

NOTES FROM TONY BENNETT's SERMON 14th May pm

New Series "Kingship" Pt 2 David: the grateful King"

Text: 2 Samuel 7 verses 18-29

Scripture references from the ESV

2 Samuel 7: 18-29 Then King David went in and sat before the LORD and said, "Who am I, O Lord GOD, and what is my house, that you have brought me thus far? ¹⁹ And yet this was a small thing in your eyes, O Lord GOD. You have spoken also of your servant's house for a great while to come, and this is instruction for mankind, O Lord GOD! ²⁰ And what more can David say to you? For you know your servant, O Lord GOD! ²¹ Because of your promise, and according to your own heart, you have brought about all this greatness, to make your servant know it. ²² Therefore you are great, O LORD God. For there is none like you, and there is no God besides you, according to all that we have heard with our ears. ²³ And who is like your people Israel, the one nation on earth whom God went to redeem to be his people, making himself a name and doing for them^[d] great and awesome things by driving out before your people,^[e] whom you redeemed for yourself from Egypt, a nation and its gods? ²⁴ And you established for yourself your people Israel to be your people forever. And you, O LORD, became their God. ²⁵ And now, O LORD God, confirm forever the word that you have spoken concerning your servant and concerning his house, and do as you have spoken. ²⁶ And your name will be magnified forever, saying, 'The LORD of hosts is God over Israel,' and the house of your servant David will be established before you. ²⁷ For you, O LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, have made this revelation to your servant, saying, 'I will build you a house.' Therefore your servant has found courage to pray this prayer to you. ²⁸ And now, O Lord GOD, you are God, and your words are true, and you have promised this good thing to your servant. ²⁹ Now therefore may it please you to bless the house of your servant, so that it may continue forever before you. For you, O Lord GOD, have spoken, and with your blessing shall the house of your servant be blessed forever."

At the start of 2 Samuel, King Saul was dead and after a brief civil war, the kingdom was reunited (**2 Samuel 5**) and the Ark brought to Jerusalem (**2 Samuel 6**). Following on from this, David wanted to build a house for God and the prophet Nathan agreed that David should go ahead and do this. However, God had a different message for David. **Moreover, the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house. (2 Sam 7:11).** This would not be a bricks and mortar house, but a house in the sense of descendants and of covenant. There would be three main features:

1. It will be fulfilled through David's offspring: **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. (7:12-13)**
2. David's heirs will enjoy the privileged status of being God's adopted sons, with God himself as their adoptive Father. **I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son. (7:11)**
3. This House of David will be everlasting. **And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me.^[d] Your throne shall be established forever (7:16)**

This was a prophecy that spoke of an imminent event, but also pointed forward to a distant event, which would be the ultimate fulfilment. The imminent event was the reign of David's son, Solomon, who will sit on David's throne and build God's temple, but the ultimate fulfilment can only come through Christ. He alone can fulfil the final part of the prophecy by which David's throne will be established forever (7:16). Although twenty more kings followed Solomon, covering almost 400 years, that is not forever! The line of human kings finished with Zedekiah who was taken into exile in Babylon, while Jerusalem was burnt and the temple plundered and destroyed.

**An eternal promise and covenant can only be fulfilled by
the One who possesses eternity as one of his personal attributes.**

That is only true of one of David's descendants, the Lord Jesus Christ, and that is why the gospels are so careful to remind us of the details of Jesus' descent from David. In the first part of **2 Sam 7**, what God promised to David was that from his line of human kingship would come the eternal King and Saviour of mankind! No wonder David prayed this prayer! It is a prayer of three parts that represent the past (thanksgiving), present (who God is) and future (for God's will to be done) of our spiritual lives.

1. **It is a prayer of thanksgiving (vv18-21 above).** David sat before the Lord, in the Tabernacle and in the presence of the Ark. Humility of self and thankfulness to God prompted David to ask the rhetorical question: 'Who am I?' John Newton asked the same question when he spoke on this passage, and David's prayer prompted him to write Amazing Grace. In his sermon, Newton phrased it thus:

This question should always be upon our minds. Who am I? What was I when the Lord began to manifest his purposes of love? Look unto the pit from which you were taken, Lord, what is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you visit him.

We were miserable, rebellious and undeserving, when we were without Christ, but by the grace of God, we are changed

For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another. But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Saviour appeared, ⁵ he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, ⁶ whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Saviour, ⁷ so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life (Titus 3:3-7) (See **Amazing Grace** v1 below)

One of the surest signs that we have come to perceive the sovereign majesty of God is that we will think little of ourselves in God's sight. We will constantly be asking 'Who am I?'

- We will be like Abraham praying for the inhabitants of Sodom: **I have undertaken to speak to the Lord, I who am but dust and ashes** (Gen 18:27).
- We will be like the prophet Isaiah when he was shown a vision of God's holiness and glory: **Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips,** (Isaiah 6:5)
- We will be like Peter, when he was startled at the miraculous catch of fish: **"Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord."** (Luke 5:8)

Asking ourselves 'Who am I?' helps us to see that our salvation is all of God's grace. Humility leads to thankfulness, and so David thanked God for three gracious gifts. God had

- Spoken to him about the future (**v19** above)
- Made all these great promises to him (**v21** above)
- Brought him thus far (**v18** above and see v3 of **Amazing Grace** below))

We have even more reason to be thankful to God for all that he has promised us in Christ and in his word:

- Forgiveness; adoption; salvation; redemption; reconciliation; eternal life

When we realise that all our blessings in Christ flow from God's free, sovereign and
merited grace,

then we will humbly kneel before him and say with David 'Who am I, O Lord God?'

2. **It is a prayer of praise (vv22-24).** David's question finds its companion in his exclamation of praise (v22). This desire to praise and glorify God for his attributes and awesome deeds is a characteristic of all the great prayer songs of the Bible, such as that of Moses (**Exodus 15**), Solomon (**1 Kings 8**) and Mary (**Luke 1**).

In this prayer of praise, David includes not just what God has done for him, but also what he has done for all his people. He praises God for four things:

- a) **His uniqueness (v22).** There is no one like God. We have so much reason to praise God for his uniqueness. **John 3:16** tells us **For God so loved the world that he gave his ONLY Son.** Jesus is the unique Son of the unique God.
- b) **His redemption of his people (v23).** The doctrine of redemption tells us of our being bought by God out of the slavery of sin. David was praising God for his ransom of his people from Egypt at the cost of the death of the spotless Passover lambs. We have an even more wonderful story of redemption, for we have been redeemed with the precious blood of Christ.
- c) **His awesome deeds (v23b)** We see God's awesome wonders in the signs and miracles that took place during the earthly ministry of Jesus, but even more we see them in changed lives today. God redeems believers from the slavery of sin and transforms us progressively into the image of his dear Son.
- d) **God's people are God's possession. (v24).** Peter tells us that all believers are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession (**1 Peter 2:9**) and why are we all of those things? It is so that we **may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.**
Never lose sight of the fact that God did **not** save you to give you a nice cosy feeling inside you!
 - God saved you in order that his name might be glorified.

Surely all of this should fill our hearts with praise too, and it is all out of his love and all out of his grace.

3. It is a prayer for God's will to be done (vv25-29). There are three principles here to follow in our own prayers.

a) **David's prayer is founded on the promises of God. (v25).** We often neglect to claim the gracious promises that God has made to us in his word. We fail to say to God: 'God, you have promised it. Now do as you have promised'. When we do pray like that, we need to be sure that we are not claiming promises that God did not make. He never promised us freedom from pain, sickness, mental anguish or bereavement. In fact, he promised the opposite. His word tells us that **in the world we will have tribulation**, but he has promised us that **he has overcome the world (John 16:33)**.

- The key to prayer is not merely to tag 'in Jesus' name' on to the end of our prayers. It is to pray only in accordance with God's revealed will for us, to lead us and others into saving faith in him and then that we might live a sanctified life to his glory.

b) **David seeks to bring glory to God (v26)** David asks God to keep his promises, solely in order that his name will be magnified forever. David models for us the importance of making petitions that have the ultimate aim of glorifying God. One commentator says:

- The highest aim of my prayer and living should be to glorify God in redeeming me from the ashes of my sin to the glories of his righteousness – that God would be glorified through the blessings that he is so gracious to bestow in my life.

c) **David's prayer is based on faith (v29).** Those words speak of faith, and that truth inspired the fourth verse of John Newton's hymn (see below). Newton concluded his sermon on this prayer thus:

Present mercies are but guarantees of his love, present comforts but foretastes of the joy to which we are hastening. O that crown, that kingdom, that eternal weight of glory! We are travelling home to God. We shall soon see Jesus and never complain of sin, sorrow or temptation any more. He found us upon the dunghill and has made us his companions; he found us in a wilderness and has led us to the city of God!

Shortly before his death, Newton remarked: 'My memory is nearly gone but I remember two things: that I am a great sinner; and that Jesus Christ is a great Saviour'. May this testimony be true for you.

To God alone be the glory

Amazing Grace

Amazing grace how sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me
I once was lost but now am found
Was blind but now I see

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear
And grace my fears relieved
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed

Through many dangers toils and snares
I have already come
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far
And grace will lead me home

When we've been there ten thousand years
Bright shining as the sun
We've no less days to sing God's praise
Than when we've first begun

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John Newton

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