

To Every Thing There Is a Season

3-Year Bible Reading Plan

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I encourage you to open your Bibles to the book of 2 Samuel 7 but we're also gonna spend a little time in Matthew 1.

John, you didn't need that, did you? Okay, just checking.

2 Samuel 7 and Matthew 1. I love kind of the hymn singing night for a multitude of reasons. I enjoy singing a plethora of styles and such and hymns of a variety of times and epochs and ages but I'll be honest with you, John, the thing I love the most about the hymn singing is the stories behind the hymns. I love knowing about the controversies. I love knowing the debates of what got and what didn't get in, and why that took place and why certain songs are written the way that they are and such. I'm just one of those guys that I really like to know the why behind what we're dealing with. Well, tonight's one of those nights. We're gonna deal with one of the big why questions because in 2 Samuel 7, even though I've entitled this "To Every Thing There Is a Season," based on Ecclesiastes 3, we're really gonna see the why is there so much controversy in the Middle East. That got your attention, didn't it? Why is there so much that takes place centered around such a very small piece of property and 2 Samuel 7 kind of is a continuation from this morning.

Whom we know as King David has rightfully become the king of the entirety of Israel, not just Judah, the southern kingdom. The ark of the covenant has returned to its rightful place and King David is about to, and if you allow me to say it southern style, he's about to set up shop as far as his kingdom is concerned. What's so important about 2 Samuel 7 is what the Lord speaks through Nathan and what he speaks through David doesn't just set the tone for the next few decades of life, it literally sets the tone for all of eternity. In fact, as you walk through the New Testament oftentimes we hear the statement the Davidic covenant, in other words, what was it that the Lord was doing through King David that would be emulated through Christ Jesus and pictured and lived out through all of eternity. Allow me to remind you in the book of Matthew 1, it says, "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ," and then it says, "the son of David, the son of Abraham." Why is that important? Because chronologically Abraham was before David but as Matthew is writing that Jesus Christ is the King of all eternity, he begins with the Davidic kingdom being mentioned first which is alluded to and spelled out here in 2 Samuel 7.

So if you'll join me in reading the first 17 verses of this great chapter, we now embark on a very politically incorrect reading of Scripture. It says,

1 And it came to pass, when the king sat in his house, and the LORD had given him rest round about from all his enemies; 2 That the king said unto Nathan the prophet, See now, I dwell in an house of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth within curtains. 3 And Nathan said to the king, Go, do all that is in thine heart; for the LORD is with thee. 4 And it came to pass that night, that the word of the LORD came unto Nathan, saying, 5 Go and tell my servant David, Thus saith the LORD, Shalt thou build me an house for me to dwell in? 6 Whereas I have not dwelt in any house since the time that I brought up the children of Israel out of Egypt, even to this day, but have walked in a tent and in a tabernacle. 7 In all the places wherein I have walked with all the children of Israel spake I a word with any of the tribes of Israel, whom I commanded to feed my people Israel, saying, Why build ye not me an house of cedar? 8 Now therefore so shalt thou say unto my servant David, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, I took thee from the sheepcote, from following the sheep, to be ruler over my people, over Israel: 9 And I was with thee whithersoever thou wentest, and have cut off all thine enemies out of thy sight, and have made thee a great name, like unto the name of the great men that are in the earth. 10 Moreover I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as beforetime, 11 And as since the time that I commanded judges to be over my people Israel, and have caused thee to rest from all thine enemies. Also the LORD telleth thee that he will make thee an house. 12 And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. 13 He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever. 14 I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men: 15 But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee. 16 And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever. 17 According to all these words, and according to all this vision, so did Nathan speak unto David.

We have here a parallel passage from the book of 1 Chronicles 17 regarding what you and I know as the Davidic covenant and I just want to walk through four very simple understanding of what is happening here so that we can get a grasp of not only what took place thousands of years ago but what we actually see laid out before us in the newscasts on a daily basis.

The first thing I want to address is from what we might call a sociological perspective. Notice in verse 3 it says Nathan said to the king, "Go, do all that is in thine heart for the

LORD is with thee." What was it that David wanted to do more than anything? He wanted to build what you and I today know as the temple, that permanent place for what we know as the ark of the covenant, that permanent place for the sacrifices and for the worship of the one true God. As you read the rest of the story, you discover that even though that was his heart, that was his desire, that was his dream, according to verse 13, it would be his son Solomon who would actually build the house and establish the throne forever.

As you step back from the Scriptures and you look back from kind of a broad chronological perspective, I think one of the key verses in this light is the book of Matthew 1:17. It's one of those obscure verses in Scripture that I love. It says, "from Abraham to David are fourteen generations," it says, "and from David until the carrying away into Babylon are fourteen generations; and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ are fourteen generations." And though I could speak ad nauseam about that one verse, allow me just a few moments to kind of unpack it. The entirety of the Old Testament history beginning with the call of Abraham is summed up in that one verse, in these three sections of 14 generations. Don't get caught up in the chronology of the generations because if you go back and you try to somehow reconcile it mathematically and with a counter, it's never gonna work out. But let me put your mind at ease: that word "generation" means more than just a specific time period. In fact, Jesus used it very specifically in Matthew 12 when a group of people large in number gathered around him. Most likely there would have been young adults, there would have been senior adults and everything in between, and they said, "Show us a sign, Jesus. Show us a sign." That famous passage where Jesus said, "I'll give you one sign, as Jonah was in the belly of the whale for three days and three nights, so the Son of Man will be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights." But Jesus referred to them as an adulterous generation. He wasn't speaking specifically to a chronological age group as he was a way of thinking, and the way of reconciling Matthew 1:17 chronologically is oftentimes in the Old Testament you will have an individual who walks in the way of the Lord, his children walk in the way of the Lord, his grandchildren walk in the way of the Lord, but his great grandchildren will depart thereof, and even though there's been four chronological generations, there have only been two different ways of thinking. For three chronological generations they walked in the ways of the Lord, and then there was a shift or there was a change.

Why is that so important to the understanding of this passage? Because Matthew 1:17 says from Abraham unto David. Think about what was the underlying foundation of that covenant. It was what the Scriptures called circumcision. It was that which Abraham was instituted and you know the controversy with Moses and his wife and his children all the way up through David. That's what established the Israelites as Israelites. However once Solomon will build that famous temple building, yes, circumcision is still valid and a part of it, but it will be the worship at that temple that is critical. It says and from David, or shall we say from Solomon unto the carrying away into Babylon. What happened when they went into Babylon in 586? That temple was destroyed. As they spent 70 years in the wilderness of Babylon in the days of whom we know as the prophet Daniel and others, Ezekiel and such, there was no place of worship. But centrally in that last statement it

says and from the carrying away of Babylon unto Christ. What was one of the first things that took place when they came back to their land? They build what we know as the second temple that made it's way all the way to the time of Christ. Remember Matthew 27 when he said, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit," the veil tore, the earth quaked and no longer was the house in a permanent place of cedar necessary for the presence of God because through the death, the burial and the resurrection of Jesus Christ, 1 Corinthians 6 says, we are now the temple of the Holy Spirit.

I say all that to say this: something was happening in this time period. In fact, if you go to 1 Chronicles and read the parallel passage, David was so distraught about what was happening around him, he was so frustrated with the fact that he was not allowed to build the temple and it would be his descendants that he sought out a group of people known as the Issacharites. You say, "Why would he seek them out?" Because they were known as men who understood the times and the seasons. The Lord had given them wisdom and understanding not just to the days they lived in but understanding from a historical perspective as well as a prophetic.

So when you read this passage about the land and about the building being built and the covenant and such, we have to understand that David grasped and he understood that something was a-changing. Something was different. Something was on the horizon. And even though he wanted to be a part of it, the Lord had other plans.

The second aspect I want you to notice is really more of a geography perspective. Look at verse 10. It says, "Moreover I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them." Understand and this is where we get into the political incorrectness, phase I of the message, irrespective of any resolution, declaration or vote by any governing body of mankind, the piece of dirt that you and I know as Israel are the Jewish people's land. Period. End of discussion. Now here's the good news: I'm not Jewish so I don't have a dog in the fight. People say, "Oh, you're just...." What have I got to gain by that? Nothing. I'm not Jewish. It's not for my family's heritage or their history. You say, "Well, why are you so adamant about it?" Because God said it and do you realize how much time and money and lives are being wasted fighting over dirt that God's already settled? If we would just say, "Okay, God, let's..." And by the way, I know, I know, I know all of the religious and significance of that piece of dirt but you do understand it's such a very small piece of land. I mean, you think we'd fight for something that was bigger. But it's the significance therein.

He says, "I will plant them there," and here's what's interesting, "that they may dwell in a place for their own and move no more. Neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more as beforetime." In other words, what we discover is even though that is their land, rightfully so, it's granted by God. Were there times that they did not possess it? Absolutely. Those 70 years in Babylon they did not possess it but they did return. The promise that we have here is there will be a time where they will return to the land never to be exiled again. My dear friends, you and I live in these days. Jesus prophesied of them in Matthew 24. He said, "There's gonna come a time where the fig tree begins to bloom and when you see it bloom, know that this is the last generation." That fig tree is always

representative of Israel in your Old Testament. You and I are privileged to live on this side of history looking back, realizing that the people of God are in the place that God gave them and I will dare stake my, shall we say, limited reputation on this: nobody's gonna move them, folks. I don't care who decides to do what, when, where or how. The Lord said that when they come back, he said that the children of wickedness will afflict them no more. Geographically speaking, that very small, very expensive piece of dirt was granted by God to a specific people for a specific time and season and you and I live in a very unique season.

Thirdly, as we get down to verse 16 he says, "And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established forever." I want to think about this from an anthropological perspective. Back in Genesis 25 we have a young lady who within the womb has twins, Jacob and Esau. Esau would be the firstborn and Jacob would be the one that would hold on to his heel as he came out of the womb. Just in brief, the story is simply this, that the Lord declared that the older would serve the younger, but here's what's important about Genesis 25, it says, "In your womb," into this lady's womb, "there will be two nations. There will be two people."

We fast forward a little bit and we realize that though Esau was the firstborn, he sold his birthright to his brother for a simple meal of pottage. That's why today we say the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, not Esau. It would be Jacob whom what we know as the 12 tribes would descend from. It would be from the tribe of Judah that the Messiah Jesus Christ would bear his lineage. Why is that critical? Because it says that your house shall be established forever. I promise you what I'm about to say is not political in nature, it's theological completely. Have you noticed how many times humanity has tried to get rid of the Jewish people? They can't do it, can they? Oh, they've tried. Nobody else in the history of mankind has been tried to be eradicated as much as they have and it doesn't matter what humanity does, they can't get rid of them. You explain to me how you exterminate almost seven million Jews during World War II and three years later without help from anybody else they established their own state. You say, "How does that happen?" It's called the hand of God, is what it is, and you and I can argue and fight and fuss all day long about this and about that, but it said that his house would be forever.

So anthropologically speaking, whether we like it or not, whether we're a fan of it or not, the land is there and so are the blessings therein. It also says that his kingdom shall be established forever. You know, it's interesting that the most quoted Old Testament verse in the New Testament is Psalm 110:1 where King David makes this statement in a song, that the Messiah will sit upon his throne forever. Interesting that would be the most quoted Old Testament verse in the New Testament is that the throne of David of which the Messiah, whom we know as Jesus Christ, would descend and sit upon would be forever. I know you've heard myself and others make this statement. There's a little bumper sticker sometimes we see that says Jesus is coming back and, boy, is he mad. Well, when you see Jesus descend out of the clouds, when you read Revelation 19, he does establish his kingdom and it is without end. You know, it's interesting that everything that we've addressed thus far flies in the face of popular public opinion, that

we find ourselves on this side of a statement by God through his prophet Nathan that a piece of land would be for a certain people, that the lineage of these people would be the ones that would not only produce the Messiah but ultimately the King for all of eternity, Jesus Christ.

The last thing, though, I want to address and by the way, I will confess that I had to look up what this word was, yearology, it's the study of time. Notice that key word in verse 16, "forever." Forever. Not for David's generation and Solomon or to the kingdom was divided. Not until the Babylonians took them captive. Not until the Romans came into power. Not until the United Nations came into existence. No. Forever. So what that says to me is this: that in spite of the political climate, in spite of the climate of all types of aspects that we have, and even as we see news come and go and personalities and such, that what God has said in 2 Samuel 7 is forever. You and I don't have the privilege of arguing about that. You and I don't have the privilege of debating it. And you and I don't have the privilege of saying, "But what about...?" If you'll remember, this morning one of the things that we talked about, Abner in chapter 2, was in spite of what God said, he rationalized and reasoned that there was a better way. You do realize that's the same thing we did in the garden of Eden, right? "God, I know you said not to eat this but there's got to be a better way." Today as you read chapter 7 of 2 Samuel and you open up the headlines of the newspaper and you listen to the broadcasts that are taking place, allow me to remind you that what God said whether it is gaining relevance or reality or not, was a promise forever. It will come to fruition.

You say, "Well, how does that relate to me?" I want to close tonight by quoting probably the most famous verse of all time, John 3:16, "For God so loved the world he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life." Isn't it good to know that Jesus didn't promise life for a decade or two, or life until a different scenario or situation comes up? He says, "It will be everlasting." And as you read the stories of the Israelites, as you read through these next couple days of what happened in David's life, you see the highs, you see the lows, you see captivity and exile, one of the things it reminds me of is that last statement in the book of Matthew 28, he says that, "I will never leave you. I will never forsake you. Lo, I am with you until the end of the age." Theologically speaking, I know what 2 Samuel 7 says, we've discussed it tonight, but practically speaking it's a picture and it's an illustration for us that as God has maintained his promise to them through all these years, he will maintain his promise to you through all of your years as well.