



The Glory Returns to Israel (2 Sam 7-8)

Notes: Week Four

2 Samuel 7-8 (HCSB)

The LORD's Covenant with David

⁷ When the king had settled into his palace and the LORD had given him rest on every side from all his enemies, ² the king said to Nathan the prophet, “Look, I am living in a cedar house while the ark of God sits inside tent curtains.”

³ So Nathan told the king, “Go and do all that is on your heart, for the LORD is with you.”

⁴ But that night the word of the LORD came to Nathan: ⁵ “Go to My servant David and say, ‘This is what the LORD says: Are you to build a house for Me to live in?’ ⁶ From the time I brought the Israelites out of Egypt until today I have not lived in a house; instead, I have been moving around with a tent as My dwelling. ⁷ In all My journeys with all the Israelites, have I ever asked anyone among the tribes of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd My people Israel: Why haven’t you built Me a house of cedar?’

⁸ “Now this is what you are to say to My servant David: ‘This is what the LORD of Hosts says: I took you from the pasture and from following the sheep to be ruler over My people Israel. ⁹ I have been with you wherever you have gone, and I have destroyed all your enemies before you. I will make a name for you like that of the greatest in the land. ¹⁰ I will establish a place for My people Israel and plant them, so that they may live there and not be disturbed again. Evildoers will not afflict them as they have done ¹¹ ever since the day I ordered judges to be over My people Israel. I will give you rest from all your enemies.

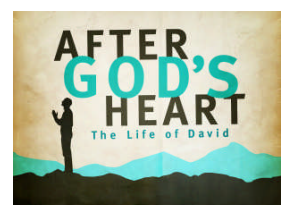
“‘The LORD declares to you: The LORD Himself will make a house for you. ¹² When your time comes and you rest with your fathers, I will raise up after you your descendant, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. ¹³ He will build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. ¹⁴ I will be a father to him, and he will be a son to Me. When he does wrong, I will discipline him with a human rod and with blows from others. ¹⁵ But My faithful love will never leave him as I removed it from Saul; I removed him from your way. ¹⁶ Your house and kingdom will endure before Me^[a] forever, and your throne will be established forever.’”

¹⁷ Nathan spoke all these words and this entire vision to David.

David's Prayer of Thanksgiving

¹⁸ Then King David went in, sat in the LORD's presence, and said,

Who am I, Lord GOD, and what is my house that You have brought me this far? ¹⁹ What You have done so far^[b] was a little thing to You, Lord GOD, for You have also spoken about Your servant's house in the distant future. And this



is a revelation^[c] for mankind, Lord GOD. ²⁰ What more can David say to You? You know Your servant, Lord GOD. ²¹ Because of Your word and according to Your will, You have revealed all these great things to Your servant.

²² This is why You are great, Lord GOD. There is no one like You, and there is no God besides You, as all we have heard confirms. ²³ And who is like Your people Israel? God came to one nation on earth in order to redeem a people for Himself, to make a name for Himself, and to perform for them^[d] great and awesome acts, driving out nations and their gods before Your people You redeemed for Yourself from Egypt. ²⁴ You established Your people Israel to be Your own people forever, and You, LORD, have become their God.

²⁵ Now, LORD God, fulfill the promise forever that You have made to Your servant and his house. Do as You have promised, ²⁶ so that Your name will be exalted forever, when it is said, “The LORD of Hosts is God over Israel.” The house of Your servant David will be established before You ²⁷ since You, LORD of Hosts, God of Israel, have revealed this to Your servant when You said, “I will build a house for you.” Therefore, Your servant has found the courage to pray this prayer to You. ²⁸ Lord GOD, You are God; Your words are true, and You have promised this grace to Your servant. ²⁹ Now, please bless Your servant’s house so that it will continue before You forever. For You, Lord GOD, have spoken, and with Your blessing Your servant’s house will be blessed forever.

David’s Victories

8 After this, David defeated the Philistines, subdued them, and took Metheg-ammah^[e] from Philistine control.^[f] ² He also defeated the Moabites, and after making them lie down on the ground, he measured them off with a cord. He measured every two cord lengths of those to be put to death and one length of those to be kept alive. So the Moabites became David’s subjects and brought tribute.

³ David also defeated Hadadezer son of Rehob, king of Zobah, who went to restore his control at the Euphrates River. ⁴ David captured 1,700 horsemen^[g] and 20,000 foot soldiers from him, and he hamstrung all the horses and kept 100 chariots.^[h]

⁵ When the Arameans of Damascus came to assist King Hadadezer of Zobah, David struck down 22,000 Aramean men. ⁶ Then he placed garrisons in Aram of Damascus, and the Arameans became David’s subjects and brought tribute. The LORD made David victorious wherever he went.

⁷ David took the gold shields of Hadadezer’s officers and brought them to Jerusalem. ⁸ King David also took huge quantities of bronze from Betah^[i] and Berothai, Hadadezer’s cities.

⁹ When King Toi of Hamath heard that David had defeated the entire army of Hadadezer, ¹⁰ he sent his son Joram to King David to greet him and to congratulate him because David had fought against Hadadezer and defeated him, for Toi and Hadadezer had fought many wars. Joram had items of silver, gold, and bronze with him. ¹¹ King David also dedicated these to the LORD, along with the silver and gold he had dedicated from all the nations he had subdued— ¹² from Edom,^[j] Moab, the Ammonites, the Philistines, the Amalekites, and the spoil of Hadadezer son of Rehob, king of Zobah.

¹³ David made a reputation for himself when he returned from striking down 18,000 Edomites^[k] in the Valley of Salt.^[l] ¹⁴ He placed garrisons throughout Edom, and all the Edomites were subject to David. The LORD made David victorious wherever he went.

¹⁵ So David reigned over all Israel, administering justice and righteousness for all his people.

¹⁶ Joab son of Zeruiah was over the army;

Jehoshaphat son of Ahilud was court historian;

¹⁷ Zadok son of Ahitub

and Ahimelech son of Abiathar were priests;

Seraiah was court secretary;

¹⁸ Benaiah son of Jehoiada was over

the Cherethites and the Pelethites;

and David's sons were chief officials.^[m]

Footnotes:

- a. [2 Samuel 7:16](#) Some Hb mss, LXX, Syr; other Hb mss read *you*
- b. [2 Samuel 7:19](#) Lit *Yet this*
- c. [2 Samuel 7:19](#) Or *custom*, or *instruction*
- d. [2 Samuel 7:23](#) Some Hb mss, Tg, Vg, Syr; other Hb mss read *you*
- e. [2 Samuel 8:1](#) Or *took control of the mother city*; Hb obscure
- f. [2 Samuel 8:1](#) LXX reads *them*, and *David took tribute out of the hand of the Philistines*
- g. [2 Samuel 8:4](#) LXX, DSS read *1,000 chariots and 7,000 horsemen*
- h. [2 Samuel 8:4](#) Or *chariot horses*
- i. [2 Samuel 8:8](#) Some LXX mss, Syr read *Tebah*
- j. [2 Samuel 8:12](#) Some Hb mss, LXX, Syr; other Hb mss read *Aram*; 1Ch 18:11
- k. [2 Samuel 8:13](#) Some Hb mss, LXX, Syr; other Hb mss read *Arameans*; 1Ch 18:12
- l. [2 Samuel 8:13](#) = the Dead Sea region
- m. [2 Samuel 8:18](#) LXX; MT reads *were priests*; 1Ch 18:17

Holman Christian Standard Bible - *Study Bible*¹

2 Samuel 7-8

2 Samuel 7

[7:1](#) David had secured his borders and subdued all his enemies, resulting in the nation's enjoyment of rest on every side. However, all of this came through God's blessing.

[7:2](#) David's words further revealed his heart for the Lord. It made no sense to him that he had so much and the ark of God was housed only by tent curtains.

[7:3](#) Nathan is elsewhere called "Nathan the prophet" ([1Ki 1:8,10,22-23](#)). He apparently believed he did not need to consult the Lord about whether David should build God a temple, so he gave the king his blessing.

[7:6](#) God had brought the Israelites out of Egypt over 400 years earlier and had led them to Sinai, where He gave them His statutes. During all that time, He had chosen to make His dwelling place among His people in a tent.

[7:7](#) God's question have I ever asked anyone implied it was His prerogative to have a temple or not. He determined how His people should worship Him.

[7:8](#) The Lord had taken David from the pasture... to be ruler—from a very humble profession to the greatest position of leadership in the nation.

[7:10](#) The Lord's promises of lasting security meant everything to people whose lives were subject to foreign invasions or raids by local tribes.

[7:11](#) The Lord denied David's desire to build Him a house (temple), but He rewarded David's heart by building the king a house (dynasty)—composed of David's descendants.

[7:12](#) God promised David the permanent dynasty Saul could have had ([1Sam 13:13-14](#)).

[7:13](#) The phrase I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever did not imply that David's descendants would live forever but that his dynasty and kingdom would.

[7:14](#) The concept of discipline implies reproof or correction, but generally with good intent ([Isa 2:4](#); [Hab 2:1](#)).

[7:15](#) God promised David His faithful love (Hb *chesed*). This term is a rich word, encompassing all that would come to David's line because he belonged to God. On the other hand, the Lord had removed such love from Saul because of his misguided heart.

[7:16](#) Ultimately God's promise to David was fulfilled in the king's most significant descendant, the Lord Jesus Christ, whose throne would be established forever ([Lk 1:32-33](#)).

1. Jeremy Royal Howard, ed., *HCSB Study Bible*, (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2010), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, Under: "2 Samuel 7-8".

[7:18](#) David's questions, Who am I...what is my house, reveal his amazement at God's grace toward him and his family. The king also pondered such issues about humanity in general when he wrote [Psalm 8](#).

[7:19](#) David affirmed that what the Lord God had done so far did not begin to challenge His power, and it was only the beginning of what He would do through David's line. The king's words this is a revelation for mankind can also be translated "This is instruction for mankind" or "This is the instruction of mankind," suggesting David thought God's work with him could be an example for all humanity. The Lord was willing to work through a surrendered heart.

[7:20-21](#) David was aware of God's grace on his life, and he affirmed all these great things the Lord had promised would happen only in light of God's word and will (lit "heart").

[7:22](#) David's affirmation of the Lord's uniqueness contrasted sharply with the polytheistic views of the nations around him.

[7:23](#) God established His covenant with Israel not only to redeem a people for Himself, but to make a name for Himself so other peoples could turn to Him ([Isa 45:22](#)). His great and awesome acts included His miracles performed in Egypt and during the journey to the promised land. God's intent was to judge nations and their gods who lived in Canaan at the time Israel entered the land.

[7:24](#) Israel's special covenant relationship with God (You established Your people... forever) did not preclude God using Israel to bless other nations ([Gen 12:3](#)). Nonetheless, Israel's covenant with God provided them a great blessing ([Rm 3:1-2](#)).

[7:26](#) David wanted most of all that God's name would be exalted forever through all He did for David's house. Seeing the Lord of Hosts receive His proper glory had long been on David's heart ([1Sam 17:26,36,45-47](#)).

[7:27](#) Like Daniel ([Dan 9:2-5](#)), David did not presume on God's promises but prayed for God to graciously fulfill them despite the unworthiness of humanity.

[7:28](#) David knew God's words were true (the Hb word rendered "true" is related to the word "amen"). God's truth provided David a foundation for his life, just as it does for all believers ([Jn 8:31-32](#)).

[7:29](#) Lasting blessing on David's house would naturally benefit the king and his descendants, but David seemed most concerned with God's honor. He truly was a man loyal to God ([1Sam 13:14](#)).

2 Samuel 8

[8:1](#) The Philistines were never again a serious threat to Israel after David subdued them. Metheg-ammah (lit "bridle of the cubit") is an unknown site. Some suggest the expression is figurative, indicating David took the bridle (the reins of leadership) from his enemies.

[8:2](#) The Moabites lived on Israel's southeast border beyond the Dead Sea. David allowed one-third of the defeated army to live; many kings of that time would not have been so merciful. Further, those who remained could then maintain the Moabite economy and thus bring tribute (regular tax that subject peoples were required to pay) to David.

[8:3](#) Zobah was one of several Aramean (Syrian) city-states northeast of Israel. Through his conquest of Hadadezer and the other Aramean rulers, David gained control as far as the Euphrates River.

8:4 David hamstringed all the horses of the Arameans probably because chariot horses were not useful for most of Israel's rugged territory. David also affirmed that victory did not depend on horses but on God's will ([Ps 20:7](#); [Hos 1:7](#); cp. [Dt 17:16](#)).

8:5 Aramean city-states were known to band together against a common enemy.

8:6 Israelite garrisons in Aram of Damascus would ensure continued rule over the region. It also guaranteed Israel a profit from controlling major trade routes. God's power, however, was the determining factor in David's victories and blessing.



8:7 Gold shields seem to have been a significant part of other kings' public displays as well ([1Ki 14:26-27](#)).

8:9 King Toi of Hamath, another Aramean region, sought a treaty with David since David had subdued Hadadezer, Toi's enemy ([1Sam 27:2-7](#)).

8:10 Lesser kings often sought a treaty with a superior king by sending large gifts ([2Ki 16:7-9](#)).

8:11 David dedicated these gifts to the Lord, because He had blessed him with victory over all the nations he had subdued.

8:12 David's victories are summarized here; his victory over the Ammonites is described later ([10:1-14](#); [11:1](#); [12:26-31](#)). Some manuscripts read "Aram" (Syria) instead of Edom, but Edom is more likely in light of [verse 13](#).

8:13 Some early OT manuscripts read Edomites while others say "Arameans." The only difference between the two words in Hebrew is one slight variation in a letter. Since the Valley of Salt clearly designates a region by the Dead Sea, "Edomites" is more likely correct (see also [v. 14](#)).

8:15 The phrase So David reigned over all Israel indicates that David now controlled not only his own people's territory, but the land of all the surrounding peoples, and thus had secured his borders. David ruled with justice and righteousness, reflecting two aspects of God's character ([Isa 9:7](#); [Jer 9:24](#)).

8:16 Joab, David's nephew, is well known to the story ([2:13-30](#); [3:22-30](#)). Jehoshaphat should not be confused with a descendant of David by the same name ([2Ch 17-20](#)). This Jehoshaphat served as court historian (lit "the one causing to remember"), the person who supervised the preservation of important records and who perhaps coordinated the announcement of royal edicts.

8:17 Zadok would serve David throughout his reign ([20:25](#)) and also would serve David's son Solomon ([1Ki 1:38-39](#); [2:35](#)). He descended from faithful Eleazar's line ([Num 25:7-13](#)); his followers were known as the Zadokites, a term that became "Sadducees" during Jesus' day ([Mt 3:7](#); [16:1](#)). Abiathar son of Ahimelech had escaped from Nob when Saul slaughtered all the priests ([1Sam 22:20-21](#)); he probably named his son Ahimelech in memory of his own father. Seraiah probably assisted Jehoshaphat in his administrative duties.

8:18 Benaiah served Solomon as well as David ([1Ki 2:35](#)). The meaning of Cherethites and Pelethites is uncertain, but many believe the terms designate special units of foreign-born royal bodyguards—perhaps from Crete and Philistia. Chief officials is literally "priests"; perhaps David's sons served as palace consultants to the priesthood ([1Ch 18:17](#)). However they served, it is clear that David desired a good relationship between his kingship and the priesthood.

English Standard Version - Study Bible²

2 Samuel 7-8

2 Samuel 7

7:1-29 Davidic Covenant: Eternal Throne. This chapter, with its messianic promise, is a key passage in the history of salvation. The Lord promises to make one family, that of David, the representative of his people forever. [Verses 8-17](#) are often described as the “Davidic covenant,” even though the term “covenant” does not appear there. But in [Ps. 89:3](#) this promise is described using the words, “I have made a covenant with my chosen one.” David expresses his desire to build a house for the Lord. But the Lord does not approve, and instead states on his own initiative that he will establish David’s house (i.e., dynasty) eternally, promising him an eternal throne: “And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me. Your throne shall be established forever” ([2 Sam. 7:16](#)). This is not, however, a guarantee that every occupant of the throne of David will himself enjoy the blessings without regard for his own piety ([v. 14](#)). [Psalm 132:11](#) says that on this occasion the Lord swore to David with “a sure oath,” from which he would not turn back, that “one of the sons of your body I will set on your throne” (cf. [2 Sam. 7:12](#)). This points to Solomon, who would “sit on the throne of Israel” and build “the house for the name of the LORD” ([1 Kings 8:20](#)), and eventually to Jesus, the Messiah who would sit on the throne eternally, thus establishing David’s throne forever ([2 Sam. 7:16](#); [Luke 1:32-33](#)). See [2 Chron. 13:5](#); [21:7](#); [Ps. 89:20-38](#); [Isa. 55:3](#); [Jer. 33:17](#), [20-22](#); etc.

7:1-3 David contrasts his own **cedar** house ([5:11](#)) with the **tent** that houses the **ark** ([6:17](#)). It was common in the ancient Near East for a king to build a temple to honor his god. **the LORD is with you.** Nathan probably means these words as a general comment on David and gives his own opinion as David’s counselor. That night, however, he receives a specific revelation from God, which he delivers to David as a prophet, the messenger of God.

7:6-7 I have not lived in a house. Nothing in the regulations about the ark in Exodus suggests that it was placed in a building; rather, it needed carrying poles ([Ex. 25:10-16](#)). The shrine at Shiloh did have a door and was called a “house” or “temple” ([1 Sam. 1:9](#); [3:3](#), [15](#); see note on [1 Sam. 1:7, 9](#)), but even a tent could be called a “house,” and since there is also a reference to the “entrance of the tent of meeting,” it may be that some kind of structure was built around the tent at Shiloh. The ark had also been in the house of Abinadab ([2 Sam. 6:3](#)) for several decades, but that was considered a temporary expedient.

7:8-17 God will not let David build him a house; rather, he will build David a house, i.e., a ruling dynasty (see note on [1 Chron. 17:10b-14](#)). According to [1 Kings 5:3](#), Solomon said David was not able to build the temple “because of the warfare with which his enemies surrounded him,” and in [1 Chron. 22:8](#) David says the Lord said he could not do so because “you have shed much blood and have waged great wars. You shall not build a house to my name, because you have shed so much blood before me on the earth” (see note on [1 Chron. 22:6-16](#)).

7:12 Your offspring after you refers to Solomon.

7:14 Hebrews 1:5 applies the words **I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son** to Christ because, as Messiah, Jesus inherits David’s role as representative of God’s people (his “son,” [Ex. 4:22-23](#); cf. [Ps. 89:26-27](#)).

2. Lane T. Dennis, ed., *ESV Study Bible, The: English Standard Version*, (Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway Bibles, 2008), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, Under: "2 Samuel 5-6".

[7:18-29](#) In this moving prayer, David uses the phrase **O Lord God** (or “O LORD God”) eight times, expressing his close intimacy with his God. **This is instruction for mankind** ([v. 19](#)) means that all people can learn about God’s faithfulness and grace from his promises to David. The phrase could also be translated, “Is this your custom for mankind?” i.e., “You do not usually do this for humans.” **there is none like you, and there is no God besides you** ([v. 22](#)). This is an explicit statement of monotheism (cf. [1 Sam. 2:2](#)). Then follows the expression **who is like your people Israel**, which describes the incomparability (hence the uniqueness) of Israel, God’s people, whom he has redeemed from Egypt and established for himself forever.

[7:18](#) **Who am I, O Lord... , that you have brought me thus far?** In spite of dramatic military success and the popular acclaim of the whole nation, David humbly considers himself unworthy of all the Lord’s blessings, attributing his success instead to the Lord (cf. [Prov. 3:34](#); [James 4:6](#); [1 Pet. 5:5](#)). He understands rightly that the covenant ([2 Sam. 7:8-17](#)) expresses God’s faithfulness to his promises to his people ([vv. 21-29](#)).

2 Samuel 8

[8:1-18](#) *Catalog of David’s Military Activities.* [Chapter 8](#) is a catalog of David’s military victories, from the old enemies, the Philistines, to the Transjordan nations of Moab and Ammon, through the Syrian countries, and all the way to “the River” (the Euphrates), ending with a statement about his administration. The varied events of this chapter are not necessarily chronological with the rest of the book. The Ammon war of [chs. 10-12](#) may have been the prelude to David’s defeat of the important kingdom of Zobah in this chapter. [Chapter 8](#) has ties with the title to [Psalm 60](#): “when he strove with Aram-naharim and with Aram-zobah [cf. [2 Sam. 8:3](#)], and when Joab on his return struck down twelve thousand of Edom in the Valley of Salt [cf. [v. 13](#)].” The older empires in Egypt and Mesopotamia were at a low point, which allowed David to take advantage of the international situation.

[8:1](#) **Metheg-ammah** is otherwise unknown—perhaps it refers to a type of land. After the time of David, there are no references to battles with the **Philistines** until the time of Hezekiah ([2 Kings 18:8](#)).

[8:3-12](#) The events of [chs. 10-12](#) may have been the prelude to [8:3](#), as suggested by the references in [ch. 10](#) to Zobah and Hadadezer ([10:6, 16](#)). If so, Hadadezer—after the disastrous defeat by David and the defection of his vassals ([10:19](#)) and the defeat of Ammon ([12:31](#))—went to the Euphrates to try to restore his power over his vassals but was attacked on the way by David. **Zobah** and **Damascus** were both in Syria (Hb. *’Aram*). Zobah was in the northern part of the Lebanon Valley (see [Josh. 11:17](#); [12:7](#)), in what is now called the Bekaa Valley. Hadadezer’s name does not appear outside the Bible, but there are similarities to an unnamed Syrian king of David’s time mentioned in Assyrian annals. Having captured chariot horses, David apparently decided to experiment with a small chariot force. It is not clear why he would hamstring the other horses ([2 Sam. 8:4](#)). It was probably to keep them from being used again by enemy soldiers, but it also may have been in response to the warning in [Deut. 17:16](#) that the king must not acquire many horses for himself (cf. [Josh. 11:6-9](#)). The hamstrung horses supposedly could have been used as farm or pack horses. **Hamath** was on the middle Orontes River; it bordered Zobah on the north. The treasures ([2 Sam. 8:11](#)) later became part of Solomon’s treasure, used either to build the temple or were placed in the temple treasury ([1 Kings 7:51](#); [1 Chron. 18:8](#)).

8:4 While the verse says that **David took from him 1,700 horsemen**, [1 Chron. 18:4](#) says that he “took from him 1,000 chariots” and “7,000 horsemen.” The Septuagint agrees with Chronicles. Although there is not enough information available to account for this difference, one possible explanation is that someone miscopied the text of Samuel, and the Septuagint (along with Chronicles) retains the true reading.

8:6 **And the LORD gave victory to David wherever he went.** The narrator continues to point to God’s blessing, not David’s skill, as the reason for David’s victories (cf. [v. 14](#); [1 Sam. 18:12](#)).

8:13-14 The **Valley of Salt** must have been in the Edomite territory south and east of the Dead Sea. [First Chronicles 18:12](#) states that Abishai killed the **Edomites**. The deeds of David’s generals were ascribed to David, just as the deeds of Abishai’s men were ascribed to Abishai. Joab seems to have led the campaign; it was at this time that Hadad, of the royal house of Edom, escaped to Egypt ([1 Kings 11:14-22](#); title of [Psalm 60](#)).

8:15-18 This is a list of David’s officials (for similar lists, cf. [20:23-26](#); [1 Kings 4:1-6](#)). Like the list in Kings, this one starts with the office of the king. It was the task of the king to establish **justice and equity** (see [1 Kings 10:9](#)). **Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud** appears as **recorder** in all three lists. The offices of “recorder” and “secretary” ([2 Sam. 8:17](#)) were common in surrounding countries. Jerusalem, like other city-states of the time, had a long history of civil administration, which David could take over and use.

8:17 **Zadok** helped David during Absalom’s rebellion ([15:27-28](#); [17:15](#); [19:11](#)) and later supported Solomon ([1 Kings 1:8](#)). His father **Ahitub** was probably a different person from Ahitub the father of Ahimelech, priest at Nob ([1 Sam. 22:9](#)). **Abiathar** appeared in 1 Samuel accompanying David ([1 Sam. 22:20](#); [23:6](#); [30:7](#)) and worked with Zadok during Absalom’s rebellion. Abiathar apparently named his son **Ahimelech** after his father ([1 Sam. 22:20](#)), a common practice. For Abiathar’s genealogy, see note on [1 Sam. 2:27-28](#). Other passages such as the account of Absalom’s rebellion and the lists of officials in [2 Sam. 20:25](#) and [1 Kings 4:4](#) refer to the priests as “Zadok and Abiathar.” It is often suggested that “Ahimelech the son of Abiathar” is a scribal error for “Abiathar son of Ahimelech.” Another possibility is that Abiathar retired his position as one of the chief priests in favor of a son, as Zadok later did ([1 Kings 4:2](#)), and then perhaps the son later died or had some other problem, so Abiathar resumed the position. The secretary **Seraiah** might be the same as the “Sheva” ([2 Sam. 20:25](#)) and “Shisha” ([1 Kings 4:3](#)) mentioned in the other two lists, but this is not established. It may be that it was a foreign name, which would be especially liable to variant spellings.

8:18 **Benaiah** was in charge of David’s personal force of **Cherethites and... Pelethites**. He was one of David’s “mighty men” ([23:20-22](#)). Like Zadok, he supported Solomon against Adonijah and became commander of the whole army under Solomon ([1 Kings 1:1-2:46](#); [4:1-6](#)). The Cherethites and Pelethites were foreigners who made up the king’s bodyguard (cf. [1 Sam. 28:2](#)). **David’s sons were priests**. It is not known what their duties were, but obviously their duties were not important compared to those of the Levitical priests Zadok, Abiathar, and Ahimelech, who were concerned with the ark ([2 Sam. 15:24](#)); the other lists do not mention David’s sons in this capacity. They may have been just chaplains for the rituals carried out in the royal family. The priestly line and the royal line were essentially separate.

NLT Life Application Study Bible³

2 Samuel 7-8

7:1ff This chapter records the covenant God made with David, promising to carry on David's line forever. This promise would be fully realized in the birth of Jesus Christ. Although the word *covenant* is not specifically stated in the Bible text here, it is used elsewhere to describe this occasion ([23:5](#); [Psalm 89:28](#), [34](#)).

7:2 This is the first time Nathan the prophet is mentioned. God made certain that a prophet was living during the reign of each of the kings of Israel. The prophet's main tasks were to urge the people to follow God and to communicate God's laws and plans to the king. Most of the kings rejected the prophets God sent. But at least God had given them the opportunity to listen and obey. In earlier years, judges and priests had the role of prophets. Samuel served as judge, priest, and prophet, bridging the gap between the period of the judges and the monarchy.

7:5 In this message from Nathan, God is saying that he doesn't want David to build a temple for him. God told David that his job was to unify and lead Israel and to destroy its enemies. This huge task would require David to shed a great deal of blood. In [1 Chronicles 28:3](#), we learn that God did not want his Temple built by a warrior. Therefore, David made the plans and collected the materials so that his son Solomon could begin work on the Temple as soon as he became king ([1 Kings 5-7](#)). David accepted his part in God's plan and did not try to go beyond it. Sometimes God says no to our plans. When he does, we should utilize the other opportunities he gives us.

7:8-16 David's request was good, but God said no. This does not mean that God rejected David. In fact, God was planning to do something even greater in David's life than allowing him the prestige of building the Temple. Although God turned down David's request, he promised to continue the house (or dynasty) of David forever. David's earthly dynasty ended four centuries later, but Jesus Christ, a direct descendant of David, was the ultimate fulfillment of this promise ([Acts 2:22-36](#)). Christ will reign for eternity—now in his spiritual kingdom and in heaven, and later, on earth, in the new Jerusalem ([Luke 1:30-33](#); [Revelation 21](#)). Have you prayed with good intentions, only to have God say no? This is God's way of directing you to a greater purpose in your life. Accepting God's no requires as great a faith as carrying out his yes.

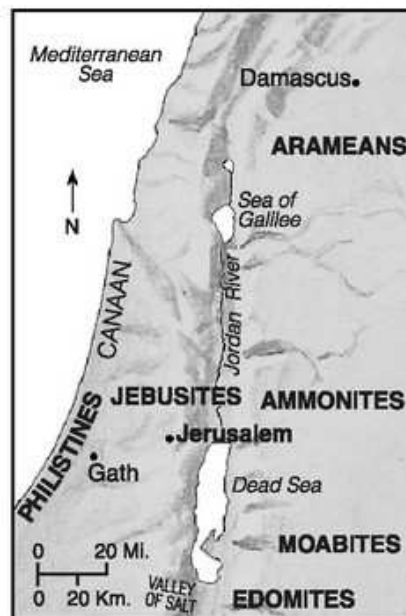
7:18ff This section records David's prayer expressing his humble acceptance of God's promise to extend his dynasty forever. David realized that these blessings were given to him and his descendants in order that Israel might benefit from them. They would help fulfill God's greater purpose and promises that through the nation the whole world would be blessed ([Genesis 12:1-3](#)).

Covenants		
A covenant is a legally binding obligation (promise). Throughout history God has made covenants with his people—he would keep his side if they would keep theirs. Here are seven covenants found in the Bible.		
Name and Reference	God's Promise	Sign
In Eden Genesis 3:15	Satan and mankind will be enemies.	Pain of childbirth
Noah Genesis 9:8-17	God would never again destroy the earth with a flood.	Rainbow
Abraham Genesis 15:12-21 ; 17:1-14	Abraham's descendants would become a great nation if they obeyed God. God would be their God forever.	Smoking firepot and flaming torch
At Mount Sinai Exodus 19:5, 6	Israel would be God's special people, a holy nation. But they would have to keep their part of the covenant—obedience.	The Exodus
The Priesthood Numbers 25:10-13	Aaron's descendants would be priests forever.	The Aaronic priesthood
David 2 Samuel 7:13 ; 23:5	Salvation would come through David's line through the birth of the Messiah.	David's line continued, and the Messiah was born a descendant of David
New Covenant Hebrews 8:6-13	Forgiveness and salvation are available through faith in Christ.	Christ's resurrection

Chapter 8

8:1-5 Part of God's covenant with David included the promise that the Israelites' enemies would be defeated and would no longer oppress them ([7:10, 11](#)). God fulfilled this promise by helping David defeat the opposing nations. Several enemies are listed in this chapter: (1) *The Moabites*, descendants of Lot who lived east of the Dead Sea. They posed a constant military and religious threat to Israel ([Numbers 25:1-3](#); [Judges 3:12-30](#); [1 Samuel 14:47](#)). David seemed to have a good relationship with the Moabites at one time; David's great-grandmother Ruth had been from Moab. (2) *King Hadadezer of Zobah*. His defeat at David's hands fulfilled God's promise to Abraham that Israel would control the land as far north as the Euphrates River ([Genesis 15:18](#)). (3) *The Edomites*, descendants of Esau ([Genesis 36:1](#)) who were also archenemies of Israel (see [2 Kings 8:20](#); [Jeremiah 49:7-22](#); [Ezekiel 25:12-14](#); and the note on [Genesis 36:9](#)).

8:6 The *tribute money* was the tax levied on conquered nations. The tax helped to support Israel's government and demonstrated that the conquered nation was under Israel's control.



David's Enemies

David wanted to complete the conquest of Canaan begun by Joshua. He defeated the Jebusites at Jerusalem and the Philistines in the vicinity of Gath. The Ammonites, Arameans, and Moabites became his subjects. He put garrisons in Edom and levied a tax upon them.

8:15 David pleased the people ([3:36](#)), not because he tried to please them, but because he tried to please God. Often those who try the hardest to become popular never make it. But the praise of people is not that important. Don't spend your time devising ways to become accepted in the public eye. Instead, strive to do what is right, and both God and people will respect your convictions.

8:15 King David's reign was characterized by doing what was "just and right." David was fair in interpreting the law, administering punishment with mercy, respecting people's rights, and recognizing people's duty toward God. Is it any wonder that almost everyone trusted and followed David? Why was it good for David to pursue justice? (1) It was God's command ([Deuteronomy 16:18-20](#)) and in keeping with his character ([Deuteronomy 32:4](#)). God's laws were meant to establish a just society. (2) It was in the nation's best interest because times would arise when each individual would need justice. Justice should characterize the way you relate to people. Make sure you are fair in the way you treat them.