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God Keeps His Promises

2 Samuel 7:12-17

“Many forms of Government have been tried and will be tried in this world of sin and woe. No one pretends that democracy is perfect or all-wise. Indeed, it has been said that democracy is the worst form of government except all those other forms that have been tried from time to time.”

So goes the well-known quote by Winston Churchill before the British House of Commons in 1947. His quote is a reminder that our form of government is far from perfect. We certainly see many problems with our political system. Many see the lack of citizens' involvement in the electoral process or the “Dysfunction in Washington” as key problems. Scandals, crimes, cover-ups, and moral failures may cause us to lose faith in our leaders. We may become discouraged and sink into worry and anxiety when we contemplate the state of our government, culture, and society. In the Bible we saw the rise and fall of many governments and the failure of many political leaders. This failure of human governments causes us to long for a leader who will rule with righteousness, justice, and truth. God promised to David long ago just such a leader, and, as we shall see, God keeps His promises!

We come to a point in David's life where God has blessed him greatly. David has become king over the nation of Israel. God has given them victory over their enemies. David's armies captured Jerusalem and he set up the capitol there further uniting the nation. David brought the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem, making the city the center of worship as well as the political capital. David realized that God had established him as king over Israel and “...the Lord had given him rest on every side from all his enemies...” so David desired to build a temple for the Lord - “See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwells within tent curtains” (2 Samuel 7:2) The Ark was still housed in the Tabernacle. David wanted to build a proper temple to worship and glorify God. God sent Nathan the prophet to tell David he would not be the one to build the temple, but then God makes an amazing promise to David instead.

God's Promise to David

God makes an amazing promise to David:

“12 When your days are complete and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your descendant after you, who will come forth from you, and I will establish his kingdom. 13 He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. 14 I will be a father to him and he will be a son to Me; when he commits iniquity, I will correct him with the rod of men and the strokes of the sons of men, 15 but My lovingkindness shall not depart from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you.

16 Your house and your kingdom shall endure before Me forever; your throne shall be established forever.”” 17 In accordance with all these words and all this vision, so Nathan spoke to David.

2 Samuel. 7:12-17

God made a promise to David that one of his descendants would reign forever. This promise is what the Bible calls a covenant. A covenant is a promise or binding agreement between two or more parties, what we might call a contract. In Bible times covenants often involved obligations as well as the guarantee of blessings for faithfulness and consequences for unfaithfulness. A biblical covenant is in essence simply a sovereignly given promise (usually with stipulations). It is what God promises to and demands of His people.

As with many covenants and prophecies, this promise has both a near term and a long term fulfillment. The promise was partially fulfilled as David's son Solomon did indeed build the temple. However Solomon, though perhaps the wisest of men sinned foolishly in his later years, bringing God's judgment and the division of the kingdom. (1 Kings 11). God kept His promise to correct David's descendants rather than set them aside from ruling as He had Saul. Though it is not recorded in 2 Samuel 7, this covenant did have obligations on David and his descendants. Solomon prays as he is dedicating the Temple: “Now therefore, O LORD, the God of Israel, keep with Your servant David my father that which You have promised him, saying, ‘You shall not lack a man to sit on the

throne of Israel, if only your sons take heed to their way to walk before Me as you have walked” (1 Kings 8:25).¹ David’s descendants, beginning with Solomon, failed to heed their way to walk before the Lord. Eventually, David’s descendants were set aside from ruling, for a time, until One would come who did walk before the Lord and follow Him completely. This One was Jesus Christ! Scripture makes it clear that Jesus is the fulfillment of this promise made to David long ago.

Isaiah prophesied concerning this coming ruler’s reign:

6 For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. 7 There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, On the throne of David and over his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness from then on and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this. Isaiah 9:6-7

The angel’s announcement to Mary declared who Jesus was to be:

31 And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus. 32 He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; 33 and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end.” Luke 1:31-33

The lengthy genealogy in Matthew 1 was given to demonstrate how Jesus was a descendant of King David.

Jesus Came First to Suffer, Then To Rule

The people in Jesus’ day were looking for a Messiah who would immediately set up a kingdom and rule over all. The Scriptures are clear, however, that the “Son of David” would first come to live a holy, obedient life so that He could be that leader who walked in uprightness and did all that God commanded. He would then suffer and die to save His people from their sin. We cannot but help to think about those words in God’s promise to David: “...When he commits iniquity, I will correct him with the rod of men and the strokes of the sons of men... (2 Samuel 7:14). Though Jesus never committed any iniquity, God treated Him as though He had on our behalf. Each of us has sinned, and deserve the righteous judgment and punishment for our sin. Yet He who knew no sin became sin on our behalf (2 Cor. 5:21). He bore the rod and the strokes so that we do not have to. He suffered and died for us and rose again to provide victory over sin and death for us. It is when we repent and trust Christ alone for salvation that we

gain the forgiveness and righteousness He has provided.

So What Does God’s Promise to David Mean to Us?

We take part in this promise when we turn to Christ in repentance and faith. The greatest mark of David’s walk with God was his faith. He believed God and believed God’s promises. It is one thing to believe in God. It is quite another to *believe God*.

The King is Coming! Jesus is coming one day to rule in perfect justice and righteousness over all things. God has kept His promise to David to provide One who will rule with justice and righteousness forever. Even now Christ is seated at the right hand of God (Eph. 1:20; Col. 3:1; Heb. 8:1). The chronicles of Israel’s history recounts the failure of her kings and how this led them into judgment. This caused godly people to long for the righteous king God had promised. The weaknesses of our own system of government and the failure of our leaders should stir us to long for the coming of the One who will rule perfectly. We can believe God’s promise that Jesus will rule. We should not put too much faith in politics and human leaders. This will keep us from becoming too excited or too discouraged with what takes place here in the capitol from day to day.

Our Role Today is to seek to submit ourselves to the “Son of David” and to announce the Good News of this kingdom to every person and every nation. This is **personal holiness** and we learn the attitudes and customs of a new kingdom, the kingdom of Christ. And it is **personal evangelism** – telling people that the true King against whom they have rebelled is willing to grant them forgiveness and reconciliation through Christ.²

We can trust God to work on our behalf. The Bible is the story of how God made promises in the Old Testament and how He kept them through Christ in the New.

“...The main point is that God exerts all his omnipotence and all his omniscience to do good to his people, and we are that people if we follow Christ in the obedience of faith. The most practical truths any Christian can know are that God is all-powerful, all-wise, and all for you.”³

¹See also 1 Kings 6:11-12; 9:4-9; 1 Chronicles 22:8-13; 28:1-10

²Piper, John. *God’s Covenant with David*. Sermon December 18, 1983. www.desiringgod.org.

³ibid.

BIBLE STUDIES

Lobbyists / Staff: Tuesdays, 12:00 Noon

Legislators / Elected Officials: Thursdays, 8 AM; 12:00

TREASURER’S CONFERENCE ROOM (EB 54)