

"WALK THRU THE BIBLE: II SAMUEL."

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First Christian Reformed Church, Lynden, WA

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Text for Sermon: II Samuel 7:16-17; 22:2-4

Introduction to II Samuel.

This is our tenth book of the OT. We will pause until Sept. 15.

As I mentioned last week we have come to the three double books of the OT that cover the entire history of the rise and fall of the Israelite monarchy, I and II Samuel, I and II Kings, I and II Chronicles. These six books cover about 500 years of the kings of Israel (1095 -586 BC) and almost all the rest of the history of the OT, all the prophets, all the writings, all the poetry, except the three minor post-exilic prophets (Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi).

I Samuel introduced the beginning of the monarchy in Israel. II Samuel introduces the establishment of the Davidic dynasty and the reign of David over all twelve tribes of Israel, a period of about 40 years from 1011 to 971BC.

But having said II Samuel chronicles the reign of King David, II Samuel is not just about David. We have to fight against a *People* magazine reading of II Samuel, and indeed of all these historical books. We must keep telling ourselves this is not about David, or the covenant kings, this is all about a covenant God who makes covenant promises to a covenant king through whom God will preserve His covenant people and accomplish His covenant purposes.

A danger in reading the books of the history of Israel is that you will read them as histories, or just as histories. They are histories that are to be read spiritually and theologically. This is God's history, and God's history is always redemptive. Keep reminding yourself of that.

These are written for our spiritual benefit, speaking to our hearts and souls as well as to our minds.

II Samuel easily divides in half.

II Samuel 1-10, David's triumphs. David's success.
A Man After God's Own Heart.

Victory and worship

II Samuel 11-24, David's troubles. David's sin. Failure and forgiveness.
A Servant Under God's Rod.
(II Samuel 21-24, Appendix, other details of David's reign. Lessons learned.)

David's rise under God (II Sam. 1-10)

II Samuel 5-6, Uzzah and the Ark of the Covenant.

David defeats the Philistines and brings the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem. The ark symbolizes God's presence, His rule and reign.

When Uzzah touched the ark of the covenant to keep it from falling to the ground, he made the fatal presumption that his sinful hands were cleaner than the dirt.

This was the first lesson David had to learn. David was very much afraid of the Lord when this happened and he became very bitter.

The truth was, it was David's fault Uzzah had died. David had to learn God is holy and it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God who is a consuming fire.

Familiarity breeds contempt. Are we too casual toward God? Do we fear God? Do we tremble at His holiness? When we treat Him as unholy, we will feel His holy and righteous wrath.

It is great mercy that God restrains His hand as much as He does. Repent lest you too perish.

II Samuel 7, the Davidic covenant and the Messianic promise.

The theological center of both books is II Samuel 7, God's covenant promise with David to give him an eternal throne. This is a major chapter in Biblical revelation because it is a turning point in the history of salvation.

We must keep our focus on the covenant God and what we can know about Him.

Chapter 7 opens with David wanting to build a great house, a great temple for God. He lives in a great palace and God dwells in a tent/tabernacle. It is time, David thinks, to have a proper house.

What a great idea, what a good and noble and godly plan. And the prophet Nathan instantly agrees. Who wouldn't agree? God wouldn't agree. God's ways are not our ways.

What a twist takes place. God has a much bigger plan in mind. God says no you will not build me a great house, rather, I, God, will make you a great house and a great kingdom that will stand forever. Rather than David building a house for God, God builds a house for David.

II Samuel 7:11 The Lord will make you a house.

II Samuel 7:16 And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me. Your throne shall be established forever.

This is God connecting the dots. The seed of David will sit on the throne of God's kingdom forever. The promised presence of God will dwell among the people through the line of David.

Through Abraham's family God promised a blessing, and specifically through Judah's royal seed, God would bring blessings to all the families of the world.

Note this about God's promise, it is *indefectible*. Death cannot annul it, sin cannot destroy it, time will not exhaust it (7:12-16).

Handel captured it most gloriously in the Hallelujah Chorus in his Messiah.
"And He shall reign for ever and ever, forever and ever, Hallelujah, Hallelujah!"

There is a note of inevitability and inexhaustibility to God's promise. Nothing will ever frustrate or thwart God's kingdom plan through David's dynasty.

Everything written in the next five books, the foolish failures of kings, the blatant wickedness, the rebellion, the denial of God, the idolatry, the defeats to foreign powers, the exile, nothing can stop God's kingdom plan.

Isaiah 9:7 Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore.
The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

This chapter reveals God to us, God's wisdom, God's grace, God's constancy, God's power, God's covenant-making, covenant-keeping character.

I said this is a turning point in the history of salvation. The messianic hope in the Abrahamic covenant takes a big step forward in this Davidic covenant. David is the next key link in God's eternal plan of salvation, He is the Lord's anointed.

Furthermore, Jerusalem is established as the capital city, and sets the entire trajectory of salvation history toward the New Jerusalem, the city of the great king. Themes that will play out in the rest of Scripture and in the rest of salvation history are being set in place here, and are picked up in the Psalms as cause for worship and celebration.

II Samuel 9, Mephibosheth, the grace of God.

Some of you know II Samuel 9 is one of my all-time favorite chapters in the Bible because of its powerful display of "hesed." Hesed is one of those Hebrew words that holds a hundred gallons of rich meaning, the steadfast love of God in covenant loyalty and covenant kindness.

Jonathan, the crown prince of Israel as King Saul's son, had made a covenant with young David, a covenant that included unborn children.

II Samuel 9:1 David said, "Is there still anyone left of the house of Saul, that I may show him kindness (hesed) for Jonathan's sake?"

When David discovered Jonathan's crippled son, Mephibosheth was alive, he extend hesed to him, covenant kindness and grace, and invites him to live in the king's palace and even sit at the king's table as a son.

This is a picture of the adoption we have been talking about in Romans 8. It is a picture of the grace we receive as enemies of the king who receive grace and mercy and eat at the king's table. The reason for it is because of a covenant made in blood on a cross two thousand years ago, a covenant that included yet unborn children like us.

The *hesed* of God is forever because Christ is the *hesed* of God, and Christ is the same, yesterday, today, and forever. Christ is our fountainhead of the *hesed* of God, and this is a fountain that can never run dry.

David fails (II Samuel 11-24)

David's public and personal life is a pyramid, a great ascent and then a great decline as the tragic consequences of his choices work themselves out.

II Samuel 11-12, David and Bathsheba.

David sends Joab and his army to battle. It is implied that David should be with them.
David is not where he should be.

David sends to ask for knowledge of who she is.
She is daughter of one of his mighty men, the husband of one of his soldiers.

David sends for Bathsheba and takes her.
David desires what is not his to desire, and takes what is not his to take

He has no concern for anyone but himself, and no concern for God or his Law.

What follows is a compounding of a great sin with the sin of murder, and then an ever greater repentance and forgiveness.

But, God in no way winks at David's sins, because rest of II Samuel is a series of tragedies as David's family unravels because of his sin.

Bathsheba's child dies (12:18), David's daughter Tamar is raped by his son Amnon (13:1–39), Amnon is murdered by his brother Absalom (13:28–30), Absalom overthrows David and usurps his kingdom (15:1–37), and Absalom is subsequently killed (18:1–33).

How to sum up David's life?

II Samuel 4:9 David answered ... , “As the Lord lives, who has redeemed my life out of every adversity.

I Kings 1:29 The king swore, saying, “As the Lord lives, who has redeemed my soul out of every adversity.

Jesus.

II Samuel is a window through which we can see Jesus. Jesus is foreshadowed in two ways in II Samuel.

First, the Davidic Covenant as outlined in 2 Samuel 7:16: “Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever.”

Matthew put David at the center of the genealogical history of the divine plan of salvation (Matt. 1:1).

Luke 1:30-33 And the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. 31 And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. 32 He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, 33 and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.”

Second, the messianic promise is seen in the song of David at the end of his life (II Samuel 22:2-51).

II Samuel 22:2-4 The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer,
3 my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield, and the horn of my salvation,
my stronghold and my refuge, my savior; you save me from violence.
4 I call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised, and I am saved from my enemies.

He sings of his rock, fortress and deliverer, his refuge and savior. Jesus is our Rock (1 Corinthians 10:4; 1 Peter 2:7-9), the Deliverer of Israel (Romans 11:25-27), the fortress to whom we “have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us” (Hebrews 6:18 KJV), and our only Savior (Luke 2:11; 2 Timothy 1:10).

In his suffering, then, Jesus Christ is crowned as the last and greatest king, fulfilling the Davidic covenant. It is in Jesus that God’s promise of an eternal kingdom is fulfilled. This is the final Son of David, Jesus himself.

Jesus is the complete and perfect fulfillment of the promise God made to David. Jesus forever sits on the throne of David.

Implications and application.

I-II Samuel are rich with developments in God’s glorious plan to save sinners and bring forth his kingdom. I-II Samuel are a window into an epoch of history in which promises of old are beginning to come to pass and new promises are made.

God has put these books in His book for our spiritual benefit (Romans 15:4; I Corinthians 10:6,10). What personal spiritual benefit has the Spirit spoken into your life?

Heed the clear warning.

David’s sin with Bathsheba should be a warning to all of us to guard our hearts, our eyes, and our minds. Pride over our spiritual maturity and our ability to withstand temptation in our own strength is the first step to a downfall (1 Corinthians 10:12).

That such a tragic story of sin in the life of one of Scriptures greatest heroes should tell us something. This is a key story in the redemptive history of God. This narrative shows both the full horror of sin and the hope of redemption.

We are sinners who commit terrible sins against God and each other, and God's forgiveness and grace are undeserved. Where sin abounds, grace abounds more.

Repentance is absolutely essential to our forgiveness. We must humble ourselves before God and each other.

This is a great warning, if this can happen to David, a great leader, a man after God's own heart, take heed lest you to fall.

I Corinthians 10:11-12 Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come. 12 Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall.

II Samuel leaves us with an appreciation for the greatness of David, but also a realization of his human weaknesses.

II Samuel is also a mirror in which we see ourselves, our sinfulness and our need to repent.

Give thanks for God's grace and provision of a righteous king and kingdom.

When we see the state of rulers and nations in our world and our own, we are reminded that this world is not our home and in the words of Jesus, His kingdom is not of this world. We are submitted to a great and good King and we are part of His kingdom to be ambassadors to the world on His behalf. We don't have to be anxious about who is on the throne on earth.

Jesus has told us to pray every day "your kingdom come" as we await the final day when the kingdoms of this world become the kingdom of Christ (Rev. 11:15).

Our Father, thank you for this glimpse into our own lives and hearts. May the truth grip us. May we realize that these are not mere words to tickle our fancy or instruct our intellect for the moment, but these are revelations of what life is all about -- the secrets of living. May we take them seriously and heed them and love you and serve you and yield ourselves to you, day by day. In Christ's name, Amen.