

2 Samuel 7:1-17

- Adam - a few people; Abraham - a family; Jacob/Joseph - a tribe; Moses - a nation
 - Last week, we looked at how we can complicate our relationship with God's covenants by creating false idols
 - This week, we look at how God's covenant seeks to shine through our governments and kingdoms
- David says I live in a house but God lives in a tent. Nathan gives David permission at first because he thinks God is with him. But God stops Nathan and tells him no. . God establishes the throne of David.
 - *As we go along today, remember that, in Hebrew, the word "house" means*
 - *A house - here David's palace*
 - *A temple - a house for God*
 - *A dynasty - "throne" or "kingdom"*
 - *All these definitions of "house" are resonating throughout our reading*
- This story is God saying "*when did I ever say to anyone that I wanted a house?"* then God goes on and talks about David's house.
 - IT: our life of faith.
 - Our life of faith is not about us.
 - Our life of faith is not about what we can do for God.
 - ***Our life of faith is about what God wants to do for us.***
- Jeremiah 31:32 - 33
 - *³³But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.³⁴No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, 'Know the Lord', for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.*
 - *bet means house, tribe, dynasty, and reflects into Revelation 7*
 - *9 After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands. ¹⁰They cried out in a loud voice, saying, 'Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!'*
 - *¹¹And all the angels stood around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshipped God, ¹²singing, 'Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom*

and thanksgiving and honour and power and might be to our God for ever and ever! Amen.'

- THAT IMAGE IS what we're being drawn toward -- a correspondence between earthly governance that's devoted to heavenly ways will begin to reflect heavenly ways
 - When I say this, we need to remember that the Lord who sits in that throne in Revelation, in the heavenly realms, is a God of freedom, a God who frees people from slavery, from oppression, to love, to relationship
 - That reflection begins here in the church
 - From here, this space right here, the earth begins to reflect the heavenly kingdom of God
 - There is no one in heaven who has not freely chosen to be there.
 - CS Lewis
 - God says I've been with you wherever you went - *2 Samuel 7:8-9*
 - David's earthly Kingdom is intended to reflect Revelation (the eternal kingdom).
 - But, God's trying to work with what the people want.
 - And what the people want is a king.
 - So God has to work now in the confines of what the people want.
 - This makes things difficult, very difficult.
 - Now God has to figure out how to free people within the temporary, earthly kingdom structures THEY'VE ASKED FOR.
 - 1 Sam 8
 - *¹¹He said, 'These will be the ways of the king who will reign over you: he will take your sons and appoint them to his chariots and to be his horsemen, and to run before his chariots; ¹²and he will appoint for himself commanders of thousands and commanders of fifties, and some to plough his ground and to reap his harvest, and to make his implements of war and the equipment of his chariots. ¹³He will take your daughters to be perfumers and cooks and bakers. ¹⁴He will take the best of your fields and vineyards and olive orchards and give them to his courtiers. ¹⁵He will take one-tenth of your grain and of your vineyards and give it to his officers and his courtiers. ¹⁶He will take your male and female slaves, and the best of your cattle and donkeys, and put them to his work. ¹⁷He will take one-tenth of your flocks, and you shall be his slaves. ¹⁸And in that day you will cry out because of your king, whom you have chosen for yourselves; but the Lord will not answer you in that day.'*
- The kingdom of God is like a mirror image of the earth's kingdoms

- We try to reverse that mirror image when we pray in the Lord's prayer (thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.)
 - How does God draw earthly kingdoms into heavenly kingdoms?
 - By the people becoming more like Jesus
 - Jesus frees people.
 - Jesus undermines empires.
 - Jesus dies for the sake of friends
 - Jesus feeds the hungry with no expectation of return or dependence
 - Jesus restored communities
 - Luke 4
 - ¹⁸ *'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the Captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, ¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour.'*
- Those things are not the behavior of earthly empires or states.
 - They are the signs and insignia of the church which God has given us
- They are the qualities that define the eternal throne of David
 - ³⁰*The angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. ³¹And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³²He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. ³³He will reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.'* (Luke 1:30-33)
- David's throne lasting into eternity is like a guidewire or a power cord that runs through the center of human history trying to radiate God's eternal kingdom values into our temporary empires, our temporary temples, our temporary homes.
 - The day to day import and events of our elections have an immediate impact,
 - The tyranny of the immediate, which is what news and social media thrive on
 - But, David's throne, which Jesus occupies, always points us to God's eternal kingdom over and above our temporary concerns of state and nation and and tribe and self.
- The Adamic, Noahic, and Abrahamic promises are all nested within the beauty of Creation: the Garden of Eden, the rainbow and the dove, and God revelation of the stars in heaven to Abraham.
 - It's when the Tribes and Dynasties come into play that things become really complicated.

- God longs for us, longs to be in covenantal relationship with us.
- God longs to be *with us*, not locked into a 'house'
 - God's palace is in the gathered body of Christ's baptized and redeemed
 - God's temple is among us -
 - John 1:14
 - God's Kingdom is actually you and I and the promises we make in God's name to one another
 - Luke 17:21
 - Can we let God establish God's Kingdom relationship with us, in the same way God established David's kingdom, *for us, not because of anything we have done for God?*
 - *"Live in the kingdom of God in such a way that it provokes questions for which the gospel is the answer."* ~ Lesslie Newbigin
- Rev 22:1-5
 - *Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb ²through the middle of the street of the city. On either side of the river is the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, producing its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. ³Nothing accursed will be found there any more. But the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him; ⁴they will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. ⁵And there will be no more night; they need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign for ever and ever.*

