



## BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Life of David: Sermon #21

2 Samuel 7:12-17

“The Davidic Covenant, part II”

TRANSCRIPT

[Message] We are turning to 2 Samuel chapter 7, and our Scripture reading is verse 12 through 17, which records the giving by God to David of the Davidic Covenant. It is an extremely important section of the Old Testament and, in fact, of the word of God. And, we are devoting a mini-series of four or five messages to the Davidic Covenant, within our series of studies in the life of David. So will you listen now as we read verse 12 through verse 17.

You may remember that David has come to Jerusalem. His anointing as king over the twelve tribes has taken place and Jerusalem has become his capital. Zion has become the place of his own palace, built with the things that King Hiram has provided for him. And the Ark of the presence of the Lord has been brought up to Jerusalem now, and so in the light of that, David had the desire to build a house of cedar or at least a house for the Ark of God. He, himself, dwelling in a house of cedar and thinking that the Ark being only in a tent was a very poor kind of house for that which symbolized for them the presence of the Lord God in their midst. And God has replied to him, in effect, that he does not desire for David to build a house. As a matter of fact, he says, in verse 11, that he will build David a house. And so we pick up the story at verse 12 and the author

writes, giving the words of God and these words were given to Nathan the prophet to return to David.

“When your days are fulfilled and you rest with your fathers, I will set up [That word means something like “raise up” being the Hebrew verb *quum*, and usually translated “raise up.” My version has set up.] I will raise up or set up your seed after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his Father, and he shall be My son. If he commits iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men and with the blows of the sons of men. But My mercy shall not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I removed from before you. And your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you.”

That little prepositional phrase “before you” is a correct rendering of the Masoretic text of the Old Testament, but the Masoretic text is not an inspired text and most students of the Old Testament text believe that in this instance, there is probably a mistake. Perhaps as a result of misreading one of the consonants or of copying it twice, and so, consequently, in the light of the fact that some Hebrew manuscripts as well as the Old Testament translation I have before me, that reading is probably to be preferred in this case. So we probably should read this, “And shall be established forever before me.”

“Your throne shall be established forever. According to all these words and according to all this vision, so Nathan spoke to David.”

May the Lord bless this reading of his word and let's bow together in a time of prayer.

[Prayer] Our Heavenly Father, we approach Thee through the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, and we thank Thee for the confidence of access that we have through him. The Scriptures say to us that he, himself, has claimed to be “the word, the truth and the life” and that no man cometh unto Thee except through him. And so, Lord, we come to Thee and we come to Thee through him as the mediator of the New Covenant. And we thank Thee for the confidence that we have that we have access to Thee through him and that our petitions are heard. And we ask, Lord, Thy blessing upon the whole Church of Jesus Christ today, wherever the word of God is proclaimed may it be accompanied by the blessing of the convicting and converting power of the Holy Spirit of God.

And, Father, we pray for our country; we ask especially for President Bush. We pray that Thou wilt give him wisdom and guidance as he directs the United States government. And we pray, particularly, Lord, for those who have responsibilities with reference to our forces and with the forces of the United Nations coalition. We ask for Secretary Cheney, and ask Thy blessing upon him. Give him counsel and wisdom beyond his own natural wisdom. And we ask Thy blessing upon General Powell, upon General Schwarzkopf, upon our soldiers, upon every individual within that army. We pray Lord that Thou will be with them. And if it should please Thee, Lord, wilt Thou give them a successful ministry of war in the land of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait and perhaps Iraq. We pray, Lord, that if it please Thee, they may be given a quick victory and we ask that conditions may be better in that part of your world, as a result of what has taken place.

We especially pray for the men who, those brave young men and others, who are leading and guiding them in their work as soldiers of the United States army, and of others within the coalition; the British, the French, the Italians and others who are there. We pray that Thou wilt protect and keep them and especially, Lord, may each one of those young men reflect upon the facts of the life that Thou hast given to us; how

important it is that in the experiences of life that we know Thee. And we pray for them that this terrible experience of having to face perhaps death every day, that their hearts may turn to Thee through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. So work, Lord, that many may find this not only an experience that will give them maturity but, above all, a relationship to Thee through the Lord Jesus Christ. Bless the Christians especially within that armed force and bless their testimony.

We ask, Lord, for Believers Chapel and its ministries, may they be fruitful. May the Lord Jesus be lifted up. And for those who listen to the tapes or hear the radio programs, or read the materials that come from the Chapel, may their hearts and minds be opened to the word of God, and use those instrumentalities, if it please Thee, for spiritual wellbeing.

We pray for the sick who have requested our prayers and for others who have other problems. O God, we bring them to Thee. We pray that Thou wilt give them favorable answers to their prayers, as it pleases Thee in Thy will.

Bless our meeting and the meetings of this day and our meeting this evening, and we ask that with each one present in this auditorium, there may be the sense of God's presence with us as we sing, as we read Scripture, as we hear the word of God.

For Jesus' sake. Amen.

[Message] As I mentioned in the scriptural reading, this is the second of the series of studies on the Davidic Covenant. The basic biblical promises are those of the Abrahamic Covenant and the story of the Bible is the record of the path along which Israel and the nations move toward the fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant. This fulfillment is located, specifically, in promises concerning a royal dynasty and a land.

If we look at Genesis chapter 12 in verse 1 through verse 3 and then again in Genesis chapter 17 in verse 6 and verse 16, in Genesis chapter 35 in verse 11, and in other places which detail details of that covenant, you will see how important that

covenant is with reference to the future of the human race, for that matter. But, specifically, Abram was promised a land and then, as the promises begin to develop, it became plain that he was promised a royal dynasty. Chapter 17 in verse 6, he says to Abram, “I will make you exceedingly fruitful and I will make nations of you and kings shall come from you.” In verse 16 he says, “I will bless her and also give you a son by her, then I will bless her and she shall be a mother of nations, kings of peoples shall be from her.” That promise is reiterated with reference to the king to Jacob in the 35<sup>th</sup> chapter, as well. So the Abrahamic Covenant is the fundamental covenant of the word of God, in that, it is the beginning of the unfolding of God’s purpose of the ages.

Well, after the Sinaitic and the Palestinian Covenants, if we can call the Palestinian one a covenant, those covenants conditionally regulating the possession and enjoyment of the land. God gave David the Davidic Covenant. The Davidic Covenant is concerned primarily with the king and his royal house. There are three great passages in the word of God that set forth the details of the Davidic Covenant. This chapter is the beginning one, the historically beginning one. It is also recorded in 1 Chronicles chapter 17 in verse 11 through verse 14, with a significant omission; everything there dealing, specifically, with the king and the question of chastisement being omitted. And then, finally, in Psalm 89, there is a magnificent detailed treatment of the Davidic Covenant in lyrical form, or in poetic form.

These three passages each look at the Davidic Covenant from a particular viewpoint. It has been the observation of some people that one may liken these covenants to three kinds of light. For example, the floodlight in which a light is spread over a broad area and that particular aspect may be suitable for the reference in 2 Samuel chapter 7 in which we have the entire history of the Davidic Covenant set forth.

And then a second kind of light, with which you are familiar, aside from the broad beam of the floodlight is the spotlight. Now the spotlight is a narrow intense beam. And the spotlight focuses on the ideal king, using that as an illustration, and it may be very

suitable to 1 Chronicles chapter 17, which specifically deals with the king. And, finally, the third form of light, the searchlight, deals with the great principles of the Davidic Covenant and Psalm 89 specifically fits that. So if we can think of floodlight in 2 Samuel 7 and spotlight 1 Chronicles chapter 17 and searchlight Psalm 89, we'll have just a convenient little summary of the principle emphasize of these accounts of the Davidic Covenant.

When we turn to Psalm 89 and the lyrical setting forth of the Davidic Covenant, you'll notice that there are two words that stand out in that psalm. One is the term *chesed*, which means, mercy, sometimes translated loving kindness, sometimes even translated truth. But, fundamentally, *chesed*, is a word that deals with the covenantal mercies of God and that term is found a number of times in Psalm 89. It's also found in our section here, incidentally. And then, the other word is the Hebrew term, *emuwnah*, which means faithfulness, sometimes translated, truth. But, faithfulness is the point of Psalm 89, generally. So if we think of God's loving covenantal kindness and his faithfulness to his word, then we have the great principles that are set forth in the Davidic Covenant. That's the searchlight.

Now, it's remarkable in the light of this that some of our contemporary scholars, relatively contemporary scholars, over the past generation, have taken such negative views towards 2 Samuel 7. For example, Professor R. H. Pfeiffer of Harvard University, who wrote a very influential introduction to the Old Testament and taught for a number of years influentially the Old Testament, has spoken about 2 Samuel 7 in this way. He says, “The author's mind was muddled. His text was obscure and involved. His text is badly written. It is full of “bad grammar and dreary style, filled with repetition, ad nauseam, and monkish drivel.” He finally said, “The whole chapter was a late fourth century B.C. Jewish midrash based on Psalm 89 that had no literary or historical value.” One of the interesting things about that is that many of our contemporary scholars take an entirely different view of this passage today.

Well, David has now brought the Ark up to Jerusalem and the question of succession now comes up. And so he's told that Yahweh is rewarding his desire to build a house with a promise that transcends all previous predictions in its unfolding of the Messianic ideal. I cannot say more than has been said by many people that this is of the greatest significance for understanding God's purpose of the ages; the understanding of the Davidic Covenant.

It is characteristic of kings and men in authority to be concerned about succession. And so we should realize that David and others would have natural concerns about who is to succeed them. Nebuchadnezzar, for example, had questions about succession and dreamed a dream which God gave to him, but which he could not interpret. And finally, Daniel interpreted it as setting forth what was going to happen in the last times. Obviously, the king was concerned about succession; wondering who should follow him. And so as a result of it, we have Daniel chapter 2 and that marvelous prophecy in that chapter.

Well, David, now, is told some facts about succession for him. I would imagine that even Saddam Hussein is thinking about succession and, perhaps, thinking of succession more seriously at the present moment. In fact, I read in the paper just the other day that he's now sent his whole family to Mauritania on the western shores of Africa, to get away from what is happening there, for their safety; thinking about succession, perhaps. But, at any rate, we're going to look at this and just lay our emphasis on the major facts that are set forth here, because we're going to deal with the subject again next week, the Lord willing.

Now, there are three great things that these verses say to us. First of all, they speak about the everlasting reign of David's seed. And then, secondly, they speak of the erection of David's house by David's seed. And, finally, they speak of the exaltation of David's seed to son-ship with God. And we'll take them up in that order.

So we look first at the everlasting reign of David’s seed and, again, we read in verse 12, in the opening of the prophecy of the Davidic Covenant, “When your days are fulfilled and you rest with your fathers, I will raise up your seed after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom.”

Now, some background is useful, briefly. You may remember that in Genesis chapter 49, Jacob had some things to say about Judah. He had said in verses 9 and 10 of his prophecy of the blessing of the Tribes, “Judah is a lion’s whelp, from the prey, my son, you have gone up.” He bows down. He lies down as a lion and as a lion, who shall rouse him? “The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh comes; and unto him shall be the obedience of the people.” Notice the words, “The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh comes.” Jacob’s lion of the tribe of Judah is now further identified as the lion of Bethlehem. In other words, the prophecy of the lion as the tribe of Judah is narrowed down to David and his family. He says, “I will raise up your seed.”

Balaam also prophesied concerning a scepter and a star. He said the scepter and the star would rise out of Jacob and out of Israel, and that is now explained as David’s line, prefigured by the brilliant victories and the reign of King David in the city of Jerusalem.

Now, when he says, “I will raise up your seed after you,” we must pay a little attention to that. The Hebrew term *zera* means “seed.” That is generally a collective term, not in every instance, but generally a collective term. In fact, the English term is very similar. If you look in Webster’s Dictionary, and you look up seed, you will find, generally, two plurals of this word. One, seed, we usually say we put out rye grass in the fall in our yard, incidentally, it’s gone now, but we put it out, it was beautiful for a while, and we can say we have spread rye grass seed and we use that in the collective sense. You don’t understand me to say, I have put out one seed of rye grass, but you understand seed collectively. The other plural is seeds. And that is a plural of the word seed. The



Hebrew term is, since it's repeated in the New Testament with that background, has a similar kind of sense. It is usually collective.

So right at the beginning, we should surmise that this prophecy is a generic prophecy; that is, it's a prophecy of a class of people. So when God says, “I will raise up your seed,” we are not to think of one seed, necessarily. In fact, the normal sense would be to think of a plurality of individuals who form one generic class, all belonging to David. Thus, David's seed would be a succession of individuals.

Now, you can see from this, as you think about the prophecies of the word of God, that the great prophecy of Genesis chapter 3 in verse 15 that the seed of the woman should crush the serpent's head, while the serpent's seed should wound his heel.

Now, also has been narrowed down, so that the seed of the woman, ultimately a reference to the Lord Jesus Christ, the seed of the woman has moved from the kingdom of Israel, through the tribe of Judah, to the seed of David. So as the word of God unfolds, we are given further details and the truth is narrowed down to more specific fulfillment, the seed of David, your seed. But the expression “seed” is probably a generic one.

Now, he then goes on to say, though not in verse 12 but in verse 13 and verse 16 and specifically in verse 16. Verse 13 he says, “He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.” And then, in verse 16, “And your throne and your kingdom shall be established forever before me. Your throne shall be established forever.” He goes on to point out that what he is talking about is something that is for eternity, or is forever.

Now, in Psalm 89 in verse 29, he's very specific. In Psalm 89 in verse 29, we read, “His seed also I will make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven.”

So we are talking about a seed of David that looks beyond Solomon, who is his successor, to the last son of the dynasty. Because, as the years unfold, the sons of David come along and they all die and pass away until, finally, one son of David comes, and this son of David is the Lord Jesus Christ. And he, himself, dies, but he has no successors.

He has no successors, but he is raised from the dead and now is at the right hand of the throne of God as the Son of David, the living eternal son of David.

So what are we to understand then, by the term “I will raise up your seed”? We are to think of a posterity of David: The posterity of a person, one or several, or a long line of successive generations, which it has turned out to be, or, in other words, a dynasty. He is promised a dynasty. But, the final end of the dynasty is to be found in one who prolongs that dynasty into eternity. What a magnificent prophecy. What a magnificent statement of the purpose of God. And so we can learn from this immediately, right at the beginning that the person who is giving this information to David through Nathan, the prophet, is a person who controls history. Please remember that. He is a person who works out his purpose in history, directing the course of it to the fulfillment, finally of his purposes.

Now, the second thing that is stated in verse 13 is, “He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.” It lets us know that Solomon’s Temple, which is soon to be constructed, from materials that David himself has gathered, but David himself being prevented from building the temple, is a step along the way to the everlasting house, the temple of God. And it goes hand in hand with the eternity of the kingdom. The seed of David then is to have the care of the temple of God.

We don’t have time to talk about all that is signified by the temple of God, but we can, at least, say that this is also something that has eternal significance; that the seed of David is given the care of the temple of God. Now, as I say, that underlines the fact that the person who is giving this prophecy is an individual who directs the course of history. Let’s not forget that.

Now, we come, finally, to the exaltation of David’s seed to son-ship in verse 14 and verse 15. The highest feature of Nathan’s prophecy is, probably, the son-ship of David and his seed, and the affirmation that his seed is the son of God, or possesses the characteristic of the son of God, but forever. Keep that in mind.

Now, we look at the words of verses 14 and 15. “I will be his Father and he shall be My son.” Now, you know the story of how Israel came out of the land of Egypt at the Exodus, and you know some of the things that were said about Israel by Moses, himself, as they came out. For example, in Exodus chapter 4 in verse 22, Moses is told, “Then you shall say to Pharaoh, Thus says the Lord, Israel is my son, my first born.” So Israel partook of son-ship by virtue of their relationship to the Lord God. He had laid his hand upon Abraham. He had confirmed the promises to Isaac and to Jacob, and as the people of God, God’s first born, God’s son, the nation Israel, was led out by Moses on the way to the Promised Land. Israel’s son-ship is now applied to David and to his seed in a unique, and I suggest, a higher sense. Notice, “I will be his Father and he shall be My son.” These terms, incidentally, are terms that have to do with the covenantal promises unfolding in the Old Testament. “I will be his Father, and he shall be My son,” repeated even in the New Testament.

Solomon is only a herald and a type of the coming of the seed. True, when Solomon came to the throne, he was the son of David, at that moment, but not an eternal son. And, as a matter of fact, we’ll read in a moment, that God took his kingdom from him. So he is only a herald, he is only a type of his coming, and as a fulfillment of this prophecy, he is only one of a long line. The ultimately reality is, and the ultimate realization of it takes place in the Messiah, who, I’m not sure this is really a word I didn’t bother to look it up but I’m confident of its meaning, the ultimate realization takes place in the Messiah, who eternalizes the genus, the class of the dynasty.

Now, you can see from this that what is meant by “seed,” is the posterity of a person. So when we read verse 12, “I will raise up your seed after you,” we are talking about a generic prophecy and we are talking about the posterity of a person, not in one person but in his posterity, however long it may be. So as the years unfold, men come, a few of them, come to the throne as the sons of David until, finally, there will come someone who eternalizes the genus and is thee seed and the final seed. In other words,

the posterity of David can only last forever by running into or running out in a person who lives forever. Let me say that again. The posterity of David can only last forever by running out in a person who lives forever. And who has no seed, himself. And thus, the Lord Jesus Christ is the only one, ultimately, who can be the inheritor of this great promise. So it culminates in the Messiah, who lives forever, and of whose kingdom there is no end.

Now, when we look at the prophecy then, we realize that the promise of raising up David’s seed refers to the posterity of David, commencing with Solomon, and closing with Christ. So that by “seed” we are not to understand Solomon alone with the kings who succeeded him, nor Christ alone to the exclusion of Solomon and the earthly kings of the family of David, nor is the allusion to Solomon and Christ to be regarded as a double allusion, in two different objects. But we are talking about a generic prophecy by its very virtue of being eternal, must finally end in one person who lives forever. What magnificent wisdom is given in this magnificent prophecy. Forever.

Now, if that’s true, then the idea of the Lord Jesus Christ as the Son of God is so different from everything in human kind, that we have nothing like it. Now, Satan has done everything that he possibly could to confuse us. And so we have instance in history and the practice in history of ancient near-eastern kings and their sons to speak of themselves as the “son” of their god, and thus son of god. We can find that expression in their literature, the king being the son of god or the emperor being the son of whatever the god’s name may be.

In fact, one of my friends likes to say, “Their sons were the sons of god X.” That is, whatever the god was, he was the son of him. But this is something entirely different, this is something absolutely unique because this is a person who when he comes, lives forever and there is no succession after him. All of those sons of god X died and passed away, and we do not have their successors in that sense. So this prophecy then is a magnificent prophecy of a unique seed who would come.

Now, some of you know that I, occasionally, read the sports pages, that is, every morning, [Laughter] and usually before breakfast. And this past week, I was reading along in the comments of one of the writers, and I turned to Martha and I said, “I’ve got an excellent illustration for what I want to say on Sunday morning.” Some of you know Bob Trumpy as an NBC analyst of football games. And he made a comment just a few weeks ago about one of the running backs that are playing this afternoon, Thurman Thomas. And listen to what he said. This individual who has quoted the comment said, “He might like to revise it now,” but he said concerning Thurman Thomas, “He is absolutely unique. He’s like Barry Sanders.” [More laughter] “He’s absolutely unique. He’s like Barry Sanders.”

Well, my friend, the Lord Jesus Christ is absolutely unique, and there is no one like him. You cannot be unique if you are like someone else. But this individual, this seed, the final, the one in whom the seed runs out, in the eternal Son of God, is absolutely unique. He is the Son of God.

And oh, how important it is that you and I be in right relationship to him that he be our Savior that we recognize that he as the eternal son has offered the sacrifice by which any and all of God’s people may have the assurance of the forgiveness of sins.

Now, we read an interesting statement in verse 14, also, “If he commits iniquity.” This is what we read. “If he commits iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men and with the blows of the sons of men.”

Paternal mercy and chastisement then are realized in the development of the Davidic Covenant. Now, how do we understand this in the light of the fact that our Lord Jesus Christ is the sinless Son of God? What does this mean within the context of this great covenant? Well, certainly, we have paternal mercy set forth in the covenant. In fact, we read right here in verse 15, “But My mercy shall not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I removed from before you.”

As a matter of fact, as I mentioned, Solomon is an illustration of this because, in 1 Kings chapter 11, we read these words with reference to Solomon. “He was the seed of David,” that is the seed of David at that time, and we read these words.

“So the Lord became angry with Solomon, because his heart had turned from the Lord God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice and had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods; but he did not keep what the Lord had commanded. Therefore, the Lord said to Solomon, ‘Because you have done this, and have not kept My covenant and My statutes, which I have commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom away from you and give it to your servant. Nevertheless, I will not do it in your days, for the sake of your father David; I will tear it out of the hand of your son. However, I will not tear away the whole kingdom; I will give one tribe to your son for the sake of My servant David, and for the sake of Jerusalem which I have chosen.’”

So Solomon is an individual who has committed iniquity and as he says, “If he commits iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men and with the blows of the sons of men. But My mercy shall not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I removed from before you.” So the statement with reference to committing iniquity and chastisement that follows, or judgment that follows, is a statement that refers to individuals within the seed of David, individuals within the line. In other words, as the line unfolds, the genus, the generic seed of David, there will be individuals who fail. As a matter of fact, all fail. And they will experience chastisement and discipline. But, the discipline of the individuals does not affect the unconditionality of the covenant. The covenant is guaranteed by the word of God as reaching its final fulfillment in the son, the eternal son, who by virtue of his eternity, runs out into all the ages of the ages of eternity. So this then is a reference to discipline within the seed, the generic seed, the class, down through the years.

You know, it's rather striking how individuals reading this prophecy understand its reference to David. For example, in 2 Samuel chapter 7 in verse 14, where we read, “I will be his Father, and he shall be My son.” In the New Testament, the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews cites that particular passage and says it refers to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, our Lord, of course, never committed any iniquity. In him there is no sin; he did no sin. Even those who were his enemies said, “I find no fault in this man.” It's clear he was the sinless Son of God. So he does not suffer this chastisement because of sin. And so the covenant is his by virtue of the fact that he is the eternal son. But a fragment of this particular verse has been found, a commentary on it, has been found in the Dead Sea Scrolls. And in the Dead Sea Scrolls, in this particular fragment, the referent of this particular prophecy is said to be the Messiah. So it's well known even by those who were believers and those who were unbelievers, that what David is prophesying is ultimately a prophecy concerning the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, finally, in verse 15, I know you are startled that I'm coming to the conclusion of the message when it's only six minutes to twelve, but miracles do occasionally happen. [Laughter] David is told, “But My mercy shall not depart from him.” This is the unconditionality of the Davidic Covenant. The term “forever” confirms it. Found three times in the passage. For example, verse 13, “I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.” Verse 16, twice, “Your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before me. Your throne shall also be established forever.” This is an unconditional covenant. In other words, it does not depend upon our obedience for its consummation. It is unconditional. God meets all of the conditions himself.

And now, if you were to say, “But I must believe,” yes, you must believe. But he promises to give the faith by which his covenant will be confirmed and established. So what we are talking about is an unconditional covenant, like the Abrahamic Covenant, like the New Covenant; these are unconditional covenants.

I have a friend who is a very well known Bible teacher, he’s an excellent man. We have a private disagreement. He’s a Calvinist, I think on this point and it’s very rare because he’s usually right, he says, “I don’t know any promise in the Bible that’s not conditional.” But this is an unconditional promise. He states, though men may disobey, nevertheless, he will not as he puts it, cause his mercy to depart from the seed, as he took it from Saul, “whom I removed from before you.” So the seed of David, then, has the promise then of an unconditional covenant, could not be fulfilled in any man, only man, mere man, could only be fulfilled in the God-man. And, thus, has been fulfilled.

David, you’ll notice, doesn’t even use the term covenant in this passage, so you might wonder, “Why are you talking about Davidic Covenant when all we have are promises?” Well, it is true. It’s not found in 2 Samuel 7. But in David’s last prophetic words in verse 5 of chapter 23, we read. “Although my house is not so with God, yet He has made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and secure. For this is all my salvation and all my desire; will He not make it increase?” And, again, in Psalm 89, that is reiterated over and over again.

There’s one final text that I would like for you to note. And it’s found in Psalm 89. In Psalm 89 in verse 37, we read these words after saying, “His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before Me; It shall be established forever like the moon, Even like the faithful witness in the sky.”

Now, different interpretations have been put on that expression “even like the faithful witness in the sky.” Notice it carefully. “Even like the faithful witness in the sky.” Most of the interpretations, however, have depended on the insertion of a Hebrew phrase “*kuwn* which means, according to. It’s really a prepositional kind of phrase, “according to.” And you’ll notice, in the version that I’m reading, “even like” is not found in the text but it’s inserted, being in italics, “even like the faithful witness in the sky.”

Now, Job said, “Behold, in heaven is my witness and my surety is in the heights.” “Behold, in heaven is my witness and my surety in the heights.” And I affirm to you that I



recognize there are possibilities of difference of reading, but I see no reason why we should not render this as the Hebrew text has it plainly. “The witness in the sky is faithful.” That’s precisely what the words mean. “The witness in the sky is faithful.” In other words, what he promises he will bring to pass. “The witness in the sky is faithful.” What a magnificent line of Christian theology to rest your eternity upon. “The witness in the sky is faithful.” He carries out what he says he’s going to carry out. And he says, my friend, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved. I cannot say anything more than that. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved. The witness in the sky is faithful.

So what are we? Well, we’re reading a great prophecy in which the Davidic king has become the especial channel of the Messianic ideal, he’s been exalted to the position of divine son-ship, been enthroned on Mount Zion as a priest-king, for that the son of David was and is, he has received authority to reign over Israel and the nations, he conquers all enemies, he reigns in peace and righteousness over them forever. If he were a sinner, he would be scourged by the divine Father on account of sin, but the Messiah is not such. He will never be forsaken by divine mercy because he is, himself, God. He builds the temple of the Lord God and enjoys the divine presence in the unique and full sense of the Son of God. And those who believe in him are associated with him as king-priests in his royal dynasty.

May God, in his marvelous grace cause us, if we have not believed in him, to turn to him, acknowledging our sin for we are sinners, and our need of a redeemer, and recognizing that he in his death and the shedding of the blood at Calvary’s Cross has laid the foundation for the forgiveness of sins. He’s paid for sin, the sin of sinners.

Come to him! Believe in him! Trust in him. May you be able to say, “The Son of God, David’s seed, the son of David, is my savior, too.”

Let’s stand for the Benediction.

[Prayer] Father, we are so grateful to Thee for these magnificent words that have been given us by Nathan, from the Lord God. We thank Thee for the promises made to ancient King David, and we thank Thee that they have now run out in an everlasting, living Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ. And we thank Thee for the invitations that have come to us from the word of God to flee from our sin, our guilt and judgment, into his open arms of mercy and salvation. May everyone present who does not know him within their inmost being turn to him with a word of gratitude and thanksgiving for what he has done for us.

For Jesus' sake. Amen.