

Christ in the Historical Books

We are studying Christ in the Old Testament, and today's famous text shows us how Jesus Christ was promised a millennium before the incarnation as the descendent of David. The New Testament makes much of Jesus' being the Son of David (Cf: Luke 1:32-33; Acts 2:29; 13:21-23; Romans 1:5; etc.). Why would the New Testament authors emphasize this? Our text today gives us the answer.

2 Samuel 7:1-17

1 Now when the king lived in his house and the Lord had given him rest from all his surrounding enemies, **2** the king said to Nathan the prophet, "See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwells in a tent." **3** And Nathan said to the king, "Go, do all that is in your heart, for the Lord is with you."

4 But that same night the word of the Lord came to Nathan, **5** "Go and tell my servant David, "Thus says the Lord: Would you build me a house to dwell in? **6** I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent for my dwelling. **7** In all places where I have moved with all the people of Israel, did I speak a word with any of the judges of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, "Why have you not built me a house of cedar?" **8** 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 prince over my people Israel. **9** And I have been with you wherever you went and have cut off all your enemies from before you. And I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. **10** And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may dwell in their own place and be disturbed no more. And violent men shall afflict them no more, as formerly, **11** from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel. And I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover, the Lord declares to you that the Lord will make you a house. **12** When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, 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 to him a father, and he shall be to me a son. When he commits iniquity, I will discipline him with the rod of men, with the stripes of the sons of men, **15** but my steadfast love will not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away from before you. **16** And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me. Your throne shall be established forever." **17** In accordance with all these words, and in accordance with all this vision, Nathan spoke to David.

David was contemplating what he could do to respond to God's goodness to him, as he discussed with the prophet Nathan the possibility of building a house for God. This makes perfect sense to any religious person, because the very dynamics of religion are human beings responding to the goodness of the Deity. But God had a surprise for both Nathan and David: God instructs David that He does not want him to build His house. In 1 Kings 5:3 and 1 Chronicles 22:8, we are taught that David was not to build God's house, because David was a man of war; however, here we also learn that God has other reasons.

I. God wants to be with us (vv. 4-7).

Here God explains to Nathan and David that He had not heretofore dwelled in a permanent house because He desired to be with His people. We all know the significance of a father's love, whether for good or ill. Our fathers wanting to be with us made a huge impression on us and communicated to us that we were valuable, cherished, and included. If our fathers abandon us, we tend to feel neglected and unloved. God makes it clear that He has loved His people because He wants to dwell with them — this is why He had never asked to live in a permanent house. Also, He explains to Nathan and David that He had never sent a word directly to them to build a house for Him. It is always important for us to wait for the Word of the Lord before we act.

II. God wants to bless us (vv. 8-11a).

In verses 8 and 9, God explains that He has raised David from obscurity, made him His servant and prince in Israel, and defeated all his enemies. God did this! And He did it for the purpose of

blessing His people (look at verses 10 and 11a). God continually raises up His leaders in order to provide security and provision—even the promise of Abraham—for His beloved people.

III. Nothing will stop Him (vv. 11b-17).

God makes the amazing statement in verse 11 that He will make David a house, rather than David making Him a house! Here God is promising David a dynasty. God furthermore shows that nothing will thwart His purposes.

A. David's death will not thwart Him (vv. 12-13).

We know that David dies some years later, but God raises up Solomon to build a magnificent temple; furthermore, God gives David a continuing dynasty that rules in the Holy Land for the next 400 years. We note that most ancient Near East dynasties lasted no more than 100 years (the 18th dynasty of Egypt was a long one at 250 years), but God obviously extends the kingdom way beyond David's own physical life.

B. Human sin will not thwart Him (vv. 14-15).

Following David, we know that Solomon started well but ended poorly, and the kings that followed Solomon in the northern kingdom were all bad kings and the ones who followed him in the southern kingdom (Judah) were largely bad kings. There were only six or seven good ones. Nonetheless, David's dynasty continued because of God's promise here in this text. God promises that He will discipline the sons of David when they commit iniquity. He continues to do that in His house even today.

C. The passing of time will not thwart Him (vv. 16-17).

When the northern kingdom was besieged by Assyria in 722 BC and the southern kingdom was taken into exile by Babylon in 586 BC it may have looked like God's promise had come to an end; but through these severe disruptions and the Greek and Roman oppressions that followed, God was continuing His purposes through His people, perfectly fulfilled in the coming of the Son of David, the Lord Jesus Christ. It is Jesus who continues to build us a house! In Matthew 16:18 Jesus says, "I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Christ is now building His house, not with stones and mortar, but with converted human beings, and into this house He pours out His spirit and makes of us the "dwelling place for God by the Spirit" (Ephesians 2:22). What a Messiah!

Discussion Questions

1. Why is it significant that Jesus is the Son of David?

2. David's plan to build a temple made good religious sense to Nathan the prophet, until he received a word from the Lord. How do we sometimes jump to conclusions without properly consulting God?

3. Why had God dwelt in a tent for hundreds of years? Why did Jesus come "in the flesh?" What difference does this make to us?

4. What is remarkable about the Davidic dynasty? How does that encourage you?

5. Israel had to wait 1,000 years from the time of David until Messiah came. What can we learn from this?

Going Deeper

1. How have you sought to “be blessed” in this life apart from your relationship with the Lord? How can you focus your aspirations and your contentment on Him alone?

2. If you are patiently waiting for Christ’s coming, how will that affect the way you live your life today?