

SECOND SAMUEL

Chapter 7

God's Promise to David

After the king was settled in his palace and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies around him, ² he said to Nathan the prophet, "Here I am, living in a palace of cedar, while the ark of God remains in a tent." ³ Nathan replied to the king, "Whatever you have in mind, go ahead and do it, for the LORD is with you." ⁴ That night the word of the LORD came to Nathan, saying: ⁵ "Go and tell my servant David, 'This is what the LORD says: Are you the one to build me a house to dwell in? ⁶ 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. ⁷ 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?"' ⁸ "Now then, tell my servant David, 'This is what the LORD Almighty says: I took you from the pasture and from following the flock to be ruler over my people Israel. ⁹ 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 of the earth. ¹⁰ 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 will not oppress them anymore, as they did at the beginning ¹¹ 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: ¹² When your days are over and you rest with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, who will come from your own body, and I will establish his kingdom. ¹³ He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. ¹⁴ I will be his father, and he will be my son. When he does wrong, I will punish him with the rod of men, with floggings inflicted by men. ¹⁵ But my love will never be taken away from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you. ¹⁶ Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever." ¹⁷ Nathan reported to David all the words of this entire revelation.

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 (see **notes** on vv. 20, 28). (CSB)

7:1 *After the king was settled in his palace.* See 5:11; see also **note** on 5:12. (CSB)

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 (see also **note** on 5:17)—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 replied.* 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 *Are you the one ... ?* 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 MOVING FROM PLACE TO PLACE - 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 ever say ... "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 TELL 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.* See **note** on v. 1. (CSB)

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 provide 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)

at the beginning. In Egypt. (CSB)

As happened in Egypt and at the time of the judges. (TLSB)

7:11 *leaders.* During the period of the judges (see NIV text note). (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 establish 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 (see **note** on Ge 9:9; see also chart on "Major Covenants in the OT"), 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 to succeed 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 is the one who will 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 (see **note** on 1Sa 25:25). (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 (see **notes** on Ps 2:7; 45:6; 89:27). 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 (see **note** on Ps 6:4). (CSB)

7:16 *your throne will be established forever*. See **note** on v. 11; see also Introduction: Contents and Theme. 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

18 Then King David went in and sat before the LORD, and he said: “Who am I, O Sovereign LORD, and what is my family, that you have brought me this far? **19** And as if this were not enough in your sight, O Sovereign LORD, you have also spoken about the future of the house of your servant. Is this your usual way of dealing with man, O Sovereign LORD? **20** “What more can David say to you? For you know your servant, O Sovereign LORD. **21** For the sake of your word and according to your will, you have done this great thing and made it known to your servant. **22** “How great you are, O Sovereign LORD! There is no one like you, and there is no God but you, as we have heard with our own ears. **23** And who is like your people Israel—the one nation on earth that God went out to redeem as a people for himself, and to make a name for himself, and to perform great and awesome wonders by driving out nations and their gods from before your people, whom you redeemed from Egypt? **24** You have established your people Israel as your very own forever, and you, O LORD, have become their God. **25** “And now, LORD God, keep forever the promise you have made concerning your servant

and his house. Do as you promised, ²⁶ so that your name will be great forever. Then men will say, ‘The LORD Almighty is God over Israel!’ And the house of your servant David will be established before you. ²⁷ “O LORD Almighty, God of Israel, you have revealed this to your servant, saying, ‘I will build a house for you.’ So your servant has found courage to offer you this prayer. ²⁸ O Sovereign LORD, you are God! Your words are trustworthy, and you have promised these good things to your servant. ²⁹ Now be pleased to bless the house of your servant, that it may continue forever in your sight; for you, O Sovereign LORD, have spoken, and with your blessing the house of your servant will 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 (see Ex 25:22; see also **notes** on 1Sa 4:3–4, 21). (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)

Is this your usual way of dealing with man, O Sovereign LORD? 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 word*. Probably God’s covenant word of promise to his people. (CSB)

7:22 *no God but you*. 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)

to make a name for himself. 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 *your servant has found courage to offer you this prayer.* 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)