

The Davidic Covenant 2 Samuel 7:1-17

By Phillip G. Kayser at DCC on 12-9-2012

Introduction

We've come to what several authors have described as *the* pivotal passage in 1 and 2 Samuel. In fact, some go way beyond that. Brueggemann calls it “the most crucial theological statement in the Old Testament.”¹ I'm not sure that I would go quite that far, but it is definitely more important in the eyes of other Biblical writers than we might at first glance guess that it might be. For example, both the Major and the Minor Prophets appeal to this passage over and over again as pointing to the coming Messiah and His New Covenant kingdom (cf. Is. 9:1-7; 11:1-16; 16:5; 55:3; Jer. 23:5-6; 30:8; 33:15-26; Ezek. 34:23-24; 37:24-25; Hos. 3:5; Amos 9:11; Zech. 12:7-8). This coming Messiah would be the “sure mercies of David” (Is. 55:3), fulfill the covenant of David, have the key of David's house on his shoulder, sit on the throne of David, and in two verses in Isaiah the coming Messiah was said to be the covenant itself (Is. 42:6; 49:8). In other words, this covenant is wrapped up in Jesus. If you were to cut this chapter out of the Old Testament, there is a lot that wouldn't make sense in the prophets.

But the New Testament makes a great deal about this passage as well. Robert Bergan, in his commentary, gives numerous New Testament verses that appeal to this chapter to teach seven things about Jesus: First that Jesus is the Son of David (Matt. 1:1; Acts 13:22-23; Rom. 1:3; 2 Tim. 2:8; Rev. 22:16; etc). Second, that he would rise from the dead (Acts 2:30; 13:23). Third, that he would be the builder of God's house in the New Covenant times (John 2:19-22; Heb. 3:3-4; etc). Fourth, that Jesus would be the possessor of the throne of David (Heb. 1:8; Rev. 3:21; etc). Fifth, that Jesus would possess an eternal kingdom, which will not pass away (1 Cor. 15:24-25; Eph. 5:5; Heb. 1:8; 2 Pet. 1:11; etc). Sixth, that the Son of God mentioned in this passage ultimately refers to Jesus (Mark 1:1; John 20:31; Acts 9:20; Heb. 4:14; Rev. 2:18; etc). It only has a secondary reference to adopted sons. Solomon could be considered an adopted son only because of his union with the real Son, Jesus. And seventh, that Jesus would be born of a virgin, since He had God as His father and a human as His mother (Luke 1:32-35). And you might wonder, “How could all of that be tied up in this

¹ Brueggemann, *First and Second Samuel*, p. 259.

somewhat obscurely worded passage?” But it is. And I’m saying all of this so that you don’t get the illusion that I will have exhausted the meaning of the passage this morning. I may succeed in exhausting you, but I’ll have just scratched the surface. But hopefully I will give enough that you will at least have a good bird’s eye view of the place that this chapter holds in the Bible.

I. The Context of the Covenant – God’s prior covenants grace

A. God’s covenant faithfulness preceded this covenant (v. 1 and earlier chapters). Each historical covenant builds on the previous, but does not replace the previous.

The heart of the covenant is verses 10-16, and we will get there in a bit, but the context in which it was given is important as well for a number of reasons. For example, it shows that God’s grace precedes anything good in David. Good works flow out of grace, not vice versa. David was enabled to be faithful because God is faithful. And this covenant is simply showing more about God’s covenant of grace that has been talked about from Genesis up through 2 Samuel. Take a look at verse 1:

2Samuel 7:1 Now it came to pass when the king was dwelling in his house, and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies all around,

The first thing that I want you to notice is that God’s covenant faithfulness to David preceded this Davidic covenant. And by the way, when I speak of the Noahic covenant, I mean the covenant with Noah; Mosaic covenant - covenant with Moses; Davidic covenant - covenant with David. And there are two ways that we can see God’s covenant faithfulness – with both the house of David and with the peace that God brought through David.

It’s rather abbreviated here, but it becomes obvious when you understand who built David’s house. The parallel passage in 1 Chronicles tells us that Hiram, King of Tyre, was so impressed with David’s God that he became a true believer. But that book also says that Hiram loved David so much, that he built David a palace simply out of the goodness of his heart. David didn’t ask for it. The offer just came out of the blue. And we are going to be seeing that Hiram will help David to prepare Solomon for the building of the temple. And here is the conclusion that David drew from Hiram’s generosity in building him a palace. 1 Chronicles 14:4 says, “**So David knew that the LORD had established him as king over Israel, for his kingdom was highly exalted for the sake of His people**” (v. 4). And it is a capital “H” – for the sake of God’s people. So the building of David’s magnificent house showed God’s covenant faithfulness even before God had

made this covenant with David. Do you see where I am going? God talks about covenant before He makes a covenant with David. All the way back in 1 Samuel 20 David spoke of God's covenant faithfulness (His *chesed*) towards him.

How could that be? What covenant would he be talking about? And it's an important question, because if you don't see the Davidic covenant of this chapter in the context of the previous covenants, you will misinterpret it. You don't have to go back very many verses in chapter 6 to see references to the "**ark of the covenant.**" So if God's throne that David is bringing into Jerusalem is the "ark of the covenant," what covenant is he talking about? Obviously, the covenant with Moses. The Ark of the Covenant was clearly at the heart of the covenant that God made with Moses. And at the end of chapter 6 David composes Psalm 105. And the reason we know that is that 1 Chronicles 16 tells us so. Well, that Psalm glories in God's faithfulness to the Abrahamic covenant and testifies to the fact that David is in the Abrahamic covenant.

Here's the point: don't think that every time God makes a covenant in Scripture that He is starting things all over again, or reinventing the wheel. That's the way dispensationalists have often looked at the covenants. Instead, each covenant continues, builds upon, and expands the previous covenants. But the previous covenants always continue to be at the heart of the next covenant that is made. Galatians 3:17 is quite clear that the Mosaic covenant could not annul the covenant that God made in Christ with Abraham. In fact, verse 15 says that no covenant that God made can ever be annulled. That's an important principle to properly understand covenant theology. Instead of annulling the Abrahamic covenant, Paul says that the Mosaic covenant built on and fulfilled the Abrahamic covenant. And when we get to this chapter we find that the Davidic covenant built on and fulfilled the Mosaic covenant. And in the New Testament we find that the New Covenant built on and fulfills the Davidic covenant. If you don't see it that way, you will destroy the beautiful picture of salvation, just like the Pharisees did. That was Paul's argument with the Pharisees. They were ignoring the Abrahamic covenant that was at the heart of the Mosaic covenant. They were eviscerating the Mosaic covenant of the Gospel. Unfortunately, too many Christians do that today – for a different reason than the Pharisees. Their reason is that they want to get rid of the law and put a wall between law and Gospel and the Pharisees wanted to keep the law, but put a wall between the law and the Gospel. But both make the same mistake of putting a wall between the law and the Gospel by failing to see

the organic relationship that each covenant has to the previous ones. Law and Gospel were at the core of each of the covenants.

So what is the immediate context of verse 1? It's chapter 6, obviously. And what happened in chapter 6? David brings the "ark of the covenant" into Jerusalem to be the heart of his kingdom. Some people try to say that the Mosaic covenant is all law and the Davidic covenant is all grace. But what was this symbol - this Ark of the Covenant pointing towards? It was pointing to Jesus. It's only in Jesus that law and grace come together in one person and provide a blessing to God's people. The Ten Commandments were stored inside the ark, and the ark was sprinkled with blood, so that law and grace are knitted together. And so the Puritans spoke of the covenant with Moses as being a part of the covenant of grace. And when you think of the typology, it was. There were literally hundreds of types or pictures of the Gospel that surrounded God's people in the time of Moses and stewarded them toward Jesus. So chapter 6 clues us in that David has been blessed because God is faithful to His covenant with Moses. And before that, God was faithful to His covenant with Abraham, and before that God was faithful to His covenant with Noah, and before that a covenant with Adam. We should not see these covenants as radical breaks with the past. Instead, each covenant adds to the previous covenant in spelling out the richness of God's covenant of grace.

And let me outline what was central to each covenant and what was unique to each covenant. What was central was pretty easy: law and grace. Jesus was not unique to any one covenant. He was at the heart of every covenant from Genesis 3:15 and on. But each covenant did introduce something unique. And I'm going to go over those.

The Adamic covenant restored the individual and the family to God, but also spoke of an ongoing battle between Satan and God and between the seed of Satan and the seed of the woman. So there is salvation, spiritual warfare and there is eschatology as Adam looks forward to the coming Messiah. And God's message concerning the seed of the woman showed that God's covenant grace would be passed from generation to generation in family lines leading up to the Messiah. So the individual and the family being restored are what is unique to the first stage in the covenant of grace. The curse is still on the ground. But individuals and families are restored. It's not till we get to the Mosaic covenant that the territory of Satan begins to be restricted.

The Noahic covenant restored an inheritance for God's covenant families – they would inherit the earth by God's grace. And the promises of an inheritance are very tangible. God's covenant embraced planet earth, the seas, the dry land, the birds of the air, and every living thing that moves upon the face of the earth. It speaks to the fact that God cares about the physical – just like Rodney was preaching on. The physical earth had previously been judged and now the physical earth will be included in the plans of God's covenant of grace. And how long does that covenant last? It doesn't just last till Moses, when God reverts to a small plot of land in Canaan. That's to grossly misinterpret the covenant. Psalm 37:11 tells us that even under Moses the Noahic promise continued – that the meek shall inherit the earth. So how long does it last? Genesis 8:22 says that it will last as long as there is a planet earth and seasons upon the earth; in other words, as long as there is time. So the Abrahamic covenant did not annul the Noahic covenant. It built on it. If your conception of eternity is strumming on harps in the clouds without any bodies and without a planet earth, you've got a distorted view of Christ's purposes for planet earth. Christ's work will not be finished till planet earth, and earthworms, and birds, fish, and animals are all put under His feet and given once again in proper dominion to His people. E. Calvin Beisner said,

The goal of redemption is nothing less than the restoration of the entire cosmos. The scope of redemption is truly cosmic. Through Christ, God determined "to reconcile to himself all things" (Col. 1:20). Matthew 19:28 speaks of the renewal (the word is "regeneration") of all things.²

We are going to have a fulfilling life in eternity future. There will be a renewed heaven and earth on which man will take dominion. So the Noahic covenant shows the broad extent of God's grace and Christ's redemption – it restores us to a very tangible inheritance. Romans 8 tells us that planet earth and this very universe will all be redeemed by the blood of Jesus. And Psalm 8 tells us that everything will be placed under Jesus and the new humanity that he redeems. And Beisner points out that it begins to take place in our age – in history, though its fullest and final manifestation will be at the Second Coming.

So Adam – a restored family; Noah – a restored inheritance. The third covenant is the covenant with Abraham. And it incorporates the individual and family of the Adamic covenant, and it includes references to the restored inheritance. But what is unique to the Abrahamic covenant is that this

² Facebook post on 12-8-2012.

restored family is to be disciplined within a covenant church with a new sign of the covenant being applied to families within that church. So though the people of the church started with Adam, the organization of the church as an institution distinct from the nuclear family started with Abraham.

The covenant with Moses is the fourth covenant, and what is unique to that covenant is the establishment of a nation. Now, with the establishment of a nation under God's grace, it will set the pattern for what God's covenant of grace will eventually do with all nations. But this is the starting point, or the first time God covenants with a nation. So to interpret the land of Canaan as if a small plot in Palestine is the only parcel of land that God cares about is to forget the previous covenants that said that the meek will inherit the earth. This is the paradigm of what should happen to every nation. That's why Romans 4:13 says that the promise to Abraham was really that he would be the heir of the world. Palestine was just a downpayment or a start to God's plans for history and God's plans for eternity. But under Moses, the issues related to a nation are clearly spelled out for the first time. Of course, in the process, the Mosaic covenant also had to make adjustments to both family and church. So the role of the family avenger of blood moved towards a state court system and executive. And the firstborn's normal role as the shepherd of his clan was replaced in Numbers by the Levites. But even though there are adjustments and expansions upon God's purpose for individual, family, inheritance, and church, the focus was on what's new – it was on the nation.

The fifth covenant is the Davidic covenant. It is still pointing to Jesus, but it is pointing to an expansion of God's national purposes to other nations, and to a future peace between nations, such as was symbolized under Solomon, David's son. And that is why the focus for the temple was on Solomon. Each new covenant builds on and advances the meaning and purpose of Christ's eventual making of all things new. And I am covering all of those covenants because I think you will appreciate this chapter more if you see its place in the whole flow of redemptive history. Look at the second half of verse 1: **"...and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies all around."** That's a tiny foretaste of the world peace that the Gospel will eventually produce as all nations are disciplined, and as they turn their spears into pruning hooks and learn war no more. Once David subdues the last of his enemies, he brings in a peace that will usher in Solomon's kingdom of peace and prosperity. The Davidic Covenant came later in David's life because it is symbolic of a time of peace that is still yet future to us.

B. God's covenant faithfulness moved David to want to bless God (v. 2)

Verse 2:

2Samuel 7:2 that the king said to Nathan the prophet, "See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwells inside tent curtains."

He probably looked out of the window of his brand new palace every day and saw the tent that he had constructed for the Ark of the Covenant, and he was feeling guilty that he was living in such a magnificent palace and God had such a humble abode. God is shortly going to say, "You think you've got a great palace. Just wait. I'm going to make you something more glorious." But we can appreciate David's heart here. Matthew Henry comments that God's overflowing faithfulness to us stirs up a desire to generously give back to God. David wanted to do something special for God. In a later chapter God will reveal the plans for a temple to David, so don't think that David is getting a rebuke here.

C. Though the intent was right (v. 3), and though God honored David with a title on a par with the patriarchs, Moses, and the Messiah (v. 5a), and though God would have his son Solomon build such a temple (v. 13), God wants to be clear that this temple and this covenant would be all of monergistic grace (vv. 5bff).

Verse 3:

2Samuel 7:3 Then Nathan said to the king, "Go, do all that is in your heart, for the LORD is with you."

He could tell that David had total sincerity of heart when he offered to build God a temple. And God Himself honors David. We shouldn't miss that. In verse 5 He tells Nathan, "**Go and tell My servant David...**" That term "My servant" was a term of honor that described those whom God was closest to. It's a term that is used very rarely. God spoke of "My servant Abraham" (Gen. 26:24), "My servant Moses" (Numb 12:8), "My servant Caleb" (Numb. 14:24) – and of course, He refers to Jesus as "My Servant" in Isaiah quite a number of times. So David's intent was right, God honored him, and in verse 13 God assures David that a temple will be built, but it will be by his son, Solomon. So it is not as if David's idea was wacky, or as if God is rebuking David. Instead, I see the dialogue in verses 5 and following as emphasizing the fact that even though building a temple was a good thing, God wanted to symbolize at least four things by waiting: First, that the making of the temple should flow from grace rather than earning grace. Second, that the plans for the temple must come from heaven, not from

David earth. And God will later reveal the detailed plans for a temple, and it was modeled after the pattern in heaven. Why is that important? Because the New Covenant that this points towards is about God's heavenly kingdom coming to earth and His will being done on earth as it is in heaven. Third, that the making of the temple should symbolize peace, not war. And fourth, that David's descendant would do something that neither David nor Solomon would ever be able to achieve. And we will see what that is later.

1. First, God didn't need such a thing, and so there was no earning of God's favor (vv. 5b-6)

Look at the second half of verse 5:

2Samuel 7:5 ...“Thus says the LORD: ‘Would you build a house for Me to dwell in?’

2Samuel 7:6 For I have not dwelt in a house since the time that I brought the children of Israel up from Egypt, even to this day, but have moved about in a tent and in a tabernacle.

God is in effect saying, “Don't feel sorry for me. I don't need a palace. When I have Solomon build me a temple, I want it to be clear to everyone that the purpose for the temple is not to *house* me (as if I could possibly be housed), but to symbolize something far greater that I plan to do.” So it's not a rebuke; it's just a clarification to make sure that the symbolism of the Davidic covenant is not missed.

2. God had never asked for such a temple (v. 7)

In verse 7 he reiterates that he has never asked for a temple before. And this is something that Stephen will pick up on when he preaches to the Sanhedrin in Acts 7. They idolatrized the temple and missed the heart of this passage, which was Jesus Christ. Verse 7:

2Samuel 7:7 Wherever I have moved about with all the children of Israel, have I ever spoken a word to anyone from the tribes of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd My people Israel, saying, “Why have you not built Me a house of cedar?” ”

This was something that the Pharisees and the Sadducees completely missed.

3. God had exalted David from obscurity to significant service (v. 8)

Verse 8 emphasizes the fact that God exalted David from obscurity to significant service. It's not the greatness of David that makes the Davidic covenant great; it's the greatness of God and of God's covenant faithfulness. Verse 8:

2Samuel 7:8 Now therefore, thus shall you say to My servant David, “Thus says the LORD of hosts: ‘I took you from the sheepfold, from following the sheep, to be ruler over My people, over Israel.

The point being made is that God is not making this covenant with David because he is special. David is special because God has chosen Him to serve His kingdom purposes. These are all lessons that the religious leaders in the Gospels completely missed. They were focused on the temple of the Davidic covenant and were in the process violating the very heart of the Davidic covenant.

4. God had been with David to accomplish all his successes (v. 9)

And then He says once again that every success that David has achieved, he has achieved because of God’s faithfulness:

2Samuel 7:9 And I have been with you wherever you have gone, and have cut off all your enemies from before you, and have made you a great name, like the name of the great men who *are* on the earth.

Subduing enemies, peace, and the greatness of the kingdom are central themes to the meaning of this covenant. So that’s the context. God didn’t want there to be the slightest mistaken notion that this covenant was being made because David was so good. David had blown it in the previous chapter with respect to the Ark of the Covenant. David had blown it with polygamy. In fact, 1 Chronicles highlights that fact of polygamy when it gives the parallel to this covenant passage. But despite David’s imperfections, God had a covenant loyalty to David and David had a covenant loyalty to God by grace.

II. The Provisions of the Covenant – experiencing God’s grace forevermore

A. A land (v. 10a)

With that as a context, I want to highlight five provisions that this Davidic covenant promises. The first provision was land, or a place to dwell. Verse 10:

2Samuel 7:10 Moreover I will appoint a place for My people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own and move no more;...

Of course, a place to dwell has always been on the hearts of God’s people ever since Adam was banished from the Garden of Eden. And as

redemptive history moves from Paradise lost in Genesis to Paradise Restored in Revelation, it is with this hope of a secure place to dwell. God has never forgotten that.

The first downpayment of this promise was David's reclaiming every border that had been lost since Joshua conquered the land. But under Solomon this downpayment was even more expanded as every nation in the known world became friendly with Solomon, and a part of his empire – at least until the end of his reign. But the reason I call it a downpayment is that Hebrews 11 makes the point that Abraham and the other fathers didn't receive the inheritance that was promised to them. And since God can't lie, they have to receive it by inheriting the New Heavens and the New Earth in eternity.

But there is more. Jesus said, **“I go to prepare a place for you. I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am there you may be also.”** Even in eternity there is going to be a place that is purchased and prepared for us. For now that place is in heaven. But the book of Revelation says that eventually, when all things are placed under Christ's feet, the Lord's Prayer will be completed and heaven will be completely merged with earth in an eternal place that is both tangible and intangible. Israel was thrown out of the symbolic land, but we will never be thrown out of what it symbolizes – the restoration of the place lost by Adam.

B. Safety (vv. 10-11)

The second promise is safety. Verse 10 continues:

2Samuel 7:10 ... that they may dwell in a place of their own and move no more; nor shall the sons of wickedness oppress them anymore, as previously, 2Samuel 7:11 since the time that I commanded judges *to be* over My people Israel, and have caused you to rest from all your enemies. ...

Security and safety has been a longing of the human heart since the dawn of time. There was certainly a measure of that security and safety found under Solomon. But according to the prophets, those glory years of Israel were symbolic of the time in history when the nations will be disciplined, and then *more* fully, they were symbolic of the New Heavens and New Earth. But Jesus is even now beginning the process of making all things new. And here is a point that we should not miss: the Davidic Covenant warns us not to seek safety and security apart from Jesus. Doing so will lead to idolatry. And that is a sure way to lose safety and security as verse 14 points out. Solomon for a time sought security and safety in ways that God had not authorized, and toward the end of His reign God raised up

enemies to be thorns in his side. It is only in Jesus that we can find this provision of safety and security.

C. A house/dynasty for David (v. 11b-16)

The third provision of the covenant was to give David a house or a dynasty. The end of verse 11 says,

2Samuel 7:11 ... Also the LORD tells you that He will make you a house.

2Samuel 7:12 “When your days are fulfilled and you rest with your fathers, I will set up your seed after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom.

2Samuel 7:13 He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.

2Samuel 7:14 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.

2Samuel 7:15 But My mercy shall not depart from him, as I took *it* from Saul, whom I removed from before you.

2Samuel 7:16 And your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. Your throne shall be established forever.” ’ ”

This is where God makes an intriguing play on words. In the Hebrew, the word for house (*beth*) can either mean a literal house, a temple, or a royal dynasty (like the House of Windsor). David was feeling guilty over his house, wanted to build God a splendid temple, and God says that while Solomon will indeed build a temple, that God was going to do something even greater. He would give David covenant succession, would give David a dynasty, and that out of that dynasty would emerge a Son that would make David’s kingdom, David’s throne, and David’s house be forever. And of course, that is a reference to Jesus. I’ll tease that apart for you a bit more under point E, but for now, please turn to Acts 15, where we see that the apostles in conference together agreed that the building of the church among the Gentiles was a partial fulfillment of this prophecy of the Davidic house. Acts 15:13-18.

Acts 15:13 And after they had become silent, James answered, saying, “Men and brethren, listen to me:

Acts 15:14 Simon has declared how God at the first visited the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name.

Acts 15:15 And with this the words of the prophets agree, just as it is written:

Acts 15:16 “After this I will return and will rebuild the tabernacle of David, which has fallen down; I will rebuild its ruins, and I will set it up;

Acts 15:17 So that the rest of mankind may seek the LORD, even all the Gentiles who are called by My name, says the LORD who does all these things.’

Acts 15:18 “Known to God from eternity are all His works.

James interprets Amos, who in turn was giving the full ramifications of 2 Samuel 7. This means that just as we are in the *Abrahamic* covenant, we are also in the *Davidic* covenant. Indeed, all the covenants find their fullest flower and fruit in the New Covenant, as Hebrews makes clear.

D. A throne (v. 16)

And verse 16 says that this time when the house of David will be built by David's greater Son, will also be the time that Jesus rules. Commentators have pointed out that if 2 Samuel's fulfillment is seen most fully in Jesus, *then we are de facto in the time of the kingdom. Jesus is on His throne.* 2 Samuel 7:16.

2Samuel 7:16 "And your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. Your throne shall be established forever."

This is not simply the Davidic rule before Jesus came, but refers to the *forever* rule of the last king of David, namely, Jesus Christ. And we don't have the time to trace this throne imagery through the New Testament, but many verses indicate that we aren't waiting for Christ's kingdom to appear as so many premillennialists insist. When he ascended to the right hand of the Father, He ascended to His throne. This is key to understanding eschatology. Please turn to Acts chapter 2. Acts 2:30 makes it crystal clear that this ascension to Christ's throne was an ascension to the throne of David. That's not future; that's already happened. Acts chapter 2, and beginning to read at verse 29. It says,

Acts 2:29 "Men and brethren, let me speak freely to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day.

Acts 2:30 Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, He would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne,

On whose throne? It's not a capital H. It's referring to David's throne. Whether Peter is referring to 2 Samuel 7 or to Psalm 132:11, or Psalm 89:3, they all say that it is on David's throne. So verse 30 makes it clear that Jesus ascended to sit on David's throne. He goes on in verse 31:

Acts 2:31 he, foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption.

Acts 2:32 This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses.

Acts 2:33 Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear.

Acts 2:34 "For David did not ascend into the heavens,

In other words, though it prophesied of David sitting on David's throne, the original was clearly symbolic of Jesus sitting on David's throne. So Peter says, "For David did not ascend into the heavens..."

but he says himself: "The LORD said to my Lord, 'Sit at My right hand,
So Yahweh's invitation to Jesus to sit at His right hand was an invitation to sit on the Davidic throne. Verse 25:

Acts 2:35 Till I make Your enemies Your footstool."'

What's the significance of that word "Till"? It means that the greatness of the kingdom under Jesus will be just a gradual as it was from Joshua to Solomon. It didn't happen overnight back then either. The "till" indicates a process of time. We shouldn't be surprised that there are enemies when Christ first sits on His throne – enemies like Herod and Pontius Pilate. Psalm 110 says that the Messiah would advance His kingdom in the midst of His enemies. Verse 36:

Acts 2:36 "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ."

That's why Acts 13 insists that refusal to believe the Gospel is a refusal to submit to the rule of the greater David. We are in the final stage of history – the growing kingdom of the Messiah, where the central aspects of every previous covenant will eventually be completely fulfilled. Can you see why I say that 2 Samuel 7 is such an exciting passage? It is a key to understanding prophecy as well as covenant theology.

E. With the promise of an unusual Son, an unusual throne, an unusual kingdom, and an unusual "house" (see "forever" in vv. 13,16 and "My mercy shall not depart from him" in v. 16, "no more" and "anymore" in v. 10; also see Heb. 1-3,5

And if you go back to 2 Samuel 7, there are phrases that hint at what the prophets and the New Testament make explicit – that this really is a Messianic prophecy. Let me emphasize certain words as I read some of these verses again. Verse 10 says,

2Samuel 7:10 Moreover I will appoint a place for My people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own and move *no more*; nor shall the sons of wickedness oppress them *anymore*, as previously,

If you take that literally, it can't apply to David, Solomon, or any of the later kings. Look at verse 13. Whoever this Son is, He doesn't establish a temporary kingdom. Instead it says,

2Samuel 7:13 He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom *forever*

It's a forever throne. That was not true of the Old Testament kingdom. Look at verse 15:

2Samuel 7:15 But My mercy shall not depart from him, as I took *it* from Saul, whom I removed from before you.

Isaiah 55:3 interprets this verse as the “sure mercies of David.” They are sure mercies because God told David that “My mercy shall not depart.” Did God’s mercy ever depart from human kings who descended from David? Yes it did. But Isaiah 55 says that God’s sure mercies will never depart from the coming Messiah. He said, “**And I will make an everlasting covenant with you— The sure mercies of David.**” Isaiah interprets it as an everlasting covenant.

Look at verse 16:

2Samuel 7:16 And your house and your kingdom shall be established *forever* before you. Your throne shall be established *forever.*”

It's these references to a never ending kingdom, never ending throne, never ending house, and never ending mercies, and never ending Son that were hints even to interpreters *before* the time of Jesus that it had to be referring to the coming Messiah – who of course has already come. Even verse 14, which speaks of chastening, though it has a partial fulfillment in Solomon (because he is part of the body of Christ – and he was severely chastened towards the end of his reign), yet even *that* (according to commentators like Bergan) has a reference to Jesus who was a suffering king because He identified with our sins and Solomon’s sins, and the sins of other kings. And Christian kings must rule as those united to Jesus or they destroy the purpose of the Davidic covenant.

1. Note that though Solomon fulfills some aspects of this prophecy (v. 13-14; Acts 7:47), the New Testament repeatedly applies the passage to Jesus.

a) He was the temple (Matt. 26:61; 27:40; Mark 14:58; 15:29; John 2:19-22; Acts 15:13-18).

Near the end of your outlines I have given six verses from the Gospels that prove that Jesus was the temple. They all prophesied that when Jesus’ body rose from the dead, His body would replace the physical temple. But there is a double entendre. Since the church is Christ’s body, Acts 15 quotes Amos to prove that the building of the church is the building up of David’s house or tabernacle.

**b) He possesses the eternal throne (Matt 19:28-29;
Luke 1:31-33; Rev. 11:15; 22:5)**

Then I give some Scriptures that prove that Jesus will reign forever and ever. I'll just read one. Luke 1:31-33 says, "**You shall call His name JESUS. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end.**" You could not get a clearer fulfillment of all of the details of 2 Samuel 7. I won't read any of the other Scriptures in your outline because this one all by itself shows that Jesus was the eternal Son of God, the possessor of an imperishable kingdom, and the inheritor of the promise of an eternal dynasty and an eternal throne.

**c) He possesses the imperishable kingdom (Luke
1:31-33; 22:29-30; John 18:36)**

**d) He is the Son of God (Mark 1:1; Luke 1:31-33;
John 20:31; Acts 9:20; Heb. 1:5; Matt 27:43; Luke
22:70)**

2. Note that though Solomon's throne/authority would be preserved forever (v. 13), it was not Solomon's seed that would be preserved forever, but David's seed through Nathan (v. 16).

a) Jesus the biological son of David through David's son Nathan; and the legal son (not biological) of Solomon (Matt 1:6,16; Luke 3:23-32; Jer. 22:24-30)

b) How this necessitated the virgin birth

But I am going to skip now to the end of the outline. I want to show you one more hint in this passage that it points to Jesus. And this hint makes it legitimate for the New Testament to say that this passage teaches the virgin birth of Jesus. It's not explicit, but it is there by logical deduction. Though both David's throne and Solomon's throne are said to be forever, only *David's* seed and *David's* house are said to *rule* on that throne forever. There is nothing in the text to indicate that *Solomon's* seed would rule forever. And I am going to have to pull three strands together for you to see the significance of this.

First, turn to 1 Chronicles 29:3, and we will see what the throne of David and the throne of Solomon symbolized. 1 Chronicles 29:3.

1Chronicles 29:23 Then Solomon sat on the throne of the LORD [All capital letters LORD means “Yahweh.” Very interesting! Solomon sat on the throne of Yahweh!] as king instead of David his father, and prospered; and all Israel obeyed him.

Notice that the throne of David and the throne that Solomon sat on are called the throne of Yahweh. They were reigning as representatives of God’s eternal reign. Their throne was symbolic of God’s eternal reign. So their throne was called Yahweh’s throne. So there is no problem in calling the throne of either one of them as being eternal. 2 Samuel 7:13 calls Solomon’s throne eternal. Why? Because it was the throne of Yahweh. 2 Samuel 7:16 calls David’s throne eternal. Why? Because it is the same throne. It is Yahweh’s throne.

But the same is *not* true of the *seed* or of the *dynasty* of Solomon. If Jesus descended from Solomon or if He was treated as being the *seed* of Solomon or the *house* of Solomon, we would have a major problem. And that problem can be seen in Jeremiah 22. In that chapter, Coniah, the surviving son of Solomon, was cursed forever, and God swore that none of his descendants would sit on the throne. Let me read that to you. Jeremiah 22:24-30.

Jeremiah 22:24 “As I live,” says the LORD, “though Coniah the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, were the signet on My right hand, yet I would pluck you off;

Jeremiah 22:25 and I will give you into the hand of those who seek your life, and into the hand of *those* whose face you fear—the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and the hand of the Chaldeans.

Jeremiah 22:26 So I will cast you out, and your mother who bore you, into another country where you were not born; and there you shall die.

Jeremiah 22:27 But to the land to which they desire to return, there they shall not return.

Jeremiah 22:28 “Is this man Coniah a despised, broken idol— A vessel in which *is* no pleasure? Why are they cast out, he and his descendants, and cast into a land which they do not know?

Jeremiah 22:29 O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the LORD!

Jeremiah 22:30 Thus says the LORD: “Write this man down as childless, a man *who* shall not prosper in his days; For none of his descendants shall prosper, Sitting on the throne of David, And ruling anymore in Judah.’ ”

Let me pull together the threads of why this is significant. Joseph, the legal father of Jesus, traced his lineage back to David through Coniah and Solomon. So if Joseph had been the *biological* father of Jesus, Jesus could not have inherited the throne. Can you see that? Matthew gives the genealogy of Joseph while Luke gives the genealogy of Mary, the biological

mother of Jesus. Her genealogy goes back through a different son of David – Nathan. Not Nathan the prophet, but Nathan the son of David. So Christ’s legal right to the throne of David comes through his adoptive father, Joseph. But Christ’s blood right to the throne comes through his earthly mother, Mary. 100% of his blood was legitimate heir to the throne. But since kings could adopt sons and give them a legal right to the throne, it was no problem for Jesus to be the adopted son of Joseph. And this is so cool! It would have been impossible for those two requirements for the Messiah to have been fulfilled apart from a virgin birth. If Jesus had been a *biological* son of Solomon and Coniah, he would have been excluded from the throne. And I believe that is why Luke 1 connects the fulfillment of 2 Samuel 7 together with the virgin birth of Jesus. Even the tiniest details of prophecy are sure and certain. We can trust even the most obscure passages of Scripture to be true down to the tiniest details. As Jesus said, “The Scripture cannot be broken” (John 10:35). Meredith Kline, as a pessimistic amillennialist, was interpreting a passage in Daniel as referring to the Second Coming. This was in a seminary class. And I raised my hand and asked him how he dealt with the preposition “to” – It says that Jesus came “to the Ancient of Days.” That looks more like the ascension of Jesus than His Second Coming when He will come back from the Ancient of Days. And His response is that you should take the overall meaning and not quibble over every little word. But Jesus told us to do so – “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.”

3. Note, though Solomon was chastened with the rod of men (1 Kings 11:14,23-26), Hebrews portrays Jesus as bearing afflictions as our substitute.

Conclusion

And I want conclude with two more applications. First, don’t see the New Covenant as abrogating the previous five covenants. Galatians says that no covenant of God can be abrogated. The New Covenant fulfills and builds upon them, and the core of each previous covenant is critical to understanding the nature and extent of Christ’s redemptive purposes for planet earth. Let me give some hints of that.

The individual and family blessings that were lost in Adam’s fall can be restored through Jesus Christ. Covenant succession can be restored. Spiritual warfare can be restored. Romans 16 says that by our union with Jesus, it isn’t just Jesus who crushed Satan’s head – we are given the privilege of trampling Satan under our feet because the New Covenant fills out the Genesis 3 covenant. The spiritual warfare that the Gospels talk so

much about is the logical extension of God's beginning of the covenant of grace in Genesis 3.

Do we still have a rainbow? Then Genesis tells us that the covenant with Noah continues to be in effect, and we need to value animals and stewardship of the earth. That's a foundation for what E. Calvin Beisner is doing with his work on the environment. And just as the covenant with Noah and creation was sealed with blood, Christ's New Covenant purchases and restores creation. We should not have a secular approach to environmentalism, but a Christian approach that is Biblical.

And of course, the New Testament says over and over again that we are in the Abrahamic covenant. The church-issues of Genesis 17 continue to bless and bind the church in the New Testament, with only one change – baptism replacing circumcision. Galatians 3-4 says that there is no other change. Galatians 4:1 says that our babies are still heirs. They would have to be because of the organic connection of all of these covenants.

What about the covenant under Moses? God's purposes for nations under Moses are being carried forward by the Second Moses, Jesus, as He uses the church to disciple all nations and teach them to observe everything that He has commanded. Listen to what Jesus says in Matthew 5:17-19.

Matthew 5:17 “Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.

Matthew 5:18 For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.

Matthew 5:19 Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches *them*, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

But then He goes on to say that we dare not approach the Mosaic covenant apart from Jesus.

Matthew 5:20 For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds *the righteousness* of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.

It is only through Jesus that the Mosaic covenant can be fulfilled, and therefore we must read it through New Covenant eyes and as just one phase among many from Paradise Lost to Paradise Restored.

What about the putting of all enemies under David's feet? 1 Corinthians 15:25 says of Jesus, “**For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet.**” The whole chapter indicates that Jesus has to remain on His throne at the right hand of the Father until all enemies are put

under His feet, and He cannot come back until all prophecies are fulfilled and the worldwide success of the Gospel has been achieved. Paul says that even the “last enemy” to be conquered, that is, death, will be conquered just before His Second Coming, when we are caught up to meet him in the air, and the dead rise, and the whole triumphant army of the elect comes back with Christ to judge the world. That means that we have a glorious future ahead of us before the Second Coming. Could this be why the prophets of old wished that they could live in our own age? It is an incredible privilege to be New Covenant Christians.

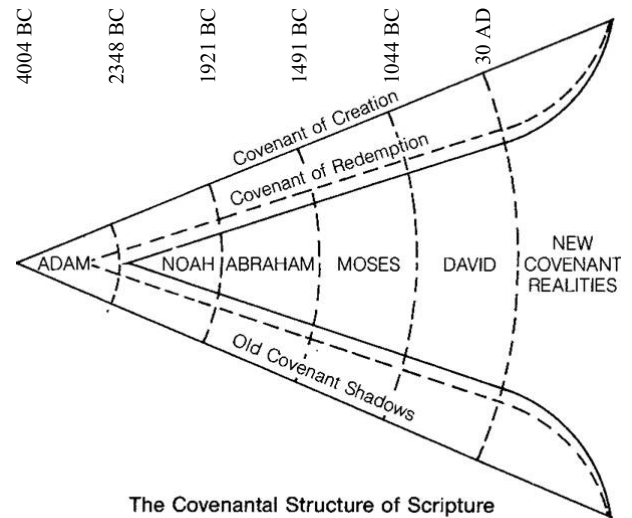
But one more application, and this is perhaps the most important one: our inheritance is not just the earth, but heaven for all eternity. The forevers of this chapter are our forevers. And they should so inspire us, that just as David praised and glorified God in Psalm 105 after verse 17, we too should make the rest of our lives an exercise in praise and service to Jesus. And even that praise and service will not be able to earn God’s favor, since God produces those good works in us just as He did in David. From eternity past when God planned out the covenant to eternity future when the covenant realities will be enjoyed without the presence of sin, it is all of grace. And that should make us sing, *Sole Deo Gloria*, just as David did. Not unto us, not unto us, O Lord, but to Your name be the glory. Amen? Amen. Let’s pray.

The Davidic Covenant 2 Samuel 7:1-17

By Phillip G. Kayser at DCC on 12-9-2012

Introduction

- I. The Context of the Covenant – God’s prior covenants grace
 - A. God’s covenant faithfulness preceded this covenant (v. 1 and earlier chapters). Each historical covenant builds on the previous, but does not replace the previous.
 - B. God’s covenant faithfulness moved David to want to bless God (v. 2)
 - C. Though the intent was right (v. 3), and though God honored David with a title on a par with the patriarchs, Moses, and the Messiah (v. 5a), and though God would have his son Solomon build such a temple (v. 13), God wants to be clear that this temple and this covenant would be all of monergistic grace (vv. 5bff).
 1. First, God didn’t need such a thing, and so there was no earning of God’s favor (vv. 5b-6)
 2. God had never asked for such a temple (v. 7)
 3. God had exalted David from obscurity to significant service (v. 8)
 4. God had been with David to accomplish all his successes (v. 9)
- II. The Provisions of the Covenant – experiencing God’s grace forevermore
 - A. A land (v. 10a)
 - B. Safety (vv. 10-11)
 - C. A house/dynasty for David (v. 11b-16)
 - D. A throne (v. 16)
 - E. With the promise of an unusual Son, an unusual throne, an unusual kingdom, and an unusual “house” (see “forever” in vv. 13,16 and “My mercy shall not depart from him” in v. 16, “no more” and “anymore” in v. 10; also see Heb. 1-3,5)
 1. Note that though Solomon fulfills some aspects of this prophecy (v. 13-14; Acts 7:47), the New Testament repeatedly applies the passage to Jesus.
 - a) He was the temple (Matt. 26:61; 27:40; Mark 14:58; 15:29; John 2:19-22; Acts 15:13-18).
 - b) He possesses the eternal throne (Matt 19:28-29; Luke 1:31-33; Rev. 11:15; 22:5)
 - c) He possesses the imperishable kingdom (Luke 1:31-33; 22:29-30; John 18:36)
 - d) He is the Son of God (Mark 1:1; Luke 1:31-33; John 20:31; Acts 9:20; Heb. 1:5; Matt 27:43; Luke 22:70)
 2. Note that though Solomon’s throne/authority would be preserved forever (v. 13), it was not Solomon’s seed that would be preserved forever, but David’s seed through Nathan (v. 16).
 - a) Jesus the biological son of David through David’s son Nathan; and the legal son (not biological) of Solomon (Matt 1:6,16; Luke 3:23-32; Jer. 22:24-30)
 - b) How this necessitated the virgin birth
 3. Note, though Solomon was chastened with the rod of men (1 Kings 11:14,23-26), Hebrews portrays Jesus as bearing afflictions as our substitute.



Conclusion