

CALVARY PANDAN BIBLE- PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

[Adapted from Bethel Bible-Presbyterian
Church, 10 Downing St. Oakleigh, Vic.,
3166]

DHW BIBLE CLASS

LESSON 5

SECOND SAMUEL

CHAPTER 7

INTRODUCTION

This is one of the most important chapters in the Old Testament. The Davidic Covenant that is frequently referred to by preachers and Bible teachers is given here. It is important to note that this is not a separate covenant independent of the Mosaic covenant or Noahic Covenant. All these covenants come under one umbrella covenant known as the Covenant of Grace. In other words, this Davidic covenant (also a covenant of grace) is one of many sub-covenants of the larger Covenant of Grace, which came into operation the moment Adam sinned against God in the Garden of Eden.

The "seed of the woman" which was intimated in Genesis 3:15; 22:17-18; 48:19 was to come from the house of Jesse through his son, David.¹ It was the Messianic

¹ Genesis 3:15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy **seed** and her **seed**; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

Genesis 22:17-18 That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate

reference that was significant and all-important to the Jews and till today they are looking forward to the coming of the Messiah who shall deliver them and rule the world! But the Messiah had already come. They will look in vain for the conquering Messiah must be preceded by the suffering Messiah. All Bible students know that this Messiah is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ. The significance of the Davidic covenant therefore determined the lineage of the Messiah that had become the credentials that would authenticate the genuine Messiah, hence the lengthy and very important chapters of Matthew 1 and Luke 3.

The theme of the chapter is twofold: the building of the Temple and the Davidic Covenant. The chapter falls into three natural divisions: (1) David's desire to build a temple to house the Ark of God (vv. 1-3); God's response to David's holy desire (vv. 4-17); and David's answer to God's word (vv. 18-29).

COMMENTARY

David's Desire to Build a House for the Ark of God-7:1-3

The LORD had given David "rest" from all the hostile tribes and nations around him. Internal strife between David's men in Judah and those of Saul in the north had ceased. The death of Ishbosheth, Saul's son, had brought about the

of his enemies; And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.

Genesis 48:19 And his father refused, and said, I know *it*, my son, I know *it*: he also shall become a people, and he also shall be great: but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his **seed** shall become a multitude of nations.

unity of the whole nation of Israel. Jerusalem was taken and David took residence in it and made it the capital city of the nation. The Ark of God was relocated to Jerusalem and housed in a tent that David had set up. The Philistines, Israel's arch-enemy, were defeated. David was now enjoying a more established and stable country.

David sat in his palace. Hiram, the king of Tyre, had completed the building of the palace for David (5:11). It was probably a beautiful and imposing palace befitting a king. David then called Nathan the prophet. This was the first time that the prophet was introduced.² He was David's adviser and trusted friend. David called Nathan and said to him, "See now, I dwell in an house of cedar, but the Ark of God dwells within curtains" (v.2). Nathan knew what was in the mind of the king. Nathan guessed that David desired to build a temple to house the Ark of God. Without any hesitation, Nathan encouraged David to go ahead to do what he wished. The LORD would be with him. Indeed, David wanted to honour God and show his gratitude for the political stability and security in Israel.

Nathan thought that this was a good gesture that would require no prayer. It was a kind-hearted proposal and furthermore, it stemmed from a man after God's own heart. God must have no problem accepting this offer from His own servant, the king.

² He is mentioned three times: the second time when David had a relationship with Bathsheba, and the third time when he reminded David of God's promise that Solomon should succeed David as king.

The LORD'S Word to David through Nathan—7:4-17

The LORD gave His word to David that very night through Nathan. David did not seek the LORD's will concerning his desire, nor did Nathan seek the counsel of God. The LORD had to intervene directly as it was His place of worship that David was considering building. The LORD replied in three ways. Firstly, the LORD raised a question concerning David's intention to build a house for the LORD—was it necessary and appropriate? The LORD remarked that since the time He had delivered the children of Israel out of Egypt until now, He had "walked" with them by dwelling in a tent and in a tabernacle. The Ark of God symbolised the presence of the LORD. In each place they had gone, the Ark was placed in a tent or in the tabernacle based on the building plan that God gave. In all these places that He had journeyed with them and provided for them, He had not asked for a "house of cedar" (v.7) to be built. **The LORD was saying that it was not necessary to build Him a temple** (vs. 5-7).

Secondly, the LORD reminded David that he was His servant (indeed, an honour and a privilege). God referred to Himself as the "LORD of hosts" that is, the LORD (YAHWEH) of the nation Israel whom He had in a great and mighty way brought out of Egypt. David, though now a king surrounded and served by the children of Israel, was also a servant of God (v.8). David's success as a leader and warrior was due to God who was with him wherever he went. Moreover, David had become famous like all other great men.

The LORD further declared that at an appointed time, He would

choose a more permanent place for His people Israel in peace and justice. **The promotion of David from ignominy to kingship was God's doing. God was the One who promoted him and not the other way around. David did not have to promote God by giving God a more permanent house.** (cf. vs 8-10).

Lastly, the LORD declared that He would build David a "house" (v.11b). There was a play on the use of the word "house." Unlike David who wanted to build a temple for the Ark of God, the LORD would build David a house in the sense of a "dynasty". This meaning was borne in the LORD's following words. The LORD said that when David "shall sleep with his fathers," the LORD would raise his "seed" after him of his own flesh and blood, and would establish his kingdom (v.12). The LORD's reference to death as "sleep" is significant. It strongly suggests that death is not the ultimate end, but envisages a future time of "awaking" (resurrection). The truth is that when David died, he would be with his fathers. Here again the words of the LORD suggests that there is life after death. However, what is important according to the words of the LORD is that the raising of his "seed" implied many generations after David. David's kingdom would not fail but would be established forever (v.13).

The immediate "seed" of David would build the "house" that is the temple for the LORD. He is none other than David's son, Solomon, who would become king when David died. The LORD would be like a father to him and he would be His son. This spoke of a special and privileged relationship that had not

been the case with Saul. What it meant is that when each successive king sinned, the LORD would be merciful to him and would not take away his rule over Israel, as He had done to Saul. Therefore David's dynasty and kingdom would be established forever (v.16). Do you agree with this explanation of vv. 12-16?

An alternate explanation of the same verses is given below. This house referred to the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ. The seed referred to the Lord Himself. 2 Samuel 7:12-13, *"And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed [Jesus Christ] after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom [Kingdom of Christ]. He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever."* {See also Zech. 6:12-13} This is more than just a promise of an earthly dynasty but a kingdom that will last beyond the millennium kingdom of Christ into eternity!

This was the LORD's promise to David because he had a desire to build a "house" for the Ark of God! This was the Davidic Covenant. It was a covenant that would culminate with the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ and His kingdom on earth. Although the word "covenant" was not used in the LORD's assurance to him, the language unmistakably expressed the idea. This covenant that the LORD made with David could not be broken. Death could not annul it (vv.12, 13); sin could not destroy it (vv.14, 15); and time would not end it (vv. 13, 16). The covenant made with David had five vital implications. First, the people of Israel must be preserved as a nation.

Second, Israel must be brought back to the land that God had promised their forefather and here repeated once more (v.10), thus indicating a continuity of the Abrahamic Covenant (Genesis 17:1-8). Third, David's seed would rule over the kingdom, and this would ultimately be fulfilled when the Lord Jesus Christ, who was David's greater Son, return. Fourth, it would be a literal earthly kingdom as David understood it at the time it was revealed to him. Fifth, the kingdom would be forever.³

David's Response—7:18-29

Nathan's task now was to go back to David and tell him all that the LORD had told him. One can imagine that Nathan had a hard time. He had encouraged David to go ahead and build the temple for the Ark of God. But the LORD said that David should not build it. Sometimes even the prophet of God could be wrong, advising without first seeking God's counsel. However, there was no condemnation of Nathan. Nathan, having received the vision from the LORD, obediently and precisely conveyed everything to David.

David was awestruck. He responded with overwhelming praise and prayer, not disappointment. After hearing all the words of the LORD to him through Nathan, David went into the tent that housed the Ark of God. There he sat "before the LORD" (v.17) and burst out in praise and adoration of the greatness of God and humbled himself utterly. This was expressed in his opening remarks (v.18): "Who am I, O Lord God? and what is my house that thou

hast brought me hitherto?" Observe the title name that he used to call God: "Lord God". The word "Lord" was the Hebrew word "adonai" which meant "master or lord."⁴ In the context used, David was expressing the absolute lordship of God in his life. He addressed God on a personal relational basis. He used this title four times in his opening address (vv. 18, 19, 20). Although what he intended to do was a small thing in God's sight, God had spoken to him about building his "house" (his dynasty) for a long time to come. Such is the way God deals with man!⁵ David admitted that he was speechless. He acknowledged that God knew him.

He recognized that God was Sovereign and had graciously and unconditionally done all the great things that he had experienced (v.21). He confessed that the LORD God was great and there was none who was like Him nor was there any god beside Him. David continued and praised God for His glory. He had saved Israel as a people and had done great and marvellous things before all the other nations. He had affirmed that Israel would be

⁴ KJV translators differentiate the meaning of "Lord" (Hebrew, *adonai*) with "LORD" (Hebrew, *YAHWEH*). The former means "master, or lord," for example, Sarah called Abraham "lord." (Genesis 18:12). *YAHWEH* is the personal name of God, sometimes translated "JEHOVAH."

⁵ The literal translation of the Hebrew is: AND THIS THE TORAH OF MAN. The expression is short, abrupt, and puzzling. "Torah strictly means "Law"; but the word also means "instruction, teaching, direction. "This' refers to the promises of God to him. NIV has it in a question form: "Is this your usual way of dealing with man, O Sovereign Lord?" Another translates thus: "such is human destiny."

³ J. Carl Laney, *First and Second Samuel*, p. 49.

a people to Him forever, and the LORD (YAHWEH) would be their God.

David now prayed to the LORD God. He put to God that He had said many things about his (David's) dynasty, and called God to fulfil all that He had promised. This is the way to pray to God. He prayed according to God's will and word. God will never fail to do what He has said and promised. David expressed that in fulfilling His word and promises, it was all for His glory and exaltation. It was because of God's promise to David and his descendants that he was praying accordingly. David ended with a request that the Lord God would bless him and his descendants forever as He had promised.

PRACTICAL VALUE

Did God cast away Israel when they rejected the Lord Jesus Christ, the "seed" of David? May it never be so! God had declared in this covenant with David that it was indefectible. Paul in his letter to the Romans affirmed this. God had made a covenant with Israel that He would take away their sins. The birth of Israel as a sovereign nation was a miracle. The children of Israel were dispersed in the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 and remained stateless until May 15, 1948 when the state of Israel became a sovereign nation among all the other nations of the world! Even their enemies admitted this was a miraculous phenomenon.

Current events in Israel are significant to God's plan and purpose not only for Israel but also for the Church and the world. These signs point to the nearness of the return of

the "seed" of David to establish His kingdom on earth and for all eternity! God had promised David and He would surely keep His promise. Israel looks up to her Messiah to destroy her enemies. The Church looks up for her redemption and salvation. The world will cease to exist and in its place will appear the Great White Throne of Judgment (Revelation 20:11). Take heed; be watchful and steadfast, and pray for all others and ourselves.

AMEN

DAILY READINGS & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Daily Readings

Monday: Samuel 7:1-11; 1 Chronicles 17:1-2; James 1:5;

Tuesday: 2 Samuel 7:1-11; 1 Chronicles 17:3-10; Matthew 1:1

Wednesday: 2 Samuel 7:12-17; 1 Chronicles 17:11-15; Romans 11:26-36

Thursday: 2 Samuel 7:18-29; 1 Chronicles 17:16-22; 1 Peter 1:18-19

Friday: 2 Samuel 7:1-29; 1 Chronicles 17:23-27; Proverbs 18:10

Analysis:

Text	Practical Value
2 Samuel 7:1-3	
2 Samuel 7:4-11	
2 Samuel 7:12-17	

2 Samuel 7:18-24	
2 Samuel 7:25-29	

Discussion Questions

1. In decision making, what is obvious to man may not be obvious to God. Do you think that Nathan's quick acceptance of David's proposal to build a Temple is a common problem in a believer's life today?

2. How do you interpret verses 12-16? What are the implications of your interpretation?

3. Why was it not possible for a man with bloody hands to build God's Temple?

4. Do you think that God's explanation for rejecting David's proposal was too harsh?

5. What may we learn from God's reply to David's proposal and David's acceptance of God's rejection?

6. What eternal promises does God give you from His Word that you cherish for comfort, spiritual strength, and assurance?

7. What can you praise God for
a. the present

b. the past

c. the future
