

## “A Promise Kept”

Today we conclude our series through the life of David with a look at his son Solomon.

Through this series we have looked at David’s successes, and his failures. David was a man after God’s own heart, chosen and anointed by God. But he also failed God including most memorably, his sin with Bathsheba.

One of David’s desires to serve God was to build Him a temple, a dream that would be accomplished by his son Solomon.

Today we examine the occasion of Solomon’s dedication of the temple. From verse one of chapter 8, we see that the entire nation was gathered for this momentous occasion. The temple had been complete for nearly a year but dedication had been delayed until the seventh month, a significant number in service to the LORD.

Not only does Solomon dedicate the temple but he takes the occasion to make a plea before God.

***8:22 Then Solomon stood before the altar of the Lord in the presence of all the assembly of Israel and spread out his hands toward heaven. And he said, “O Lord, the God of Israel, there is no God like Thee in heaven above or on earth beneath, who are keeping covenant and showing loving-kindness to Thy servants who walk before Thee with all their heart, who hast kept with Thy servant, my father David, that which Thou hast promised him; indeed, Thou hast spoken with Thy mouth and hast fulfilled it with Thy hand as it is this day. Now therefore, O Lord, the God of Israel, keep with Thy servant David my father that which Thou hast 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.” Now therefore, O God of Israel, let Thy word, I pray Thee, be confirmed which Thou hast spoken to Thy servant, my father David.***

I will admit that I find this request a bit self-serving. At the occasion of the dedication of the temple, Solomon reminds God of a promise to his father.

It is helpful to revisit God’s promise to David.

2 Sam 7:8-16

***Now therefore, Thus you shall say to My servant David, “Thus says the Lord of Hosts, “I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, that you should be ruler over my people Israel. And I have been with you wherever you have gone and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make you a great name, like the names of the great men who are on the earth. I will also appoint a place for My people Israel and will plant them, that they may live in their own place and not be disturbed again.***

***(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 this kingdom. He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. 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, but my loving-kindness shall not depart from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed before you. And your house and your kingdom shall endure before Me forever; your throne shall be established forever.”***

In 2 Samuel, God says that when a son of David commits iniquity, that he will correct him but his loving-kindness will not depart as it did with Saul.

This promise is commonly referred to as the Davidic Covenant, one of three primary covenants in the Old Testament: God’s covenant with Abraham, with Moses and the people in the Sinai, and with David. (Remember to include new covenant later)

### **Why would Solomon remind God of his covenant?**

Keeping one’s word has been important across all times and all cultures. Some covenants are treaty covenants where the giver imposes an obligation upon the receiver, or vassal.

The Mosaic Covenant fits this type: God told Israelites “You shall be my people and I shall be your God.

Others are a Grant such as God’s covenant with Abraham and David. I will make you a great nation and I will you’re your name great.

While each of these covenants are different, there is a common theme. God chose the receiver not because of who he or they were, but because of who God is. Abram was a childless man whom God made into a great nation. God chose Moses as a reluctant servant and continually reminded the people of Israel that I chose you not because you were great but because you were small. And David – David was so insignificant that his father Eli did not deem him worthy of returning from the fields when the prophet Samuel came to anoint the next King.

***Now therefore, Thus you shall say to My servant David, “Thus says the Lord of Hosts, “I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, that you should be ruler over my people Israel.***

By the time of this promise by God, David’s enemies had been vanquished – by the Hand of God. David had already been richly blessed by the Lord.

In 1 Kings 8, we see the dedication of Solomon’s temple which was David’s vision and further proof of God’s blessing. Part of the desire to build a temple was to have an

appropriate home for the Ark of the Covenant. As a child that phrase was just a name. I understood that it was holy. I understood that it was important. But I focused on the first part the Ark, or the impact, its holiness. To really digest this occasion though, we need to examine the covenant. The Ark contained the covenant between God and his people. Again revisiting this covenant, in the Book of Deuteronomy as Moses prepares the people to inherit the Promised Land and as he prepares them for Joshua's leadership, he gives them warnings from God. One that is repeated in various forms throughout the book is remember it was the Lord!

Deuteronomy 6:10ff

*Then it shall come about when the Lord your God brings you into the land which He swore to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to give, great and splendid cities which you did not build, and houses full of all good things which you did not fill, and hewn cisterns which you did not dig, vineyards and olive trees which you did not plant, and you shall eat and be satisfied. Then watch yourself, lest you forget the Lord who brought you from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.*

I find sad irony in Solomon's request. Solomon is reminding God of his promise to David yet seems to be forgetting God's warning to his people. In 8:12 Solomon says, **The Lord has said that he would dwell in the thick cloud. I have surely built Thee a lofty house, a place for They dwelling forever.**" While technically correct, Solomon built the temple; he did it only because God had blessed him and his father.

Also, sadly the latter part of Solomon's life is known for his unfaithfulness to God including marrying daughters of foreign rulers in direct opposition to God's law given through Moses. People of Israel forgot the Lord as well and Jeremiah prophesied of a New Covenant

But I want to be careful that this is not a sermon bashing Solomon, or the Israelites. Because I too have forgotten God at times. I too have failed him. And so have you.

David, Solomon, and their sons were imperfect Kings.

But God kept his promise, he kept his covenant and he sent the King of Kings, Jesus Christ to be our Lord and Savior. We are a fallen people. But we serve a faithful God who keeps his covenant.

**The question for us today is not whether God will remember his promise, but rather whether we acknowledge him as Lord, be a humble servant, and accept his covenant with us.**