

Title: He Shall Be to Me a Son
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Texts: 2 Samuel 7:1-17
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He Shall Be to Me a Son

[Proposition: God is faithfully fulfilling his covenant promises, therefore we find our hope in Him and the promises of his Word.]

Introduction:

I'm sure many of you saw this past week the shocking news that Pastor Jarrid Wilson took his own life Monday evening. Jarrid was one of pastors at Harvest Christian Fellowship in Southern California, and was also a well known mental health advocate. He and his wife Juli founded Anthem of Hope, an outreach ministry to help people coping with depression and suicidal thoughts, as well as to help equip churches to do the same.

Perhaps some of you also saw the news that Gregory Eells, executive director of counseling and psychology at the University of Pennsylvania, also took his life Monday. Dr. Eells area of research and professional expertise was resilience and suicide prevention among college and university students.

There are many factors at play when someone has suicidal thoughts, not least of which may be mental illness. Christians have not always done a great job recognizing and responding to mental illness, but have put all forms of depression or anxiety under the umbrella of false thoughts. For some folks, there are really patterns of false belief that need to be displaced with the truth of the Gospel—actually we all fall into that category whether we feel depressed or anxious or whatever. But with things like clinical depression, chronic anxiety, and PTSD—there is often a malfunction in or a trauma to the body that causes and/or complicates the situation. Do I think prayer, meditation on the Bible, sitting under the preaching of the Gospel, and Christian community can help those people? Of course! God may cure the diabetic but until He does, you ought to take your insulin, and God may heal a traumatic injury, but in the meantime we better stop the bleeding.

But another key factor in suicidal thoughts is hopelessness—the belief that things will never change and never get better, that this feeling, or depression, or situation, is permanent. I'm sure all of us can relate to that sense of hopelessness, how sometimes in life it really does feel like there is there's no way out and no way up, no hope for this financial situation, this relationship, this struggle. The word “hope” isn't used in this passage, but what we do see in this Scripture is the *reason* we can have hope. Because what we see is **God faithfully fulfilling his covenant promises, therefore we can find our hope in him.** God has been, and is, and will be until the end of the age at work in the lives of his people to both be their source of hope as well as the one who accomplishes their hope. We're going to see three things:

- I. We can hope in God because he faithfully fulfills his covenant promises.**
- II. We can hope in God because he fulfills his covenant promises in unexpected ways.**
- III. We can hope in God because he fulfills his covenant promises in Christ.**

I. We can hope in God because he faithfully fulfills his covenant promises.

First, we want to notice

A. The story of the Bible is the story of God's Kingdom through Covenant

As Pastor Larry said in the second sermon in this series, on Creation last September, “the pattern of the kingdom or rule of God that will run through the whole story [is]: *God's people, in God's place, under God's rule and blessing.*”

And, the way God brings his kingdom into the world is through covenants. A covenant is God's legal and relational commitment to his people. The covenants contain obligations as well as promises of blessing and warnings of cursing. The Biblical covenants are the backbone of the Bible's story, the substructure to God's building a Kingdom.

At the creation, God established his covenant with Adam offered life for obedience, giving him the job of expanding and embodying God's rule and reign to all the earth. But this Kingdom was lost when Adam and Eve broke the covenant, rejecting God's loving rule and seeking to rule their own lives. Their sin brought the curse of broken relationships, and expulsion from God's holy presence. The effects of sin continue to reverberate in our world and in our hearts, as we replay the Fall in our own lives. seeking our own kingdom on our own terms. We seek other covenant lords and serve those ancient gods: Money, Power, Sex, Control, Pride, though they never live up to their promises of blessing and life. Now all humans find ourselves in rebellion against God, estranged from the giver of life, and under his wrath against sin.

But God was not willing that his creation should perish, nor that his kingdom should pass away. As we have seen over the “seasons” of this sermon series, God promised the restoration of his kingdom in his call and covenant with Abraham and his offspring, the people of Israel. And ultimately, God's kingdom breaks into the world and into our hearts through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. The King of Heaven dies in the places of cursed rebels and establishes a New Covenant of life and blessing through faith in him.

So you see then that the Bible is a story of Kingdom through Covenant... What is God doing in the world? Bringing his kingdom. How is God bring his Kingdom into the world? Through a series of covenants.

But it isn't just that God is one who makes a lot of promises, what really matters for us is that God keeps and fulfills his covenant promises.

B. The story of the Bible is the story of God's Faithfulness to his Covenants

As we come to 2 Samuel 7, we see God's covenant with David. God begins by reminding David, and us as well, of his record of faithfulness to the covenant with Abraham by key ideas and key words we find in 2 Samuel that connect back to God's covenant with Abraham.

In Genesis 12:1-7, God promised Abraham his descendants would become a great nation, that he would give them a land, that he would make Abraham's name great, and that he would give him an “offspring” who would inherit the land. In Genesis 15:7-20, God promised Abraham that his offspring would sojourn in Egypt for four hundred years, that He would deliver these people, and he would give them the land of Canaan.

Now to David he says: I did bring up the people of Israel from Egypt (v. 6), I took you from the pasture, delivered you from your enemies, and I will make your name great (v. 9), I will appoint a place for my people Israel and I will give them rest from their enemies there (v. 10-11), I will raise up your “offspring.” God had done everything he promised, and now David and his

offspring can expect the same covenant faithfulness and blessing from God. The LORD is a God who faithfully fulfills his promises.

Illustration/Application:

One of the very few things I like about Facebook is the “Memories” function. I love when I open it and see a post or a picture from years past, or when my wife shares one of her memories with me and we see our older kids when they were little ones. I get similar notifications from Google Photos that say “Rediscover This Day” with the same kind of idea. These reminders can have a really positive benefit because if nothing else they show you that whatever you’re facing right now isn’t permanent—it hasn’t always been this way, so it won’t always be this way.

But how will you remind yourself of God’s faithfulness? Keep a prayer journal of God’s answer to your prayers, share your story and ask to hear the stories of others. My daughter Eva reminds me of God’s faithful love in a funny way. Sometimes when I tuck her in at night I’ll remind her that Jesus loves her even more than her Daddy does. Now sometimes when I say “I love you” she’ll say “Jesus loves me more than you do!”

David could continue to hope in God, and we can too when we are reminded that the LORD **faithfully fulfills his covenant promises.**

As we look again at 2 Samuel 7, we see also that

II. We can hope in God because he fulfills his promises in unexpected ways.

When something is unexpected it has a way of provoking joy. My kids and I play this game on Nintendo Switch called “The Legend of Zelda: Breath of the Wild.” It’s set in a kind of medieval-ish fantasy realm, and along with the playing out the story you can also equip Link with different swords and shields and armor. Well Gabriel was playing and found this random treasure chest, he opened it up and inside was a bright red shirt for the character in the game that says Nintendo Switch on it. All the boys were laughing and freaking out about it. Finding the Nintendo shirt provoked joy in us because of the totally unexpected nature of it... how much more then does the unexpected grace of God to David and to us bring us joy and hope.

God fulfills his promises in two unexpected ways:

A. God extends his promises to unexpected people

You can see this in verses 8-9:

8 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. 9 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.

The Lord chose David from the pasture and made him a prince. That's how God works, he sets his love on the most unlikely and unexpected people and then lavishes them with promises of blessing.

Abraham and his wife Sarah were pagan, barren, senior citizens whom God promised would become the father and mother of God's own people. As Israel approached the promised land, the LORD reminded them (Deuteronomy 7:7-8):

7 It was not because you were more in number than any other people that the Lord set his love on you and chose you, for you were the fewest of all peoples, 8 but it is because the Lord loves you and is keeping the oath that he swore to your fathers, that the Lord has brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

This is always the pattern of God's work in the world, makes covenant with unexpected people. Listen to Paul's first letter to the Corinthians he tells these early Christians (1:26-31):

26 For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. 27 But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; 28 God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, 29 so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. 30 And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, 31 so that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."

The LORD extends his covenant love and promises to unexpected people because it reinforces his grace—no one can boast before God. All of us come to him by his grace through faith in Christ and not because of anything we bring to the table. And that is the Gospel, because **God extends his promises to unexpected people**, anyone can come to him and find hope in him through Christ.

Moreover,

B. God expands his promises in unexpected ways.

We've already noticed God's record of faithfulness and ongoing commitment to past promises. Now we want to recognize how God actually goes beyond what he previously promised by adding more and more promises of blessing. You can see this from v. 11-16.¹

The LORD will make [David] a house (v. 11), the LORD will give David a son through whom he will establish an everlasting kingdom (v. 13), who will be as a son to God (v. 14), God

¹ Our passage began with David wanting to build a house, a temple, for the LORD (v. 1-3). but God rejects that plan and promises instead (v. 11) "the LORD will make you a house." It's worth pointing out that though the desire of the King and the opinion of the Prophet agree on David's plan to build God a house—the "word of the LORD" comes to Nathan and overrules. No matter how much power you have or how spiritual you may be, our desires and opinions must be submitted to the Word of God.

will extend to David's offspring "steadfast love"—hesed, faithful covenant love—which he will never turn away (v. 15). David's kingdom shall be made sure forever (v. 15).

You see what I mean by God expanding his promises in unexpected ways. To keep his promises to Abraham is one thing, to take David from the pasture to the palace another—but this is grace upon grace upon grace. No wonder it says:

18 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?"

Application/Illustration:

Over the summer, the members of the worship team gathered on Sunday mornings to share our stories. Each week one of us took a turn sharing where we come from, how we came to faith, where we are now and how God brought us here.

Man if you were going to choose people to have such an important and public role of glorifying God and encouraging His people in the gospel—(and I'm including myself in this assessment) humanly speaking, these are not the people you would have picked!

We were not the wise, the strong, and the noble. Our stories are ones where humanly speaking, there was no hope—but God brought us to faith in Christ and changed our lives with the good news of Jesus's death for sin and resurrection power. It was so encouraging to hear stories of how the Gospel brings hope, stories about God's faithfulness in our lives and struggles. They are stories of unexpected people receiving unexpected grace.

We can hope in God because he *extends his promises to unexpected people and expands his promises in unexpected ways.*

Finally,

III. We can hope in God because he fulfills his covenant promises in Christ.

First, notice that

A. The Son that is promised is Jesus

There is a son of David, Solomon, whom we will talk about when we begin the next season of The Story of God in October. But he isn't the Son the LORD is ultimately talking about here.² God promises David's son will build a house for God's name, and the LORD will establish an everlasting kingdom for him. But, after Solomon the kingdom is divided and most of the kings of Israel and Judah are wicked. Eventually the Northern kingdom of Israel is carried off into Assyrian captivity in 722 BC, and the Temple is destroyed and Judah carried off in 586 BC.

² Acts 7:44-48

During this period, the Jewish people began to read David's covenant as pointing ahead to the coming of a greater son of David, the Messiah.³

Jesus was great David's greater Son. The whole New Testament testifies to Jesus the son of Abraham, son of David,⁴ the Son of God.⁵ God established an everlasting kingdom that is breaking into our world through Jesus's life, death, and resurrection. Jesus built a house for God not by building a Temple of stone but by purchasing us out of sin through his death on the cross.⁶ He is seated at the right hand of God, and will come again to make the kingdom of the world into the kingdom the LORD and his Christ, and he will reign forever, and ever.⁷

Paul says in 2 Corinthians 1:20:

20 For all the promises of God find their Yes in him. That is why it is through him that we utter our Amen to God for his glory.

B. Through the Son, God makes us sons and daughters.

God offers his faithful love to any who would receive Christ—and in Christ the promises God made to Abraham and David, all the covenant promises become ours!

In 2 Corinthians Paul actually quotes 2 Samuel 7:14, but makes an interesting little shift that is enormously important for us. Here's what he says 2 Cor 6:18:

*18 and I will be a father to you,
and you shall be **sons and daughters** to me,
says the Lord Almighty.*

Speaking to the church there at Corinth, he quotes this verse as if it were written directly to Christians. He can do this because whoever is in Christ is one with Christ, and so the Scriptures that are about him can be applied to those who are in him through faith.⁸

Let's take a second and think about this: Through faith in Christ, God has made us sons and daughters of the covenant. All the promises of God are for us!

Through the death and resurrection of Jesus:
he has made us a new people rescued from bondage,
he prepares a place for us the NHNE,
he conquers the enemies of sin, death, and the devil,
he makes us sons and daughters and loves us like a Father,
and he gives us an everlasting Kingdom where we experience his irrevocable steadfast love.

³ See for instance Psalm 89 and Isaiah 11 in the Hebrew Bible, and *4QFlora* in the Dead Sea Scrolls.

⁴ Matthew 1

⁵ Hebrews 1

⁶ 1 Cor 6:19-20

⁷ Revelation 11:15

⁸ Stated as logical syllogism:

I. The covenant promises to David are ultimately for Jesus Christ.

II. If you have faith in Christ you are in him, all that is his becomes yours.

III. Therefore if you are in Christ, all the covenant promises are for you!

So, are these promises yours? Do you know the Son who can make you a son? If you do, do you remember his faithfulness and rejoice in his grace? **If you do you'll find unshakeable hope in the God who faithfully fulfills his covenant promises, offering us more than we ever hoped through Christ.**