

# Unstoppable Promises to David

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[ 0 : 00 ] And turn to 2 Samuel, 2 Samuel chapter 7, and we'll be reading verses 1 to 17 about a great promise that God made to David.

After the king was settled in his palace and the Lord had given him rest from all his enemies around him, he said to Nathan the prophet, Here I am living in a palace of cedar while the ark of God remains in a tent.

Nathan replied to the king, Whatever you have in mind, go ahead and do it, for the Lord is with you. That night, the word of the Lord came to Nathan, saying, Go and tell my servant David, This is what the Lord says.

Are you the one to build me a house to dwell in? 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.

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?

[ 1 : 20 ] 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 a ruler over my people Israel.

I have been with you wherever you have gone and have cut off all your enemies from before you. Now I will make your name great like the names of the greatest men on earth.

I will provide a place for my people Israel, and I will plant them so that they 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. The Lord declares to you that the Lord himself will establish a house for you. 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.

[ 2 : 29 ] He is the one who will build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. 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. 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. Nathan reported to David all the words of this entire revelation.

Let's hear the word preached. Well, keep your Bibles open there to 2 Samuel 7. We're in a series of sermons called Great Chapters of the Bible.

We finish Romans 8 and Isaiah 40 and John 17 and Psalm 110. We come to 2 Samuel 7. And though this might not be on your list of top chapters in the Bible that you would have picked, I trust that when we're done with this series, you'll see why it belongs in this category.

[ 3 : 48 ] First of all, these promises to David were used to direct Israel's expectation of the coming Messiah for a thousand years. It was these promises that they especially looked to as they expected a coming Messiah.

The hope of the Messiah was kept alive in the hearts of the faithful remnant as they waited for a son of David to come to the throne in answer to these promises given here.

These were faith-building promises. But secondly, at the same time, they became the cause of the greatest challenge to the faith of the Israelites when their experience seemed to mock the very promises that were made here.

Indeed, the greatest problem of the second half of the Old Testament is just to do with these promises. Has the Lord's promise of a Davidic king failed? Because it had appeared as if it had failed. So many later prophets and psalms will deal with this problem. There's no king in Israel. There's no promise of rest in the land.  
[ 5 : 03 ] As they live century after century after century under the heel of the Babylonians and the Persians and the Greeks and the Romans.

600 years had God's faithfulness to his promise failed. So these same promises at the one time were faith-building promises, but they also became a real test of their faith in God's faithfulness. And thirdly and most importantly, this chapter is great because in the New Testament, these promises helped to identify Jesus Christ as our long-promised Messiah King, who is the ultimate fulfillment of the promises made here to David.

So the babe in the manger in the city of David is this long-promised king of David, promised a thousand years earlier through the prophet Nathan.

So a right understanding of this chapter, I trust, will help to unlock many other Old Testament portions for you as you see the Israelites wrestling with these promises.

[ 6 : 16 ] And it should also inform our hopes in Messiah's reign, not only his present reign, but that which he will yet fulfill as has been promised here.

So the promise of God's salvation was progressively revealed throughout the Bible. It wasn't as clear at the beginning as it is now in the full light of all of Scripture.

And so the first promise of a coming Savior in Genesis 3.15 said that there would be a seed of the woman who would come and crush the serpent's head. So Messiah will be an offspring of the woman, a real human being.

Genesis 12, I should say, tells us it will be a seed of Abraham. So not just humanity, one of them, but now it's narrowed down to the seed of Abraham.

That seed will bring blessing to all the nations of the earth. By the end of Genesis chapter 49 and verse 10, we're told that this Messiah Savior will be from the tribe of Judah.

[ 7 : 29 ] And that the scepter will not depart from Judah nor the ruler's staff from between his feet until he comes to whom it belongs. And the obedience of the nations is his.

And then 900 years later, around 1000 BC, the promises found in our text tonight narrows it down even further. That this Savior will be of the seed of David.

The seed of David. So, let's dig in and see how this was revealed. How it all happened. So you remember David was fleeing from Saul, King Saul, for 10 to 12 years.

Saul's killed in battle with the Philistines. And at age 30, David is made king over his own tribe, the tribe of Judah. Seven and a half years later, he was made, or six and a half years later, he was made king over all the 12 tribes of Israel.

He then conquered Jerusalem from the Jebusites. He had a palace built for him there, making it the capital city.

[ 8 : 35 ] And then he brought the Ark of the Covenant up to Jerusalem, making it not only the center of politics for the land, but the center of religion as well. As that's where the temple would then eventually be built.

So the center of political and religious life. And so we can almost see David and his advisor, prophet Nathan, sitting around after dinner, talking together.

And David just saying, here I am, Nathan. I'm living in this palace of cedar while the Ark of God remains in a tent. Something's wrong with this picture.

I've got this luxurious palace and God has a tent for a dwelling place. This should not be. And Nathan replies to the king, whatever you have in mind, do it for the Lord is with you.

He saw the value and the sincerity of what David had said. But though it was a good desire in David, it was not the will of God.

[ 9 : 49 ] We can have desires that are not the will of God and even prophets can get it wrong. As Nathan said, do it. But that night, God came and spoke to David saying, go tell my servant David, this is what the Lord says.

Are you the one to build me a house to dwell in? I've not dwelled in a house from the day I brought the Israelites up out of Egypt to this day. I've been moving from place to place with a tent as my dwelling.

And 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 haven't you built me a house of cedar?  
 Let's pause and ask, what does this teach us about our God? Well, he's a God who wants to be with his people. We saw that this morning.  
 And he will humbly stoop in order to be with his people. He's the king of heaven and earth. And he's willing to live in a tent if that's where his people are.  
 [10:58] Just to be with them. Are they constantly on the move, living in tents? Then I'll move about living in a tent just to live with them. Do you see the condescension of God, even in that? Willing to live in a tent to be near his people. You count it strange? So once did I, before I knew my Savior.  
 He will stoop even lower than that, won't he? And he will tabernacle in human flesh. A body like you and me that has all these needs and knows weakness.  
 Yes, he will stoop that low in order to tabernacle with his people. For the word became flesh and dwelt among us. Tabernacled with us.  
 In order that he might die for us. And thereby bring us to God. He wants to be with us. And while journeying homeward by his spirit, he does come to dwell in us, doesn't he?  
 [12:04] Into our hearts. To be that God with us in all of our wilderness wanderings through this world. And then to bring us safely home at last as we sang.  
 Surely goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life. And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. All the way my Savior leads me. He's with me. So this was God's past goodness and grace to his people Israel.  
 And now he turns from that goodness to his people Israel. And he speaks of his goodness past and future to his servant David.  
 Verse 8 speaks of it. I took you, David, from the pasture and from following the flock to be ruler over my people Israel. So, David, I took you from being a shepherd boy following a bunch of sheep to actually leading my nation.  
 What exaltation of David. What kindness of God. And then he says, verse 9, I've been with you. There it is again. I've been with you wherever you've gone.  
 [13:14] What a blessing to have God with us. And with you to help you because I have cut off all of your enemies from before you. God's way with his people.  
 It's just one grace after another. Like the waves of the sea. And we see it in David's life. But it's not over. David, there's more grace coming. And now he speaks of future grace.  
 Verse 9c. Now I will make your name great like the names of the greatest men of the earth. So, not only to be great in Israel as the king of Israel.  
 But to be great over all the earth. Here we are tonight. Thousands of miles away from David's homeland.  
 Thousands, 3,000 years later. And what do we do? And we're talking about David and his greatness tonight. Just like God said he would do. All over the world. He's known.  
 [14:12] He's honored. And God's about to tell him how this will happen. And what this honor is that will be given to him.  
 But first he then goes on to speak of the future grace given to his people Israel as well. Verse 10. And I will provide a place for my people Israel. And I'll 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 in the beginning. And have done ever since the time I appointed leaders over my people Israel. It's always been conflict. Always been wars and fights. I will also give you rest from all your enemies. So we have in this section.  
 And these words of God to David. Two great promises. One that's especially new and central to the passage.  
 [15:12] But there is a second promise. And it's this one that we see first. It's a place. It's a land. Now it had already been promised to Abraham and his descendants. But now that promise is reiterated to David.  
 And it's not only a land. It's a land at rest. Deuteronomy 12.10 had already promised. You will cross the Jordan and settle in the land the Lord your God has given you as an inheritance.

And he will give you rest from all your enemies around you. So that you will live in safety. God will not rest until he gives his people rest.

It's not enough to have a home of their own. It must no longer be disturbed. No longer oppressed.

No longer bothered by enemies as they had been ever since the nation was given leaders.

How would you like to have your home be in Ukraine with Russia as your neighbor? And that's the Israelites. Or maybe you'd like to live in South Korea with North Korea your neighbor.

[16:25] Or Iran or Iraq. Or you could have the nicest home. But it wouldn't be worth much, would it?

Why? Because it's a place where you would always be in fear of wicked men. Of being disturbed. Of being killed. Of being robbed. Well, here's the promise.

I'm going to give you a land that is undisturbed. Peace and safety. Nothing to ruffle your peace.

Now that's still an unfulfilled promise to God's people.

Of a land totally undisturbed by the enemies. Because though there were periods of rest, they just didn't last long.

Indeed, part of the covenant that God made with his people was that as long as you're faithful to me, you'll be at rest. But as soon as you turn away from me, what will he do?

[17:25] He'll whistle and call for the nations to come in and to take them to the woodshed in battle. So, though there was peace right now, it wasn't a peace that lasted.

And their homeland was not that which was yet undisturbed. But we're still waiting for Messiah to bring about that part of the promise. So, that's the first promise.

A homeland at rest. The second great promise of the chapter is something new. And it's found at the end of verse 11. The Lord declares to you that the Lord himself will establish a house for you.

Remember, the whole question is about this house. Verse 5, are you the one, David, to build me a house? David wanted to build a temple, a house of the Lord.

And the Lord said, are you the one to build me a house to dwell in? Verse 11b says, no. No, I'm going to build a house for you. So, there's a play on the word house.

[18:27] David means a temple for God to dwell in. And God means a dynasty of kings to come from his descendants. I will build a house for you.

Now, we have a similar play on the word today. What is a house? Well, it can be a place where a family lives. But it can also be the family, can't it?

We talk about a household, don't we? We're talking about our family. And there's something of that similar play going on here. David wants to build a house, a building, a structure, a temple for the Lord.

And God wants to build a family of kings to be David's descendants. And to reign upon the throne of the kingdom. Now, that's the new thing promised in the Davidic covenant.

And that promise will build the faith of Israelites. And it will challenge that faith to the utmost degree. That's how David's going to have his name made great all over the earth.

[19:31] So the two promises are connected in this way. It will be through a Davidic king that this homeland of Israel will finally enjoy peace and safety.

It will be a descendant of David on the throne that will bring this blessing to all of his people. So, right now, we saw in Psalm 110 that the Lord Jesus reigns.

He's a seed of David, isn't he? And he reigns. But he reigns in the midst of his enemies. And he reigns until God puts all of his enemies under his feet.

So there's still more to come when the Lord returns and destroys his enemies. And then the wolf will lie down with the lamb and the leopard with the goat.

And they will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain. In that day, the root of Jesse, David, David's son, will stand as a banner for the peoples.

[20:39] The nations will rally to him. And his place of rest will be glorious. So there, Isaiah in chapter 11 and verse 10 is talking about a seed of David who will come.

And his place of rest will be glorious. He will provide this rest for his people. Jeremiah connects these two promises as well. In Jeremiah 23, 5 and 6, The days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will raise up to David a righteous branch, a king who will reign wisely and do what's just and right in the land.

And in his days, Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. This is the name by which he will be called the Lord, our righteousness. A place to live in safety.

Revelation 21 and 22 shows us that place. The new Jerusalem coming down out of heaven. And the city is so safe that its gates are always open.

That's a sign of just how safe it is. There's nothing to fear. All of that has been removed by the return of our king. The place of his rest will be glorious.

[ 21 : 59 ] So here we find these two promises. David, you're going to have a king on the throne. That will go on as we'll see forever and ever. And through that king, the land will come to no rest.

A king and a secure homeland. Now the subsequent history would be such that it would appear that both of these promises had failed. Because there would be some 600 years with no king and no rest in the land.

And God knows this even as he promises David. So he speaks of three threats to this dynasty of kings and to this rest.

Three threats to this covenant he's making with David. These promises that threaten it. Threaten to destroy it. And I could not improve on the three point outline of Dale Ralph Davis.

As he gives these three threats that need to be overcome to fulfill the promises. First of all, death cannot cancel it. Sin cannot destroy it. And time cannot exhaust it.

[ 23 : 08 ] So death, sin, and time are enemies to these promises of God to David. So first of all, death cannot cancel these promises.

Notice verses 12 and 13. 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. He is the one who will build a house for my name and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. So David, you're going to die. But not this dynasty of kings coming from your loins. No, that dynasty will live on. First in your son, Solomon. Who will build a house for me. The house of the Lord, the temple in Jerusalem.

And then will live on forever through his following descendants. Now this is in stark contrast with Saul's kingdom. Remember the first king of Israel.

[ 24 : 11 ] The Lord took it away from him and gave it to David. Though Saul's son Ish-bosheth tried to establish himself as king when Saul died.

It ended in his death as well. And so all Israel acknowledged David as their king. So death did mark the end of Saul's kingdom. But the promise is it will not end.

David's kingdom. His kingdom and dynasty will live on forever. So that's the first threat to this dynasty. Death. The death of David. That won't bother it.

It will go on. It cannot cancel this promise. All men are like grass. And all their glory is like the flowers of the field. The grass withers and the flowers fall.

But what? The word of the Lord stands forever. And the word is, David, you're going to have a dynasty of kings reigning forever.

[ 25 : 18 ] Wow. Death cannot cancel it. Secondly, sin cannot destroy it. Verses 14 and 15. Speaking of Solomon and from him the following Davidic kings.

We read in verses 14 and 50. I will be his father and he will be my son. And when he does wrong, I'll punish him with the rod of men and floggings inflicted by men.

But my love will never be taken away from him as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you. You know, it was because of Saul's sins, wasn't it?

That God took the kingdom away. Took away his love. Took away his spirit. Removed his spirit.

Removed his kingdom from Saul. So that becomes the next threat to the fulfillment of this promise.

Oh. Kings can be sinful, can't they? And because of sin. Saul's dynasty was destroyed.

[ 26 : 21 ] And if sin destroyed Saul's dynasty, what about David's? The Davidic kings weren't angels, you know.

I mean, let's start with David. We're just pages away from Bathsheba. And his adultery. And his murder of Uriah.

David himself. A sinner. And then there's the sins of Solomon that were no less serious if we read our Bibles.

And we could go on and on. You can read in the books of the kings. In fact, there's some ways that we might think Saul's sins were less serious than those of David and Solomon.

And some of the following kings in David's line. I mean, Saul did not completely annihilate the Amalekites as commanded and save some of the best things.

[ 27 : 22 ] And he impatiently offered a sacrifice without waiting for Samuel to come and make the sacrifice. But as I said, we've read the sins of David and Solomon and the kings of David.

So what hope is there for David's dynasty? To not be destroyed and this promise to be shattered because of their sin. Well, the hope is clearly not in these Davidic kings, David himself, but clearly in God's determination to preserve this dynasty of kings.

God's relationship with the Davidic kings was a special relationship in which he considered himself the father of this Davidic king and the Davidic king to be his son.

Indeed, that terminology is spoken between God the father and God the son. The Davidic king of Hebrews 1 and verse 8, I believe it is. So there's this intimate relationship between God and the king of David that's on the throne.

Starting with David and Solomon and all the rest. But it wasn't all smothering affection. Because as we read this morning in Sunday school in Hebrews 12, part of being a good father is disciplining your children when they sin.

[ 28 : 44 ] And this is how God's promises, this is how God promises to deal with the sins of these Davidic kings. Verse 14b, when he does wrong, I'm going to punish him.

And I'm going to punish him with the rods of men, with floggings inflicted by men. Did David get away with his sin? No, God flogged him.

And he flogged him with men. His own son, Absalom, stealing the throne from him, chasing down his life. And on and on we could use God using men as rods to spank the Davidic king when he does wrong.

And so it was with the other sinning Davidic kings that followed. They did wrong and God whistled for the enemy nations. Come on. Come on, Assyria.

Come and run havoc over my people. I'm no longer for them. I am for you and I'm against them. He disciplined them for their sins.

[ 29 : 47 ] The Egyptians, the Arameans, the Philistines, the Assyrians, the Babylonians. You can read it in the books of the kings. They became God's rod of wrath to discipline these errant Davidic kings and the nations, the nation that they ruled.

So these disciplines could be very severe and could remove in death the Davidic king, the individual king. But here's the difference.

And it's highlighted. God says my covenant love will never be taken away from him as I took it away from Saul. Individual kings may be destroyed, but not the Davidic dynasty of kings.

I will not take away my love, my spirit, my kingdom from them. No, that kingdom will move on. That Davidic dynasty will move on.

In Isaiah 55, 4, God speaks of my faithful love promised to David. I promised him. That's why they won't. Why sin will not destroy this promise.

[ 30 : 55 ] Because God promised that he would not bring an end to this Davidic covenant. God will prove stronger than sin itself.

Men fail, but God never. So there's two threats. Death. Oh, but after David dies, the kingdom will go on through his sons.

Sin. God will discipline them, but he will not take the kingdom away from them. And the last one, the last threat to this promise being fulfilled.

Time. Time cannot exhaust it. We've seen many good things, haven't we? Come to an end. Good things that wore out and became worthless.

With time's rude hand having its way with them. Given enough time, we've seen powerful nations, worldwide empires and kingdoms have come to nothing.

[ 31 : 54 ] Nothing but a bit of ruins and a place in the history books. Even good things over long periods of time can erode and come to nothing.

We even wonder about our own nation and its future. Well, what about this covenant with David? Could time just wear it out? This lasting dynasty of kings from David.

Verse 16, God promises to David addresses this issue of time head on. Notice it. He says, your house, David, and your kingdom will endure forever before me.

Your throne will be established forever. Forever. Forever does not wear out God's ability to keep his promise.

Forever. It's one of the believer's favorite words, isn't it? Goodness and mercy all the days of my life and to dwell in the house of the Lord forever. Forever. And that word is used throughout our Bibles.

[ 32 : 58 ] And we love the word forever. And here's that word. Twice in verse 16 and once earlier in verse 13, I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.

And that's the reason this promised dynasty is so secure. Why it cannot fail. It's due to the fact that it rests on the faithfulness of God, not the faithfulness of these Davidic kings.

It's something God will do. And it's not dependent upon what man will do. I counted some eight times God's word to David is here punctuated.

I will. I will. I will. I will. What's he saying? He says, this is something that I will do. These are the things that I will do. That's not dependent upon you, David, Solomon, or any of your sons and what they do.

This is what I will do. I will establish and maintain David's dynasty of kings forever. And we'll see David's humble response to this at another time.

[ 34 : 02 ] So here we have it. This promise of God cannot be destroyed by time, death, sin. I'm out of time.

And I'm not to the end. So I'm trying to decide what to do. Let me just let me just say this. This was 1,000 B.C.

That this promise is made. The dynasty of David would last 400 years where there would be a succession of another king of David on the throne.

400 years it lasted. The average time of a dynasty in that time area, in that place, was 100 years. So 400 years they saw another king of David follow the next one and the next one.

But then Israel's sin was such that God whistled for the Babylonians and they came and they destroyed Jerusalem and burned the temple and took the Davidic king into captivity along with many other people.

[ 35 : 11 ] That was about 600 years before Christ. And for 600 years, there was no king on the throne of Israel.

Much less a Davidic king as had been promised. And this is where things got dicey in Israel. Where is the promise?

Where is God's faithfulness? Do your circumstances sometimes make you wonder?

Where is God? Is he faithful? Is he going to do all that he has said? I don't feel like it. It doesn't look like it. 600 years.

Folks, that's longer than we've been a nation twice. And no king of David on the throne. And so we're going to look in the future at the problems that that created for the faith of the remnant in Israel.

[ 36 : 15 ] It's no wonder when Jesus came that there were only a few people, Simeon and Anna in the temple, looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

Most have given up hope. The promise of God. One day, an angel.

After 400 years, 600 years without a king, 400 years without a word from heaven, silent. So the promise seemed to fail and God's not saying anything to us to explain it.

And then an angel is sent to a virgin in Galilee. And tells her a child that she's going to bear by the Holy Spirit.

And how that he will reign on the throne of his father, David. Ah, there it is. There's the answer.

[ 37 : 25 ] Yes. And once he takes his throne, his position on the throne, it will be forever. And so he dies and he is raised and he ascends to heaven.

And the father says, sit here, son, at my right hand. Till I make all your enemies a footstool for your feet. Yes, the promise.

Forever. And that's the way it will be. And Lucentor asked for the Hallelujah Chorus from Handel's Messiah to be played at his funeral.

And so we honored his request. It needed another 50 decibels of volume at least to give it the oomph that the Hallelujah Chorus deserves.

It was lame. But it's a song that celebrates Revelation 11, 15. You know, Handel wrote the whole thing from Scripture.

[ 38 : 25 ] And here he's celebrating Revelation 11, 15. The kingdom of this world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ. And he will reign forever and ever.

Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Forever and ever. A descendant of David. Reigning as king over God's people.

In a place of glorious rest. Without anything to threaten. Well, what do we do with the promises of God when circumstances seem to mock them?

Well, we say a promise might go a thousand years before it ripens into a fulfillment. But it will be fulfilled.

Because the word of the Lord stands forever. May our hearts be established in that truth. And even as we are waiting for that king of David to return and to bring peace.

[ 39 : 35 ] Is it sometimes hard for you to even imagine this world that we are living in? Being a place of perfect peace and nothing to scare us anymore? And only perfect love?

Well, let our hearts be encouraged tonight. Death cannot cancel the promises. Sin cannot destroy the promises.

And time cannot exhaust the promises. Our God is faithful. And if he is the God of great faithfulness, does he not deserve a people of great faith?

People who are full of faith. Faithful. To take him at his word. And to rejoice in him. To go on believing.

Hoping. Looking. Praying. Even so come. Lord Jesus. Well, sing with me number 226. Rejoice. The Lord is king.

[ 40 : 37 ] He is on that throne of David. He's coming back. And we'll look at this passage many more times, I believe. But let's at least rejoice that he has come.

He is on his throne. He's right on time. He's doing all that was promised. Number 226. Stand and let's sing. Father, thank you for your word.

Thank you for exalting your son to your own right hand upon that throne that rules the universe.

Thank you that he is the fulfillment of these promises to David.

Thank you that his reign is forever. And that nothing can threaten it. That there is nothing out of hand this day that he is not ruling over.

And will turn to his own good and eternal purposes. Thank you that we have been counted in those eternal purposes. To receive mercy and love that will never be taken away from us.

[ 41 : 47 ] Do give us faith to hold on to the promise. And to believe that our God is holding on to us. That you delight to be with your people. And even lived in tents to make it so.

And how much more that you would dwell in flesh. And that you even now at the Father's right hand, Lord Jesus, bear our likeness of our flesh and blood. You're there as our representative. And because you're there, we one day will be there too. So we give you thanks. We pray all this with thanksgiving in your name. Even Jesus. Amen.