

THE DAVIDIC COVENANT

THE CONTEXT

- After God empowered David, by the Spirit, to conquer all of Israel's enemies, giving them rest in the land of Canaan and thus fulfilling the first Abrahamic promise (see last lesson), God made a covenant with David.

THE PROMISES

- God promised
 1. To set David's offspring on David's throne.
 2. To establish his throne forever.
 3. That his offspring would build a house for God to dwell in.
 4. That He would be his offspring's Father.
 5. That His mercy would not depart from his offspring, in spite of his sin.

2 Samuel 7: ¹² "When your days are fulfilled and you rest with your fathers, I will set up your seed after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. ¹³ He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. ¹⁴ I will be his Father, and he shall be My son. If he commits iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men and with the blows of the sons of men. ¹⁵ But My mercy shall not depart from him, as I took *it* from Saul, whom I removed from before you. ¹⁶ And your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. Your throne shall be established forever.

THE FULFILLMENT OF PROMISES 1-4

- These promises were fulfilled in Solomon's reign over Israel. (Note that David reveals in these passages that God revealed more details to him than just what is recorded in 2 Samuel 7 – namely that promises were about Solomon.)



1 Chronicles 22: ⁵ Now David said, "Solomon my son *is* young and inexperienced, and the house to be built for the Lord *must be* exceedingly magnificent, famous and glorious throughout all countries. I will now make preparation for it." So David made abundant preparations before his death. ⁶ Then he called for his son Solomon, and charged him to build a house for the Lord God of Israel. ⁷ And David said to Solomon: "My son, as for me, it was in my mind to build a house to the name of the Lord my God; ⁸ but the word of the Lord came to me, saying, 'You have shed much blood and have made great wars; you shall not build a house for My name, because you have shed much blood on the earth in My sight. ⁹ Behold, a son shall be born to you, who shall be a man of rest; and I will give him rest from all his enemies all around. **His name shall be Solomon,** for I will give peace and quietness to Israel in his days. ¹⁰ **He shall build a house for My name, and he shall be My son, and I *will be* his Father; and I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel forever.'** ¹¹ Now, my son, may the Lord be with you; and may you prosper, and build the house of the Lord your God, **as He has said to you.** ¹² Only may the Lord give you wisdom and understanding, and give you charge concerning Israel, that you may keep the law of the Lord your God. ¹³ **Then you will prosper, if you take care to fulfill the statutes and judgments with which the Lord charged Moses concerning Israel.** Be strong and of good courage; do not fear nor be dismayed.

1 Kings 4: ¹ So King Solomon was king over all Israel... ²⁰ Judah and Israel were as numerous as the sand by the sea in multitude, eating and drinking and rejoicing... ²⁴ For he had dominion over all the region on this side of the River from Tiphshah even to Gaza, namely over all the kings on this side of the River; and he had peace on every side all around him. ²⁵ And Judah and Israel dwelt safely, each man under his vine and his fig tree, from Dan as far as Beersheba, all the days of Solomon. [cf 1 Kg 5:⁴ But now the Lord my God has given me rest on every side; there is neither adversary nor evil occurrence.; 1 Chr 22:9 below]

1 Kings 2: ¹² So Solomon sat on **the throne** of David his father, and **his kingdom was firmly established.**

- At the dedication of the temple, Solomon said the promises of the Davidic Covenant were fulfilled.

1 Kings 8: ¹² Then Solomon spoke:



"The Lord said He would dwell in the dark cloud.

¹³ I have surely built You an exalted house,
And a place for You to dwell in **forever.**"

¹⁴ Then the king turned around and blessed the whole assembly of Israel, while all the assembly of Israel was standing. ¹⁵ And he said: "Blessed *be* the Lord God of Israel, **who spoke with His mouth to my father David, and with His hand has fulfilled it** saying, ¹⁶ 'Since the day that I brought My people Israel out of Egypt, I have chosen no city from any tribe of Israel *in which* to build a house, that My name might be there; but I chose David to be over My people Israel.' ¹⁷ Now it was in the heart of my father David to build a temple for the name of the Lord God of Israel. ¹⁸ But the Lord said to my father David, 'Whereas it was in your heart to build a temple for My name, you did well that it was in your heart. ¹⁹ Nevertheless you shall not build the temple, but your son who will come from your body, he shall build the temple for My name.' ²⁰ **So the Lord has fulfilled His word which He spoke; and I have filled the position of my father David, and sit on the throne of Israel, as the Lord promised; and I have built a temple for the name of the Lord God of Israel.** ²¹ And there I have made a place for the ark, in which *is* the covenant of the Lord which He made with our fathers, when He brought them out of the land of Egypt."

²² Then Solomon stood before the altar of the Lord in the presence of all the assembly of Israel, and spread out his hands toward heaven; ²³ and he said: "Lord God of Israel, *there is* no God in heaven above or on earth below like You, who **keep Your covenant and mercy with Your servants who walk before You with all their hearts.** ²⁴ **You have kept what You promised Your servant David my father; You have both spoken with Your mouth and fulfilled it with Your hand, as it is this day.** ²⁵ Therefore, Lord God of Israel, now keep what You promised Your servant David my father, saying, 'You shall not fail to have a man sit before Me on the throne of Israel, **only if your sons take heed to their way, that they walk before Me as you have walked before Me.**' ²⁶ And now I pray, O God of Israel, let Your word come true, which You have spoken to Your servant David my father.

IF... THEN...

- God also revealed to David that the promise to establish the throne of his son *forever* (meaning passed down through generations indefinitely) was *conditioned on his sons' obedience to Mosaic law.*



1 Chronicles 28:² Then King David rose to his feet and said, "Hear me, my brethren and my people: I *had* it in my heart to build a house of rest for the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and for the footstool of our God, and had made preparations to build it.³ But God said to me, 'You shall not build a house for My name, because you *have been* a man of war and have shed blood.'⁴ However the Lord God of Israel chose me above all the house of my father to be king over Israel forever, for He has chosen Judah *to be* the ruler. And of the house of Judah, the house of my father, and among the sons of my father, He was pleased with me to make *me* king over all Israel.⁵ And of all my sons (for the Lord has given me many sons) **He has chosen my son Solomon to sit on the throne of the kingdom of the Lord over Israel.**⁶ Now He said to me, 'It is your son Solomon *who* shall build My house and My courts; for I have chosen him *to be* My son, and I will be his Father.⁷ **Moreover I will establish his kingdom forever, if he is steadfast to observe My commandments and My judgments, as it is this day.'**⁸ Now therefore, in the sight of all Israel, the assembly of the Lord, and in the hearing of our God, be careful to seek out all the commandments of the Lord your God, **that you may possess this good land, and leave *it* as an inheritance for your children after you forever.**

⁹ "As for you, my son Solomon, know the God of your father, and serve Him with a loyal heart and with a willing mind; for the Lord searches all hearts and understands all the intent of the thoughts. If you seek Him, He will be found by you; but **if you forsake Him, He will cast you off forever.**

¹⁰ Consider now, for **the Lord has chosen you to build a house for the sanctuary;** be strong, and do it."

1 Kings 2:¹ Now the days of David drew near that he should die, and he charged Solomon his son, saying:² "I go the way of all the earth; be strong, therefore, and prove yourself a man.³ And keep the charge of the Lord your God: to walk in His ways, to keep His statutes, His commandments, His judgments, and His testimonies, as it is written in the Law of Moses, that you may prosper in all that you do and wherever you turn;⁴ **that the Lord may fulfill His word which He spoke concerning me, saying, 'If your sons take heed to their way, to walk before Me in truth with all their heart and with all their soul,'** He said, 'you shall not lack a man on the throne of Israel.'

1 Kings 9:¹ And it came to pass, when Solomon had finished building the house of the Lord and the king's house, and all Solomon's desire which he wanted to do,² that the Lord appeared to Solomon the second time, as He had appeared to him at Gibeon.³ And the Lord said to him: "I have heard your prayer and your supplication that you have made before Me; I have consecrated this house which you have built to put My name there forever, and My eyes and My heart will be there perpetually.⁴ **Now if you walk before Me as your father David walked, in**



integrity of heart and in uprightness, to do according to all that I have commanded you, *and* if you keep My statutes and My judgments, ⁵ then I will establish the throne of your kingdom over Israel forever, as I promised David your father, saying, 'You shall not fail to have a man on the throne of Israel.' ⁶ *But* if you or your sons at all turn from following Me, and do not keep My commandments *and* My statutes which I have set before you, but go and serve other gods and worship them, ⁷ then I will cut off Israel from the land which I have given them; and this house which I have consecrated for My name I will cast out of My sight. Israel will be a proverb and a byword among all peoples. ⁸ And *as for* this house, *which* is exalted, everyone who passes by it will be astonished and will hiss, and say, 'Why has the Lord done thus to this land and to this house?' ⁹ Then they will answer, 'Because they forsook the Lord their God, who brought their fathers out of the land of Egypt, and have embraced other gods, and worshiped them and served them; therefore the Lord has brought all this calamity on them.'"

Psalm 132: ¹⁰ For the sake of David Your servant,
Do not turn away the face of Your anointed.
¹¹ The Lord has sworn to David
A truth from which He will not turn back:
"Of the fruit of your body I will set upon your throne.
¹² "If your sons will keep My covenant
And My testimony which I will teach them,
Their sons also shall sit upon your throne forever."

- God's promise to establish the throne of David and his offspring forever had reference to a continuous succession of kings. They would continue to reign, one after the other as long as they obeyed Mosaic law. God's dwelling in the temple was also conditioned upon this obedience. He says in v3 above that the temple was consecrated to put His name there *forever* (cf Ps 132:14). Yet he goes on to state the conditional nature of *forever* (v7). God revealed the same thing to Solomon during its construction.

1 Kings 6: ¹¹ Then the word of the Lord came to Solomon, saying: ¹² "Concerning this temple which you are building, **if** you walk in My statutes, execute My judgments, keep all My commandments, and walk in them, **then** I will perform My word with you, which I spoke to your father David. ¹³ And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will not forsake My people Israel."



- Israel's tenure in the land was now conditioned upon the obedience of the king (1 Kgs 9:7 "then I will cut off Israel from the land which I have given them"). The Davidic Covenant was truly an extension of the Old Sinai Covenant of works for life in the land of Canaan.

THE FULFILLMENT OF THE 5TH PROMISE

- Solomon failed to meet the conditional requirement, and thus his kingdom in Canaan would not be established forever down through successive generations.

1 Kings 11: ¹ But King Solomon loved many foreign women, as well as the daughter of Pharaoh: women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians, *and* Hittites— ² from the nations of whom the Lord had said to the children of Israel, "You shall not intermarry with them, nor they with you. Surely they will turn away your hearts after their gods." Solomon clung to these in love. ³ And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines; and his wives turned away his heart. ⁴ For it was so, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned his heart after other gods; and **his heart was not loyal to the Lord his God, as *was* the heart of his father David.** ⁵ For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. ⁶ **Solomon did evil in the sight of the Lord, and did not fully follow the Lord, as *did* his father David.** ⁷ Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, on the hill that *is* east of Jerusalem, and for Molech the abomination of the people of Ammon. ⁸ And he did likewise for all his foreign wives, who burned incense and sacrificed to their gods.

⁹ So the Lord became angry with Solomon, because his heart had turned from the Lord God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice, ¹⁰ and had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods; but he did not keep what the Lord had commanded. ¹¹ Therefore the Lord said to Solomon, "Because you have done this, and have not kept My covenant and My statutes, which I have commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom away from you and give it to your servant. ¹² Nevertheless I will not do it in your days, for the sake of your father David; I will tear it out of the hand of your son. ¹³ However I will not tear away the whole kingdom; I will give one tribe to your son for the sake of My servant David, and for the sake of Jerusalem which I have chosen."

2 Sam. 7:14-15



"If he commits iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men and with the blows of the sons of men. But My mercy shall not depart from him, as I took *it* from Saul, whom I removed from before you." (NKJV)

"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." (ESV)

"When he does wrong, I will discipline him with a rod of men and blows from mortals. But my faithful love will never leave him as it did when I removed it from Saul, whom I removed from before you." (CSB)

- Saul was anointed by God to be king over Israel (1 Samuel 9:16; 10:1). The Spirit was placed upon him as a prophet (1 Sam. 10:10). He was then made king by the people (1 Sam. 10:17-25). He disobeyed Mosaic law and was therefore rejected as king by God (1 Sam 15:10, 26). As we saw above, God said that Saul's kingdom would not continue forever because he would be replaced by someone else. Samuel said "The Lord has torn the kingdom of Israel from you this day and has given it to a neighbor of yours, who is better than you." (1 Sam. 15:28). God then anointed David king and the Spirit came upon him as the Spirit left Saul (1 Sam. 16:13-14). God cut Saul's life short by killing him in battle so that David could reign ("whom I removed from before you" 2 Sam 7:15; cf Acts 13:22).
- Unlike Saul, God did not remove Solomon from his throne or place His anointing on another when he sinned (2 Chr 6:42). This was the fulfillment of the fifth Davidic promise. Saul broke Mosaic law and was therefore killed in battle (Deut. 28:1, 7, 15, 25). Solomon broke Mosaic law, but he was not killed in battle. The Lord did raise up adversaries ("wounds inflicted by human beings") against Solomon after he sinned but Solomon was not defeated by them. Instead "Solomon slept with his fathers and was buried in the city of David his father" (1 Kgs 11:43).

1 Kings 11:14 And the Lord raised up an adversary against Solomon, Hadad the Edomite... 23 God also raised up as an adversary to him, Rezon the son of Eliada... 25 He was an adversary of Israel all the days of Solomon, doing harm as Hadad did... ³⁴ Nevertheless, I will not take the whole kingdom out of his hand, but **I will make him ruler all the days of his life**, for the sake of David my servant whom I chose, who kept my commandments and my statutes. ³⁵ But I will take the kingdom out of his son's hand and will give it to you [Jeroboam], ten tribes. ³⁶ Yet to his son I will give one tribe, that David my servant may always have a lamp before me in Jerusalem, the



city where I have chosen to put my name.³⁷ And I will take you, and you shall reign over all that your soul desires, and you shall be king over Israel.

- Rehoboam became king, but the people rebelled against him because of his heavy taxes. 10 tribes broke away from Rehoboam and made Jeroboam king instead. These 10 tribes became known as "Israel" in opposition to "Judah." Here the reign of the family of David over all Israel, actually, and forever ceased. Indeed, from beginning to end, it continued at most, but three generations, or about one century.¹

1 Kings 12:19 So Israel has been in rebellion against the house of David to this day.

²⁰ Now it came to pass when all Israel heard that Jeroboam had come back, they sent for him and called him to the congregation, and made him king over all Israel. There was none who followed the house of David, but the tribe of Judah only.

- God offered Jeroboam the same conditional promise that he made Solomon.

1 Kings 11:³⁷ So I will take you, and you shall reign over all your heart desires, and you shall be king over Israel.³⁸ Then it shall be, if you heed all that I command you, walk in My ways, and do *what is* right in My sight, to keep My statutes and My commandments, as My servant David did, then I will be with you and build for you an enduring house, as I built for David, and will give Israel to you.

- This opportunity to have a kingdom established down through the generations of a king appears to have been a standing order. When Saul provoked the Lord to anger by unlawfully offering a sacrifice himself:

1 Samuel 13:¹³⁻¹⁴ Samuel said to Saul, "You have done foolishly. You have not kept the command of the Lord your God, with which he commanded you. **For then the Lord would have established your kingdom over Israel forever.** ¹⁴ **But now your kingdom shall not continue.** The Lord has sought out a man after his own heart, and the Lord has commanded him to be prince over his people, because you have not kept what the Lord commanded you."

¹ R.B.C. Howell, The Covenants, p. 38-40



BUT...

- The conditional Davidic Covenant was fulfilled in Solomon and the Davidic kingdom of Israel was taken from his son as a result of his sin. However, in God's judgment upon Rehoboam we see a "but."

1 Kings 11:³⁹ And I will afflict the descendants of David because of this, **but not forever.**

- God will curse the descendants of David according to the letter of the promise, but there will be a time in the future when this will cease. It will not be permanent.

1 Kings 11:¹³ However I will not tear away the whole kingdom; I will give one tribe to your son for the sake of My servant David, and for the sake of Jerusalem which I have chosen."

- The kingdom of Israel is taken away from the line of David because of their disobedience to Mosaic law, but the tribe of David (Judah) is to be spared in some way. Rehoboam forsakes the Lord so God sends judgment upon Judah.

1 Chronicles 12:¹ When the kingdom of Rehoboam was established and strong, **he and all Israel with him forsook the law of the Lord.** ² And it came about in King Rehoboam's fifth year, because they had been unfaithful to the Lord, that Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem ³ with 1,200 chariots and 60,000 horsemen. And the people who came with him from Egypt were without number: the Lubim, the Sukkiim and the Ethiopians. ⁴ He captured the fortified cities of Judah and came as far as Jerusalem. ⁵ Then Shemaiah the prophet came to Rehoboam and the princes of Judah who had gathered at Jerusalem because of Shishak, and he said to them, "Thus says the Lord, 'You have forsaken Me, so I also have forsaken you to Shishak.'"

- Psalm 89 was most likely written during this time when the Davidic kingdom had been fully established but then lost to Israel's old enemy Egypt. In this psalm we see a hope of some future fulfillment of the Davidic Covenant (that we don't really see in Psalm 132), despite the fact that Scripture teaches the Davidic promises were already fulfilled. Verses 19-37 recall what God promised in the Davidic Covenant, but with new details and a new emphasis. The "forever" clause is no longer understood to be conditional.



Psalm 89: ²⁸ "My lovingkindness I will keep for him forever,
And My covenant shall be confirmed to him.
²⁹ "So I will establish his descendants forever
And his throne as the days of heaven.
³⁰ "If his sons forsake My law
And do not walk in My judgments,
³¹ If they violate My statutes
And do not keep My commandments,
³² Then I will punish their transgression with the rod
And their iniquity with stripes.
³³ "But I will not break off My lovingkindness from him,
Nor deal falsely in My faithfulness.
³⁴ "My covenant I will not violate,
Nor will I alter the utterance of My lips.
³⁵ "Once I have sworn by My holiness;
I will not lie to David.
³⁶ "His descendants shall endure forever
And his throne as the sun before Me.
³⁷ "It shall be established forever like the moon,
And the witness in the sky is faithful." Selah.

- Previously God said the establishment of the throne forever was conditioned upon the obedience of David's sons (1 Kgs 9:4-5; 1 Chr 28:7). Now the "forever" promise is to be fulfilled *in spite of their disobedience*. How are we to make sense of this? By understanding the Davidic Covenant as a narrowing of the Abrahamic Covenant of Circumcision. Like the Abrahamic, the Davidic had reference to two different offspring. The first promise was that David would have numerous offspring that would rule over the nation of Israel in the land of Canaan forever with God in their midst. The second promise was that David would be the father of the promised seed of the woman who would bless all nations.
- Though aided by the Spirit of prophecy, perhaps what allowed David and Ethan the Psalmist (Psalm 89) to see a future fulfillment beyond Solomon was the very end of the oath. David understood that the promise to establish the throne of **Solomon's kingdom** forever (v 13) was conditioned upon Solomon's obedience to the law (recall 1 Chr. 28:7). But then God goes on to say that even if Solomon commits iniquity, **David's kingdom** and throne shall be established forever.



1 Samuel 7:¹² “When your days are fulfilled and you rest with your fathers, I will set up your seed after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. ¹³ He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. ¹⁴ I will be his Father, and he shall be My son. **If he commits iniquity**, I will chasten him with the rod of men and with the blows of the sons of men. ¹⁵ But **My mercy shall not depart from him**, as I took *it* from Saul, whom I removed from before you. ¹⁶ **And your house and your kingdom shall be established forever** before you. Your throne shall be established forever.”

- So Solomon’s kingdom (letter fulfillment) will be established forever if he obeys the Mosaic law, but David’s kingdom (spiritual fulfillment) will be established forever even if Solomon commits iniquity.
- This would explain why the tribe of Judah was separated from the 10 tribes and spared from their annihilation. Previously, all 12 tribes were spared from the Mosaic curse because of God’s promise to Abraham. But because the first Abrahamic promise had been fulfilled in the reigns of David and Solomon, it no longer preserved all of Israel from the Mosaic curse (Gen 15:11; Deut 28:26). The second Abrahamic promise (yet to be fulfilled) was narrowed to the seed of David and thus Judah was spared.

