

The following is a rough transcript, not in its final form and may be updated.

A Covenant Making God

II Samuel 7:1-17

Intro: the last vs. of **ch6** says that Michal had no children to the day of her death. She had falsely accused David of disgracing himself in front of his subjects – even the slave girls. David rejected her accusation & her humanistic idea of dignity. For David, to be humble before the Lord was the upmost in human dignity & he assured her he would humble himself in his own sight even more. He also declared that in doing so, he would be held on honor by his subjects – even the slave girls. The inference is that while David would be honored, Michal would be disgraced & that's exactly what happened. In that culture, for a wife to have no children was a disgrace, especially if her husband rejected her. We don't know if this was David's doing or if Michal's bareness came from **YHWH**.

What we can say, at least for David, Michal's bareness was a blessing from the Lord. It prevented Saul's family from continuing in Israel & becoming a threat to David's throne. David & Jonathan had covenanted to reign together back in **I Sam 23** but **YHWH** nixed that plan by allowing Jonathan to die in battle. **YHWH** wanted the throne & line of David to be kept separate from any other dynasty b/c David's royal lineage would eventually culminate in the birth of the long awaited **Messiah: Jesus Christ!** This will be the theme & focus of **ch7**.

Volumes of theological dissertation have been written about ch7 & rightly so b/c it records **YHWH**'s promise of an everlasting dynasty to David. Known as the Davidic covenant, it is just as important as the Abrahamic covenant. God 1st announced the coming of a Savior for mankind in **Gen 3:15**, telling us that the Savior would be a man & not an angel. The Abrahamic covenant of **Gen 12:3** tells us He will be a Hebrew who will bless the whole world. In Jacob's blessing to his sons in **Gen 49:10** we learn that Messiah would come thru the tribe of Judah & here, **YHWH** informs David that the Savior will come thru his family & **Micah 5:2** says He would be born in Bethlehem: the City of David.

With all the theology & doctrinal suppositions that have been published concerning this covenant & its importance to God's plan of salvation, it would be tempting to camp out here & dig down deep into the wealth of knowledge & leave no stone unturned but we must resist that temptation.

Why? B/c, tho **ch7 records** the Davidic covenant, it's not really **about** the covenant. No, the emphasis here is not on the covenant but (like all Scripture) is on the covenant God. Let's not focus on the promise but on the Promiser. We can glean some things about David's character here but we need most is to discover what **ch7** says about David's God? What can we learn about **YHWH** from this passage?

1-5-Picture the scene: David & Nathan are relaxing, probably drinking an after-dinner coffee on David's roof. The military situation is stable for now but something's bugging David: he now lives in a beautiful house of cedar while the ark of God is sitting in a tent. It's nice to have the ark in Jerusalem but shouldn't it also have suitable housing? David had a problem with this but he didn't need to explain it to Nathan b/c he knew what David was thinking! It was **noble, rational & right!** You didn't have to think twice about it – Nathan told David to just "Go for it!"

But, something odd happened later that night: revelation rejected reason! Odd b/c it all seemed as logical as having dip at a crawfish boil – it's just what you do! But **YHWH's** word was clear, "**Are you going to build a house for Me?**" Understand, the answer isn't "No" just "Not yet." David was not the 1 who will build the temple. **YHWH** will elaborate later but for now we have His answer: David's (& **Nathan's**) plan to build the temple must be put on hold.

We've seen similar situations before in the books of Samuel: Eli observing Hannah praying (**thought she was drunk**); Samuel's 1st glimpse of Eliab (**thought he'd be king**); David's response to Nabal's rebuff (**thought he'd teach a lesson**)

David moving the ark (**thought he knew what he was doing**); now David & Nathan conspiring a good plan for **YHWH's** honor & He's having none of it! The point: **God's servants often mean well but they lack the wisdom of God!** The text teaches that **the kingdom of God is never safe in human hands, no matter how godly those hands may be.** Even God's finest servants are often deficient in properly discerning His will. What do we do? If **God's wisdom** is what we lack then **God's wisdom** is what we must seek. How? **Jam 1:5** Ask for it! We all need **God's wisdom** to look beyond what seems right in order to lay hold of **what is that good & acceptable & perfect will of God** (Rom 12:2b)

6-7- The Lord explains 1 reason why David's plan must be put on hold. Now, He's not angry over David's offer so there may be some playfulness in His response. "I've never asked for a temple. I'm good w/ the status quo for now." He paints an vivid contrast saying He has **not dwelt** (to sit, remain, dwell) but **has moved** (walk, travel around) in a tent. He means He has not settled in a house b/c He's been on the go. Why? B/c so far, His people Israel have been on the move (wilderness wandering; unsettled conditions of judges period) & He has travelled /wandered w/ Israel. How can He settle down when His people are still unsettled themselves?

What's God saying about Himself? He's a God who travels with His people in all their up & down, back & forth journeys & wanderings! Do they live in tents? So does He! Are they pilgrims on their way to the land of Promise? He is a pilgrim God, sharing the troubles of the journey with them. Now we see why **YHWH** doesn't need a temple yet. He must make a secure place for Israel 1st! He will not rest until He gives **rest** to His people!

We talked about David's humility in **ch6** but can you see the astounding **humility** of David's God here? Should we not stop & marvel at the condescension of the covenant God; the God who will not enjoy rest until He gives His people rest; the God who stoops down to share the hardships of His people ; the God who is not ashamed to say He's been traveling around in a tent with them. Do we understand how **close** God is to each of His people? The reality of **YHWH's humility** in **vs6-7** provides us with a framework for grasping the truth of **Phil 2:5-8**.

8-11- This is the main gist of **YHWH's** word to David, the very word of the **Lord of hosts** & that word is **grace**! Here, God rehearses His goodness to David in the past & promises His goodness to David & Israel in the future & all of this without any temple building on David's part. Peter refers to the **manifold** (multifaceted) **grace of God** (I Ptr 4:10). What does our text reveal concerning the reality & the glory of **YHWH's** grace in relation to His people?

1) He **insists** on it - **YHWH** is promising grace (**10-11**) on top of grace (**8-9**)! But notice: this future grace is not in response to David's building a temple for **YHWH** b/c He's rejected that plan for now. In fact, **YHWH** answers His own question from **5b** in **11c**. David is not the active initiator of God's grace; he's merely the passive recipient. **YHWH** graciously **insists** that He will be

the Builder & the house will be David's, not the other way around!

In ancient pagan cultures of the Near East, it was common for a king or ruler to attempt to curry favor from their false gods by building or restoring a temple for that particular god. The hope was that the king would then receive some promise relating to his reign or victories in battle. These efforts (well documented) stand in stark contrast to how the covenant God of Israel acts. He won't let David build a temple-house for Him but insists on building a dynasty-house for David. It wasn't that the temple was unimportant but it could wait a few yrs. The point is: **YHWH's** king can't lay claim to **YHWH's** favor by building Him a lavish temple. Instead **YHWH**, the giving God, reminds David of past grace, piles on more grace & puts the temple on ice. You can't out-grace a grace-giving God who **insists** on giving grace!

2) He's **preoccupied** with it – sandwiched between the promises to David is a promise to Israel (10-11a) indicating that Israel's security is at the heart of **YHWH's** concern. He'll make David secure b/c He wants to make Israel secure. He establishes the Davidic dynasty for the sake of Israel. His kingship will be the instrument **YHWH** uses to plant Israel safely in the land He gave them. He intends David's reign to usher in a new era: the end of the terror, trials & turmoil of the judges yrs. **YHWH** has always wanted His people Israel to have a home & to enjoy it in safety.

Now, if you know your Bible history, you know the Davidic kings, for the most part, failed to maintain a secure place for Israel /Judah. In time, the people are carted off to Babylon & exile. But, **YHWH** never cancels His program. Even in exile, He spoke promises of a future & a hope & filled them with assurances that Israel will dwell safely & that no one will make them afraid (Jer 3Xs; Ezk 3Xs; Hos, Mic, Zeph, Zech). He's preoccupied w/ the safety of His people! The evidence of Scripture: God never abandons His passion to establish a safe home for His people – at least not until he brings them into a city that is so safe that the gates can be left wide open all the time (**Rev 21:25**)!

12-17- The heart of the covenant: **YHWH's** promise to David. The main feature of the promise is: it's **indestructible!**

1) **Death doesn't annul it** (12-13) the promise is valid even when David dies. Just as **YHWH** promised the land to Abraham's seed so He promises the throne to David's seed (**any individual descendant & an ongoing line of**

kings).

2) **Sin can't destroy it** (14-15) **YHWH** is a realist – they're going to sin & when a reigning Davidic king sins, he'll find that having **YHWH** as a father isn't all roses & clover but discipline & punishment. But, He imposes a limit: **shall not depart!** He adds a bottom to the bottomless pit b/c if the promise depended on human faithfulness, it would be doomed from the start. He'll definitely chastise any king that sins but that judgment will never include a total removal of His covenant love (*hesed*). **YHWH** will have to deal with sinful kings but He will never allow sin to have dominion over His dominion! Sin will never **dissolve hesed**. David's line will never meet Saul's end. In the "house" analogy: Sin may bring disaster on any current resident of the house (*dynasty*) but it will never demolish the house (*dynasty*).

3) **Time won't exhaust it** (16) Hear the determination of **YHWH**: He states 3Xs that David's throne is established forever! As long as He has a human people for His own possession, David's seed will have sovereignty over it. This promise to David will never expire, it will never wear out, it will never be exhausted by the passage of time. Let **death, sin & time** do what they will, they'll never frustrate **YHWH's** kingdom plan thru David's dynasty. It's **inevitable!**

God will overwhelm **death, sin & time** if need be to bring His plan to pass. In fact, He already has! Over the yrs, the Davidic kings failed miserably & Israel was carted off to exile. Eventually, a child is born (Davidic) & a Son is given. In Him is no sin. He became sin for us on the cross & defeated it there. He defeated death when He rose from the tomb & now He reigns eternally at the right hand of God, the place of supreme power & authority in the universe. Nothing else remains to be done except for us to display to the world the reality of Christ's reign in our hearts.

God is constant, His word is constant – His promises are constant. **YHWH's** kingdom is unstoppable! If God's big promises are so reliably constant, shouldn't we be able to trust all His smaller ones?

It's interesting to me that in David's down time, he thought of ways to honor God. In his free time, old Neb like to look around & take pride in what he had built. Apparently, Solomon liked to collect wealth & wives, entertain & write. Not David. Don't get me wrong, David has his faults but I believe David did more to honor the Lord than most other believers ever have. God had a plan for David's life & for the most part, it was achieved with

astounding success.

Guess what? There's a calling on your life, too; a great, big, God-sized calling. God has plans for you & has been dreaming about them since before you were even born. Eph 2:10 says we're **created...for good works**. You are destined for impact in this world! How will we see that? Seek to honor the Lord with all your life & He will pour His grace out upon you & grace for grace! 😊