

2 Samuel 7:8-11, 16

Our text today has what we might call a humble **beginning**. In the verses which precede it we read, *“It happened that when the king (David) was living in his palace, and when the Lord had given him rest from his enemies all around, the king said to Nathan the prophet, ‘Look, I live in a house of cedar, but the Ark of God sits under tent curtains.’”* Somehow, after all the things which God had done for David, it just didn’t seem **right** that God should have to live in a **tent**. So, David decided to build a **house** for God - a **temple**. Actually, it seems like a pretty nice gesture on David’s part. The only **problem** was that David hadn’t bothered to ask **God** if He **wanted** him to build a house for the LORD. And as it turns **out**, He **didn’t**. That’s what makes the **beginning** of our text **humble**. However, the **end** of our text offers us quite a **contrast**. There we see **God’s Great Power And Promises**. God **promises** to use His great **power** to build a house - both for **David**, as well as for **all** of Israel - a house which will endure **forever**.

Just like our text, David **himself** had humble **beginnings**. He was the youngest of the eight sons of Jesse. With seven older brothers in the family, you can **imagine** some of the problems he faced. David wasn’t given much **consideration** in the family - after all, he was just the **“baby”** of the family. Why, when Samuel came to anoint one of the sons of Jesse to be the next **king**, at first Jesse didn’t even bring David out. But after the LORD had rejected all seven of Jesse’s **other** sons, Samuel asked if he had any **more**. Obviously, Samuel knew that God wouldn’t have **sent** him there on a wild goose chase. Almost as an **afterthought** Jesse said, *“There is still the youngest, but he is tending the sheep.”* Have you ever found yourself **ignoring** the youngest child in your family? Have you ever heard them being teased or ridiculed because they’re not **big** enough, or **old** enough, or **smart** enough to do the same things as their older brothers and sisters? Well, **watch out!** Just like David, they may be destined for some **great things** in the future. Jesse figured that David wasn’t the **oldest**, he wasn’t the **strongest**, he wasn’t the **tallest**, and he probably wasn’t the **smartest** of his children. So obviously, **he** couldn’t be the one whom God had **chosen**. But how **wrong** Jesse was - and **Samuel** too! If it hadn’t been for the guidance of the LORD, **Samuel** would have chosen any **number** of David’s **brothers** to succeed King Saul. But the LORD told Samuel, *“The LORD does not look at things the way man does. For man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.”* So, Samuel anointed **David** - **God’s** choice - to be the next king.

Such were the humble **beginnings** of David. You know, sometimes it’s good to be reminded of **our** humble beginnings too. As **adults**, things haven’t always

been as **good** for us as they are right now. Perhaps as a child **you** were the little one in the family. Perhaps **you** were beat up by the neighborhood bully. Perhaps **you** struggled with your studies in school. Perhaps **you** didn't have any idea about what you wanted to **be** when you grew up. It's good for us to be **reminded** of our humble beginnings from time to time, in order that we may be more **understanding** of those who are **currently** going through such problems, and so we may always remain properly **humble** and **thankful**.

So in our text, the LORD reminded **David** that He had been with him **throughout** his life. Listen again to the words which Nathan the prophet was to speak to David. *"This is what the Lord of Armies says. **I** took you from the **pasture**, from **following** sheep, to be **ruler** over my people, over Israel. **I** have been with you **wherever** you went. **I** have cut off all your **enemies** from before you. **I** will make your reputation **great**, like that of the **great ones** on the earth."*

Listening to those words might have **irked** David a bit. After all, wasn't he a pretty good **king**? Hadn't he **worked** pretty hard on behalf of God's people? Didn't **he** deserve a little **credit**? David had become renowned for his ability to **rule**, for his great **courage**, and for his **military** achievements - not only in **Israel**, but among all the **surrounding** nations as well. Even in his own day, David was spoken of more **often**, and in more **glowing terms**, than any of the other great men of his time. And later in history, people would look back on the rule of King David (and his son, Solomon) as the **Golden Age** of Israel. Yet, the LORD seemed to be **passing by** all of those accomplishments.

However, if David was completely **honest** with himself, it wouldn't take much soul searching to come to the conclusion that the LORD was absolutely **right** in His assessment of the situation. Looking back on his life, David would certainly have seen the many times that his **own** wisdom and his **own** choices had only created **more problems** for him. And that's where David would have been greatly **comforted** by the words of Nathan. After all, even when David had made a total **mess** of his life, it was still the LORD Himself who was obviously in **control** - carefully **guiding**, and sometimes **redirecting** the events of David's rule. As an **individual**, none of David's "accomplishments" would have come about at **all**, if it had not been for the gracious and loving hand of the **LORD**.

In much the same way, the LORD also made some great **promises** regarding the entire **nation** of Israel. He said, *"**I** will set up a place for my people **Israel**, and **I** will **plant** them there. They will **dwell** there, and they will not be **disturbed** again. **Violent men** will not afflict them again as they did at the beginning and ever since*

the day I appointed judges over my people Israel. I will give you rest from all your enemies.” The things which the LORD had done for **David**, He had done for the sake of **all** Israel. Two things in this promise seem to stand out in bold relief. First of all, God promised that His people would have a place to **dwell** - a **home of their own**. And secondly, He promised that they would no longer be **disturbed** in that home.

What would that **mean** to Israel? Well, speaking to the **first** part, just ask any young married couple, currently **renting** an apartment, what it would mean for **them** to have their own **place** - a **home of their own** - and they will quickly tell you how **important** it is - and how **wonderful** it would be. Many couples, young and old alike, scrimp and save to make that initial down-payment on a house. Then they **continue** to spend a goodly portion of their income each month, in order to **keep** that dream of a **home** for themselves. There’s really nothing quite like a home of your **own** - a place where you can kick off your shoes and relax - a place which you can change, or remodel, or update as **you** see fit. Nobody will tell you that you’re being too noisy, or that you can’t drive a nail into the wall to hang up a picture, or paint, or put up wallpaper, or whatever **else** you might have in mind. It’s **your place** - a home of your **own** - to **enjoy** in your own way.

Of course, those of us who **are** homeowners can easily tell everybody **else** that having a place of your **own** isn’t all **roses** either. There are the **mortgage payments**, the **property taxes**, the constant **repairs** and **updates**, and even the occasional disputes with your **neighbors**. But, God had taken care of **all** those things for the Israelites - giving them the assurance of **stability** - guaranteeing that they would no longer be **disturbed**.

The Israelites had never really **had** such a place in the past. From the time of Abram, they had been a **nomadic** people - **wandering** from place to place - **searching** for areas where grazing land was plentiful, and food and water were abundant. God came to Abram and told him to **leave** his father, his relatives, and his false gods, and that He would **show** him such a place - a land flowing with milk and honey. Abram didn’t waste any time. He **left**. Abram **wanted** a home of his own.

But at the time of our **text**, the Israelites **had** their home. They **had** their land flowing with milk and honey. They **had** their powerful ruler in King David. They **had** stability, peace, and prosperity. What **more** could they possibly desire? What **more** could God possibly deliver? The answer lies in the final words of our text. *“Your house will stand **firm**, and your kingdom will endure **forever** before*

you. Your throne will be established forever.” The LORD had done great things for David and the Israelites. But while the Golden Age of Israel under David and Solomon would come to an **end**, God’s **promises** would **not** come to an end. The kingdom which God would establish **through** David, would be an **everlasting** kingdom. And that promise was **fulfilled**, through **Jesus Christ**, great David’s **greater** son.

Dear friends, this week we celebrate the **birth** of that son - **God’s Son** - a birth which would qualify as a **humble beginning** by **anyone’s** standards. Yet, as we celebrate Jesus’ humble **birth**, we must always remember that it is not the **beginning** which really matters - it’s the **end**. **God’s Great Power And Promises** are ours today. Through **faith** in His Son, God has provided **us** with a **place of our own** - an **eternal** dwelling place with Him in heaven - a place where we will be **undisturbed** by the enemies which currently assail us. May God grant us **all** that blessed end - an end which He has **promised** to all those who believe in **Him**.
Amen.