



THE STORY OF *Everything* LUKE 24:27

Yesterday, I had to help a newly married couple out. The wife's papers needed a stamp of guarantee since she is not Canadian. So I met with this couple, examined the papers, and stamped it and signed the document. In this act, I was guaranteeing that everything said was true and sure.

Making a guarantee is no small thing. It is important that the facts line up, that things said and written are true. And when we come to 2 Samuel 7, we come to one of the most important chapters in the Bible. It is a chapter where God is guaranteeing, as the King of the world, that his promises from old will stand.

When we left David, he was fleeing from King Saul. Saul had turned on David. But once Saul was dead, David could begin the process of acting as the rightful heir to the throne. As king, David was the promise and hope for a better future for Israel.

In 2 Samuel 7, what we find is that the hope for the future doesn't lie in David's guarantee or promise, but in God's. Why is that?

Make Your Plans; God Will Direct Your Steps

After David had victory over his enemies and had united the kingdom after all of the turmoil that resulted from Saul's death, we are told that the Lord had given David rest from all his enemies. David had fought battles, and after each battle there was the ability to settle down. He was now living in Jerusalem in a beautiful home, finely constructed for a king. Like a new Joshua who has settled the land and brought rest to the people, David's thoughts now turn to the Lord. God's presence, symbolized by the ark of the covenant, had been in a tent. And so, David's desire was that the Lord would have a more permanent dwelling – something fit for the king that he is. If the king of Israel was now in a beautiful home, shouldn't the Lord be due the same?

So David discussed his plans with the prophet Nathan, and they agreed: The Lord is worthy of a temple. But the Lord had other plans. Through Nathan, the Lord says, "Don't build a house for me yet." And the reason God does not want David to build a house for him is simple: He is the God who goes with his people. If the people are unsettled, God will not settle. He is the God who has wandered and travelled with Israel. God will not rest until his people have rest (see v. 10). As noble as David's plans are, God is not looking for secure place to dwell. He is looking for his people to find rest. The king may have his palace; the Lord will dwell among his people.

So the Lord's question to David, "Are you going to build me a house?" God hasn't been asking for a house. David's desire is good – he wants to provide for the Lord. But it is the Lord who has provided for David. David wants to do work for God. But it is God who works for David. Through vv. 8-9 we hear the same kind of language of promise that the Lord made to Abraham: "I took

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June 20, 2021



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you...I have been with you...I have cut off all your enemies...I will make for you a great name..." God works for David because God works to fulfill his promises. And his promises to Abraham have never been forgotten. Now, the Lord is giving us a clue that his promises of old are going to be fulfilled in David's house. The land God promised to Abraham will be a place of rest for his people because God is going to build a house for them (vv. 10-11). And God's promise to Abraham was not a promise that depended upon Abraham working, but upon Abraham believing. It was not about what Abraham could do for God, but what God would do for Abraham. And now, again, God says to David that it is not what David can do for God, but what God will do for David.

David seems to think that because he has arrived and now lives in comfort and ease that he can now serve the Lord and assist him. And how often do we think that we can serve God when things are good for us. Once things settle down, once I've got my life in order, then I'll be able to serve the Lord. But that is not how God works. You may make your plans, but it is the Lord who directs your steps. You may think you are going to serve God, but it is God who will serve you. And you might think you can help God out, but God is not looking for assistance.

So what will God do for David? Three things we are told in vv. 12-16, and these three things build upon God's covenant with Abraham, progressively unfolding how God keeps his promises and is making a covenant with David.

First, God will bring about the promised child. In v. 12, we hear about the offspring that will come to rule. And through this promise, we hear the echoes of Scripture. Adam and Eve would have offspring that would crush the serpent's head (Gen. 3:15); Abraham would have offspring that would be so numerous they wouldn't be able to be counted (Gen. 13:15-16). In other words, what God is promising to David is that his descendant will be the snake crusher.

Second, God promises to be a father to David's son. In v. 14 we hear the echo of the sonship language. Adam was the son of God but failed to obey his Father's word; Israel was described as God's son in Exod. 4:22-23 but failed in the wilderness. Now the king's son will be God's son. As the king goes, so will the nation. So the Lord will discipline him to keep his people close to his heart.

Third, God promises an eternal kingdom. In vv. 13 and 16, God says to David that what happened to Saul – that he was cut off – will not happen to David. "Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me. Your throne shall be established forever." And no matter what happened in Israel's history, the southern kingdom always had a son of David on the throne.



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So David could make his plans as king. He could promise God that he would do something great for God. And his desires weren't wrong. We may make our plans, but the true throne belongs to God, and he will direct our steps so that his promises are fulfilled.

God Makes His Plans, So Praise Him!

David's response to God's covenant promises is overwhelming praise. He goes into the presence of the Lord to praise God. Why? Because David sees that what he wanted to do for God was so small whereas what God will do is a great thing (v. 21) that is so simple (a small thing – v. 19). And what is this thing that the Lord is going to do?

The answer is in v. 19 – this small thing that the Lord is going to do is an “instruction for mankind” – literally it is a law for Adam. In saying that this is an instruction or torah for Adam, David understands that Adam was a representative for humanity. And now, he understands that what God is going to do through his son, the future king, is to bring about the blessing of Abraham to the whole world. And David is shocked. In v. 20, he can barely get the words out. Yet when he does, he responds in praise (vv. 18-24) and prayer (vv. 25-29).

David can only respond in this way because of the shock of God's amazing fulfillment to his promise to Abraham. When he opens his mouth, he praises the “Lord God” – the Sovereign Lord – the same title Abraham used to praise God for his promises to him in Gen. 15:2, 8. And David now sees himself not as someone who can do something to help God out, but as a servant – a phrase he uses 10x in these verses. What God has done is a great thing, and David can only praise God for how great he is (v. 22) in light of how inadequate he and Israel are (v. 23).

After David's time, the promises of this chapter became so central to Israel's hope. When the people went into exile and things looked dark, God's people returned to his promises again and again. In Psalm 89, the opening lines recount God's promise to David (READ Ps. 89:1-4). The reason these promises were mentioned over and over is that they were seen as key promises to God bringing about the newness of the world. So when the Psalmist feels like God has forgotten his promises to David at the exile, he can pray these words (READ Ps. 89:38-51).

Has God forgotten his promises? When the people of God are mocked, what then?

But there is hope. God's power is great (READ Ps. 89:13-14). And the coming king won't look like anything anyone expected (READ Ps. 89:45). That's because all of these things are intended to help us

See the Glory of Christ

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One day the son of David, the King would come. Luke describes his birth (READ Lk 1:31-33). He is great (see 1 Sam. 7:9), Son of the Most High (1 Sam. 7:14), ruling from a throne forever and ever (1 Sam. 7:16). And he would come in shame, dying on a cross. And it would seem like the promise of God had failed, like the crown had been thrown into the dust. But on the third day, he would rise again. The temple that God would dwell in would not be one made of brick or stone, made by human hands. As David's son Solomon would pray in 1 Ki. 8:27, the heavens, even the highest heaven, cannot contain the Lord. How much less the temple Solomon would build!

And Jesus would come, and he said he was the temple, the very dwelling place of God. And he would reign from the cross as the King of kings, with an enduring throne that would never spoil or fade.

So when the promises of God come, remember this simple truth: God's promises are not dependent upon what you can do for God, but upon what God will do for you. He has placed his seal of the Spirit upon the hearts of those who belong to him, guaranteeing the future is sure, that his promises are secure, and that he will rule and reign. And you can know this, because the Son of David has come, sure and mighty, to take his rightful place as the Son of David, the heir of the throne, to rule and reign forever. No matter what happens, no matter how bleak life may look, pray not as Psalm 89 does with a sense of despair, but with the reminder that God has always been our refuge and strength, a God who has always kept promises – and still does, by stamping you with the guarantee that those in Christ belong to him, sealed by the Spirit (Eph. 1:11ff).