

## God's Promise to David/Finding Courage to Pray

2 Sam 7:1-29

KV 27 "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."

Having courage to pray is something we don't often think about – in fact before studying this passage I didn't think that prayer was something that required courage. But if you think about it – if David, a man after God's own heart, a man feared by his enemies, required courage to pray, how much more do we need it! Sometimes, it does take courage to ask someone something. It takes courage to ask a friend to help you move. It might take more courage to ask your boss for a raise. It might take even more courage still, if you met the president of the United States, to ask him a favor. Prayer is the most important work we can do as Christians, and it is vital to our spiritual health – yet, how confident are we in our prayers? How real are our prayers? I know that sometimes, my prayers can be empty, but let's learn today how we can find courage to offer our prayers to God, and improve the quality of our offerings to God.

King David found the courage to pray – so let's find out how. Through this passage we will see that David first sought the glory of God. It was out of this motive, deep in his heart, that God gave him one of the most glorious promises in the Bible. It is this promise that is the highlight of 2 Samuel. When God revealed these promises to David, he then found the courage to pray. The King James version translates it like this: "David found it in his heart to pray." In any case, whether it be courageous, or just in our hearts to pray – it is something we need to find. Let's explore how David found it in his heart to pray.

### Part I: David Seeks God's Glory

Look at v.1: "After the king was settled in his palace and the Lord had given him rest from all his enemies around him." Throughout our study of 2 Samuel, David had quite a rough trip to the throne. He had to wait 7 years in Hebron while the last of Saul's family tried desperately to hang on to power – after that he had to capture Jerusalem, the walled city, from the Jebusites, and defeat a Philistine force that had returned to challenge him. Last week we studied the difficult time he had in bringing the ark up to Jerusalem, but finally he was settled in his palace and had rest from all his enemies.

David here could have been tempted to glorify himself. Now that he wasn't busy fighting, he could easily take a look at his high position and take pride. Saul, after receiving victory from the Lord in many battles, set up a monument in his own honor (1 Sam 15:12). Sometimes when God gives us blessings, we thank him right away, but after a few days we forget that it was from God. I could say, look, I have gotten promoted three times in two years at work, I must be a really good worker! But the truth is, God helped me every step of the way. David had no mind for his own glory, but was resolute about giving glory to God. In this time of rest, he said to Nathan the prophet, 'Here I am, living in a palace of cedar, while the ark of God remains in a tent.'"

God gave David nice things, and David wanted God to have even nicer things. He could not rest, to see that God, who gave him such splendor in a cedar palace, would

still dwell in a tent. His desire was for God's glory, and this desire was deep in his heart. 1 Kings 8:18 says, "But the Lord said to my Father David, 'Because it was in your heart to build a temple for my name, you did well to have this in your heart.'" God says, because it was in your heart, you did well. You want to please God? Have it in your heart to do so! David had not done anything yet, but because it was in his heart to glorify God, God said he did well.

Notice also, that David did not just set about doing what was in his heart, though it was a good thing. David went and spoke with Nathan. The first thing he did was to consult a prophet of God, before he did anything, he inquired of the Lord. Sometimes, even though what we want to do is good, it may not be what God wants us to do. It is important then, that we inquire of the Lord. It might be good that I have a privilege to deliver messages, but if I neglect my wife or kids at home because I'm so busy preparing, that is not a good thing. Before we set out to do anything for God, we should inquire of the Lord – and we see in v.3 that even prophets of God need to be inspired before they speak. Nathan, perhaps out of human understanding, and knowing God was always with David, said, "Whatever you have in mind, go ahead and do it, for the Lord is with you."

Nathan made a mistake – but he was of the same mind that to give glory and honor God was good. So God did not condemn Nathan, but corrected him very quickly. It's not uncommon for men of God to make mistakes. Samuel thought Eliab would be the next anointed king, but he was corrected (1 Sam 16:7). Paul wanted to preach in Asia, and got as far as that, but the Holy Spirit would not let him continue, and led him somewhere else (Acts 16:7). I believe that's true for us too. The basis of all we do should come out of this: to glorify God and give Him honor – I think then, when we inquire of God he will make our paths straight: either approving our way, or redirecting our steps. It was on this basis that the Lord revealed His promise to David that very same night.

## Part II: God Reveals His Promise

Look at verse 4-5: "That night the word of the Lord came to Nathan, saying: 'Go and tell my servant David, 'This is what the Lord says: Are you the one to build me a house to dwell in?'" Even though Nathan was in error, the Lord would allow him to redeem himself by giving him the correct revelation. God could have given a direct revelation to David, but chose to continue to use the prophet according to his good will. He tells Nathan that from the time of the Israelites deliverance from Egypt to this day [David's reign], his presence was always in a tent. His will for the leaders he chose for Israel were to shepherd his people, not to mobilize them to build His temple. God would appoint others to do that, but his chosen leaders were to feed his flock with knowledge and understanding of God. This was the role of Samuel, who was the last appointed judge over Israel.

God's will must always supercede our will. David was not allowed to build the temple because he was a man of war – he shed much blood in the sight of God (2 Chron 22:7), but he was God's chosen instrument to put all enemies of Israel under the Lord's feet (1 Kings 5:3), in order to bring about a time of peace in which the temple could be built. Still though we need to work hard. Even though David did not build the temple himself, he knew his son would be young and inexperienced to begin the project, so he

took great pains to provide for the temple of the Lord the building materials (1 Chron 22:14). Even if it's not God's will for us to do so, we don't sit idle, but we do all we can to make sure in all ways, he is glorified. David did this by supporting his son and preparing for him. How can we know God's will? To best know our Lord's will, we need to study our Bibles! We need to listen to good sermons and sound doctrine to help us improve our knowledge of God's word. We cannot hear the word of God and thus know the will of God unless we spend time with the word of God.

Next God reminds David of what he has done – how he took him from being a humble shepherd of a small flock to the king and ruler over God's people Israel, and how he cut off all of his enemies from before him. All that we have is from God – he is the Creator God, the provider of all things, and the author of life. David did not become king by his own will, desire, intelligence or strength, but by the will of God. We should remind ourselves from time to time what God has done for us – because it's so easy for us to forget, and we can't be thankful if we don't remember. Notice here that God uses Nathan to remind him of these things – and friends can be good reminders of what God has done in our lives, and if we really can't remember, we can pray for God to remind us of the things he has done for us personally.

After God declares his will, and reminds David of what He has done, he begins to present his promise to David. The first parts of his promise will establish the glory of the nation of Israel. God promises first that he will make David's name great, like the names of the greatest men on earth. Even today we respect the name David, and name our kids David, like David Henkins, in hopes that they may be like King David. Today, in both Christianity and Judaism King David is a very important person. God then promises to provide a place for his people Israel, where they will not be oppressed anymore, and will give David rest from his enemies. We see this happen during the time of Solomon's reign in the book of 1 Kings, and it is these acts of God which establish the nation of Israel and solidify it first under David's reign.

Now here comes the introduction of God's promise to David. Let's all read v. 11b together: "The Lord declares to you that the Lord himself will establish a house for you." At first we see David's desire to build a house for the Lord, but here, the Lord turns around and promises to establish a house for David! Here we see God's amazing and abundant grace, that when we do what is good and right, when we seek for his glory, his desire is to bless us richly. The Lord then tells David how this house will be established – Look at v.12 "When your days are over and you rest with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, who will come from your own body, and I will establish his kingdom." The establishment of David's house is the establishment of a line of descendants who will succeed him in ruling the kingdom of Israel, God's people. Though David is only the second king, he is the first to have his children succeed him. God has promised a great blessing to David's family. Many parents hope for their children to succeed, and do well, David may have had the same hopes, but now these hopes are supported by the promise of God.

Can we all please read v.13 together: "He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever." The promise of God regarding David's house just got more glorious. Not only will God establish his house, but God will also bless his desire to build a temple – through a direct descendant of

David. This was done through King Solomon – but there is an even more glorious aspect of this promise. Not only were David’s descendants promised to succeed him over the course of time, but God promised that the throne of one of his descendants will last forever. There was only one person who lived forever – and that was God. This was a Messianic hope – that God would come to this world through a direct descendant of David. It’s comforting to know that even though we are unfaithful, or unfaithful to keep our promises, God is always faithful to keep his.

Before this time, the world was still looking forward to a Savior. From the time of the Passover, when God rescued the Israelites from Egypt, up until the time in the passage, an annual sacrifice was made to atone for all the sins of Israel. Israel felt the deep guilt produced by their sins, and there were reminded year after year through the annual sacrifice. Israel was anticipating a Savior, a deliverer from their sins – but they did not know how he would come. In this promise to David, the revelation is made by God that from a descendant of David, the Messiah would come. It was from this point on, that people would anticipate the Messiah as Son of David. Jer 23:5 says, “‘The days are coming,’ declares the Lord, ‘when I will raise up to David a righteous Branch, a King who will reign wisely.’” Isaiah 9:7 says, “Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David’s throne and over his kingdom.” John 7:42, which is not a prophecy, but a debate within a crowd where some said, “Does not the Scripture say that the Christ will come from David’s family and from Bethlehem, the town where David lived?” Jesus himself testifies, in Matthew 22:44, quoting the Psalm David wrote: “The Lord said to my Lord, sit at my right hand until I put your enemies under your feet.” Jesus Christ, the Messiah, the Savior of the world, was promised to come as a descendant of David.

Look at v.14 – “I will be his father, and he will be my son. When he does wrong, I will punish him with the rod of men, with floggings inflicted by men.” This verse applies to the descendants of David, but I don’t think it applies to Christ, because he never did wrong. Solomon, however, did wrong by taking many wives (1 King 11) – and the Lord did discipline him. The Lord could have taken away David’s kingdom, as he did with Saul, but for David’s sake he took away most of the kingdom from Solomon, but left 1 tribe loyal to their family in order to continue the line of succession. Verse 15 says “But my love will never be taken away from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you.” Though we sin, God’s love will never be taken away from us. He may discipline us, and often will discipline us, but that is out of his love and leads us to repentance. When we are disciplined by the Lord, we must repent. Though David sinned, he always repented before the Lord.

Finally, in verse 16, the Lord re-emphasizes his promise to David, saying, “Your house and our kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever.” So – for David’s heartfelt desire to build a house for the Lord, he got much more than what he could ever expect from God. Not only would God grant his desire for the temple to be built, but gave him the promise that his kingdom would be established forever, and that the Son of God would also be his direct descendant. This is a great encouragement to us – to know that the Lord gives us much more than we expect.

This is the highlight of 2 Samuel – it is God’s promise to David, God’s covenant to David. God made great promises over the course of his work over several thousands

of years – but this is one of the most glorious. God made a covenant with Noah that he will never again flood the earth. He made a covenant with Abraham that his descendants will be as numerous as the stars, and by his descendants the earth will be blessed. He made a covenant with Moses that the Israelites will be his people – a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. Now he makes a covenant with David – the Davidic covenant – that the temple will be built by his son, that David’s kingdom shall be everlasting, and that the Son of God would come through his very own descendants. And we know that God kept this promise through the coming of Jesus Christ, who ushered in a New Covenant – the complete and final forgiveness and removal of sins through a new heart and mind. We who have accepted Jesus were adopted as sons of God, in a sense, we are sons of David as well, just as Jesus was a son of David – so the promise God makes to David, is ours as well. Through Jesus Christ, we are a part of the everlasting kingdom.

Nathan reported all of these things to David, and now we come to

### Part III. Finding Courage to Pray

Look at v.18a “Then King David went in and sat before the Lord.” Immediately after receiving these promises, David went to pray to the Lord. His first desire was to go before the Lord, and offer up a prayer. David went into the tent, and he sat before the Lord. This is how our prayers should always be – though now we don’t have a correct place or posture, we should always pray before the Lord. When we pray, we need to understand that we are in the presence of God, before the Lord, so we must give the Lord due reverence, honor and respect.

David’s first words were “Who am I, O Sovereign Lord, and what is my family, that you have brought me this far?” Here notice David’s humility before the Lord. He says, “Who am I?” Who was David? He was the highest in all of Israel, feared by all of her enemies – a valiant warrior and a talented musician and poet – yet, before the Lord, he is nothing. Finding courage to pray does not mean praying arrogantly, or with pride – surprisingly, having courage to pray includes humbling yourself before God.

Look at v.19 “And if this were not enough in your sight, O Sovereign Lord, you have also spoken about the future of the house of your servant. Is this your usual way of dealing with man, O Sovereign Lord?” Was it enough to bring David from a lowly shepherd boy to the king of His people? Was it enough to deliver him from his enemies before him? God wanted to bless him even more – to establish his throne forever, and bring the Son of God through his family. This is God’s usual way of dealing with man – he doesn’t give us what we deserve, but desires to pour out the riches of his grace on us. We are by nature rebellious and disobedient, but what does God reward us with? He gives us his Son, Jesus Christ, whom he sent through David, as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. He gives us redemption from our lives of sin – he gives us peace in our hearts and satisfaction of our souls. And if this were not enough – he offers us eternal, everlasting life – an eternity free from sin, and if this were not enough – he offers us new, glorious, immortal, imperishable bodies (I Cor 15:42)

How do we deal with people who hate us, mock us, make fun of us? We want to treat them the same way. But that is not how God deals with men. He deals with them with love, with kindness and abundant grace through his one and only Son Jesus Christ.

Those who say God is an evil God, God is wrong, God is hateful should only look at the cross and see what he did for them – He gave the life of his one and only Son to pay for their sins.

Verse 20 says, “What more can David say to you? For you know your servant, O Sovereign Lord.” God knows our hearts - that is all the more reason to come to him in order to seek his will. We want to think we know better, we want to think we know what’s good for our lives – but God knows better, and we should acknowledge that he truly knows us, even better than we know ourselves.

David then goes on to praise the Lord – “How great you are, O Sovereign Lord! There is no one like you, and there is no God but you...and who is like your people Israel?” You can see David’s heart poured out all over this prayer, and how much he truly loves and adores the Lord. This to me, sounds like true praise and true worship. He talks about all that God has done, and glorifies the nation of Israel. Indeed, who is like Israel? They escaped from Egypt, with help from great and awesome wonders from God – enemies were thrown into panic before them and were driven out of their lands along with their false gods. Why is Israel such a great nation? Because God is their God – and that was David’s point. Verse 24 says, “You have established your people Israel as your very own forever, and you, O Lord, have become their God.”

Who is like us, IITUBF, can we pray that prayer? Who is like us, my Christian family? Who is like us – because God is our God. Through Jesus, God has established us as his own forever, and He has become our God. We have a God who is living, righteous and true.

Next, David makes his petition to the Lord – verse 25 says, “And now, Lord God, keep forever the promise you have made...” The Lord made some big promises – if you remember – David’s son to build the temple, the establishment of his kingdom forever, and the coming of the Son of God through him - this would seem like a lot to ask, but David knew the Lord could and would do them. What I notice is David’s attitude in the petition – Do these things so that your name will be great forever, and men will say, “The Lord Almighty is God over Israel!” From start to finish, David desired nothing more than the glory of the Lord.

Let’s all read v.27, “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.” The three points of this message are in this verse. The first part should be the basis of our prayers: “O Lord Almighty, God of Israel” – glorifying the name of God. The Lord’s prayer begins and ends with “Our Father, Hallowed be your name...and, Yours is the glory forever.” David sought the glory of God.

Then, God revealed his promise to David: “I will build a house for you.” God was found by David. He passed on this wisdom to his son Solomon in 1 Chron 28:9, “And you, my son Solomon, acknowledge the God of your father, and serve him with wholehearted devotion and with a willing mind, for the Lord searches every heart and understands every motive behind the thoughts. If you seek him, he will be found by you; but if you forsake him, he will reject you forever.” If you seek him, he will be found by you. And when God gives us his promises, like David we can find courage to offer our prayers to God. Notice that courage to pray needs to be found – it’s not something we

have naturally. Before we pray, we ought to take a minute to search our hearts and Bibles.

In the last 2 verses of the chapter, David again praises God – “O Sovereign Lord, you are God! Your words are trustworthy.” He prayed again according to the promises of God, and for the blessing of his children and descendants. The last part of verse 29 says, “for you, O Sovereign Lord, have spoken, and with your blessing the house of your servant will be blessed forever.” God’s words are trustworthy, and he only needs to speak to make them come true. The house of David has been blessed forever through the coming of our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, and through him, we have been adopted as sons, and we too, will reign forever with David when he comes again.

Today we saw how David found courage to pray to the Lord. In the first place, he desired earnestly for the glory of God. When he desired to build a house for the Lord, the Lord revealed this glorious and awesome promise to him: “I will build a house for you.” David’s son would build the Lord’s temple. In addition, God would establish his kingdom forever, and would bring his Son Jesus Christ to earth through David’s family. By truly knowing God – and knowing his overflowing graces and mercies, David offered prayers full of praise and honor to God, courageously petitioning him to carry out his good will. Oh that we could pray like that, and I pray that someday we all will.

Spurgeon said a thermometer of our spiritual temperature is the measure of intensity of our prayer – neglect of private prayer is like a locust which devours the strength. We will have no power, and we will be useless to God, if we cannot pray according to his will, and according to his promises. If David needed to find courage to pray, how much more do we! I do not encourage false or shallow prayers, but I encourage getting to know the Lord more through his word. Let us also remember in our prayers – Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be your name ... and Yours is the glory, forever.

Let us find it in our hearts to pray. The key verse says, David found courage to pray. The King James version translates it as “and I found it in my heart to pray.” Finding courage to pray may be hard to understand, but at the basic level, it’s finding it in our hearts to pray. It’s not something we have naturally, but something we can find, if we seek after it. David was a man after God’s own heart. He sought God’s heart, he sought the love and the glory of God – so God gave him a promise much, much greater than he could ever ask for. This promise is also ours – the promise to have everlasting life in God’s eternal kingdom. Let us seek God, through his word, and claim the many promises in the Bible for us, so that we too, can find it in our hearts to pray.