

SECOND SAMUEL

Chapter 7

God's Covenant with David

Now when the king lived in his house and the LORD had given him rest from all his surrounding enemies, 2 the king said to Nathan the prophet, "See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwells in a tent." 3 And Nathan said to the king, "Go, do all that is in your heart, for the LORD is with you." 4 But that same night the word of the LORD came to Nathan, 5 "Go and tell my servant David, 'Thus says the LORD: Would you build me a house to dwell in? 6 I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent for my dwelling. 7 In all places where I have moved with all the people of Israel, did I speak a word with any of the judges of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, "Why have you not built me a house of cedar?"' 8 Now, therefore, thus you shall say to my servant David, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, that you should be prince over my people Israel. 9 And I have been with you wherever you went and have cut off all your enemies from before you. And I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. 10 And I will appoint 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, 11 from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel. And I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover, the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house. 12 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. 13 He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. 14 I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son. When he commits iniquity, I will discipline him with the rod of men, with the stripes of the sons of men, 15 but my steadfast love will not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away from before you. 16 And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me. Your throne shall be established forever.'" 17 In accordance with all these words, and in accordance with all this vision, Nathan spoke to David.

7:1–29 God's great promise to David (see Introduction: Contents and Theme). Although it is not expressly called a covenant here, it is elsewhere (23:5; Ps 89:3, 28, 34, 39; cf. Ps 132:11), and David responds with language suggesting his recognition that a covenant had been made. (CSB)

7:1 *when the king lived in his house.* This was an expression referring to his permanent abode after having attended to all the external affairs of the kingdom. (Kretzmann)

For so much of his life David had been caught up in the business of war and fighting. A courageous warrior, he had carried out some of the most successful military campaigns in Israel's history. But now he found himself in a unique situation, at least as far as his life was concerned. David experienced a time of rest and peace. (PBC)

and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies. Chronologically the victories noted in 8:1–14 probably preceded the events of this chapter. The arrangement of material is topical—ch. 6 records the bringing of the ark to Jerusalem; ch. 7 tells of David's desire to build a temple in Jerusalem in which to house the ark. (CSB)

All those nations which still felt strong enough to dispute the growing power of Israel having been vanquished. (Kretzmann)

7:2 *Nathan*. The first reference to this prophet (see 12:1–14; 1Ki 1). (CSB)

David regarded Nathan highly as a confidential adviser. (Kretzmann)

tent. See v. 6; 6:17. Now that he himself had a royal palace (symbolic of his established kingship), a tent did not seem to David to be an appropriate place for the throne of Israel's divine King (see note on 6:2; see also Ps 132:2–5; Ac 7:46). He wanted to build Israel's heavenly King a royal house in the capital city of his kingdom. (CSB)

As David relaxed and enjoyed his beautiful new palace, truly fit for a king, something struck him as being terribly wrong. It didn't seem right that he should be living in such splendor, in a palace whose walls were lined with beautiful cedar, while the ark of the Lord was kept in a tent. (PBC)

David wanted to build a temple for the Lord. (TLSB)

7:3 *Nathan said*. In consulting a prophet, David sought God's will, but Nathan boldly voiced approval of David's plans in the Lord's name before he had received a revelation from the Lord. (CSB)

This approval of David's purpose, however, came out of Nathan's own mind, not by divine revelation. (CSB)

By consulting Nathan the prophet, David was seeking God's will. Nathan readily agreed with David's plans without first consulting the Lord. (TLSB)

7:5 *would you build*. David's desire was commendable (1Ki 8:18–19), but his gift and mission were to fight the Lord's battles until Israel was securely at rest in the promised land (see v. 10; 1Ki 5:3). (CSB)

7:6 *have moved with* - literally, "I was a wanderer in tent and dwelling-place"; for even after the children of Israel had reached Canaan, the tent had been moved from Gilgal to Shiloh, and then to the hill between Gibeah and Gibeon. The Tabernacle, the structure as built by Moses, Ex. 35, 11, had been Jehovah's dwelling-place. (Kretzmann)

7:7 *did I speak ... "Why have you not built me a house ... ?"* David misunderstood the Lord's priorities. He reflected the pagan notion that the gods were interested in human beings only as builders and maintainers of their temples and as practitioners of their cult. Instead, the Lord had raised up rulers in Israel only to shepherd his people (that is also why he had brought David "from the pasture," v. 8). (CSB)

The Lord had never commanded such a dwelling to be built, so David's predecessors had not acted wrongly by not building one. (TLSB)

Neither during the desert journey, nor during the entire period of the Judges, when the leadership passed from one tribe of the more important ones to another, had the Lord ever commanded the children of Israel to build Him a permanent and costly sanctuary, worthy of His glory. (Kretzmann)

7:8 *say to my servant David* – It wasn't that God was punishing David for something in his past. It was just that it was not God's plan that David build a temple for him. God had other plans for David to do. (PBC)

7:9 *I have cut off all your enemies.* David had always been sure of the merciful presence of Jehovah, even during the years when Saul persecuted him. David's victories had brought him into prominent attention in all the surrounding nations. Of so much concerning his outward success Nathan was to remind David first, of the fact that he owed his position and all his success to the Lord alone. (Kretzmann)

7:10 *I will appoint a place for my people Israel.* It is for this purpose that the Lord has made David king, and through David he will do it. (CSB)

7:11 *judges.* During the period of the judges. (CSB)

I will also give you rest from all your enemies. See vv. 1, 9. David's victories over threatening powers will be complete, so that the rest already enjoyed will be assured for the future. (CSB)

the LORD himself will make a house for you. Compare this statement with the rhetorical question of v. 5. In a beautiful play on words God says that David is not to build him a house (temple); rather, God will build David a house (royal dynasty) that will last forever (v. 16). God has been building Israel ever since the days of Abraham, and now he commits himself to build David's royal house so that the promise to Israel may be fulfilled—rest in the promised land. It is God's building that effects his kingdom. This covenant with David is unconditional, like those with Noah, Abram and Phinehas, grounded only in God's firm and gracious purpose. It finds its ultimate fulfillment in the kingship of Christ, who was born of the tribe of Judah and the house of David (see Ps 89:30–38; Isa 9:1–7; Mt 1:1; Lk 1:32–33, 69; Ac 2:30; 13:23; Ro 1:2–3; 2Ti 2:8; Rev 3:7; 22:16). (CSB)

A dynasty. Even Solomon's temple served only as a temporary house of God. It would give way to that offspring of David who dwelt (tabernacled) among people and in whom "all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell" bodily (Col 1:19). Cf Jn 1:14; Col 2:9. (TLSB)

7:12 *raise up your offspring after you.* The royal line of David, in contrast to that of Saul, would continue after David's death by dynastic succession. (CSB)

Refers to one successor of David in whom David's kingdom would be established forever. (TLSB)

7:13 *He shall build a house for my Name.* God's priorities are that his own royal house, where his throne (the ark) can finally come to rest (1Ch 6:31; 28:2), will wait until Israel is at rest and David's dynasty (in the person of his son) is secure. "Name" is equivalent to "me" in v. 5. (CSB)

The singular offspring of David was the promised Messiah. The temple Solomon would build foreshadowed what the Lord would build in His eternal Son, Jesus Christ. Cf Jn 2:19–21. Cyprian: "Christ should be the house and temple of God, and ... the old temple should cease, and the new one should begin" (ANF 5:511). (TLSB)

7:14–17 The relationship of the Lord and David's one successor. This prophecy and covenant promise from God is central to the theme of salvation in the OT, since it was anticipated in Jacob's prophecy about Judah (Gn 49:10) and ultimately fulfilled in Jesus, the Son of David (Mt 1:1). (TLSB)

7:14 *his father ... my son.* This familial language expresses the special relationship God promises to maintain with the descendant(s) of David whom he will establish on David's throne. It marks him as the one God has chosen and enthroned to rule in his name as the official representative of God's rule over his people.. In Jesus Christ this promise comes to ultimate fulfillment (see Mt 1:1; Mk 1:11; Heb 1:5). (CSB)

Though these words may refer to Solomon (cf 1Ki 2:12), the substance of prophecy found here was not completely fulfilled in Solomon or any of his successors until the coming of the Christ. See note, 1Ch 22:10. Just: “This very Christ is the Judge of all the living and the dead. And Nathan likewise, [spoke] to David about Him” (ANF 1:258). (TLSB)

7:15 *my love.* God’s special and unfailing favor. (CSB)

7:16 *your kingdom shall be made sure forever.* The promise of an everlasting kingdom for the house of David became the focal point for many later prophecies and powerfully influenced the development of the Messianic hope in Israel. (CSB)

The constant repetition of the phrase “forever, for eternity,” again forces the conclusion that we must look beyond Solomon, to the eternal existence of the Son here concerned, to One who is Himself possessor of eternal life and of a kingdom which shall never have an end. This, of course, may rightly be said only of Christ, for it was in His case alone that there was so complete an identification with the sons of men as to make the expression possible: “He was made sin for us,” 2 Cor. 5, 21. (Kretzmann)

That’s the wonderful thing about God’s “No’s.” Though at first they may appear to be depriving us of some joy, in reality they are designed to give us more. How wrong ever to think we know better than God. How foolish of us every to second-guess the Lord. (PBC)

7:17 *vision.* General term for a revelation from God. (TLSB)

7:1–17 The Lord tells David and Nathan not what they will do but what He will do and make for David—an everlasting house and kingdom. In all we do for the Lord, we must first consult His Word to find out what is pleasing to Him. Jesus Christ is the “rest” and “house” promised to David. In Him, God’s people have rest from their enemies of sin and death, and in Him they shall dwell forever. • Gracious Lord, keep us in the true faith, that we may have the blessed rest and peace that Christ, our eternal King, alone provides. Amen. (TLSB)

David's Prayer of Gratitude

18 Then King David went in and sat before the LORD and said, “Who am I, O Lord GOD, and what is my house, that you have brought me thus far? 19 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 for mankind, O Lord GOD! 20 And what more can David say to you? For you know your servant, O Lord GOD! 21 Because of your promise, and according to your own heart, you have brought about all this greatness, to make your servant know it. 22 Therefore you are great, O LORD God. For there is none like you, and there is no God besides you, according to all that we have heard with our ears. 23 And 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 them[d] great and awesome things by driving out before your people, whom you redeemed for yourself from Egypt, a nation and its gods? 24 And you established for yourself your people Israel to be your people forever. And you, O LORD, became their God. 25 And now, O LORD God, confirm forever the word that you have spoken concerning your servant and concerning his house, and do as you have spoken. 26 And your name will be magnified forever, saying, ‘The LORD of hosts is God over Israel,’ and the house of your servant David will be established before you. 27 For you, O LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, have made this revelation to your servant, saying, ‘I will build you a house.’ Therefore your servant has found courage to pray this prayer to you. 28 And now, O Lord GOD, you are God, and your words are true, and you have promised this good thing to your servant. 29 Now therefore may it please you to bless the house of your servant, so that it may continue forever before you. For

you, O Lord GOD, have spoken, and with your blessing shall the house of your servant be blessed forever.”

18–29 David’s prayer expresses wonder that God would make such commitments to him and his descendants. But he also acknowledges that what God had pledged to him is for Israel’s sake, that its purpose is the fulfillment of God’s covenanted promises to his people—and that its ultimate effect will be the honor and praise of God throughout the world. (CSB)

7:18 *went in*. Presumably into the tent (6:17) in which the ark was kept. *sat before the LORD*. The ark was the symbol of God’s presence with his people.. (CSB)

Entered the temporary tent and sat before the ark. One did not normally pray before the ark this way. (TLSB)

thus far. So highly exalted. (TLSB)

7:19 *great while to come*. Esp concerning the time of Christ. (TLSB)

you have spoken. The meaning of this clause is uncertain (cf. 1Ch 17:17). It has also been taken as an exclamation (“This is your law for man, O Sovereign LORD!”) and understood as a summation of the divine decree concerning David and his house. (CSB)

Lit, “this is the instruction of the man Lord GOD.” Either David was describing the character of the coming Messiah, that He would be both man and God (Luther’s interpretation), or the last two words are an address to God: “the instruction of man, O Lord GOD.” In this case, God’s mercy would be an example of how David and all parents should care for their children. (TLSB)

7:20 *know*. Or “especially acknowledge” or “choose” (see Ge 18:19, “chosen”; Am 3:2, “chosen”). David recognizes God’s promise as a covenant (23:5). (CSB)

7:21 *your promise*. Probably God’s covenant word of promise to his people. (CSB)

7:22 *no God besides*. See 22:32; 1Sa 2:2. (CSB)

7:23 *the one nation on earth that God went out to redeem as a people for himself*. Israel’s uniqueness did not consist in her national achievements but in God’s choice of her to be his own people (see Dt 7:6–8; 33:26–29). (CSB)

making himself a name. The basis for God’s electing love, revealed in his dealings with Israel, did not lie in any meritorious characteristic of the Israelite people but in his own sovereign purposes (see Dt 7:6–8; 9:4–5; 1Sa 12:22; Ne 9:10; Isa 63:12; Jer 32:20–21; Eze 36:22–38). (CSB)

Making Himself known to many. Cf Dt 7:6–8; 1Sm 12:22; Is 63:12. (TLSB)

7:24 *you, O LORD, have become their God*. What God has pledged to David, he has pledged as the God of Israel. (CSB)

7:27 *concerning your servant...his house*. David’s prayer lays claim on God’s promise. (CSB)

David had never prayed about so weighty a matter. (TLSB)

7:28 *good things*. A common summary expression for covenant benefits from God (see, e.g., 1Sa 2:32, “good”; Nu 10:29, 32; Dt 26:11; Jos 21:45; 23:14, “good promises”; Isa 63:7; Jer 29:32; 32:40–41, “good”; 33:9). (CSB)

7:18–29 In humility, David acknowledges that everything the Lord has done and will do for him and for Israel is due solely to the Lord’s mercy. Today, when great blessing comes your way, glorify the Lord for His gifts. His greatest gift is the great One to come, Jesus, the Son of David. • O Lord Jesus, You are both true man and true God. Make us truly thankful for Your mercy, and bless Your Church forever. Amen. (TLSB)