

David the Great: Consolidating King and Kingdom (Summer Bible Exposition 6)

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[0 : 00] Friends, I just should tell you a little bit about that book.

That book arose out of a series of sermons over a long period of time and out of lecturing and it was designed not as a commentary but as what I call a reader's guide.

That is, it's designed for people to read through to help them understand what the passages are saying. It's written in an easy to read manner. That's my goal.

They are sermons turned into written form in one sense. So if you want to have a look at one, just browse through it. And basically some of these sermons arise out of it.

I preached them first, I wrote it, now I'm preaching them again. So that's where they're from. Let's pray and ask God to help us this evening. Father, thank you so much for your word.

[0 : 58] We thank you for this wonderful passage we are looking at tonight. We pray that you would help us understand it, that you'd help me to explain it well and help us to see its ramifications for our life.

We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. Friends, I want you to imagine for a moment that you were speaking to someone who had never read the Bible before.

Before sitting down to read it, they said to you, Look, I want to get a bird's eye view of the Bible. I want to orient myself to its main story. And so could you please give me a dozen passages that I could read that would sort of, from the beginning of the Bible to the end, that would sort of summarize the whole story for me.

You know, a really Reader's Reader's Reader's Digest version. You know, very abbreviated. Well, I wonder what passages would you include if you were to choose a dozen?

Now, I reckon Genesis 1 to 3 would certainly come into contention, wouldn't it? God's creation and the fall. And then maybe you'd probably go to the call of Abraham in Genesis 12.

[2 : 06] Then I wonder whether perhaps you might think about the giving of the law in Exodus 19 and 20. And toward the end of the Old Testament, you might want to go to, remember that Grand New Covenant passage in Jeremiah 31.

And then in the New Testament, well, of course, you'd want to have one about the birth of Jesus, wouldn't you? And perhaps you'd put in a passion narrative as well from any one of the Gospels.

And then possibly you'd put in the call of Paul and the coming of the Gospel to the Gentiles in Acts chapters 9 to 11. Now, any of those passages I reckon you could call big moments in God's story.

Now, each of those passages represents a pivotal moment in God's story of what he's doing in his world. Now, in my view, if you made a collection of any of those passages, any such passages that didn't have this one, 2 Samuel 7 in it, you would have missed something.

You would have made a mistake. Your collection would be sorely lacking. You see, 2 Samuel 7 looks back to what God has done. It reshapes what God has done.

[3 : 17] And then it looks forward to what God is going to do and gives God's future direction in his world. Now, 2 Samuel 7 is therefore, I think, a pivotal passage in the Bible.

And we are going to give it some careful attention tonight. And I'm going to tell you what it's all about, hopefully. Now, look, it is such a rich passage. There's no way we can do justice to all the deep things.

But let me tell you what we're going to find. We are going to find wonderful plans that God has for his world. And we are going to learn wonderful things about his son.

And we're going to get inside God's plan for his world. We have got a real treat ahead of us tonight. This passage is a purple passage of the Bible. It is wonderful.

However, to understand it properly, you've got to put it in its big context. So let's start by remembering where we've been in the books of Samuel. Perhaps so if you've been coming these last few weeks, you might remember. You might remember a week or two ago I told you that Genesis had told us that kings were integral to God's plan for God's world.

[4 : 23] When humans sinned, what did God do? He promised that the seed of a woman would strike the heel of the head of the serpent. Then we heard the language of seed as it's used through Genesis begins to talk about kings.

And then we found that at the end of Genesis, Jacob's promise is that the future ruler that would come would come from which tribe? Which of his 12 sons? Judah.

Now we have finally arrived. You see, Saul was God's first king over his people, but he was a Benjaminite. Now though, in 2 Samuel, we have a Judahite.

We have one from the tribe of Judah. Saul had failed to live under God's word. He had failed to obey God's prophet. He had died in 1 Samuel chapter 31.

Civil war had waged until chapter 4 of 2 Samuel. And finally, all Israel recognized that this Judean king was God's anointed.

[5 : 23] And in 2 Samuel 5 verse 3, David is anointed as king over all of Israel by the elders of Israel. So that's where we are. We are now in 2 Samuel chapter 5.

So now's the time to open your Bibles because we're going to take a flying run through 5 and 6 before we get to 7. So back in Genesis 18, God promised Abraham that he would give him the land.

You might remember that in a covenant where there's a burning fire pot passing through some animals that are all cut up. God promises Abraham some great things. And he says this.

He says, I will give you the land of the Kenites, the Kenizzites, the Kadmonites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites, and the Jebusites.

Now, the last people on the list are those Jebusites. Well, in 2 Samuel chapter 5, we are told that these Jebusites still have a city right bang in the middle of Israel's land.

[6 : 25] This last list of nations on that list given to Abraham still exist in the middle of the land. They are still unconquered. And what's more, they think they're unconquerable.

But David and his men march on their city. They conquer it. And they rename it, as it were, Jerusalem, the city of David. And with the help of the king of Tyre, a palace is built in that city.

David now is not only king over all Israel. He now has a capital city. And it's one that has no tribal affiliations. No tribe has ever lived there.

It is a good base for a king who will serve the whole of the nation. It's sort of, in one sense, the equivalent of founding a Canberra, really. You know, it's got no affiliations with anyone.

It's not in any state. You know, it's a good place to have your capital city. Anyway, after some more victory over the Philistines, we enter chapter 6 of 2 Samuel. And at the beginning of 1 Samuel, the Ark of the Covenant, you might remember the story of the Ark of the Covenant.

[7 : 28] The Ark had been placed on the borders of Israel, on the outskirts of Israelite territory. Well, for 20 years, it's been sitting there. Now, David leads a huge army.

I mean, not a little army, a huge army of 30,000 men to the place where it is. Without consulting God, without any divine mandate and without any religious protocols, they load it on a cart.

And they start to carry it toward Jerusalem. And God acts. He breaks out. He slays a man who reaches out his hand to steady the Ark.

In verse 8, we're told that with this action, David becomes angry. And then he becomes afraid. And he waits. And he waits. And he waits for three months.

And then he decides he's going to try again. This time, if you look at chapter 6, you'll see he's a little more cautious than he'd been. And understandably, there's no mention this time of an army being present.

[8 : 32] David does the right religious thing. He carries the Ark on the shoulders of people as it was meant to be carried. He dresses in religious garments himself. He offers sacrifice every few steps as he goes.

And then he celebrates with dancing. And he gets carried away with the joy of the event. And his wife, Michal, the daughter of Saul, looks on the procession as it approaches the city.

And she does not like what she sees of David's actions. And when it's all done, and David returns home to bless his family, Michal comes out.

And we're told that she comes out to meet him. So I presume she's standing outside the palace. And I think probably she's outdoors. She's in public. And Michal gives David a public dressing down before he even gets home.

And David retaliates by reminding Michal that he is God's appointed king, not her father Saul. And then we're told that Michal does not have children to the day of her death.

[9 : 36] David is now, try and grab the scenario, king over all Israel. He now has a capital city. He now has the blessing of God in that city, demonstrated by the presence of the Ark of the Covenant.

And any hope for Saul, his predecessor, and his family is gone. David, at this point, at the beginning of 2 Samuel 7, is in a very good place.

So that's the context of this chapter. Now let's take an overview of chapter 7 and see what it contains. And in your outline, some of you, I hope, have picked up the outline as you came in. I've given you a structure for the chapter.

And you might like to just flip over the page there, if you've got it there, and have a look at it with me. You can see that there are four main sections to this chapter. In verses 1 to 3, what happens is David puts forward his proposal.

Then in verses 4 to 17, the Lord responds to David's proposal to Nathan. In verse 17, Nathan brings the Lord's response to David.

[10 : 40] And then in verses 18 to 29, David responds to God's alternative proposal. Now, I don't have time, as I said, to go into all the detail, but let's look at what happens.

And I'm going to highlight some important things as we go through. So follow me in your Bibles. Have your Bibles open at 2 Samuel 7. What we know, the first verse or two, is that some time has passed since the events of chapters 5 and 6.

And what it says, verse 1 says, is David is now settled in his palace. The Lord, we're told, has given him rest over his enemies.

Now, the language I need to tell you is the language of Exodus and Deuteronomy. In other words, what it's saying is God has finally fulfilled his promises to Israel. And then we see David take the initiative.

He approaches Nathan the prophet. And look at verse 2. He says this, See, now I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a tent.

[11 : 41] Now, this is the second time the word house has been used in this chapter. And do you know how many times it's going to be used in the whole of the chapter? Fifteen times. It'll be used 15 times in this chapter, many of them with different meanings.

It is a key word for understanding this chapter. Anyway, in verse 3, Nathan responds to David. And I want you to notice something. There's no record of Nathan even talking to God about this. No record at all.

He knows that God is with David. He knows that God has blessed David. And he's sure that whatever David does is okay with God. And so look at verse 3.

Nathan said to the king, Go, do all that's in your mind, for the Lord is with you. But Nathan is wrong.

Not that the Lord's not with him, but that he should do whatever he wishes. In the previous two chapters, I wonder if you noticed this as I told you the story. David has been acting, you know, all the time up to 2 Samuel 5, whenever he's done something dramatic, what has he done?

[12 : 50] He's inquired of God. Do you know, after 2 Samuel 5, he stops inquiring of God. What he did was he conquered Jerusalem on his own initiative.

And the same thing happened when he brought up the Ark of the Covenant. He didn't consult with God. He did it on his own initiative. And so I think we've begun to wonder, is David reaching the stage where he thinks God is at his disposal?

Does he also think that God's prophets are at his disposal? He's, after all, God's chosen king. Can he now do what he likes, when he likes?

Friends, to understand what David is proposing, you need to understand a bit about the ancient world. You see, what David's proposing here to do is very understandable in the ancient world. First, it makes a lot of sense theologically to build a temple.

After all, you see, David saw how Saul had failed to put God first. And that's the most significant reason for his demise. He did not put God first.

[13 : 56] And so it's only right, isn't it, that David thinks, I want to put God first. And the way to put God first is build this temple, give him a right place in Israel's life and in my life. Second, what David does makes a lot of sense politically.

After all, he's got a capital city. He has the blessing of God symbolized by the Ark's presence in the city. It's only natural, isn't it, that this becomes outwardly visible through a permanent dwelling place for God, a temple.

That would be the right, you know, that would make it, that would really solidify all of this, wouldn't it? It would work politically. It would provide a visible focus for political cohesion and consolidation. But it makes sense culturally as well.

You see, in the ancient world, do you know, if you're a conquering king, do you know what you ought to do? Well, you ought to give honor to the God who's given you victory. It is expected in the ancient world that you would build a shrine or a temple for the God who had established you and your rule.

Anything less would have amounted to snubbing God. Friends, David's situation here, in these verses, is very strong. He's a king secure. He is the fulfillment of God's expectations.

[15:10] Jerusalem is the fulfillment of the prophetic oracles in Deuteronomy. David dwells in a house of cedar with no political threats around about him. He's supported by compliant prophets who think he can do nothing wrong.

But if we have read Hannah's prayer in 1 Samuel 2, we might wonder whether there's a surprise coming. And I want you to have a look at it.

Look at verses 4 to 7. I'll read them to you and listen to them. But that same night, the word of the Lord came to Nathan. Go, tell my servant David, thus says the Lord.

Are you the one to build me a house to live in? I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day. But I've been moving about in a tent, in a tabernacle.

Did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, Why have you not built me a house of cedar?

[16:12] Now I want you to notice a few things here, friends. It's very salutary. First, we get the jump on David. Did you notice that? David hasn't heard yet. We have heard. We have heard what God says to Nathan.

Second, God's word to David, his king, is full of rebuttal and full of rejection. Verses 1 to 3 were full of references to David as king.

But the language of king is entirely absent from God's vocabulary. What does he call David instead? Did you see it there? My servant, David.

Can you see what's happened? And not only that, God has totally reversed the initiative. You see, in verses 2 to 3, what was the thrust of the initiative? King to prophet to God.

And now what does God do? He says, uh-uh, uh-uh, uh-uh, David, no. It is God to prophet to king. That's how things run. Not the way you want them to run.

[17:15] There is a clarification of roles. God and Nathan are not at David's court for him to move around. No. David is in God's court for God to command.

He is God's servant, not vice versa. God is not his servant for him to move around. Next thing. God is actually astounded at what David has done.

Can you hear it in verse 5? Are you the one to build me a house to live in? And then he gives two reasons why David's proposal should be rejected.

He says, I've never dwelt in a house. In other words, God says, I've always been mobile. And there's no basis. The second thing. There's no basis in my word for what you're wanting to do.

Now, please, friends, understand what's going on here. God is not rejecting the idea of a temple in principle. But he is. He is denying his need for a temple.

[18:16] He is rejecting that David should be the temple builder. God is making clear to David that when a temple comes, the timing for it will be in his hands.

Not David's hands. The agent of the building will be God's at God's initiative. And the initiative will totally lie in the hands of God.

So in verses 4 to 7, it's a real rebuttal, isn't it? We don't read it that way. But that's what it is. It is a rebuttal. God has rejected David's proposal. Now he turns the whole question back.

And God does it by stressing the word I. Look at verses 8 to 11 and I'll stress them as I go. God says, David, I took you. I have been with you.

I will make for you. I will appoint. And I will give you rest. Can you see what God's saying? God is saying, I, God, am the one who initiated my plan for the world and for my people.

[19 : 22] God is the one who brought David to this place. And God is the one who's going to determine David's future. And God is the one who will determine his people's future. God alone is the initiator.

Not David. By the way, I want you to notice something else about this speech. Remember I told you verses 1 to 3 were full of the language of king? God refuses to use the word king in this passage.

It's a marvellous thing. He does not use the word king. He talks about David as my servant David. And then he uses the term prince of David.

It's a striking thing, you see. Can you see what God's doing? God is, in one sense, gently rubbing it into him. He, God, is king. Not David.

David is his servant, his prince, his vice-regent. God alone sets the agenda for his kingdom. The final thing I want you to notice about this section is that God begins to move into language that's future-oriented.

[20 : 27] And when he does, he uses covenant language. Just as he promised to make Abraham's name great, so he promises, David, I'm going to make your name great. Just as he promised Moses that he'll plant his people and give them a place, so he does here.

And just as he promised in Jerusalem, rest, so he promises here. The future-oriented language is a good bridge to the next section.

Now look at verses 11 to 16. In these verses, God puts forward his alternative proposal. So David's put forward his. God's rejected it.

Now God's putting forward his. And the language of prophecy begins in the second half of verse 11. The Lord declares to you that the Lord will make you a house.

It's a great turn of phrase, isn't it? David says, I'll make you a house. God says, no, no, no, no. I make you a house. I will make you a house. When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring after you who shall come forth from your body.

[21 : 30] And I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name. So he's going to be the one doing it. And I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. And I will be a father to him.

And he shall be a son to me. And when he commits iniquity, I will punish him with a rod, just as mortals use with blows afflicted by human beings. But, but I will not take my steadfast love from him as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before you.

Your house, your kingdom shall be made forever sure before me. And your throne shall be established forever. Friends, did you hear those references to house?

First, God is going to be the house builder. The house he's going to build will be one for David. It will not be a physical house made of cedar. No, it will be a family house, a dynasty, a dynastic kingship, a throne forever.

Second, a house is going to be built for God. In other words, a temple is going to be built, but it will not be at David's initiative. It will be at God's timing. Can you see what God's doing here?

[22 : 40] He has rested all initiative off David. He has put David in his place, which is as God's servant. But at the same time, he's done this wonderful thing with David, hasn't he?

He's told David that his place in God's purposes is enduring and central. It's a marvelous turn, isn't it? He's taken David's sort of sin and he said, David, it is that.

But I want to tell you, I'm still with you. I'm still for you. You are still central in my purposes. Did you notice another thing? Look at verses 14 and 15. I will be a father to him and he will be a son to me.

I told you a couple of weeks ago that the books of Samuel are full of failed fathers who refuse to discipline their sons. Can you remember them? Eli had two thugs for sons.

Samuel, in one Samuel 8, his sons are abusing the people. In the coming chapters, David would also fail as a father. But can you see what this passage is saying?

[23 : 47] He's saying, in this book of failed fathers, I'm not going to be among them. I will be a true father. I will love with steadfast love.

And as the other fathers in this book have not disciplined their children, I will. I will. Now, Nathan has been given the script of what he's to take back to David.

It must have been with a bit of fear and trepidation, I gather, I guess. But he does it in verse 16. In verse 17, he reports everything to David. And look at David's response.

I want you to notice where he is. Do you notice what happens? He exits his house of cedar. And he goes down to the humble tent that he wanted to replace.

To where the presence where God is represented. And he sits before the Lord. So he's no longer directing commands from his house of cedar.

[24 : 49] He's ready listening to God and placing himself at God's beck and call. Physically, non-verbally, it's a wonderful thing that he's done. His tune has changed.

And he sits before the Lord and acknowledges his place. And let me point out some few things to you again. In verses 20 and 21, he talks about himself. Do you see the language there?

As a servant. In verse 22, he talks about himself as an hearer. Not a speaker. Not an initiator. God alone is God.

There's none beside him. But I want you to notice one particular verse. Verse 19. David observes that God has spoken about a future for his family, his house.

And in our versions, he says this. Verse 19. May this be instruction for the people, O Lord. Now, the New Jerusalem Bible translates it this way. Such is human destiny, Lord Yahweh.

[25 : 49] And what I think David is saying is something like this. He's saying, God, your stated plan for me and for my family is the direction for humanity as a whole.

Your plans for me are where you are heading in your world. In one sense, you're saying to me, God, your plans for humanity run through me.

Through your plans for me. And that fits exactly with what we saw a week or two ago, doesn't it? We saw that God's plans were to overcome the serpent.

And that this would come through the offspring of a woman. And that that offspring would include kings. And that the particular king that would be, it would include as a Judean king. Now we have that king.

And can you see what God is saying? He's reiterating that his plans for humanity are integrally tied up with David. And the destiny of his people.

[26 : 50] God is going to shape the destiny of humanity through David. And not even the sinfulness of David's descendants will be able to stop it.

Friends, the potency of these promises is absolutely extraordinary. You see, David clearly senses this as he prays. He's bold and full of confidence in the God behind what has been said.

Listen to David. And rely on the word of God whose word can be trusted. Look at verses 25 to 29. And now, Lord. Can you hear? He's heard the promises.

He says, Now, Lord God, keep forever the promise you have made concerning your servant and his house. Do as you promised so that your name may be great forever.

Not my name, but yours. Then men will say, The Lord Almighty is God over Israel. And the house of your servant David will be established before you.

[27 : 52] O Lord Almighty God of Israel, You have revealed this to your servant saying, I will build a house for you. So your servant has found courage to offer you this prayer.

O sovereign Lord, You are God. Your words are trustworthy. And you have promised these good things to your servant. Can you hear what David's saying? He's saying, My little thing to build you a house, That was a pittance before what's gone on.

It was a pittance. You are going to do something far beyond building a house of cedar. You are doing something extraordinary. Now be pleased to bless this house of your servant, So that it may continue before you in your sight forever.

For you, O sovereign Lord, Have spoken, And with your blessing, This house of your servant will be blessed forever. There's 2 Samuel 7.

Can you see? This is a high point of biblical revelation. But before we see how it works out in the larger biblical picture, Let's look at the course of these promises through the Old Testament.

[28 : 58] Track the two central points of this passage. Let me ask you, What happened to David's descendants? What happened to them? Well, the story is very straightforward and very sad, isn't it?

We've already seen that David is not a perfect king. In the succeeding chapters of 2 Samuel, He'll confirm this. He may be a moral king, But he's not a perfect king.

And his descendants are not much better. In fact, the kings of Israel sin against God. The kings of Israel lead their nation into sin. And the end result is where? Babylon in exile.

God disciplines, Just as he said here in this chapter, The sons of David with the rods of men. With a foreign nation who cast them off into exile.

And so God's people look back to these promises in 2 Samuel 7, And they long for the king that God had promised. They wait for a king like David, But better.

[29 : 59] For an anointed one. For a Messiah. For one who will not be guilty of wrong. But what about the temple? What happened to the temple? Well, just as kings abused their role.

Do you know what Israel did? They abused the temple's role. They thought that if they had a temple, They could manipulate God along the same lines that David was tempted to do here. They thought, Look, if we have a temple, Then God's captured, isn't he?

We've got him tied down. He's there in the temple. Well, we'll be right forever. Because he's not going to let anyone conquer him, is he? He would be at our beck and call.

It didn't matter whether we sinned or not. And so in Jeremiah, in Jeremiah 7, What are they saying to each other? No, nothing's going to happen. Babylonians are not going to come and get us. Why? Because this is the temple of the Lord.

The temple of the Lord. The temple of the Lord. Who cares what we do in it? No. God couldn't be captured in a temple. And his people should have known that from their experience with the ark in 1 Samuel.

[31 : 02] Because of sin, God left his tabernacle, his temple, And he allowed the idol that his temple had become to be destroyed and desecrated and raised to the ground.

But God didn't desert his people. He didn't forget his promises. Because what did he tell David here? That he's a God of steadfast love. He loves his world.

He loves his people. He loves his word. And he keeps his promises. Friends, the importance of this passage that is before us cannot be underestimated. It is outstanding in its importance.

And it clearly shaped the self-identity of the Lord Jesus Christ. And its importance amongst the New Testament writers cannot be overemphasized. What God did and said here raised eternal hopes in the hearts and minds of his people.

Hopes for a king who would rule as God rules. Hopes for an eternal kingdom that will never pass away. And those were fulfilled in Jesus.

[32 : 12] According to his human nature, Paul says in Romans 1, he was Jesus, the son of David. In fulfillment of this promise here. Not a descendant that sinned like David, but a son of David that did not sin.

And yet who took sin, the punishment of sin upon himself. But Jesus is not only the son of David. Paul says in Romans 1, he is the one through whom the spirit of holiness was declared with power to be the son of God by the resurrection of the dead.

He is the ruler of Psalm 2 who will rule the nations. He is the one whom God will give the nations as his inheritance. But he is not only the son of David, not only the son of God, but he is also the Christ.

He is Jesus, the Messiah, our Lord. But there is even more. For John 1 says that Jesus is God's temple, God's tabernacle. He tabernacled among us.

He dwelt among us. He is the means by which God makes his dwelling among human beings. Or as John 2 says, he is the builder of the house of God.

[33 : 28] But there is more again. As Jesus says in Mark 1 verse 15, in him the kingdom of God has drawn near. He is the one who rules over God's eternal kingdom.

As Revelation 5 says, he is the lion of Judah who unlocks the purposes of God for his world. He enables a return to Eden.

He enables humans to live with God without sin. Through him sin is dealt with. And Satan, that ancient serpent of old, is vanquished and thrown into the eternal fire.

Friends, the promises here in 2 Samuel 7 have their yes and there are men in Jesus. And we are the inheritors of those promises.

So in Jesus, this passage is our passage as well. It is our passage as well. It outlines our future.

[34 : 32] It sketches our destiny. But it teaches us also some other key truths. Let me see if I can unpack them for us. And this is where we'll look at its impact on us.

First, did you notice this passage teaches us about the nature of our God? I wonder if you heard it as I explained the passage. You see, what I wanted to show you is two things.

First, I want to show you the nature of God. And this nature of God is reiterated by himself. Look at verse 15. Verse 15. What is it that will guarantee David's future?

It is God's steadfast love, isn't it? That is how David knows that his house and his kingdom will be made sure before God and his throne established.

God's nature, you see. It's the same word used in the Lord, the Lord, the gracious and compassionate God. God's nature is to exercise steadfast love. You see, God's nature is to exercise steadfast love.

[35 : 42] We have seen this in his word. We have seen this in his actions in the Old Testament. We see it in the cross. God's nature is steadfast love.

But we learn more about God in this passage, don't we? You see, we see in this passage the God we met in page one of the Bible. The God we meet here is a planning God.

He's a God of purpose. A God who, before he founded the world, had a destiny in mind for it. And it will be fulfilled.

This is our God. The God of purpose. The God whose purpose is undergirded and guaranteed by his steadfast love. The God whose will is unfolded in his word and in his promise.

Friends, I want to ask you tonight, do you believe this? Do you believe that God really has a purpose for this world? Do you believe that this world is shaped by God's word and by God's promise?

[36 : 46] Do you believe that it is undergirded by God's love? Do you believe that God only has good in mind? But if you don't, then may I urge you to take another look at Jesus.

You see, in Jesus, these things are fleshed out. In the cross and in the life of Jesus, we see a God who plans. A God who fulfills his promises and keeps his word.

And a God whose plans are saturated with steadfast love. Or as the New Testament uses, grace. However, this passage has more to teach us.

Did you hear my explanation of the passage? Did you watch David at work? Friends, David is one of the great heroes of the Bible, isn't he? I mean, you know, you can't get much of a greater one, I think.

But even he is not free from the taint of his humanity. Even he shows the deep temptation that faces us as humans. And that temptation is for us to bend God to our will.

[37 : 51] It is to attempt to manipulate God and make him tame. Friends, throughout the books of Samuel, people give it a try. Throughout the history of Israel, his people give it a try.

But God is not a God who can be tamed. He is constantly on the move. And when people try and pin him down, he can't be.

He is constantly on the move. And he cannot be manipulated by us. And he will not be squeezed into our mould. Friends, as David's motives are hard to untangle here, ours are often hard to untangle, aren't they?

They may have this odd mixture. And you've all experienced this odd mixture of godly attitudes and ungodly ones. And you think, where do they really belong? And at times you struggle with them.

They make sense. They often sound good. But they often undermine God's sovereignty as well. They place us in a situation where we turn the tables on God. And we say, well, God, I wonder if you'll be in this just for a moment.

[38 : 57] May I direct you where to go? Now, we'd never put it that way, of course, would we? But by our actions and our words, often we are. Friends, do not stand over God and his purposes.

We stand under God. We stand under God's word. He is not our servant. On the contrary, like David, we are his.

We are his servants. In all our planning as individuals, and if I might say so, as a church, this must be our goal. To listen first to God in his word.

To allow him and his interest to shape us and our plans and our future and our destiny and everything we do. Friends, God's message to David is clear.

The way of faith is the way of living how? In submission. God is not our servant. We are God's servants. He is not at our beck and call.

[40 : 04] He governs. We are at his beck and call. He governs our existence. Our lives are shaped by him. Our future depends on him.

Our ministry and its success relies on him. Our future is shaped by him. Our destiny as a congregation is shaped by him. We are his. The church is his.

As David says in verse 26, The Lord God of hosts is God over Israel, or in our language, the Lord God of hosts is God over his people. And David's prayer is our prayer.

Lord, confirm your word. Do what you have promised. This is our situation under God. Dependent. Reliant.

Living under his word and his promise. This is what our Lord Jesus Christ did. He is our model. But more than that, he is the means by which we live before God.

[41 : 01] And God's guarantee is this, friends. And please hear me if you hear nothing else tonight. He will fulfill his plan and his purpose for his world. He has shaped this world by his promise.

And he will fulfill it in his son. We have listened to the promises he gave many, many, many years ago in this passage.

We have seen them languish, haven't we? And the people of God lose faith in them. But God never for a moment forgot them.

He never for a moment forgot David and his promises to him. And in Christ, those promises were fulfilled. And in Christ, all the promises of God will be fulfilled.

As Paul says in 2 Corinthians chapter 1, in Jesus, every one of the promises is a yes. And it has God's promise.

[42 : 03] And it has God's amen attached to it. We can trust God. We can live under his word and his promise. For they are guaranteed in Jesus. They are guaranteed in Jesus, his king.

Let's pray. Father God, thank you so much for this passage. Thank you so much for your direction of David.

Thank you so much for the promises you gave to him. Thank you so much for their fulfillment in Jesus. And thank you so much that he is the guarantee that all your promises will have their yes and their amen.

We thank you for this. In Jesus' name. Amen.