END-TIMES ISSUES



GOD DOESN'T TELL US TO KNOW ALL THE END-TIME DETAILS. HE TELLS US TO BE READY.

AND BEYOND!

#149 Davidic covenant – God's promise vs. human failure.

1

What we've seen so far:

① **The Israelites rejected God as their king, and wanted a human king.**

- ✓ **God gave them a king** *in anger* (because of the sin linked to their request). He gave them Saul, the king they wanted.
- ✓ **God warned them:** They must *still* follow and trust God, *or their enemies will destroy them*. ***Without God,* having a king *wouldn't help.***

② **They ignored God; and God's warning proved to be true (as it always does).**

God says this at the time the Northern Kingdom came to an end:

He destroys you, O Israel,
for **you are against me, against your helper**.
Where now is your king, to save you in all your cities?
Where are all your rulers—
those of whom you said,
"Give me a king and princes"?
I gave you a king in my anger,
and I took him away in my wrath.

Hosea 13:9-11 (ESV)

2

③ **God would use their *sin* to accomplish something *good*.**

- ✓ **The king proved to be just like the people:** unwilling to obey God.
- ✓ **So God rejected him as king.**
  - » On two occasions, Samuel told him that God had rejected him as king. On *this* occasion, Saul was being quite *religious… but he wasn't obeying God*.

"Does the Lord delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the Lord?
To obey is better than sacrifice,
and to heed is better than the fat of rams.
For rebellion is like the sin of divination,
and arrogance like the evil of idolatry.
Because you have rejected the word of the Lord,
he has rejected you as king."

1 Samuel 15:22-23b (NIV)

3

④ **Now God is ready to accomplish his *good* plan!** (He chooses David.)

- ✓ **God would replace Saul with someone who *would* obey him.**

"… **the LORD has sought a man after His own heart** and **appointed him ruler** over His people, because you have not kept the command of the LORD."

1 Samuel 13:14b (BSB)

- ✓ **This doesn't mean David was *sinless*. But his life was *characterized by obedience*.**

For David had done what was right in the eyes of the Lord and **had not failed to keep any of the Lord's commands all the days of his life—except in the case of Uriah the Hittite**.

1 Kings 15:5 (NIV)

- ✓ **Throughout David's life, the devil would try to thwart God's plans… but God always protected David.**
  - » On several occasions, people tried to kill him – including King Saul and Absalom (David's son). But *David always trusted God.*

4

The Davidic Covenant is established by God.

- **The occasion:**
  - ✓ **King Saul was dead and David's kingdom was fully established.**
  - ✓ **David observed that *he* was living in a palace and *the ark of God* was residing in a tent.** This did not seem right to him, so he decided that he ought to build a house (temple) for God. *
    - ★ **BUT THIS ISN'T WHERE IT ALL STARTED!** →

* Actually, *God* would say it was a house for his *name* (which represented everything about him), not for his *person*. As Solomon would later say …

But who is able to build a house for Him, since **the heavens, even the highest heavens, cannot contain Him**? Who then am I, that I should build a house for Him, except as a place to burn sacrifices before Him?

2 Chronicles 2:6 (BSB)

5

Where did it start?

- **It started *many years previously*** – even *before* David became king.
  - ✓ **David was *already* trusting God.**
  - ✓ **David was *already* obeying God.**
  - ✓ **David was *already* loving God.**
  - ↳ **And he did all of these *even in times of trouble.***

★ **Even when he was a shepherd** (which was considered to be a low-status, menial vocation), **he had this attitude toward God:**

I MAY BE A "NOBODY," *BUT I SURE LOVE GOD!*

★ **This is why God could look at him, and say:**

"I have found David son of Jesse **a man after My own heart**; he will carry out My will in its entirety." *

Acts 13:22b (BSB)

* (Here, Paul paraphrased the *intent* of some O.T. passages, rather than quoting them word-for-word. He was talking to Jews, who would have understood this.)

6

- **Throughout his life, David would have *many* opportunities to demonstrate this trust/obedience/love** – including many trials and situations where his life was in danger.

HE WAS … NOT THIS! … … … … … … BUT THIS!

I'M WILLING TO TRUST/OBEY/LOVE YOU *AS LONG AS YOU KEEP BLESSING ME!*

I'M WILLING TO TRUST/OBEY/LOVE YOU *NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS!*

At the time the Davidic Covenant was made, David was *already* doing these things – *since he was a child.*

↳ **And he wasn't doing it to gain God's favor, or to "earn" anything.** *He did it just because of who God is.*

★ **All this influenced…**

✓ **David's attitude toward God.**

✓ **God's attitude toward David.**

7

WHAT LED UP TO THE COVENANT?

- **God was *already* blessing David** in everything that David did.
- **David was now living in a palace of cedar –** though previously he would have probably been living in a tent, while fleeing from Saul.
- **It just didn't seem right to David** that *he* was residing in such a luxurious situation, while *the ark of God** was still residing in a tent.
  - ✓ **This was an expression of *love* on David's part.** It was not a "reward" or "payment" for all that God had done for him.
- **Nathan, the prophet** could see that God was blessing David in all that he did. So, *speaking as a friend*, he encouraged David to go ahead and build a house (temple) for God.

* (The ark, and the brightness of God's glory – sometimes called the "Shekinah Glory" – was in the tent. As we have already noted, *God himself* is too great to be "contained" in *anything* that is a part of creation.)

8

- **The way things were going, it all made sense.**

[David] said to Nathan the prophet, "**Here I am, living in a house of cedar, while the ark of God remains in a tent.**"

And Nathan replied to the king, "**Go and do all that is in your heart, for the LORD is with you.**"

2 Samuel 7:2-3 (BSB)

- **But then, God told Nathan to deliver to David a *different message.***
  - ✓ **First: God didn't *need* a house (temple).** He'd never asked for one – 2 Samuel 7:4-7.
  - ✓ **Second: He would grant David his desire, but it would be his *son* who would do the construction** (though David could begin to gather the materials).

When your days are over and you rest with your ancestors, **I will raise up your offspring** to succeed you, your own flesh and blood, and I will establish his kingdom. **He is the one who will build a house for my Name**, …

2 Samuel 7:12-13a (BSB)

FOR HIS NAME, NOT HIS PERSON.

9

- **WHY did God do it this way?** There is *always* a good reason for what God does! (He wasn't mad at David, for asking!)

↳ It's because David was characterized as a "warrior"; and God wanted the temple to be built by a "man of peace."

"**You have shed much blood and waged great wars.** You are not to build a house for My Name because you have shed so much blood on the ground before Me.

But a son will be born to you who will be a man of rest. I will give him rest from all his enemies on every side; for his name will be Solomon, and I will grant to Israel peace and quiet during his reign.

He is the one who will build a house for My Name. He will be My son, and I will be his Father."

1 Chronicles 22:8b-10a (BSB)

BUT THIS IS JUST THE *BEGINNING* OF THE COVENANT. THE MOST IMPORTANT PART IS WHAT FOLLOWS!

10

GOD CHANGES THE FOCUS OF THE CONVERSATION!

- **David wanted to build *God* a "house" – a temple.**
  - ✓ It wouldn't be David, but David's son, who would do it.
- **But God wanted to build *David* a "house" – a throne, a dynasty, an eternal kingdom – *and he would make sure it happened*.**
  - ✓ God would make an unchangeable, eternal promise – a binding covenant.
  - ✓ He would also give David's son an opportunity to share in this promise.
- **First, he mentions what he has *already* done for David.**

I took you from the pasture, from tending the flock, and **appointed you ruler** over my people Israel. **I have been with you** wherever you have gone, and **I have cut off all your enemies** from before you.

2 Samuel 7:8b-9a (NIV)

11

- **Second: God would do certain things to prepare for the temple.**
  - ✓ This included blessings for David (including a great reputation); but it also included blessings for the people.
  - ✓ Many of the following things have to do with conditions that would be needed, in order for the "house of God" to be built. (Doing so would require a time of peace and stability.)

Now I will make your name great, like the names of the greatest men on earth.

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 and have done ever since the time I appointed leaders over my people Israel.

I will also give you rest from all your enemies.

2 Samuel 7:9b-11a (NIV)

< **Without these things happening, conditions in the nation would not be stable enough to allow the temple to be built.** >

12

- **Now for the most significant part of the covenant.**
  - ✓ David would have an ongoing dynasty that would last *forever*.
  - ✓ The temple would be built by his son.
    - We tend to immediately think of Solomon. But at this time, Solomon had not yet been born. The prophecy, *as stated*, leaves it open for other possibilities. (In the long run, this proves to be an important factor.)

> The Lord declares to you that the Lord himself will **establish a house** [= dynasty] **for you**:
>
> When your days are over and you rest with your ancestors, I will **raise up your offspring to succeed you**, your own flesh and blood, and I will **establish his kingdom**.
>
> **He is the one who will build a house** [= temple] **for my Name**, and I will **establish the throne of his kingdom forever**.
>
> 2 Samuel 7:11b-13 (NIV)

13

HOUSE (DYNASTY), KINGDOM, THRONE… WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

- These concepts work together to express the totality of what the covenant means.

> … the Lord himself will **establish a house** [= dynasty] **for you**: …
>
> … **your offspring** … I will **establish his kingdom**.
>
> … I will **establish the throne of his kingdom forever**.
>
> From 2 Samuel 7:11b-13 (NIV)

- ✓ **House – David's physical descendants**, the royal line or dynasty. Emphasis is on *bloodline*. God promised that David's *family* would never lose its claim to rule.
- ✓ **Throne – The right to rule**; represents the king's power and authority. Emphasis is on the *legitimacy* and *power* of the king's rule.
- ✓ **Kingdom – Those who would be ruled over**; the domain or political territory of that rule. Emphasis is on the *territorial realm* and the *people* who were governed.

14

- **Concerning David's son: A *warning* (with a *promise attached*).**
  - ✓ Wrongdoing will occur, and there will be punishment. *But it will not have any impact on the promise made to David.*

> When he does wrong, **I will punish him** with a rod wielded by men, with floggings inflicted by human hands.
>
> But **my love will never be taken away** from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you.
>
> Your **house** and your **kingdom** will **endure forever** before me; your **throne** will be **established forever**.
>
> 2 Samuel 7:14-16 (NIV)

THIS LOVE IS *COMMITMENT*, NOT *APPROVAL*.

- Some translations start this passage with "when," and others with "if." But the implication is that **wrongdoing *will* be committed**.
- In contrast: In *all* the parallel passages (directed toward Solomon or his offspring), the person is given the opportunity to *choose* whether or not to commit the wrongdoing. **Wrongdoing *might not* occur**.

15

How was this promise applied to David's Sons – the Kings who came from him?

It wasn't applied quite the way it was given in the original promise!

- **The PROMISE:**
  - ✓ **As given:** "It will happen; the kingdom will endure." (A *guarantee* that it will happen.)
  - ✓ **As presented to the sons:** "If you choose to follow God…" (An exhortation to be faithful, but *no guarantee* it will happen.)
  - ✓ **In history:** Most of them choose to *not* do this, so the promise wasn't fulfilled.
- **The WARNING:**
  - ✓ **As given:** Sin seems to be *expected*, though not *encouraged*.
  - ✓ **As presented to the sons:** "If you choose to *not* follow God…" (An exhortation to *not* choose this option.)
  - ✓ **In history:** Most of them choose this way, and the nation was eventually destroyed. *The nation (David's kingdom) did not endure.*

16

What was King Solomon told (also the kings that followed him)?

It was *not the same* as the original covenant.

- **They were given instructions** that would have enabled them to successfully fulfil that covenant… *if they had obeyed the instructions*.
- ***This means they were without excuse***, *when they chose to rebel against God*. They were warned in advance.

THIS IS WHAT THEY WERE TOLD.

- Of all the exhortations and warnings they were given, related to the Davidic Covenant…
  - ✓ Most of them are exhortations to do what was right.
  - ✓ A fewer number of them were warnings to *not* do what was wrong. (If they paid attention to the "*do what is right*" part, there would be no need to hear the "*don't do this*" part!)

17

The "PLUS" side – what they needed to DO.

⇨ **If you obey God, are faithful to him, seek him, obey the Bible, etc. …**

- ✓ **What Solomon was told would happen to *him*:**
  - » **David told him:** "You will succeed" – 1 Chronicles 22:13; "You will find God" – 1 Chronicles 28:9.
  - » **David told him and the people:** "God said, 'I will establish his kingdom forever' " – 1 Chronicles 28:7.
  - » **God told him:**

> **I will fulfill through you the promise I made to your father David. And I will dwell among the Israelites** [in the temple] **and will not abandon My people Israel.**"
>
> 1 Kings 6:12b-13 (BSB)

> … **I will establish your royal throne over Israel forever**, as I promised your father David when I said, "You will never fail to have a man on the throne of Israel."
>
> 1 Kings 9:5 (BSB); also in 2 Chronicles 7:17.

18

⇨ **If you obey God, etc. … (CONTINUED)**

- ✓ **What Solomon was told would happen to *him and his sons*:**
  - » **David told him:** The LORD would fulfill his promise that David would never fail to have a man on the throne of Israel – 1 Kings 2:4.
  - » **Solomon repeated the above statement in a prayer to God:** Solomon acknowledged it (which means he fully understood it) – 1 Kings 8:25 and 2 Chronicles 6:16.
- ✓ **This promise, to *Solomon and his sons*, was also quoted in one of the Psalms:**

> If your [= David's] sons keep My covenant
> and the testimony I will teach them,
> then their sons will also **sit on your throne forever and ever**."
>
> Psalm 132:12 (BSB)

★ **Quite clearly, they *knew* this and had no excuse, if they disobeyed it.** ★

19

The "NEGATIVE" side – what they needed to AVOID.

⇨ **If you DON'T obey God, stay faithful to him, obey the Bible, etc. …**

- ✓ **What Solomon was told would happen to *him*:**
  - » **David told him:** "God will reject you forever" – 1 Chronicles 28:9.
- ✓ **What Solomon was told would happen to *him and his sons*:**
  - » **God told him:**

> But if indeed you or your sons turn away from following Me
> and do not keep the commandments and statutes I have set
> before you, and if you go off to serve and worship other gods,
> then **I will cut off Israel from the land** that I have given them,
> and **I will banish from My presence this temple** I have
> sanctified for My Name. Then **Israel will become an object of scorn and ridicule** among all peoples.
>
> 1 Kings 9:6-7 (BSB)

20

⇨ **If you DON'T obey God, etc. … (CONTINUED)**

- ✓ **This warning, to *Solomon and his sons*, was also quoted in one of the Psalms.** Here are the consequences of abandoning God's commandments:

Yet even then, their sin would not prevent God from keeping his promise to David!

The question is "HOW?" (We will look at this issue *next time*.)

> **… I will attend to their transgression with the rod,**
> **and to their iniquity with stripes.**
>
> But I will not withdraw My loving devotion from him,
> nor ever betray My faithfulness.
> **I will not violate My covenant**
> or alter the utterance of My lips.
> Once and for all I have sworn by My holiness—
> I will not lie to David—
> his offspring shall endure forever,
> and his throne before Me like the sun,
> like the moon, established forever,
> a faithful witness in the sky."
>
> Psalm 89:32-37 (BSB)

21

OUR MISSION!

If we look only at *Israel's* history, the promise to David ultimately FAILED.

Yet the way it was originally stated left the door open for a *future* fulfillment – sometime *after* Israel's failure.

The prophets knew this, and God revealed more about it to them – **AS WE WILL SEE NEXT TIME.**

WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM THIS?

We can *trust* God,
even when circumstances seem to go against it.

What he has promised remains true,
even when we don't understand
and everything seems to go against it.

22

Credits

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