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The LORD's Covenant with David

Second Samuel 7:1-17

and First Chronicles 17:1-15

The LORD's covenant with David DIG: How prophetic was Nathan's initial counsel? Why did that change later on? What is God's attitude regarding David's house of cedar? What is meant by YHVH reminding David of his indebtedness? While that might motivate David to build a house for the LORD, how does such dependency actually preclude "favor?" Why does ADONAI go on to say no to David building Him a Temple but yes to his dynasty lasting forever? What about God's promises here would surprise David the most? Which one would reassure him? In what sense today is David's house and Kingdom established forever?

REFLECT: When you get "a good idea" that you think will further God's Kingdom, do you wait in His presence to ask Him if it really came from Him or if it is nothing more than your own thinking? How do you react when YHVH says "No" or "Not yet" to you? Humility - the most surprising of all the traits of ADONAI. Do you agree? Why or why not. In the matter of a Temple for the LORD, David was to be a passive recipient rather than an active initiator. Do you think there is a place for both in the life of a believer? Which do you think should be primary? How does God's promise to David impact us today?

998 BC

This chapter follows up on the themes of the previous chapter, in that **the Temple** would have enshrined **the Ark**, and the question of an heir, touched on by the barrenness of Michal, became a subject of **God's** special purpose. **Second Samuel 7** is rightly regarded as one of the theological highlights of the TaNaKh. **Nathan's** prophecy forms the basis for the title-deed of **the house of David** to rule both **Isra'el** and **Judah**, which it did indeed exercise over **Judah** for fully four centuries.



The fact that its rule came to an end, and had been seen by the prophets to be failing, gave rise to a second theme that developed as a reinterpretation of the promises to **David**: **In that day I will restore the fallen house of David. I will repair its damaged walls. From the ruins I will rebuild it and restore its former glory (Amos 9:11).** A descendant of **David**, a **child**, would establish **His** throne with justice and righteousness (see the commentary on **Isaiah**, to see link click [Cm](#) - **For To Us A Child Is Born**). And a **branch** from the **stump of Jesse** would create an ideal **Kingdom** in **the far eschatological future** (**Isaiah 11:1-9; Jeremiah 23:5; Zechariah 3:8**). In other words, this chapter was to become the source of the Messianic Hope as it was developed in the message of the prophets and the psalmists.²⁷⁹

The Background: After the king was settled in his palace and ADONAI had given him rest from all his enemies around him (see [Cx](#) - **David's Victories**), he said to Nathan the prophet, "Here I am, living in a house of cedar, while the ark of God remains in a tent." Nathan, now David's personal advisor after the death of Samuel, replied to the king, "Whatever you have in mind, go ahead and do it, for the LORD is with you," but this was Nathan's personal opinion (**Second Samuel 7:1-3; First Chronicles 17:1-2**). He did not say: ADONAI says . . .

But that night the word of YHVH came to Nathan, correcting his premature approval of David's plans, saying: Go and tell my servant David, "This is what the LORD says: You are not the one to build Me a house (Temple) 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. He is the God who travels with His people in all their topsy-turvy, here-and-there journeys and wanderings. Do His people live in tents? So does He! Are they a pilgrim people on their way to the Land of promise? So He is the pilgrim God, sharing the rigors of the journey with them.²⁸⁰ More than that, God said: Wherever I have moved with all the Israelites, did I ever say to any of their tribes whom I commanded to shepherd My people Isra'el, "Why have

you not built Me a house of cedar?" YHVH had commanded that a **Tabernacle be built, but **He** did not demand that all **the tribes** of **Isra'el** should build a **Temple (Second Samuel 7:4-7; First Chronicles 17:3-6).****

There you have it - a clear, unequivocal statement from **God** that **His** answer to **David** was "No!" **He** gave no explanation. It was simply a loving, firm refusal. It was wrapped up in some wonderful promises, but nevertheless, this **man** who offered **his** life for a tremendous task was met by the divine "No!"

I wonder, has something like this has happened in your life? Perhaps you can recall a time when **God** said "No" to you, and there was no explanation at all. You offered your life for **His** service, yet it became perfectly clear as the weeks and months passed that **ADONAI** said "No." Perhaps, you yearned for a home and children. Or grandchildren. But as the years slipped by, you come to understand that **YHVH** said, "No." Someday you will understand, because **the LORD** has a reason for every denial. **He** may give no explanation at the time. **He** simply wants us to trust **Him**.²⁸¹

Now then, tell my servant David. This is an honored title, but at the same time a reminder to **David** that, though **he** is **king**, and surrounded by those who serve **him**, **he** too has a **servant** role in relationship to **his God**. It is worth remembering that it was the role of a **servant** that **Yeshua** was most profoundly foreshadowed in the TaNaKh (see the commentary on [Isaiah Ho - The Servant of God the Father](#)). If **David** had **his** eyes on greatness, it would begin with **submission and service to ADONAI**.²⁸² The most important thing is, how we react when **God** says, "No." In **David's** case, **the LORD's** refusal became the source of tremendous blessing.

ADONAI-Tzva'ot reminded **David** to keep in mind that day when **he had been taken from the pasture, from tending the flock, and appointed ruler over God's people Isra'el.** **David** had been known as a great general, but **God** reminded **him**, "**I have been with you wherever you have gone, and I 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.**" This is exactly what **YHVH** promised **Abram** (see the commentary on [Genesis Dt - I Will Bless Those Who Bless You and Whoever Curses You I Will Curse](#)). And I will provide a place for My people **Isra'el** and will plant them so that they can have a home of their own and no longer be disturbed. Wicked people will not oppress them anymore, as they did at the beginning, and have done ever since the time I appointed leaders over My people **Isra'el**. The words **I will also give you rest from all your enemies (Second Samuel 7:8-11a; First Chronicles 17:7-10a)** are taken word-for-

word from **Deuteronomy 12:10**. **The near historical fulfillment** was during **David's** reign and **the far eschatological fulfillment** will be during the messianic Kingdom (see the commentary on **Revelation Fh - The Dispensation of the Messianic Kingdom**).

The Covenant: ADONAI's first announcement of the coming of **the Savior** was given in **Genesis 3:15**, informing us that **the Savior** would be a human being and not an angel. Then **Genesis 12:3** tells us that **He** would be **a Jew** who would bless the whole world, and **Genesis 49:10** that **He** would come through **the tribe of Y'hudah**. In this covenant, **the LORD** announced to **David** that **Messiah** would come through **his** family, and **Micah 5:2** prophesied that **He** would be born in **Beit-Lechem**, the city of **David** (**Matthew 2:6**). No wonder **the king** was so elated when **he** learned that **Messiah** would be known as **the son of David** (**Mattityahu 1:1**).²⁸³ Moreover, ADONAI declares that **YHVH Himself will establish a house for you. David wanted to build a house for God; instead, ADONAI would build a house for David (First Samuel 7:11b)**. Then **the Ruach ha-Kodesh** gives us two different ways that this dynasty will be built.

First, the promise will not be negated by **David's** death. **When your days are over and you rest with your ancestors**, an expression that suggests fellowship beyond the grave, **I will raise up your near historical offspring to succeed you, your own flesh and blood, and I will establish His Kingdom**. The word **offspring** is singular indicating one generation. **Solomon was the one who would build a house for ADONAI's Name (Second Samuel 7:12-13)**, and this would fulfill the promise of **YHVH** listed several times in (**Deuteronomy 12:11-12, 21, 14:23-24, 16:2, 6, 11, 26:2**).

Secondly, **Nathan** prophesied about **Jesus Christ**. **When your days are fulfilled that you must go [to be] with your fathers, I will set up [one of] your far eschatological descendants after you, who will be of your [ancestors]**. The word **descendants** is plural, indicating several generations. In fact, **Messiah** would not descend from **Solomon** but from **Nathan** the ancestor of **Miriam**, the mother of **Yeshua** (see the commentary on **The Life of Christ Ai - The Genealogies of Joseph and Mary**). **And I will establish His Kingdom (First Chronicles 17:10b-11)**.

He is the One who will build a house (dynasty) for My Name, and I will establish the throne of His Kingdom forever (First Chronicles 17:12). Obviously, this could not be **Solomon** because when **he** died the monarchy was torn in two (**First Kings 12:1-33**). Here **the Ruach ha-Kodesh** is referring to **Yeshua Messiah** and **His** Millennial reign, and Eternal State (see the commentary on **Revelation Fq - The Eternal State**).

God promises not to remove **His** covenant love, but there will be discipline for

disobedience. The relationship between **the LORD** and **David's descendants**, and **Solomon** in particular, will be: **I will be His Father, and He will be My Son (Second Samuel 7:14a, and this phrase is included in First Chronicles 17:13). When He does wrong, I will punish Him with a rod wielded by men, with floggings inflicted by human hands (Second Samuel 7:14).** Now this phrase is not found in **First Chronicles 17:13** because again the **Samuel** passage focuses on **Solomon** where there was a possibility of sinning, but the **Chronicles** passage focuses on **Christ** where there is no possibility of sinning.

Now the promise: **But My love will never be taken away from [Solomon]** because **he** was part of an unconditional covenant, **as I took it away from Sha'ul, whom I removed from before you** because **Sha'ul** was not a part of an unconditional covenant (**Second Samuel 7:15; First Chronicles 17:13**). This is a very good example of an unconditional covenant. Both **Sha'ul** and **Solomon** were sinners. What was the difference in **their** sins? Actually, **Solomon's** sins were far greater. **Sha'ul** offered up **burnt offerings and fellowship offerings** that **he** was not authorized to do because **he** was from the tribe of Benjamin and not a Levite (**First Samuel 13:9**). But at least **he** offered up **his** sacrifice to **the True God** and not a pagan one. But **Solomon** was guilty of idolatry. After building the **Temple to the True God** **he** built three more temples to pagan gods, the gods of the Ammonites, Moabites and Edomites. The first commandment reflects the severity of this sin (see the commentary on **Exodus Dk - You Shall Have No Other Gods Before Me**). Yet, **YHWH** did take away **His loving kindness** from **Sha'ul**, but not from **Solomon** because **Solomon** was part of an unconditional covenant and **Sha'ul** was not. Therefore, we must realize that because our salvation is part of an unconditional covenant we never have to worry about losing it (see the commentary on **The Life of Christ Ms - The Eternal Security of the Believer**).²⁸⁴

Moreover, the ravages of time will never wear out this promise. First, let's look at the **Samuel** passage: **Your house** (dynasty) **and your Kingdom will endure forever before Me; your throne will be established forever (First Samuel 7:16).** But in the **Chronicles** passage, aside from affirming the same three eternal things of the **Samuel** passage, it promises a fourth eternal thing . . . an eternal **descendant**. And a final summary of the prophet's message, **ADONAI** declares: **I will set Him over My house** (dynasty) **and My Kingdom forever; His throne will be established forever (First Chronicles 17:14).** The point is that **Messiah** will be a **descendant** of **David**.

Then Nathan told David all the words and described the entire vision (Second Samuel 7:17; First Chronicles 17:15). At this time **Nathan** was speaking from divine

revelation, not personal opinion.

God's covenant with David promised eight things:

First, **God** promised **David** an eternal **house** or dynasty.

Second, one of **David's** own **sons**, **Solomon**, would be established on the **throne** after **him**.

Third, **Solomon** would be the one to build **the Temple**.

Fourth, **YHVH** promised **David** an eternal **throne**.

Fifth, **Solomon** would be disciplined for disobedience, but **the LORD** would not remove **His loving kindness** from **him** (see the commentary on **Ruth Af - The Concept of Chesed**).

Sixth, the promised **Messiah** will be a descendant of **David**. **Christ** is called **the Son of David** (**Mattityahu 1:1, 12:23, 21:9 and 15, 22:42**); **Yeshua** is called **the root of David** (**Revelation 5:5, 22:16**); **Jesus** is called **the offspring of David** (**Revelation 22:16**); He is called **the key of David** (**Revelation 3:7**). In fact, **David** will have a special role in the Messianic **Kingdom** in that **he** will be the co-ruler with **Christ** over **Isra'el** (see the commentary on **Revelation Fi - The Government of the Messianic Kingdom**).

Seven, **God's house, throne and Kingdom** are to be established forever.

Eight, **YHVH** promises an eternal **descendent, Jesus Christ**.²⁸⁵

I am quite sure that in heaven **David** will have the glory for the building of **the Temple** - not **Solomon**. If you want my authority for that, I would refer you to a passage in the book of **Revelation**, where in the very last chapter the risen **Lord Jesus** speaks of **Himself: I am the Root and the Offspring of David, and the bright and Morning Star** (**Revelation 22:16**). No mention of **Solomon**. As mentioned above, **Jesus** did not come from **Solomon's** line at all. I am sure on that great day **David** will have credit for the **Temple**, and I am equally sure on that day, some life who had a dream unfulfilled, to whom **God** said, "No," will be credited also.²⁸⁶

Later, **Solomon** talked about **his father's** desire to **build a Temple for God: My father David had it in his heart to build a Temple for the Name of the LORD, the God of Isra'el. But ADONAI said to my father David, "You did well to have it in your heart to build a Temple for My Name. Nevertheless, you are not the one to build the Temple, but your son, your own flesh and blood - he is the one who will build the**

Temple for My Name" (First Kings 8:17-19).

Did you catch that? **YHVH** told **David**, "**You did well to have it in your heart.**" Even though **David** wasn't going to be able to accomplish **his** goal of **building the Temple**, **God** still appreciated and honored **David's** intentions.

ADONAI never says "No" coldly; **He** whispers into the heart that is attentive to **His** word: **You did well to have it in your heart.** Encouraged by this, **David** gave **himself** passionately to the task of gathering the materials ([Ed - David Provided the Resources for Building the Temple](#)). This **man**, who had been denied the fulfillment of **his** vision, instead of sulking about it, gave **himself** completely to the task in the best way **he** knew how, preparing that which **he himself** would never be able to complete.

If you cannot build, you can gather the materials; if you cannot go, you can send somebody else. If **Ha'Shem** has said "No" to you, you can make it possible for someone else to fill that place on which you have set your heart. The vision need never be in vain, even though it remains unfulfilled, for **God's** refusals in life are loaded with immeasurable possibilities of blessing. It all depends if you sulk or seek. If you seek you'll find that **the LORD** is right there will blessing such as you have never experienced before.²⁸⁷

When we try to do something big for **ADONAI** and we fail and our plans don't work out, I'm thankful to know that we serve a **God** who says: **You did well to have it in your heart.** Realize that you are going to fail in this life. Your results won't always match up with your intentions and your plans. But our **God** is an awesome **God** who sees our hearts and appreciates our best efforts. With that in mind, let us attempt great things for **Him**!