low end.

And he knows that his success has come from God. So he goes to the prophet and he says, I want to build something for God. And the prophet says, that's such a good idea, I don't even need to pray like that.

Go for it. But God has got other plans to me. That's so often it is the case. And as you come into this chapter, it's so different from what's coming forward.

There's no chasing. There's no injury. There's no beheadings. No witches. There's just two speeches. A speech from God in the first half of the chapter.

It's an astounding and astonishing price. And then the second half of the chapter is a speech from David. It's a prayer. A prayer of a man who has been gripped by God's grace.

[4 : 33] And he is literally flabbergasted. He is lost for words. And my prayer says, we come to the table tonight, we too will be flabbergasted. And so three things about God.

The whole moment of this week. First of all, humility of God. So Nathan goes home that night and the verse, or the word of the Lord comes to Nathan the prophet.

And in verse 6 onwards, this is what God says. He says to Nathan, I chose to live in a tent. You get that?

I chose to live with my people, Israel, in the wilderness. And they were a pilgrim people. And I am a pilgrim God.

He reminds him of what it was like back in 2 Timothy 12. And I said that when the people of God enter into the land that I'm going to give you, I'm going to move them up the land and attack it.

[5 : 31] I'm not going to settle down until I'm good and ready. And the reason for that is the land is mine. But the land is now full of false gods, idols, and false worship.

And I need to come around the land and create it up. And your job, Israel, is wherever you find an idol or a false god, chop it up and use it in fire.

My job is to disinfect the land. To purify it by my presence. It's one reason, this is incidentally, why Jesus throughout his ministry is constantly casting out unclean demons.

He's doing the same thing that the Lord did. The Lord God moved about the land and cleansed it.

Do you hear what God is saying? God is saying, I am not like any other god.

I will not be worshipped with idols. I don't need a special temple. I don't need a cathedral to keep the rain off my head. I am the Lord.

[6 : 40] I am not suffering because I don't have a house to see yet. As though I'm missing out, he says. He says, the day we have to take the tent.

It's this strange humility of God. He did not need to create the world. In the beginning, God.

He did not need to create the world. He did not need to create you. He did not need to create me.

God was not lonely. God does not need your worship as if he didn't secure.

That's the pagan view of God. The pagan view of God is that God needs us to do things for him.

And so we build them temples and we make offerings to them so that they might be good to us.

And the ancient world, you'll know, is full of ziggurats and temples for God to live in. But the God of the Bible will not be confined to a building.

[7 : 45] The God of the Bible does not need our lavish plans. I think that's important for the human eye because the constant temptation for the people of God is to domesticate.

To think that he wants what we want. And to take our expectations and put them on him.

And to want him to settle down on our plans and on our buildings to make our golden calves. And let's worship. The apostle Paul said later, didn't he?

The God who made the world and everything here, being the Lord of heaven and earth, he does not live in temples made by man. Nor is he served by human hands. As though he needed anything.

Since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything. Perhaps even better, the words of God in Isaiah. Heaven is my throne.

[8 : 45] And earth is my footstool. What is the house that you have built for me? What is the place of my rest? All these things my hands make.

All these things came to be, declares the Lord. But this is the one to my Lord of God. He who is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles up my word.

That is the one he looks to. The Lord dwells in the humble because he is the humble God. That is David down very much. David says in verse 9, if you cast the line down. It says in verse 9, I am with you whatever you want.

David, when you faced Goliath, I was with you. When Saul tried to spew you with his spear, I was with you. When you hid in the cave, when you ran off to the Philistines, I was with you.

And that is the humility of God. God is constantly coming down to be with us, so it is the Rascals.

And to save us and to bring us home.

[9 : 58] I don't know if you have thought about that. But it is a great act of humility to do that. Think of the burning bush of Moses out in the wilderness, not having washed for years.

The burning bush amongst the sheep down. And God comes down in a pillar of cloud and fire. The technical world is, it is amongst the smell of burning carcasses, burning animals.

And when we come to the Gospel of John, we read that the Word was with God. And the Word was God. And the Word became flesh.

And made his dwelling, dwelling amongst us. Literally, the Word is God, which is pent amongst us. In Jesus Christ, God came from heaven and came to the monsters.

He is not like other gods. When Jesus rose, he said to his followers, I am with you always until the end of the age.

[11:07] And since the death and the resurrection of Jesus and the coming of the Spirit, things have changed for us. And there is no tent. And there is no temple.

God's presence doesn't come and go, but he dwells in us. We will, together, find his Holy Spirit. And that is God's humility. That is the first thing I think we take from this chapter.

The humility of God. The strange humility of God. Secondly, the grace of God. And you can't miss it. The grace of God.

One of the key words in the passage, I don't know if you picked it up, but it was read, is the word house. It's used about 15 times. And if I can say it reverently, God makes a play on the word house. Because you see, a house can mean two things, Captain. A house can mean a physical building with walls and roof and rooms. Or it can mean a household of people, a family desks.

[12:08] So you think of a house of winter. So look at how God does this. Look at verse 5. Verse 5 chapter 7.

I have not lived in a house. A physical place. This is the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day. But down in verse 11, in the last line.

He speaks to David and he says, I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover, the Lord declares to you that the Lord will make you a house. That's not a physical house, is it? That's a physical life. That's a dynasty.

He's talking there about an eternal home. The start of the chapter, David thought he was going to do this big thing for God.

But it turns out that God was going to do the greedy man. For David. That there's going to be an eternal household. A place, a dwelling where God himself will dwell with them.

[13:07] And not because David deserves it, but because of his grace. And that is God's intention when he made the world. And so when God created the world, he made him and beings in his image so that he might do our words.

And the world is meant to be a home, a house, an eternal place where we live in God's peace. With each other and with his world and with God.

And if you bend your Bible right around, Genesis 1 and 2 meets Revelation 20 and 21. And what you have a picture at the end of the Bible is a picture of the new Jerusalem.

And we read there, don't we, that the wonderful thing about the new heavens and the new earth and the new creation is that the dwelling of God is with man. And we will dwell with God.

And we shall be his people and he will be with us as our God. And so one of the things that I hear about London that you do is that it's a lonely city.

[14:14] And we think of the alienation and the homelessness and the kind of rootlessness, is that the word?

That the needing to feel rooted and yet not feel rooted. And that is found not only being able to buy your own property. That is found by understanding what God promises here.

That we love the city, we love this area, but it will not be our true home. And even though we've done nothing to deserve it, God is creating a house for us.

And God is creating for us a place of belonging. And by his grace, he is going to bring it about. We don't build his kingdom, he is building it. And so I think if you're someone who thinks what he says afterwards, you want to take this passage home and trace it through the first half of the passage.

How often God speaks about himself? Did you pick it up? I, me, my, that section of 12 verses. I think in those 12 verses it's around 31 times.

[15:30] He tells David what God did in the past. He tells what he's going to do in the future, and then what he's going to do in the eternal future. Let me read a couple of other verses. Verse 8, chapter 3, that says the Lord first. I tell you from the past here, from following the sheep.

That you should be prince over my people Israel. I think he's called prince there, because God is the true king. Verse 10. And I will upon 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. You see, the reason that everything has happened to David is not because he's a great guy, and he's particularly virtuous. He's not. It's all of God's kindness. It was God who took him from the field. It was God who gave him the gift of music. It was God who unointed him Messiah.

God doesn't do those things just because he's nice. He does it for the sake of his people. He keeps working for the sake of his people. And I think David doesn't censor this.

[16:34] Just click over to the next page. Is it prayer? It's 23. And this is David's glad of asking prayer. It says, Who is like your people Israel?

The one nation on earth whom God went to redeem to be his people, making himself a name, and doing for the great horse, and thanks, by driving out before your people whom you redeemed for yourself from Egypt, a nation that's God's.

And you established for yourself your people Israel to be your people forever. And you, O Lord, Okay, thank God. It's great stuff.

Israel is uniquely privileged, not because they were important, not because they were any great shakes in themselves. Purely because of God's undeserved kindness.

And God went to redeem. And he brought them to himself that they would be his people. There's a two directional thing going on, isn't there?

[17:37] They would be his people. And he would be their God. It's like a marriage. It's not because they're attractive or brilliant or numerous. It's purely because of God's grace.

And again, we see the same thing as what we saw this morning. Two directional, seven, turns what many people think Christianity is. It turns it on its head.

Many Christians go through their lives with nagging questions, plaguing doubts. Some of you. And you don't doubt, do you, that God is there.

You know that God is there. But you doubt, or whether your faith is real. And you're trying to live the Christian life. You're trying to do things for God.

But you don't feel as if it's working. And you feel sometimes like you're feeling object. You say to yourself, I don't love God as I should.

[18:39] And my life is shot through with disobedience. And my performance is spotty and best. And my whole wrong God is touch and go. And my faith is up and down.

And I want you to understand, in fact, I need you to understand. That the message of the Bible is that it is not what we do for God that's important.

It's what God does for us. Is that the message of the Lord's table? Is that the great link between this sermon and the Lord's table? Is that the message of the Bible is that it is not what we do for God that is important.

And when you understand that, there are lots of people in church that live as if it all depended on their faith and their work and their love.

But what is really important is God's faithfulness, God's work, God's love. And I think it's very easy to get hold of the wrong end of the stick with this.

[19:47] You could be around Christians and Christianity for a long time and still be on that desperate treadmill of trying to save yourself with all your best intentions. And the signs that you're trying to save yourself are that you lack in your heart an assurance of God's forgiveness and all these things.

And you try to obey God by looking at the boundaries, the ages, the rules. What can I do? What can I do? Instead of desiring to please Him.

And grace for you is more about what you do than He does.

And as a result, your inner life is a little bit grumpy. And praise is unnatural, joy is losing. And I don't know if that is new tonight.

But if that is new, here is God's promise. God's promise is I will be your God. And you shall be my people.

[20:52] And I am your true home. And I am in the way into that group. So come unto me and I will give you rest.

Do you see the difference? When you get hold of this or your confidence size? But it's not in my performance, it is in the grace of God. I come to the letter that guilt is a very poor long-term motivator.

Grace is not such a good short-term motivator. But it is a very good long-term motivator. None of us fully understand God's grace to us.

Let me give you a verse to ponder this week. 2 Corinthians 8 verse 9. 2, 4, 8, 9. 2 Corinthians 8 verse 9.

For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though ye will be rich, yet for your sake ye will be free, so that you by your authority have become rich.

[22 : 18] As David begins to understand that, he sits in his tent and he says, Who am I and what is my family? That you've done this over.

Again, notice from family, you can expect. He's done a stroke, God's man. He's glad to gather. Notice, please, he doesn't grovel, he doesn't say, I'm worthy, I'm worthy, I'm worthy, it causes them to work.

So are you. It's alright. But that's not really relevant. The point is, he's seen the grace of God, and it's difficult for him to find words. The question for us, the community of Christians, the question for us is God the same today.

That's his grace strong on the background. He lost his hand. Well, the grace of God, the strange humility of God, and it lasts in the wonderful covenant of God. Anyway, I'm going to get you Bible for a day.

But Leo Tolstoy wrote War and Peace. I've not read it to which you might greatly surprise you. But Leo Tolstoy says that the big turning points in world history are due to idiotic and inhumane decisions made by people who have not a clear what they are doing.

[23 : 40] That's his argument. I think it's a very good one. I think it's almost impossible to deny that theme. But 2007 is different. The turning point for the world comes from the God who knows the future, who controls the future and promises his grace.

And who comes through his promises, and it's a very particular kind of promise, it's a covenant promise. It's a bad description, but let me try and give it to you.

It's a two-sided contract. It's not a business contract. It's not a drive. It's a marriage. Where God binds himself to us and us to him.

And this passage is the covenant with David. And the idea of the covenant is the way to look at the whole of the Bible. If you're near the Bible, you'll see that the Bible provides you to the Old Testament and the New Testament.

It's the Old Covenant and the New Covenant. Another thread of the covenant runs right away from John G. Rhodes, our minister of Leeds. He's written a great book on this. Helps you to see how is the Bible hang together.

[24 : 50] There are six covenants. There's the covenant with creation, where God promises to bless him and rest. There's the covenant with Noah. There's the covenant with Abraham, where God promises to make the people bless him with his presence, and make them bless him with others.

And put them in a place. And then there's Moses, where God shows how precious his people are at him. When he comes to dwell with them. And then the fifth covenant is with David, this Davidic covenant.

And then there's Jeremiah, who promises the blessings of a new covenant in Jesus. So at communion, we say, this is the new covenant, my beloved. They're not all separate covenants. There is one theme running one way through. One plan, one purpose of God. And each time he re-establishes his covenant that he made in creation. And God picks up and he takes the most wonderful and brilliant things of his promise.

And he heightens them and he adds to them and he redirects them and he deepens them. And so that's why in this passage you see echoes of those covenants. You find rest and unleashing.

[26 : 02] But there are two things about the Davidic covenant that are completely new. The first is the two of the verses. Well, 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.

You shall build a house in my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. Verse 16, and your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me, your throne shall be established forever.

So here is God making these promises about 1000 BC. And they come to us, through the person of Jesus Christ, and they come to us in the 21st century, and they go right beyond us to the end of the

world.

Into eternity, into the future that's to come. And it is God who is making this promise of a forever end. So death can't defeat it, time can't terminate it.

But God's promise, you see, is that this world will become the kingdom of our God, our Christ. And this Christ will reign forever.

[27 : 07] That's the first thing. The second thing is that it's got to do with an eternal king. And the king is completely uniquely. Verse 14, I will be to him a father, and he shall be to his son.

How much is in that promise? When he commits iniquity, I will discipline him with the rod of man, with the stripes of the son of man. But my steadfast love will not depart from him from this day's limit.

And so from this point on, we are looking, looking, looking for an eternal king. From this day onwards, God will relate to his people through the anointed son of David.

Whose job it will be to be the son of God. So I want to push this video as we finish. The way that God is going to create a house and a home for us. The way that he's going to redeem us.

The way that he's going to bring us peace. All hinges on the coming son of David. Who will be an eternal Messiah. And that's why the Bible and Christians are so focused on the coming son of David.

[28 : 08] He's the touchstone of humanity. He's the key to human destiny. He's the key to human happiness. He's the key to the future. And the tragic thing is that when you look at the kings that come after David.

Even David, each happens from now. David gets himself in the real mess. And most of the kings are abject, self-absorbed, corrupt, living off the sheep like wolves.

And what is even worse in 400 years time because of the decay and the corruption in Israel. The Babylonians will come and they will completely conquer Israel. And they will kill all the family line. And they will take all the people into exile. They will kill all the royal family. And the great question for God's people in exile is how did this happen?

How did that happen, God, when you promised that the house and kingdom of David are going to be forever? So it's time to keep your finger in 2007.

[29 : 09] And turn with me to Psalm 89. We sang it earlier, Psalm 89. And I think the Psalm is written at the time of the exile.

And the Psalmist is struggling with this very issue. In verse 3, Psalm 89. You have said, I have made a covenant with my chosen one. I have sworn to take my servant.

Ah, you will establish your offspring forever and build your throne for all generations. Verse 8 of Psalm 89. The Psalmist says, O Lord, God of hosts, who is mighty as you are, O Lord, with your faithfulness all around you.

You are mighty. You've got the time, he said. You can fulfill this if you want. Verse 28 and 29. My steadfast love I will keep him forever. And my covenant will stand for him.

I will establish his offspring forever and his throne as the days of the hamlets. Verse 38. But now you have cast off and rejected. You are full of wrath against your own mind.

[30 : 12] You made his flamethrower seats and cast his throne to the ground. Verse 44. Verse 51. With which your enemies are cold over. With which they want to fulfill steps in the United. Do you see the problem?

What do you do with God's promises to Samuel? Number one. A. God did really mean it. B. You can't keep it. Three.

Well there's something much bigger than your own will do. And as we read the later prophets in the Old Testament, we find that God brings together two things. He brings together his own personal role with people and one particular self to it.

And they become the same person. And so go with me to Itai chapter 9. They're really famous words. Keep going. Itai chapter 9.

And you know these words. Verse 6. For to us a child is born, us a son is dead, and the government will be upon his shoulders as his kingdom.

[31 : 16] And his name shall be called Wonderful Counsel and Mighty God. Everlasting Father and Prince of Peace. And of the increase of his kingdom will there be no end.

On the throne of David and over his kingdom to establish it and hold it. With justice and the righteousness of the Lord will the zeal of the Lord will do this.

We can go to Ezekiel, we can go to Jeremiah. Or we can go to one more place. Go with me to Luke's Gospel Chapel. Luke 1. Luke 1 verse 26. In the sixth and eighth age of Gabriel was sent from God for a city of Galilee in Nazareth. The virgin control was to a man whose name was Joseph, but the house of David.

And the virgin's name was Mary. What this angel Gabriel says for him is, behold what you will conceive in your womb and bear a son and you will call his name Jesus. Who is this child? Verse 32, he will be great and he will be called the Son of Christ and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David and the reign of the house of Jacob for Adam and his kingdom there will be God.

[32 : 46] It's as though Gabriel is really out of Sam's hand. And in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ we have the fulfilment of the Davidic covenant.

And you are the fulfilment of creation and all that of us. And so we see the humble God and the God of grace and the God of the covenant.

And it's still a little bit of a second but I don't think that's where we should finish. Because David after these years he goes into the tent and he sits down and he's moved. And I don't think we grasp the shred of God's goodness.

Unless, if we are moved by this. Because you can't receive this covenant, it is overwhelmingly good news. And what David does is he pleads God's promises back to him.

The Lord do as he promised. And the thing about these brief promises and purposes of God is you can understand them. There's another step, isn't there? If you understand them, you can reject them for that.

[33 : 57] Or you can accept them. And the thing about a covenant, like a marriage, is that one partner has both given themselves fully to each other. But it takes two to each other.

And all his humility and all his goodness and all his grace are a no-affect and as you give yourself to. Some people have got him.

He's accepted you and he's taken hold of you and he's made promises to you. And so accept him. And do this with a great joy together. As we say before we tell them those demons.

Let's give a hint. Let's give a hint. Let's give a hint. Let's give a hint. Let's give a hint. Let's give a hint. Let's give a hint. Let's give a hint. Let's give a hint. Let's give a hint. Let's give a hint.

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[34 : 58] Let's give a hint. Let's give a hint. Let's give a hint.