

# Hope in the Coming Rest

King David Pt.4

2 Samuel 7:8-11 8-23-2009

Summary: This is one of the most important chapters in the Bible – the basis of all future hope. The foundation for hope is past grace, the focus of hope is future grace from God’s promises. The object of hope is rest (not only from enemies but from all trouble), plus supply of all we need, spiritual restoration, reversal of the curse, satisfaction – in other words, enjoyment of God’s love. Let all the joys of life be windows into that future hope.

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After the king was settled in his palace and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies around him, <sup>2</sup> he said to Nathan the prophet, "Here I am, living in a palace of cedar, while the ark of God remains in a tent." <sup>3</sup> Nathan replied to the king, "Whatever you have in mind, go ahead and do it, for the LORD is with you." <sup>4</sup> That night the word of the LORD came to Nathan, saying: <sup>5</sup> "Go and tell my servant David, "This is what the LORD says: Are you the one to build me a house to dwell in? <sup>6</sup> I have not dwelt in a house from the day I brought the Israelites up out of Egypt to this day. I have been moving from place to place with a tent as my dwelling. <sup>7</sup> Wherever I have moved with all the Israelites, did I ever say to any of their rulers whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, "Why have you not built me a house of cedar?" <sup>8</sup> "Now then, tell my servant David, "This is what the LORD Almighty says: I took you from the pasture and from following the flock to be ruler over my people Israel. <sup>9</sup> I have been with you wherever you have gone, and I have cut off all your enemies from before you. Now I will make your name great, like the names of the greatest men of the earth. <sup>10</sup> And I will provide a place for my people Israel and will plant them so that they can have a home of their own and no longer be disturbed. Wicked people will not oppress them anymore, as they did at the beginning <sup>11</sup> and have done ever since the time I appointed leaders over my people Israel. I will also give you rest from all your enemies. "The LORD declares to you that the LORD himself will establish a house for you

## Introduction

How are you doing this morning? Are you up? Or are you kind of down? And if you are up, or down – why is that? What kind of effect do the ups and downs of life have on you? Do you have an even keel – untouched by all the craziness? Or are you more like a can of pop – where too many ups and downs build up pressure that eventually explodes all over everyone? One of the things we are going to learn from this text today is how to gain greater stability, so that instead of being jerked around by the events of life, you find that through all kinds of circumstances your joy level stays on a fairly level plain. That happens when you have hope. And this passage is one of the greatest chapters in all the Bible for instilling hope.

2 Samuel 7 is famous because it is the chapter where God first gives what is known as the Davidic Covenant. There are several key covenants God made with various people throughout redemptive history. The three that stand out as being especially important: the covenant with Abraham, the covenant with Moses, and this one with David.<sup>1</sup> To Abraham God promised to make his offspring into a nation and give them the

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<sup>1</sup> There are different kinds of covenants. The law was delivered to Moses in the form of what is known as a Suzerain/Vassal treaty. That was a treaty in which a benevolent king would come to a conquered people and say, "I will offer you all the benefits of my kingdom if you will be loyal to me." Then he would spell out all the benefits he would offer, and he would spell out the requirements of what he would accept as loyalty. The requirements of the

Promised Land. In the Mosaic Covenant God promised blessing to those who were loyal to His law and curses to those who were disloyal. And now comes the greatest of all – the covenant with David.

So far in the book of 2 Samuel the pace has been very fast. The narrator has us zooming along through all kinds of events as the years fly by. In just six chapters we have seen numerous wars and murders, assassinations, the rise and fall of Ish-Bosheth, two coronations of David, and all the adventures of capturing Jerusalem and setting up the capital and bringing the Ark there.

But here in chapter 7 that all changes. Very little happens in this chapter, and the narrator does not really say much. Instead of describing a lot of events, this chapter is mostly dialogue. David speaks, Nathan speaks, God speaks, and then David speaks again – the narrator says almost nothing. And the whole chapter covers a conversation one day and a conversation the next day and that's it. When a Bible writer slows down like that the implication is that he is showing us something that is especially important. If your tour guide has been speeding along at 80 mph, but then slows down to 5 mph in one area, that tells you something. This is an area you *really* need to see. The inspired writer is telling us that this material is especially important.

And if you doubt that, just look at verse 13.

**13 I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.**

**16 Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever."**

Three times God uses the word “forever.” That is huge, because when you make promises using the word “forever,” and you are God, by making the statement you are shaping eternity. Do you realize what is happening in this chapter? God is shaping the landscape of what will be taking place a trillion years from now. A trillion years from now, and 100 trillion years after that, God will be busy carrying out the things He is promising in this chapter.

2 Samuel 7 is easily one of the most important chapters in the entire Bible. Scholars have called this chapter the theological center of the entire Old Testament. And in case you miss it here in 2 Samuel 7, the whole story is told again in even more detail in 1 Chronicles 17. Then again in 1 Chronicles 22, then again in 1 Chronicles 28, and again in 1 Kings 8. And the number of times this promise is referred to is way too many to list.

God's promise to David in this chapter becomes the cornerstone of the hope of the people of God from this time forward. If you want to increase the level of hope in your heart, this is the chapter to study. It is the foundation for almost all of the Messianic hope of the Old Testament. What I mean by that is pretty much everything the Old Testament says about the Messiah is rooted in this chapter.

And not only that, but in many ways this chapter is the beginning point for the whole concept of future hope. Think about it – what kind of future hope was there before 2 Samuel 7? In Genesis 3:15 there is a promise that God would someday crush the head of the serpent, but no specifics are given. God promised Abraham that he would have a lot of descendants and that all nations would be blessed through him. But that is still pretty vague. It is a beginning point, but it really does not say much about the end times. The main focus of what God promised Abraham is that someday his descendants would get the Promised Land - which they got under Joshua.

Moses spoke of a great prophet who would come, but that was also pretty vague. And the covenant God made with the people at Mt. Sinai with the giving of the Law was not primarily a future hope. It just said, “When you are faithful to Me I will bless you and when you are unfaithful I will curse you.”

So up to this time in Israel's history there really is not much of a future hope. God's people are kind of living with Him month to month – just sort of oscillating back and forth between blessing and punishment

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law – the Ten Commandments and all the other commandments, are presented in that format. They are the stipulations of what is required if you want the benefits of having God as your king. But if you break your end of the deal, you are out of the covenant. But that is not the only kind of covenant. There was another kind of covenant known as a royal grant. And that is the type we see here.

One of the main differences between a treaty and a grant is in the treaty the main focus is on the responsibilities of the vassal toward the king. But in a grant the main focus is on the responsibilities of the king toward the people. A treaty is mostly for the purpose of motivating future loyalty. A grant is a reward for past loyalty. Also, in both treaties and grants there is a section where curses are pronounced. But in the treaty the curse is on the vassal who breaks the covenant and does not remain loyal. In the grant the curse is upon anyone who would harm the king's people. [*Expositor's Bible Commentary, The*, Pradis CD-ROM:Second Samuel/Exposition of Second Samuel/I. Consolidation of Monarchy in Israel (1:1-20:26)/C. David's Powerful Reign (5:17-8:18)/3. The Lord's covenant with David (7:1-17), Book Version: 4.0.2 ]

depending on their faithfulness. The focus is on the present or at best the near future. But all in all life for them is all bound up in the current situation.

But all that is about to change. Seven chapters into the ninth book of the Bible God is going to turn the attention of His people toward the future. No more living month to month and riding up and down on circumstances. From now on there is going to be a future hope that can keep your heart steady through all of life's joys and disappointments. God is about to make some promises to David about the future that are not vague at all. They are specific and they center on a particular man. From now on it is not just a case of looking to God for a blessing day by day; now there is going to be a constant, underlying hope in the fulfillment of future promises and the receiving of future grace.

### **The explosion of future hope**

And so as you study your Bible you will see that after this chapter God's Word explodes with hope in this coming of the Davidic King – this descendent who will fulfill these future promises. Almost all the prophets point to this covenant with David as the basis of future hope in the end times – as do the psalms.

Psalms 89 is one of the longest psalms – 52 verses, and the whole thing is about the Davidic covenant. It is an amazing psalm. Almost the entire psalm is joyful, happy praise and exultation and rejoicing in God's promise to David. And then at the very end you find out the psalmist is in terrible trouble and is not experiencing any of the promises, and the purpose of the psalm is to ask God, "How long until You fulfill those promises made to David?" But in the process his thinking about those promises makes him so happy that for the first 37 verses he seems to forget that he is in trouble. That is the effect hope can have on the human heart.

Psalms 132 is another one that the entire psalm is about the Davidic covenant. The prophets also center on this covenant as their primary hope. All through the book of Isaiah there are statements of hope about this offspring of David who will come and rule a glorious, eternal kingdom. That all comes from the promise made to David in 2 Samuel 7. Here is an example.

**Isaiah 9:6 For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. 7 Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever.**

You see the same thing from the prophet Jeremiah.

**Jeremiah 23:5 "The days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will raise up to David a righteous Branch, a King who will reign wisely and do what is just and right in the land.**

And Ezekiel...

**Ezekiel 37:24 "My servant David will be king over them, and they will all have one shepherd. They will follow my laws and be careful to keep my decrees. 25 They will live in the land I gave to my servant Jacob, the land where your fathers lived. They and their children and their children's children will live there forever, and David my servant will be their prince forever.**

The prophet Daniel spoke of this great kingdom that would be an everlasting dominion that will never be destroyed or pass away, and the King of that kingdom will be one like a son of man – a human being who can actually approach the Ancient of Days (Dan.7:13-14). Hosea said Israel will go astray but then they will be restored and...

**Hosea 3:5 will return and seek the LORD their God and David their king.**

**Amos 9:11 "In that day I will restore David's fallen tent.**

The whole fifth chapter of Micah is devoted to this King. He will be born in Bethlehem, just like David was, and He will shepherd His flock, and they will live securely and His greatness will reach to the ends of the earth. The prophet Haggai calls Him **the desired of all the nations**<sup>2</sup> (Hag.2:7). Zechariah promised that God would grant a spirit of grace and supplication to the house of David and they would mourn over the one they had pierced (Zech.12:10). Almost all the prophets point to the promises made to David in this chapter as the basis for all our future hope. The only prophets that do not mention it are the ones that are just pronouncing judgment or warning of judgment.<sup>3</sup> But most of the prophets<sup>4</sup> also speak of restoration and future hope, and they all base that on these promises.

All of the promises of Israel being delivered and protected from enemies and living securely in peace are rooted in the promise to David in 2 Samuel 7.

**Isaiah 37:35 "I will defend this city and save it, for my sake and for the sake of David my servant!"**

**Psalm 132:10 For the sake of David your servant, do not reject your anointed one.**

It was understood that all promises of protection and blessing of Jerusalem were based on the Davidic covenant. So for example in the book of Joel David's name is never mentioned, but when you get promises like...

**Joel 3:17 Jerusalem will be holy; never again will foreigners invade her.**

Everyone would immediately think – “Ah, the promise made to David in 2 Samuel 7”.

Then when you get to the New Testament the very first thing you read on the very first line of the first page -

**Matthew 1:1 A record of the genealogy of Jesus Christ the son of David**

When the angel appeared to Mary to announce to her that she would give birth to the Messiah there are a thousand things He could have said to her, but he chose to focus on the Davidic covenant.

**Luke 1:32-33 He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David,<sup>33</sup> and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end."**

Every bit of that is straight out of the Davidic covenant. Throughout the gospels Jesus is presented as the Son of David who is the final, ultimate fulfillment of all those Old Testament prophesies.

And then you get to the book of Acts, and you have sermons focused on explaining to the people that David died and was buried, so those promises were not talking about him. They were talking about Someone much greater – Jesus Christ.

Then you get to the epistles.

**Romans 1:1-2 Paul ... set apart for the gospel of God--<sup>2</sup> the gospel ...<sup>3</sup> regarding his Son, who ... was a descendant of David**

**2 Timothy 2:8 Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, descended from David. This is my gospel.**

**Hebrews 1:5 For to which of the angels did God ever say, ... "I will be his Father, and he will be my Son"?**

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<sup>2</sup> Haggai announced that restoration would come through Zurubabel, son of David. Zurubabel was not the ultimate fulfillment of the promise, but he served as a picture of the greater descendant of David who would come.

<sup>3</sup> Those prophets are Obadiah (Judgment on Edom), Jonah (Mercy on Nineveh), Nahum (Judgment on Nineveh), Habakkuk (Judgment on Israel, but no focus on restoration), Zephaniah (Warning of judgment), and Malachi (Call to repentance).

<sup>4</sup> Including Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Micah, Haggai, Zechariah, the psalmists, and the former prophets (historical books).

(That is a quotation right out of 2 Samuel 7.) Then you skip to the very last chapter of the Bible – the final end –

**Revelation 22:16 "I, Jesus ... I am the Root and the Offspring of David ... 22 Yes, I am coming soon."**

So you can see that we are on some very holy ground when we approach this chapter of God's holy Word.

## **The Foundation of Hope - Past Grace**

We began our study of this chapter last week, and saw that David wanted to build a house for God but God said, "No, I am going to build a house for you." Before man can give to God, God must first give to man so it is clear who the Benefactor is and who the beneficiary is. The word "house" can refer to a Temple and it can refer to a dynasty. God is going to build a dynasty for David, and along with that will come some other amazing promises that are spelled out beginning in verse 10. But first, before He spells out what He is going to do in the future; God is going to take a couple verses to talk about what He has already done for David in the past.

**8 ...This is what the LORD Almighty says: I took you from the pasture and from following the flock to be ruler over my people Israel. 9 I have been with you wherever you have gone, and I have cut off all your enemies from before you.**

**8 ... I took you ...<sup>9</sup> I have been with you ... I have cut off ...**

Now look at the next words:

**9 ... Now I will...**

"I have, I have, I have, and now I will." Before describing the future grace God reminds him of past grace.

Have you ever had someone make promises to you that sounded empty and failed to generate hope in your heart because that person has such a track record of not following through on promises? If you are married you are probably married to someone like that. And your spouse is too, by the way. Human beings are notoriously unreliable, for a variety of reasons. We have limited power, limited wisdom, limited resources, inability to see the future, very often we lack the virtue of faithfulness; and as a result our promises cannot be relied upon 100%. And if that irritates you about your spouse let that irritation be translated into delight in a God who is utterly reliable.

When God makes promises He never has to say, "Trust Me, it will be different this time." He never has to say, "I know I've never really followed through in the past, but this time it will happen." When God makes a promise for some future grace he can always point to a track record of past grace as a guarantee. And I believe that is what He is doing here with David. He is reminding David of what He has done for David in the past as a down payment, so that David's hope in this future promise might be rock solid.

## **The Focus of Hope – Future Grace**

### **Hope rests on promises**

And that brings us to the second point – future grace. All hope looks forward. The definition of hope is this – hope is when what is coming in the future is so wonderful and so certain that it makes you feel happy now, in the present. If you are so excited about what is going to happen tomorrow that it actually puts you into a good mood today – even though it is not happening yet – that is hope. We sometimes use the word hope to refer to a wish – "I hope it doesn't rain" or "I hope the pastor doesn't go for two hours." That is not what the word "hope" means in the Bible. In Scripture the word hope refers to when the thing you are looking forward to is so good and you are so sure it is going to happen that it makes you happy ahead of time – before it even

happens. It is the opposite of worry. Worry is when you borrow tomorrow's pain so that you can suffer it today. Hope is when you borrow tomorrow's joy so you can enjoy it today.

And so all hope is based on God's promises. God's past blessings would mean nothing if there were no guarantee of them continuing in the future. And the guarantee of them continuing (and increasing) in the future is God's great and precious promises. So any passage of Scripture that contains promises is a passage that is designed to increase your hope.

## Greatness through Grace

So let's look at the first promise God makes.

### 9 ... Now I will make your name great, like the names of the greatest men of the earth.

The first thing promised to David is greatness. Now, that promise was for David and the descendent of David who would be the Messiah. God has not promised each of us that same greatness. And when we get to verse 16 we will talk about the significance of that for us. But for now, there is a key principle that we need to make sure we catch. It is very significant that God promised David greatness right after telling him he could not build the Temple. Usually if a king wanted to become great in the ancient world one of the ways to do it was by completing huge, spectacular building projects, such as a temple. But God would not let David build Him a Temple. He did not want David to become great that way. He wanted David to become great not by receiving from David but by giving to David.

And that is a great lesson for us because it reminds us that the truly great men and women of history are not those who did a lot for God. They are those who *received* a lot *from* God. Think about it – aren't the greatest men and women in the Bible great because God singled them out to receive great amounts of His grace? Abraham, Moses, Samuel, David, Elijah, Elisha, Job, the Apostles – weren't they all great because of what they received from God? That is the measure of greatness – not giving to God.

Who gave the most to God? Let me ask you this – who built the most spectacular and magnificent Temple for God ever constructed? Herod the Great. Herod built the greatest temple ever, David built nothing, and yet who was greater? Who do we name our kids after? Raise your hand if you know someone named David. Now raise your hand if you know someone named Herod. Greatness is achieved not by supplying things for God but by receiving great grace from God. So what is it we are hoping for? The object of our hope is grace from God. The grace He gave David was greatness. The grace He will give you and me might be something different. But the form the grace comes in does not really matter because it is grace that makes something worth hoping for. The writer says more about the greatness part later on, but for now he moves on to the next promise.

## The Object of Hope – Rest (God's Love)

### Peace & rest for Israel

**10 And I will provide a place for my people Israel and will plant them so that they can have a home of their own and no longer be disturbed. Wicked people will not oppress them anymore, as they did at the beginning <sup>11</sup> and have done ever since the time I appointed leaders over my people Israel. I will also give you rest from all your enemies.**

God promises peace and rest for His people.

### *Partial vs. ultimate rest*

Some interpreters have suggested that that part of the promise was fulfilled in Solomon's time. And when you read the account in 1 Chronicles 22 it sounds like they have a pretty solid case.

**1 Chronicles 22:9 But you will have a son who will be a man of peace and rest, and I will give him rest from all his enemies on every side. His name will be Solomon, and I will grant Israel peace and quiet during his reign.**

How could you argue with that? It just flat out states that the time of peace and rest will be enjoyed during the reign of Solomon. And so, it is argued, there is no need to look to any future fulfillment of this. It was fulfilled in Solomon's time.

But there are some problems with that. First of all, while it is true that Solomon did have a reign that was mostly peaceful, it was not completely peaceful. There were some enemies that rose up against Solomon. One was Hadad the Edomite (1 Ki.11:14). Another was one of his own officials, named Nebat (1 Ki.11:26). Another was a guy by the name of Rezon.

**1 Kings 11:25 Rezon was Israel's adversary as long as Solomon lived, adding to the trouble caused by Hadad.**

So the promise of blissful, wonderful, uninterrupted peace forever and ever did not really happen under Solomon.

“Well, maybe the promise was only for a partial, temporary peace and rest and not an ultimate, eternal peace and rest.”

But we know that cannot be the case because if this promise only referred to partial, temporary rest it would not make any sense, because David already had a partial, temporary peace and rest at the time the promise was given. Look at verse 1.

**1 After the king was settled in his palace and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies around him**

That is the situation before the promise – David already has rest. Now listen to the promise:

**10 I will (future) provide a place for my people Israel and will plant them so that they can have a home of their own and no longer be disturbed. Wicked people will not oppress them anymore.**

During a time of rest, God says “Someday I'm really going to give you rest.” That points to a greater rest.

Not only that, but we know the promise is for eternal rest and not temporary rest because that is what God says in the promise.

**13 I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.**

**16 Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever.**

## **Telescoping prophecy**

“But what about 1 Chronicles 22:9? That verse explicitly says the promise is fulfilled in Solomon.” The answer to that question and a crucial key to understanding Biblical prophecy in general, is in understanding what is known as the *telescoping* nature of prophecy. When God gives a pronouncement of a future event He does not supply the timing or chronology unless the time and chronology is important for us to know (which it usually isn't). So sometimes there will be descriptions of events that span long periods of time. For example, when Daniel announced the destruction of Tyre he described several events, all of which took place in the centuries that followed exactly as Daniel described to the letter. But they did not all happen at the same time. Some happened when Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Tyre, and others happened when Alexander the Great defeated them hundreds of years later, etc.

Another example is the prophecies of the coming of the Messiah. Some are fulfilled in Jesus' first coming and others in His Second Coming – but you cannot tell that from the prophecies themselves. They call that telescoping because it is like a collapsing telescope. If you think of the far events as being like the far end of the telescope, and the near fulfillments being like the part of the telescope close to your eye, when you collapse that telescope you cannot tell which events are far and which are near. That is what it was like for the Old Testament prophets. They were shown the things that were going to happen, but not always the chronology or timing. It was kind of like looking across a bunch of mountain peaks – the peaks look like they are all right next to each other, but you cannot see the valleys in between.

When God starts telling David about what is going to happen through his descendent, some of it applies to Solomon, some applies to later kings in his line, and some applies to Jesus in His first coming, and some to His Second Coming, but in the prophecy it is all telescoped together.

## **There is a future fulfillment**

Now, those of you who took the Hermeneutics class might be asking, “Would the original readers have known this?” The answer is yes. And you can see that by the way the Old Testament prophets interpreted this prophecy. They kept talking about it as a future thing long after Solomon was dead. When they saw all that language about forever and ever they knew that was something a lot grander than anything that was happening in their day.

Next week the plan is to focus our attention on the descendent of David. And I will deal with the issue of who that refers to, and the implications for us. But for now let’s just keep our attention on the first part – the promise of peace and rest. What exactly is God promising when He promises this rest?

### **Rest is God’s love**

It is a lot more than just the cessation of war. The rest that God promises is a rest from trouble in general. Rest in Isaiah 14:3 means relief from suffering and turmoil. Rest in Isaiah 28:12 means a place of repose and comfort for the weary. God’s rest is a rest from every kind of trouble – not just war.

### **Protection from nothing**

But even that does not capture all of it – not even close. Because even if you eliminate all trouble, all threats, all problems – we still do not necessarily have rest, because of how needy we are. Usually you think of needing refuge from bad things. But we are so weak and so needy of God’s grace that we need refuge from nothing. Do you realize nothingness would kill you instantly? If you traveled into outer space in some spot where there is mostly nothing – no air, no light, no heat, no food, no water – nothing at all, even if you are the strongest, healthiest, smartest, and most resourceful person in the world, you would be dead in a matter of moments. Not only could you and I not survive exposure to any great threat, but we are so weak and needy that we cannot even survive nothing. If you are so small that you need protection from huge threats, that is one thing. If you are so weak and so needy that you need protection from tiny things – then you are really small. But if you are so weak and small and needy and dependent that you need protection from nothing at all – that is the epitome of neediness.

The rest that we need from God is not just shelter from bad things; it is also supply of good things. So when God promises ultimate peace and rest He is promising a whole lot more than just the absence of trouble.

### **Protection from enemies**

Protection from enemies is definitely part of it. That part of this covenant to David is repeated in Jeremiah 33:16, Isaiah 7:35, Joel 3:17, and Psalm 89:19-23. So part of the promise does include total protection from enemies. And passages like Ezekiel 37:25 promise that this time of safety will not just be in heaven someday, but will be enjoyed by Israel in the land that God gave them.

**Ezekiel 37:25 They will live in the land I gave to my servant Jacob, the land where your fathers lived. They and their children and their children's children will live there forever, and David my servant will be their prince forever.**

So the Jews will enjoy protection from enemies *in the land of Israel*. There has never been a time when Israel has enjoyed total and permanent protection from enemies in Israel, so I am still looking for a future time when that will happen. I believe it will be during that 1000 year reign of Christ described in Revelation 20. I don’t see how that can refer to the Church in this age, because the book of Revelation describes the Church as suffering persecution all the way until the Second Coming. So it seems to me this has to happen after the Second Coming.



## **Curse reversal**

But whatever your view on end times, total protection from enemies in Jerusalem is part of the promise. But it is not all there is to the promise of rest. There is a whole lot more. In this time of rest everything that is wrong will be set right. Which means the curse will be lifted. When you read the promises about the time when the curse will be lifted, and lions and lambs will get along just fine, pay attention to the fact that those are fulfillments of the Davidic covenant. For example, the most famous one of all...

**Isaiah 11:6 The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them. 7 The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox. 8 The infant will play near the hole of the cobra, and the young child put his hand into the viper's nest. 9 They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.**

When? When will all that happen? When will the creation be radically transformed like that? And why? And how will it come to pass? Just back up a few verses and you will see.

**Isaiah 11:1 A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse (that's David's father) from his roots a Branch will bear fruit. (That's the descendent of David.) 2 The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him ...5 Righteousness will be his belt and faithfulness the sash around his waist. 6 The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat...**

You see, it is all part of the Davidic covenant. Right now the whole creation groans under the curse, but when the rest God promised David in 2 Samuel 7 arrives that curse will be reversed and the groaning will turn to rejoicing.

## **Restoration**

And beyond that they will also experience spiritual restoration that will take place.

**Amos 9:11 "In that day I will restore David's fallen tent.**

**Micah 5:3 Therefore Israel will be abandoned until the time when she who is in labor gives birth and the rest of his brothers return to join the Israelites.**

That is talking about the birth of the Messiah in the context.

## ***Spiritual restoration***

And that restoration will involve the people's hearts being changed and made righteous.

**Ezekiel 37:24 My servant David will be king over them, and they will all have one shepherd. They will follow my laws and be careful to keep my decrees.**

Hosea said Israel will go astray but then they will be restored and...

**Hosea 3:5 will return and seek the LORD their God and David their king.**

Zechariah promised that God would grant a spirit of grace and supplication to the house of David and they would mourn over the one they had pierced (Zech.12:10). So it will be a spiritual restoration when their hearts will turn back to God.

## Satisfaction

And that is still not all there is to this rest. The promised rest will be a time when not only will God's people be protected from all threats, and not only will the hearts of Israel be turned back to God, but it will also be a time when God's people will enjoy rich provision from God so that we will have all our needs and longings completely satisfied. Psalm 132 is all about the fulfillment of the Davidic Covenant.

**Psalm 132:14-17 This is my rest for ever and ever; here I will sit enthroned, for I have desired it-- 15 I will bless her with abundant provisions; her poor will I satisfy with food. 16 I will clothe her priests with salvation, and her saints will ever sing for joy. 17 "Here I will make a horn grow for David and set up a lamp for my anointed one.**

When God fulfills this promise to David it will involve a rest that includes the full out pouring of God's grace in every area of life, including abundant provisions, satisfaction of desires and longings, and fullness of joy through the nearness of God's presence.

## Love

In fact, if you want the most comprehensive summary of what this promise is, it is in Isaiah 55.

**Isaiah 55:3 I will make an everlasting covenant with you my faithful love promised to David.**

All these things God promises are nothing less than expressions of His love. That is the essence of this rest. You could take all that I have said and summarize it in two words – God's love. The rest we are hoping for – the rest that is going to be so wonderful and that is so certain that it should make us happy today and affect our mood today even though it's still in the future – that rest is nothing more and nothing less than the full, unhindered, direct enjoyment of God's love.

## Conclusion

So what does all this have to do with us? These promises were made to a Jewish king about the Jewish nation 3000 years ago. But what is the significance for me, today?

The first major controversy in the early church was over the question of whether Gentiles had to become Jewish in order to be saved. And they had a big meeting in Jerusalem to debate that issue, and the whole thing was finally settled when James stood up and quoted a passage from the Old Testament<sup>5</sup> that showed that Gentiles are included in the promises of the Davidic Covenant.<sup>6</sup>

And so the benefits of the promise to David – the great peace that is the very love of God that supplies everything our souls crave - that is experienced by us Gentiles in two ways. One is partial and temporary and the other is complete and eternal. In eternity we will enjoy total rest and unhindered enjoyment of the love of God. And that is our great hope.

And in the meantime, here and now in this life we experience the love God promised to David in a partial way. Do we have absolute rest and safety from our enemies? Do we have the complete elimination of trouble? No, but in times of trouble when we need more than anything an experience of the love that God promised to David we can cry out with the writer of Psalm 132.

**Psalm 132:1 O LORD, remember David ... 10 For the sake of David your servant, do not reject your anointed one.**

In times of trouble we can look up to heaven and say, "Dear Lord, for the sake of David, and for the sake of the great Son of David, whom You so dearly love – for His sake give me a taste of Your rest."

There are all kinds of ways God might answer a prayer like that. He might answer it by giving you relief from the trouble. He might answer it by giving you great strength in the midst of the trouble. He might fill your

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<sup>5</sup> Amos 9:11-12. See also Micah 5:2-3.

<sup>6</sup> Acts 15:15-18.

heart with the ability to enjoy and be satisfied with His gifts in a greater way so that your joy is greater than your sorrow. He might give you special access to His presence. He could do a lot of things.

But however God answers that prayer keep in mind two things: Our asking is on the basis of His promised love to David. And that is the most certain thing there is. A few different places in Scripture God said, “If you can break my covenant with the sun and moon then you can break My covenant with David.” God showing you His love for the sake of David and the descent of David is more certain than the sun coming up in the morning. When you receive what you are asking for, that is not an end in itself. It is designed to point to something in the future. God does not want us to live with His grace month to month. We tend to be so short sighted. We can only think about our current situation in this life. So when God gives us little emblems of what paradise will be like – little samples – little cracks in the window for us to get an idea so that hope swells in our hearts; all too often we focus on that sample without looking through the window as though the sample were an end in itself. And then when the sample is gone we think, “What good was it? It’s gone now – I don’t have it anymore, so what good was it? God gave me a job, but now that job is lost. He gave me a spouse, but now that spouse is gone. He gave me health, but now it’s gone.” And we get so while we have God’s gifts we enjoy them, but we enjoy them as though they were ends in themselves, and the result is when they are gone our joy is gone.

But if we learned to use them the way God intended – as little, miniature models of the great joy that is coming so that hope increases in our hearts, then even when the models pass away the hope will remain.

Let’s not live month to month. Let’s not live blessing to blessing. We live in the days after the great promise to David. We live in the days of hope. When God gives you rest from your trouble that rest might last a year or 10 years, or it might last only a few moments. But however long it lasts, use it for which it was designed. Preach to your soul, and say, “This rest – this blessing – this joy is a sample of the thing that should be the focus of your desires day and night. Don’t squander it.

“How do I know if I squandered it?”

You can tell you squandered it if after it is gone all your joy goes with it. If it leaves you depressed then that means you were probably focusing on the glass rather than looking through the window. Every pleasure in life is an illustration of what it is like to be in the presence of God. One day you eat some food and it is not one bit satisfying. Another day you take a bite of that exact same kind of food and it fills your soul with delight. The difference between those two, according to Ecclesiastes 5:19, is the grace of God. The ability to enjoy something is a gift of God’s grace designed to generate desire in your soul for the presence of God.

At the beginning of the sermon I talked about the problem of being shaken up by the ups and downs of life. What will keep you on an even keel so that you are not controlled and dominated by the circumstances of life? Hope in God’s rest. When the joys of life are used as windows to catch a glimpse of future grace, then even after the window is closed the hope lingers and you don’t drop into depression every time blessings are removed.

So seek rest from God. Seek joy and delight and happiness through the little windows of heaven that God opens up throughout the day each day. But do not ever let the windows themselves be the focus of your delight. Do not stare at the glass. Look through the glass to the great rest that is coming, so that every pleasure in life –whether it lasts 10 years or 10 seconds, throws gasoline on the fires of your desire for the presence of God.

**Benediction: Romans 15:13 May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.**