

ESTABLISHED

2 Samuel 7:8-21

For thousands of years, people thought the earth was the center of everything. They thought that the sun moved around the earth. Later on discoveries were made showing that the sun is the center of the solar system and the earth rotates on its axis and revolves about the sun. The sun is central rather than the earth. Of course, we know that in the overall or universal scheme of things, even the sun is not central and this knowledge gives us a different perspective when we know how things really are.

I think that sometimes our relationship with God is at such an immature level that we think in terms of what we are doing or should be doing for God. We read the Bible from the perspective of “Abraham’s or Moses’ walk with God” rather than seeing it as “what God was doing through Abraham, Moses, Isaiah, and Paul.” Inadvertently, we take on a humanistic outlook that assumes that man is the center of everything. This is similar to the ancient thinking that the earth was the center of the universe. This idea expresses itself in our concern about what **we** are going to do for God or how we can find God’s will for **our** lives. The proper perspective is “What is God doing and how can we fit in with His plans and purpose?”

Though David was a man after God’s own heart (1 Sam 13:14), he thought in terms of what he could do for God rather than seeing what God would do through him. David wanted to build a house for God because David had such a nice house built for himself. It is interesting that we NEVER find any reference in the Bible where God asks any person to dream up what he wants to do for God. Understanding what God is doing and where we are in being aligned with His will and purpose is more important than telling God what we want to do for Him. In Isaiah 55:8 God said “For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are My ways your ways. As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways.”

In the situation with David, the important thing was NOT that David build a cedar “house” in which God would dwell, but that God was going to build a “house” or lineage with David’s family. We see here the various ways the word “house” is used in the Scriptures. The first would be the ordinary usage such as the cedar house in which David lived. The second would be a temple that would be suitable for a “god” and the third usage would be a reference to a family or dynasty. Clearly, David was thinking in terms of the first and second usage of the word in the physical realm, but (as we shall see) God was focused on the concept of a dynasty with eternal significance.

In the first verse of chapter seven we see that the timing was several years after David had brought the Ark to Jerusalem since we learn that God had “given rest to David from all his enemies.”

When David told the prophet Nathan that he wanted to build a cedar house for the Ark of God, Nathan thought it was a great idea. God quickly informed Nathan of the error of that plan and Nathan had to go back to David with the change of plan. When Nathan told David what God was planning to do and that his kingdom would be established forever, then David could see how much better God’s plan was than his. When we see the greatness of God compared to ourselves, the proper response is worship.

Rest – 7:8-11a

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, to be ruler over My people Israel.’” ⁹ “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. ¹⁰ “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, nor will the wicked afflict them any more as formerly, ¹¹ even from the day that I commanded judges to be over My people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. 2 Samuel 7:8–11a (NASB95)

God used this opportunity to remind David of his humble beginnings and how God had chosen him to be king of Israel. David may have been feeling good about how much had been accomplished and may have needed to be reminded that it was God Who had made David’s name to be great.

Notice that God was the initiator and the One who completed all that David had experienced. God reminded David “I took you,” “I have been with you,” and “I have cut off all your enemies.” Most translations agree that the first two actions of God are completed. The verb tense used with regard to “have cut off enemies” is different in that this was an ongoing process. As we move to the subject of “great name” some of the more recent translations switch to a future fulfillment of David’s name being made great as opposed to a completed accomplishment. Both KJV and Young’s Literal Translation render this as having already happened.

Starting in verse ten, most translations switch to present the items of “an appointed place” and “not being attacked as had happened during the time of the Judges” as something that will happen in the future. Since the verb usage is the same as that used in verse nine, Young’s Literal Translation renders the meaning as these things had already happened.

God had also established the children of Israel in the land and it was His intent that they would be there forever and would dwell in peace. Even though God had promised the land to Abraham and his descendants, the people had (under the leadership of David) gained control over the land. Most of the peoples in that area of the world were and many still are wandering nomads. The children of Israel were firmly established in the land and would not be like the nomads or even as their ancestors had been in the time of the wilderness wanderings. These people were just coming out of the time of the judges which had seen a series of oppressions by their heathen neighbors and now God had used David to defeat these ancient enemies of the Israelites.

The nation of Israel had it made and they really didn’t realize what they had. If they had been obedient to God’s commands and not turned away to doing things their own way and following after pagan gods, then peace and prosperity would have continued. We know from the history of these kings and the actions of the people that did not happen.

Rule – 7:11b-17

^{11b} The LORD also declares to you that the LORD will make a house for you. 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 7:11b–17 (NASB95)

David started out with the idea of building a house for God and instead he found that God was building a house for him. This prophecy is clearly stated starting in the second part of verse eleven. It was not a house of wood or even of bricks and mortar, but a lineage or dynasty of kings that would lead the nation. Again, the people of Israel had such an opportunity for true greatness but because of disobedience this promise to them was not fully realized in the line of

earthly kings.

The wording of this promise clearly points to a future time since it would happen after the physical death of David. We also see that the main focus of this prophecy was on a particular “seed” or “descendant” (singular) of David and was not applicable to all the kings who would be physical descendants of David. The three promises we see are an eternal kingdom, a Son-Father relationship to God, and regarding iniquity there will be chastisement or reproof using those of the world system and their methods.

There is an obvious relationship of these promises to Solomon. We can see Solomon being “chosen” by God to set on the throne of the “kingdom of the Lord over Israel” that would be established after the death of David; however, it is difficult to see how any of the three promises found their “fulfillment” in Solomon. While the “throne” was established conceptually, Solomon and those who followed him did not qualify as the fulfillment of the prophecy since they did not meet the “eternal dominion” criterion. The physical kingdom which they represented fell apart (literally into two nations) immediately following the death of Solomon. Beyond that failure, the Northern Kingdom was destroyed and scattered and the Southern Kingdom was conquered and exiled before being restored to their land. They were then given 490 years to prepare themselves to receive and accept the coming of the One Who would literally fulfill this prophecy in the person of the Messiah Who was “begotten” of God.

With regard to the “father-son” relationship we find a supporting reference to this in 1 Chronicles 28:6-7 where we find “He said to me: ‘Solomon your son is the one who will build my house and my courts, for I have chosen him to be my son, and I will be his father. I will establish his kingdom forever if he is unswerving in carrying out my commands and laws, as is being done at this time.’” In the second part of this supporting passage we see the conditional nature of that which is applicable to Solomon and those who followed him. As we know from the historical facts, Solomon did not “unswervingly” carry out the Lord’s commands and laws. He became involved in pagan worship because of his many marriages to foreign women.

This then brings us to the third promise regarding chastisement because of iniquity. As far as we can tell from the Scriptures, Solomon did NOT experience the punishment for his sins during his lifetime. This chastisement was deferred for its fulfillment until the coming of the begotten Son of God who received the chastisement that not only Solomon deserved but which all of us who have sinned and come short of the glory of God deserved.

The promises are fulfilled in Jesus Christ who was (in the flesh) a direct descendant of David and who truly fulfilled the role of being a Son to His Father God. His house and His kingdom are forever.

Rejoice Over – 7:18-21

¹⁸ Then David the king went in and sat before the LORD, and he said, “Who am I, O Lord GOD, and what is my house, that You have brought me this far? ¹⁹ “And yet this was insignificant in Your eyes, O Lord GOD, for You have spoken also of the house of Your servant concerning the distant future. And this is the custom of man, O Lord GOD. ²⁰ “Again what more can David say to You? For You know Your servant, O Lord GOD! ²¹ “For the sake of Your word, and according to Your own heart, You have done all this greatness to let Your servant know. 2 Samuel 7:18-21 (NASB95)

Did you (as a child) ever give any consideration to what your life would be like when you were an adult? Admittedly, I did not give a lot of thought to what might develop. Sometimes we are limited in our vision and we might think in terms of something that would be an extension a little beyond and a little better than what our parents had. Most of us had been encouraged by our parents and perhaps other adults to get a good education and “make something” of ourselves.

There was not a lot of specificity in the outlook we had. It is probably safe to say that most of us turned out better and further along than we could have imagined at the time we were children.

Sometimes we might wonder “How did this happen?” For most of us we have to conclude that we have been greatly blessed by God along the way.

Put yourself in the shoes (or sandals) of a young boy living on a farm in a remote part of the world and the most significant thing you had ever done was to protect your family’s sheep from wild animals. Jump forward thirty year and you find that you are recognized as king by the nation in which you live, you have influence on and the respect of leaders of surrounding nations. That would cause anyone to be amazed by such results. On top of that you just received a message through the prophet of God that your posterity would produce a ruler whose kingdom would never end. The things that were predicted for the future were so significant and great that it made all the great things that God had already done for David seem insignificant.

David had a quality of humility in that he did not think that he deserved what God was doing for him. He knew he had come from a humble background and there nothing spectacular about himself that would merit such blessings as he had received from God. To add to his amazement, God had even greater future plans for David’s posterity.

The last part of verse nineteen seems to be translated differently by each translator. Some render this passage as a question and others as a statement. Some use the word “custom” and others the word “law.” The message of these words seems to be related to the astonishment that David was experiencing as he thought about all that the Lord had done for him in his life and how much more would be done in the future.

David may have been asking the question: “Is this the way God usually deals with people?” What do you think? If we recognize God’s greatness and our humble condition, if we are obedient to His word and focused on God rather than ourselves, then I believe God does and will deal with us in a way that exceeds our greatest expectations. We, as was David, will be speechless in that we will not know what to say.

Some think that David was expressing surprise that what God had promised was what typically happened to those who were powerful and important in the assessment of greatest that the world gives. Clearly, David did not see himself as someone who was deserving of such honor.

David was so overwhelmed by the graciousness of God toward him and his family that he could not find the words to adequately express his gratitude. It is somewhat ironic that the greatest praise we can give to God is being “speechless” because we are so humbled by his grace. That is perfectly good in that God knows what is in our hearts and He doesn’t need to rely on the words we utter.

If David did not deserve what God had already done for him and the even greater things He had promised, then it is logical to conclude that the motive for what God was doing was from within Himself. God blesses us so that we may know Him and His character. As we see in John 3:16 “For God so loved the world that He gave.”

We can learn as David did that God is not confined to time or space and that His promises are sure. We can realize the outworking of these promises in the physical to the extent that we walk with Him and are obedient to His precepts. We can also learn that the good that we accomplish is a direct result of God working in our lives and the more we surrender to Him the more good He can accomplish through us. God is gracious in that He realizes that even though we intend to do what is right, there are times we will miss the mark and He stands ready to forgive and to restore us to fellowship with Himself.