

The Promise Of Godly Rule: The Davidic Covenant

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Date: 14 December 2025

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[0 : 00] Please take your Bibles and open them up this morning to the book of 2 Samuel. We're in 2 Samuel chapter 7 this morning verses 8 through 17 and then once you have a finger there if you would flip over to the gospel according to Luke and we'll be in chapter 1 verses 26 through 33.

If you don't have a Bible with you that's okay. We have Bibles in the seat back. Should be nearby around there somewhere. You can find a Bible. If you don't have a Bible at all please don't leave here without one. We would love for you to take one of these pew Bibles home with you as our gift to you.

We think that there's nothing more important that you could own and have in your possession than a copy of God's Word and we'd love to help you read it and understand it. So if you do take a Bible with you please let me know. We'd love to connect you with different ways that you can read and understand God's Word.

We are continuing our Advent series walking through covering the promises of God this morning and we have come this morning to this promise of a coming King. And so if you would if you found 2 Samuel chapter 7 let's stand in honor of the reading of God's Word this morning.

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.

[1 : 31] And I have been with you wherever you went and I 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.

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 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. When your days are fulfilled and you shall 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.

He shall build a house for my name and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. 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.

But my steadfast love will not depart from him as I took it from Saul whom I put away from before you. And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me.

[2 : 45] Your throne shall be established forever. In accordance with all these words and in accordance with all this vision Nathan spoke to David. Flip ahead to Luke chapter 1 verses 26 through 33.

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth. To a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph of the house of David.

And the virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said greetings oh favored one the Lord is with you. But she was greatly troubled at the saying and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be.

And the angel said to her do not be afraid Mary for you have found favor with God. And behold you will conceive in your womb and bear a son and you shall call his name Jesus.

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. And he will reign over the house of Jacob forever.

[3 : 51] And of his kingdom there will be no end. The grass withers and the flower fades but the word of the Lord endures forever. Let's pray.

Father God we confess that we need a king. We need a ruler. We need a defender.

We need a leader. And so we praise you God for these promises made. And these promises kept ultimately in Christ our king. May we all bow the knee to him now.

We pray in Jesus name. Amen. You may be seated. Amen. In 1887 the Englishman Lord Acton wrote a letter to Bishop Mandel Creighton warning about the potential dangers of absolute authority.

And in it he wrote what now is a well-known popular quote. He said power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely.

[4 : 55] The Lord Acton believed in and advocated for personal individual liberty. And so he rejected, he fought hard against any sort of overarching authority.

He did not want anyone having absolute authority over him. So this morning I want you to imagine with me Lord Acton's worst nightmare.

Maybe your nightmare too. Imagine with me that you are not in control. In fact there is somebody else who has absolute, complete, and total control over you.

He has unchecked, unlimited authority. This individual can never be voted out of office. His decisions can never be overruled.

His power and his reign, his rule that he has cannot be overstated. His reign and his rule, his sovereignty is absolute. He has full, complete, total authority over you, over me, over everyone, everywhere.

[6 : 08] That sounds like an absolute nightmare scenario, doesn't it? That's true. That's true. That's true. We do not want someone else having absolute authority over us. Why? It's because we have experienced Lord Acton's quote in action.

In many cases, authority is either abused or misused. And when that happens, authority becomes a curse and not a blessing to all those who are up under the authority.

But it's also true, on the other hand, although it may be much harder to find, that good authority, authority used well, is a blessing to those who come up under that authority.

A corrupt leader with absolute authority is a nightmare, but the type of leader that we need is a righteous leader. A righteous ruler with absolute authority.

A truly good leader. A leader with unlimited wisdom to protect the weak and the needy. A leader with unlimited power to reign in and destroy the forces of evil once and for all.

[7 : 22] A godly leader who will lead his people in the ways of the Lord and do everything in his power to bless the people and not to harm his people. That type of leadership is a blessing.

The sad truth is, for many of us, it's a lot harder to imagine that type of authority than it is to imagine the corrupt leadership, isn't it? But the good news of our passage this morning, and the hope of Christmas, is that God has promised godly authority to the world in Jesus Christ.

That's the main message of our passages this morning. It's all the blessings of good and godly authority are ultimately found, only found, in Jesus Christ, our King.

Now, I want to trace that promise in three steps this morning. We're going to see the need. We're going to see the promise. And then, third, the provision of this King.

First, I want us to understand the need here. So, first, we see the need for a King. We need a King. And I understand for a group of Americans in a room, those are fighting words, right?

[8 : 37] You know, we settled that in 1776, I thought. Yeah, I need to back up here and give us a little bit of context here, because we have some catching up to do. Last week, we were in this covenant with Moses, all the way back in the book of Exodus, this covenant of law, the Mosaic covenant.

God gave this covenant of law. It presented God's righteousness to us, but it could not fulfill, it could not produce God's righteousness in us. It showed us what holiness looked like, but it can't work that in our hearts.

We needed something else. Well, now we zoom ahead, and what we see in the pages in between this covenant of law and this promise to David is that Israel does, in fact, come into the promised land.

That's the book of Joshua. God fulfills his promise to Abraham to bring his people in. But despite their proclamation last week that they would, in fact, obey all the words of the law, guess what happened?

They fail to obey. And that disobedience is seen so clearly in the book of Judges. And there's this phrase that keeps getting repeated over and over and over again in the book of Judges.

[9 : 46] Anybody know what it is? In those days, there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in their own eyes.

It's clear that what Israel needs is a true and a godly leader. Like us, they need a leader who's going to keep the law and so lead the people to keep the law.

They need a leader who's going to honor the Lord and so lead the people to honor the Lord. The fact is, as goes the leader, so go the people. The people need a leader who's going to bring blessing and not curse.

What they failed to realize is that they already had that. You remember what was supposed to be so special about this people Israel? And what was supposed to be so distinct about them?

It was that God was supposed to be their king. God was supposed to be their lawgiver. God himself was supposed to be their deliverer.

[10 : 48] God himself was to be their leader and their judge and their defender. This is the whole point. Israel is meant to be a theocracy with God up at the top, not a monarchy.

They belong to him. They're supposed to come up under his authority. But 1 Samuel chapter 8, the people got fed up and they asked for a king like all the other nations.

I had a birthday this week and Amanda made me a cake. It was chocolate cake with chocolate icing. And if you've never had one of Amanda's cakes, I'm telling you, you will not find a better piece of cake anywhere else.

I saw Amanda in the kitchen whipping it all together. She had the ingredients and everything that she needed. She was spending the time making that cake for me. It was going to be there right after dinner for me to enjoy.

What would have happened if on the way home that day I stopped at the gas station and I filled up on Little Debbie's instead? You just imagine what would have happened, right?

[11 : 53] It would basically be me saying, no, I don't want your cake. I want to go fill up on my own cake. And what a poor decision that would have been. What we need to understand here is that Israel, by asking for a king like all the other nations, what they're really doing, Israel is rejecting God as their king.

They're saying to God, we don't want your kingship. So we're going to go turn, we're going to go get somebody else. You aren't leading us well. We need a better leader.

You aren't judging us well. We need a better judge. You aren't ruling us well. We need a better ruler. It's an incredible display of sinful foolishness, isn't it?

But the truth is, friend, we have all done this exact same thing. We have all, every one of us, rejected God as king over us.

That's what sin is. Sin is a rebellion against God as our king. In our sin, we don't like his authority over us.

[13 : 05] We don't want him telling us what to do or how to act. And so, in our sin, what we do is we seek to overthrow him as ruler of our lives. And what's so shocking here is that God allows this.

God allows Israel to select for themselves a king. He says to Samuel, listen to their request. If they want to go and fill up on little debbies, just let them do it. Don't feel bad.

They haven't rejected you. They've rejected me. Let them pick out a king. But, he says, I want you to warn them what that king is going to be like. Listen to how Samuel describes the king.

He says, these will be the ways of the king who will reign over you. He will take your sons and appoint them to his chariots and to be his horsemen and run before his chariots.

He will appoint for himself commanders of thousands and commanders of fifties. Some to plow his ground and to reap his harvest and make his implements of war and the equipment of his chariots.

[14 : 10] He will take your daughters to be perfumers and cooks and bakers. He will take the best of your fields and vineyards and olive orchards and give them to his servants. He will take the tenth of your grain and of your vineyards and give it to his officers and to his servants.

He will take your male servants and female servants and the best of your young men and your donkeys and put them to his work. He will take the tenth of your flocks and you shall be his slaves. And in that day you will cry out because of your king whom you have chosen for yourselves. But the Lord will not answer you in that day. You hear that?

When you reject the Lord as king, you can pick whatever authority you want. That's up to you.

That's fine. But God says, here's what it's going to be like. That king, that authority over you, he will take and take and take and take and take.

[15:11] He will take for himself. He won't be for you. He will be for him. He will not be a blessing to you like you think he's going to be. He will be a curse to you.

And it's terribly sad that this is the type of authority that many of us are used to. As I read those verses, maybe there's ringing in the back of your mind.

We have had bosses like this that take and take and take and take. We've had, some of us, fathers and mothers that take and take and take.

Some of us have had husbands that take and take and take. We've seen politicians that take and take. Even pastors that take and take.

That's not to say that all human authority is bad. Of course not. It's not. We've also seen good examples of this. Good teachers, good leaders, good mothers, good fathers, good husbands, good pastors.

[16:12] Good politicians. But here's the point. These human authorities are only a blessing insofar as they reflect and represent the rule and reign of God.

Good authority is ultimately an extension of God's authority. The authority and the blessing that we need ultimately is God's authority.

It's God's blessing. It's God's reign over us. I mean, you think of the last words of King David. He says, When one rules justly over men, ruling in the fear of God, he dawns on them like the morning light.

Like the sun shining forth on a cloudless morning. Like rain that makes grass to sprout from the earth. Friend, that's the type of authority that we need.

We need authority over us that will bless us by leading us in the ways of the Lord. We need that type of leadership. Israel needed that type of leadership.

[17:17] But sadly, what we see is here, God's people don't want that. They want a king like all the other nations. And so they look around. They pick the most obvious choice around them.

This guy named Saul, he's the most obvious choice from all external appearances. He's visibly everything you would want in a leader. And he had some highlights in his reign, yes.

But clearly, Saul was not ultimately the king that they needed. By and large, he was proud and disobedient. And ultimately, he did not follow the ways of the Lord.

And so the Lord takes the kingdom from Saul and gives it to a man after his own heart. He gives the kingdom to David. But keep reading.

And if it becomes clear, you'll see David also is not the king that we need. And so now let's come to 2 Samuel. 2 Samuel chapter 7. And here we see 2nd, the promise of a king.

[18:20] The promise of a king. Look there with me, 2 Samuel chapter 7. And here in chapter 7, David has come to this point in his reign where he thinks he's going to do something good for God.

He's going to build him a house. God's been wandering around with him in this little tent, the tabernacle. And David looks over there and he says, I want God to have something nice. I'm going to build him a house.

Well, God responds through Nathan and sends David a message here starting in verse 8. Look there. First of all, what he does is he reminds King David of the hierarchy here.

He reminds him who's actually king. He reminds him of his faithfulness and his loyalty to his promises. Thus says the Lord of hosts, verse 8. I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, that you should be prince over my people Israel.

In other words, David, remember who you are and where you came from, buddy. Like, I made you king and I have been with you wherever you went and have cut off all your enemies from before you.

[19:24] All those battles that you won, I won those battles for you. And I will make for you a great name like the name of the great ones of the earth. 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 from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel. And I will give you rest from all your enemies.

You remember the promises God made to Abraham? Those same promises that were then governed and regulated by law with Moses. Remember what they were?

Promises of prosperity and place and posterity. Posterity, Vaughn Roberts puts it like this. God's people in God's place under God's rule and blessing.

You remember that? You see all of it here again, don't you? And again, all of it, all these promises, it all centers on this promise of posterity.

[20 : 27] This coming child. Moreover, the Lord says, the Lord will make you a house. You're not going to build God a house, David.

I'm going to build you a house. It's a play on words here. The house of David is not just the dwelling that he lives in. It's his lineage. It's his line.

God is promising a child to come from the line of David. It's the same snake crushing child from Genesis 3. The same blessing to the world from Genesis 12.

It's a promise of a coming child. We learn a little bit more about him here. Look there, starting in verse 12. We can learn at least seven truths here about this child.

For one, this child will be the one who will bring about all of these promises. Every promise God has made to Abraham and to David through Moses and the law, he will be the one who will truly and finally establish God's people in God's place under God's rule and blessing.

[21 : 39] This child will be the one to prosper God's people. He will be the one who's a blessing to the world. Not only this, second, we see now the child will come from David's line.

This child must be a son of David. If he's not, then he's not eligible. And so when we break out the family tree, like Matthew does in Matthew chapter 1, we need to be able to connect the dots and trace the line back to David.

Third, it says God himself will raise up this child and God himself will establish his kingdom. Now this is crucial. You know why Saul's kingdom was doomed from the start?

It was the plan of man. But this kingdom and this king is God's own doing. He won't be a king like Saul, chosen by the people, contrary to the desires of God.

God himself will raise up this king and establish this king. He will establish this kingdom. His kingdom is not of this world. It is of God.

[22 : 47] Fourth, verse 13. He will be the house-building king. A temple-building king. David won't build this house for the Lord, but this coming king will build the house for the Lord.

Number five, he will be a forever king. A forever king. He tells us this three times. Verse 13, I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.

Verse 16, your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me. Your throne shall be established forever. What a nightmare that would be if it was just any human king, right?

Because Lord Acton is right. Absolute power corrupts absolutely. Only, number six, this king, verse 14, will be a godly king.

He will be like a son to God. He will lead and rule up under the leadership and the rulership of God almost as a direct extension of the power and authority of God himself.

[24 : 00] And number seven, he will be disciplined for his sin. But God will be faithful. Verse 14 says, when he commits iniquity, God will discipline him with the rod of men, with the stripes of the sons of men.

He will be disciplined for his sin. And yet, verse 15 says, the steadfast love of the Lord will not depart from him. And the throne of David will be established forever.

Who is this king? Because I saw you all. One through six, you thought you had it down, right? I think we're talking about Jesus, aren't we?

Right? He checks one through six, all those boxes. He checks them up. But you get to step. Jesus didn't sin, right? You get to number seven. Who are we talking about here? Here's where I think we need to step back and learn a little bit about biblical prophecy, how this works.

Because what the prophets often do is they stack multiple layers of fulfillment right on top of each other.

[25 : 09] It's like when you make a sandwich, okay, and you got one piece of bread here, that's where the peanut butter goes. Got another piece of bread here, that's where the jelly goes. If you do it any other way, you're wrong, okay?

Two pieces of bread, keep them separated until it's time to smush them together, right? When the bread is separated, you see those two layers very clearly, very distinctly.

These are two different things. But when you smush them up together, they mix. It's peanut butter and jelly now, right? That's what the prophets do.

They take these two layers of fulfillment, sometimes separated by thousands of years, but they just smush them up together in just a few verses space in your Bible.

forevermore.

The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this. Church, this is the authority that we need. A king who rules with righteousness and wisdom and just is a perfect king who leads his people in peace and safety and security, who rules not only over one piece of the earth, but over all the earth.

Not only over one people, but all peoples. A king whose reign has no end. Who can this be but God himself? The authority we so desperately need is the authority that we have all rejected.

But Christmas is the message that this is the authority God has so graciously sent down to us.

[30 : 40] Who is this king? Third, Jesus is the king. We need. Third, we see the provision of the king we need.

Once again, this is the message of Christmas. I want you to look now to Luke chapter 1. We zip forward here to the New Testament.

In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to the city of Galilee named Nazareth to a virgin right away. Our ears ought to perk up. What did he say?

A virgin? Isaiah told us to be looking for a virgin. Here she is, betrothed to Joseph, who, oh, by the way, of the house and lineage of David. There's potential here.

He came to her and said, greetings, oh favored one, the Lord is with you. She was greatly troubled at the saying and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be.

[31 : 37] And the angel said to her, do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son. You shall call his name Jesus.

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. And he will reign over the house of Jacob forever.

And of his kingdom there will be no end. It is abundantly clear, isn't it? Jesus is the king we've been promised.

The story of Christmas is the story of God giving us the authority that we so desperately need. It's a gift of God's grace. God himself has come down to us in human flesh to be our king.

Christ Jesus is not just an extension of God's authority. He is God with us. And as he began his public ministry, Jesus stood up and said, repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

[32 : 51] Meaning, the kingdom of God is here. The king has arrived and with him the kingdom. You see his authority as he teaches like no one has ever taught before.

You see his power as he heals the sick and casts out demons. You see his righteousness as he resists every temptation. Ultimately, you see his victory, our victory, as he dies and rises again.

Crushing the powers of sin and death. Friend, our king has come. Jesus Christ is the true son of David who left the throne of heaven to purchase for himself a kingdom people.

To build us up into a holy temple of the living God. Don't you see? He is the king we've been promised. And yet, many in his day still rejected him.

Many still refused to have him as their king. And many in our day still reject him.

[34 : 06] And many in our day still refuse to have him as their king. They turn instead to anybody else. Anything else.

Self, you can be king. You can rule over me. Flesh, you can be king. Pride, works, accomplishments, trophies on the shelf, diplomas on the wall.

You can be my standard. You can be my ruler. Sex, money, success, alcohol.

What my friends think of me, the praise of others. You will rule over me. I'll do whatever you say. Anything or anyone other than King Jesus.

I hope you see how foolish this is. At Christmas we celebrate the good news that the promised king has come.

[35 : 10] The king that we need has come. He comes to reign and to rule over us. His reign is not a curse. It is a blessing. And he bids you come.

Bow the knee to me. We celebrate at Christmas the coming of the king. But you know, we've talked a lot about how Advent, it has us looking in two directions.

And at Christmas we look backwards to the birth of Christ. The birth of this king. When he came the first time. But we also look forwards to the time when this king will come again.

He came the first time to live and to die and to rise to inaugurate the kingdom. But he comes again to reign and to rule forevermore.

Think about it with me again. Imagine a totally righteous ruler with absolute authority. A truly good ruler.

[36 : 15] One who will never be removed from office. One whose policies are never voted down. A leader with unlimited power and wisdom to protect the weak and the needy.

A leader with unlimited strength to destroy the forces of evil once and for all. A godly leader who will do everything in his power to bless his people now and forevermore.

In a kingdom that will never end. A remade world where there is no sin. There is no death. There are no tears. There is no pain.

Where every knee will bow in heaven and on earth. And every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. To the glory of God the Father. Are you imagining it? The time is coming soon and very soon when we will not have to imagine.

It will be very, very real. The king and his kingdom are coming soon. But the good news for us this Christmas, friend.

[37 : 25] We don't have to wait till then to experience this good authority in our lives. The king of heaven and the king of earth commands you now to bow the knee right now.

The time is fulfilled. The kingdom of God is at hand. And repent and believe in the gospel of Jesus Christ. If you want an authority that will not ever fail you, friend.

Look to Jesus. If you want a leader who will not take from you but will give himself to you. Look to Jesus. If you want a leader who will bless you and protect you and lead you in the ways of righteousness, friend.

Look to Jesus. If you want a leader who will defend you and redeem you. Look to Jesus. And if you don't want that type of leader at all. You just want to rule yourself.

Friend. Look to Jesus. And as you come to him now, you will know the blessing of a king who is holy and just and patient and kind and merciful and sovereign.

[38 : 40] Who leads us and blesses us according to the word of God. This is the message of Christmas. The king has come.

And he will come again. So we sing here at Christmas. Joy to the world. The Lord is come.

Let earth receive her king. Let every heart prepare him room. And heaven and nature sing. Joy to the earth.

The Savior reigns. Let men their songs employ. While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains repeat the sounding joy.

He rules the world with truth and grace. And makes the nations prove the glories of his righteousness. And the wonders of his love.

[39 : 36] Friend, the absolute power of King Jesus blesses absolutely for all who know him by faith. Let's pray. Father, we praise you, God, that you have provided the authority, the king, the leadership that we so desperately need.

We confess that all of us have rejected your rule over us. There's not a single one of us in the room this morning that is innocent before you. Lord, we have all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.

But Father, we praise you for the good news of the gospel that we celebrate this Christmas season. That you have graciously sent Christ down to us simply to be received by faith.

Lord, we love you. We look forward to the return of Christ and the final establishment of his kingdom to come. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Thank you.