



05

SESSION 5

The Covenant is Reestablished

SESSION SUMMARY

In this session, we see God reaffirming and expanding the covenant promises He made to Abraham—this time to King David. God promised to give David rest from his enemies and to build an eternal house through one of David's descendants. In response to God's unfailing promises, David expressed gratitude and humility, and this is the appropriate response for all believers in light of God's faithfulness.

SCRIPTURE

2 Samuel 7:8-26

THE POINT

God doesn't need us—we need Him!

INTRO/STARTER 5-10 MINUTES

Option 1

Headlines and newsreels seem to stay filled with news of broken promises. And a quick search on the internet for “keeping promises” yields results on anything from quotes to steps, tips, or other how-to articles to help you learn to keep your promises. What is a promise? *A promise is a seal, a commitment or agreement to follow through with what you said you would do.* Lead students to discuss the following questions:

- **How important is a promise?**
- **What are some negative consequences to broken promises?**

After allowing time for students to answer, say, “Did you know that keeping your word tells people about their value to us? It also expresses our value for speaking truth.” Explain that God always keeps His promises—speaking truth and love are part of His character. He doesn’t need us to fulfill His plan, but He promises to fulfill our needs as we follow His plan.

Option 2

Before the session, create a list of situations that require promises or represent promises and can be acted out in a game of charades. Examples may include: a proposal, oath of office, signing a contract, a pinky promise, a handshake, and so on.

Place students in groups for each scenario, making sure each group has enough members to portray the scene. As each situation is guessed, list the correct theme on a dry erase or large poster board. After each group presents a sketch, ask students if they picked up on a theme. Then, announce that the theme was promises.

- **How important would you say it is to keep your promises? Why?**

Explain that today, we will be studying how God reestablished His covenant promises to Abraham with David, and how He would eventually fulfill His promise for an eternal king through Jesus.

HIS STORY

15-20 MINUTES

THE POINT

God doesn't need us—we need Him!

CHARACTERS

- **The Triune God** - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit
- **David** - youngest son of Jesse who was anointed to be king following Saul. David is recognized for a number of things, in terms of both his character—he followed God—and his accomplishments—he defeated Goliath, etc.

PLOT

In the previous sessions, we've seen how David was anointed king but not yet on the throne. We've also seen that even while on the run from King Saul, David scored a number of military victories and became one of the most popular men in the kingdom. Now, after the death of Saul, David finally becomes king. And because David was God's chosen king, God reaffirmed and expanded the covenant promises He made to Abraham. Among them is the promise to give David rest from his enemies and to build an eternal house through one of David's descendants.

TIMELINE

THE DAVIDIC COVENANT

God reestablishes the covenant with David and his descendants.

DAVID AND BATHSHEBA

David's fall into sin and prayer of forgiveness.

THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON

Solomon becomes known for his God-given wisdom.

GOD PROMISES PEACE FOR HIS PEOPLE

We catch up with David in 2 Samuel 7, where he was living large as the king of Israel. From his palatial balcony, David looked down and saw the travel-worn tabernacle that served as God's house. So David made a commitment to build God a beautiful new house. In response to David's seemingly generous act, God flipped David's script. Instead of accepting David's offer He wrote one of His own:

“Now, therefore, thus you shall say to my servant David, ‘Thus says the LORD of hosts, I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, that you should be prince over my people Israel. And I have been with you wherever you went and have cut off all your enemies from before you. And I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may dwell in their own place and be disturbed no more. And violent men shall afflict them no more, as formerly, from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel. And I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover, the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house.’”(2 Sam. 7:8-11a)

Before God issued one of the most notable promises in the Old Testament to David, He referred back to recent history to remind David how he got where he was. God reminded David that, every step of the way—from the pasture to the palace—He was orchestrating David's steps. In keeping with a common pattern in Scripture, God reminded David of His faithfulness before He made His promise.

- **Why is remembering God's past faithfulness in our lives important when it comes to trusting His faithfulness to us in the future?** (*p. 34, PSG*)

While David's desire to build God a house might seem odd to contemporary readers, it was quite the common practice in the ancient world. King Tut, for instance, built a temple for the Egyptian god Amon-Ra. In exchange, Amon-Ra allegedly proclaimed that King Tut would rule a kingdom that spanned the globe and lasted for millions of years. (He fell just a few thousand miles and a couple million years short.)

But note the order: 1) a king builds temple for a god; 2) the temple makes the god famous; 3) the god thanks the king by blessing his kingdom. That's the order of every religion in the world: work hard for me and I'll work hard for you.

God rejected that idea and reversed it. It is not God who needs us, but rather we who need God and are completely dependent upon Him. The house that God

builds will not bear the inscription, “Built by David for God,” but “Built by God for David.”

Grace—it seems so simple—a gift that is costly for the giver, but free for the recipient. Yet this is where so many people stumble. We’re hard-wired to ask, “How much is *enough*?” How often do I need to come to church? How much money do I have to give? Those questions will never get you to the gospel. The gospel begins with God’s extravagant gift. Jesus’ blood, and Jesus’ blood alone, is *enough* for your weary, guilty soul.

GOD PROMISES AN ETERNAL HOME FOR HIS PEOPLE

At this point, God opened David’s eyes to see something amazing. David had been thinking of building God a house, but what God offered to do instead never would have entered David’s mind as something to ask for. Look at what God promised:

“The LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house. When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son. When he commits iniquity, I will discipline him with the rod of men, with the stripes of the sons of men, but my steadfast love will not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away from before you. And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me. Your throne shall be established forever.” (2 Sam. 7:11b-16)

Here we see God promising to build David an eternal house. This is a promise that refers to the Messiah who would come and reign forever. But one detail immediately strikes a lot of readers as odd: “When he commits iniquity...” If we’re talking about Jesus here (which we are), what is this about? Jesus never sinned!

It is helpful to remember that most biblical prophecies have a dual meaning. There is an immediate meaning, and then there is an ultimate one. From the perspective of the prophets it was often difficult to untie the two, but they remain distinct. Think of it like the experience of seeing a mountain range in the distance. When you first spot it, you might see two distinct peaks, seemingly right next to each other. It’s only as you get closer that you see that these peaks are miles apart.

The first fulfillment of this prophecy was David’s biological son, Solomon. Solomon’s name means *rest*, so in many ways he would exemplify this promise. His reign would extend rest throughout Israel, and it would be on his watch that Israel constructed the temple. And yes, Solomon would do some foolish

things—some Saul-like acts, as God puts it here—like having 700 wives and worshipping idols. Even so, God will keep His promise, and will not strip the kingdom from him.

This prophecy points through Solomon, to another King: Jesus. He was the descendant of David whose kingdom would last. He was the descendant who would establish a real temple, not a building constructed with human hands, but the temple of His own body. And after His ascension, He would send His Spirit to make us, His people, the temple of God.

Unlike Solomon, Jesus would not need to be disciplined with the stripes of men. Instead, He would be bruised for our iniquity, and by His stripes we would be healed. The real Son of David would build the real temple of God and establish God's real presence with His people—forever. And He would not just be David's son. He would be God's own Son, building the house of salvation for God's people on earth.

Wrap your head around that: God would build His own house and He would become the house He promised to build. In Jesus, God would be the fulfillment to His own promise.

David began this discussion wanting to go and build for God. But he ends it sitting, wondering, knowing, considering, adoring, and then exalting the King who deserves all glory.

Then King David went in and sat before the LORD and said, “Who am I, O Lord GOD, and what is my house, that you have brought me thus far? And yet this was a small thing in your eyes, O Lord GOD. You have spoken also of your servant’s house for a great while to come, and this is instruction for mankind, O Lord GOD! And what more can David say to you? For you know your servant, O Lord GOD! Because of your promise, and according to your own heart, you have brought about all this greatness, to make your servant know it. Therefore you are great, O LORD God. For there is none like you, and there is no God besides you, according to all that we have heard with our ears. And who is like your people Israel, the one nation on earth whom God went to redeem to be his people, making himself a name and doing for them great and awesome things by driving out before your people, whom you redeemed for yourself from Egypt, a nation and its gods? And you established for yourself your people Israel to be your people forever. And you, O LORD, became their God. And now, O LORD God, confirm forever the word that you have spoken concerning your servant and concerning his house, and do as you have spoken. And your name will be magnified forever, saying, ‘The LORD of hosts is God over Israel,’ and the house of your servant David will be established before you. (2 Sam. 7:18-26)

This is the key to salvation. Asking, “How much is *enough* for God?” is the wrong starting point. Instead, salvation starts with knowing what God has already

TIMELINE

THE WISDOM OF PROVERBS

Solomon instructs on how to walk in wisdom.

THE BUILDING OF THE TEMPLE

Solomon constructs the temple, and God fills it with His presence.

SOLOMON'S FALL INTO IDOLATRY

Foolish decisions ultimately lead to idolatry.

done—which leaves us sitting in stunned awe in the presence of God. Yes, trusting Christ will lead you to do things for God. But everything you do is only a grateful response to what He’s done for you.

We often think that the world is supposed to look at Christians and say, “What impressive works they’ve done! They must really love God.” But, as God shows us here, our witness to the world should leave them saying, “Wow, what great things God has done for them!”

CHRIST CONNECTION

God promised David that future kings of Israel would come from his family and that his kingdom would last forever. God kept this promise by sending Jesus as one of David’s descendants. All of history is driving toward the day when Jesus, the Son of David, will be recognized as the King whose kingdom is everlasting.

Christianity is not about you living a good life and then giving your record to God, but Jesus living the perfect life and then giving His record to you, as a gift. He lived the life we were supposed to live and died the death we should have died. His life is ours, but only if we receive it.

99 ESSENTIAL DOCTRINES

God is Faithful

God’s faithfulness means He keeps His word and always fulfills His promises (1 Cor. 1:9; 2 Tim. 2:13; 1 Pet. 4:19). God’s faithfulness is demonstrated in His fulfillment of the promises He made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The Apostle Paul linked the attribute “faithful” to God’s coming through on His word: “He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it” (1 Thess. 5:24). We reflect God by keeping the promises we make to Him and to others.

YOUR STORY

10-15 MINUTES

GROUP QUESTIONS

God's Story has always been designed to connect with your story. It is because of His Story that our stories make sense, have meaning, and carry on into eternity. Use the questions below to help think through how His Story connects with your own.

- **Have you ever struggled with the mind-set that you have to repay God for the grace and mercy He has shown you? Why do you think people often feel this way?** *This mind-set comes from the misguided notion that we can earn or contribute to our right standing with God. It is a prevalent mind-set, represented in every world religion besides Christianity. We could never earn salvation or repay God for it. However, we can respond with gratitude and tangible expressions of thankfulness that flow out of the recognition that we are recipients of God's goodness.*
- **Why do you think the promise of rest was important to God's people? Why should that be important to us as well?** *If we are honest, we all want a place to rest—a place of security, no longer worrying if something bad or tragic is just around the corner. For the Christian, our rest is found in Jesus Christ (Matt. 11:28).*
- **David responded to God's grace and faithfulness with gratitude and thanksgiving. What are some ways you respond to God's blessings in your life?** *Answers to this will vary.*
- **Have you ever felt burned out or tired in your walk of faith because you were asking the question "How much is enough?" How should this session help you avoid this burnout?** *Burnout is often the result of thinking that everything depends on us and rests on our shoulders and abilities. However, ironically, the more we steep ourselves in the finished work of Christ, resting in what He has done for us, the more we will find His Spirit rising up within us. The fire to do in the Christian life comes only from being soaked in the fuel of what He has done.*

HIS STORY

God's Story of Redemption, through His Son, Jesus Christ.

YOUR STORY

Where your story meets His.

YOUR MISSION 10-15 MINUTES



HEAD

We should remember that God does not need us. God is not now, nor has He ever, looked for “helpers” to assist Him in saving the world. That doesn’t mean He isn’t calling us to give ourselves generously to that mission, just that He’s not looking for people to supply His needs. He’s not short on money, talent, or time. He never commands us to go save the world *for* Him; He calls us to *follow* Him as He saves the world.

- **What dangers come with the faulty mindset that God needs us?** *Dangers like the belief that one's salvation depends on our ability to share the gospel and persuade others, or the prideful mind-set that “I” am a necessary part of God's plan to save the world.*
- **Why might humility of mind come easier to the person who recognizes that God doesn't need him or her?** *By recognizing that God doesn't need us, but instead has invited us to play a part, we are in a better position to think of ourselves less in relation to God's plan, resulting in personal humility on our part.*



HEART

Even though God does not need us, we should want to give back to God as an overflow of our gratitude for Him. After all, David wasn’t rebuked for his attitude. God commended it: “Now it was in the heart of David my father to build a house for the name of the LORD, the God of Israel.” (2 Chron. 6:7). David wasn’t trying to buy God off; he wanted to do something great for God because of God’s great love toward him. David’s heart overflowed with the desire to give of itself back to the God who had given so much to him. That’s precisely how we should be in response to the gospel.

- **What are some graces and mercies in your life that stir up gratitude in your heart?** *Answers to this will vary.*
- **How can this gratitude can lead you to make much of Jesus as a result?** *Answers to this will vary.*



HANDS

What God told David is just as true for us. Our own personal kingdoms will fail. Our loftiest ambitions will fail. Jesus is the only thing that will last forever. And the greatest privilege of our lives is asking God to show us where we can join Jesus. He doesn’t need us, but He will use us for eternal value. He can make our miniscule lives into something beautiful, precious, and everlasting. For far too many of us, our lives are just so small. We think of God as a personal assistant, Someone to get us out of a jam. What He desires for us is so much bigger, so much richer, so much more profound than any of us realize.

- **Share about a time you experienced something and it was evident to everyone involved that God was working. What characterized that time in your life?** *Answers to this will vary.*
- **In what ways do you dream of sharing the gospel in your area?** *Answers to this will vary.*

▶ ADDITIONAL INFO

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Check out the following additional resources:

- **Leader Training Videos**
- **One Conversations**
- **Midweek Studies (to access your Midweek Study, go to lifeway.com/TGPKingsSUM16)**
- **Circular Timeline Poster**
- **App (for both leader and student)**



Additional suggestions for specific groups are available at

GospelProject.com/AdditionalResources

And for ***free online training*** on how to lead a group visit

MinistryGrid.com/web/TheGospelProject