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2 Samuel 7:1-16 & Luke 1:26-33

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This morning we're looking at 2 passages of Scripture...

One from the Old Testament...

And one from the New.

An Old Testament prophecy in the book of Samuel...

And its fulfillment in the book of Luke.

I invite you to turn in your Bibles to 2nd Samuel.

We'll be looking at 2 Samuel 7.

Hear now God's Word to you:

After the king was settled in his palace and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies around him, ²he said to Nathan the prophet, "Here I am, living in a house of cedar, while the ark of God remains in a tent."

³Nathan replied to the king, "Whatever you have in mind, go ahead and do it, for the LORD is with you."

⁴But that night the word of the LORD came to Nathan, saying:

⁵"Go and tell my servant David, 'This is what the LORD says: Are you the one to build me a house to dwell in?' ⁶I 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. ⁷Wherever 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?'"

⁸"Now then, tell my servant David, 'This is what the LORD Almighty says: I took you from the pasture, from tending the flock, and appointed you ruler over my people Israel. ⁹I 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 on

earth. 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 ¹¹ 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: ¹² When your days are over and you rest with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, your own flesh and blood, and I will establish his kingdom. ¹³ He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. ¹⁴ I will be his father, and he will be my son. When he does wrong, I will punish him with a rod wielded by men, with floggings inflicted by human hands. ¹⁵ But my love will never be taken away from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you. ¹⁶ Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever.”

And from the book of Luke, chapter 1 starting in verse 26:

²⁶ In the sixth month of Elizabeth’s pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, ²⁷ to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin’s name was Mary. ²⁸ The angel went to her and said, “Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you.”

²⁹ Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. ³⁰ But the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. ³¹ You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. ³² 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, ³³ and he will reign over Jacob’s descendants forever; his kingdom will never end.”

The Word of the Lord. (**Thanks be to God**)

Raise your hand if you’re a sports fan?

I have a question for you...

What do these professional sports teams have in common?

New York Yankees – 1936 to 1943 (Joe DiMaggio & Lou Gehrig) ;

Chicago Bulls – 1989 to 1998 (Michael Jordan);

New England Patriots – 2001 to 2004 (Tom Brady);

Los Angeles Lakers – 2000 to 2010 (Kobe and Shaq and Pao);

Edmonton Oilers – 1984 to 1990

And just for fun, the 1991-2015 Detroit Red Wings...

They are all considered dynasties.

(If you track me down after service and argue that the Wings were not a dynasty I won't listen to you)

When we think of the word "dynasty," this is probably our most familiar association.

It has to do with a sports team that wins a string of titles over a certain period of time...

Or a hockey team that makes the playoffs 25 consecutive years...

We're not too familiar with the "dynasty" that has to do with lineage...

Or a line of rulers from the same family.

But this is Israel's concept of the word:

A succession of people from the same family who rule over a kingdom.

In our Old Testament passage from 2nd Samuel we see the word "house" show up a lot.

In these 16 verses, the word "house" occurs 8 times.

And we see that it has a few different meanings in our passage.

We see it in the first two verses when it's used of King David's palace.

He calls his palace a "house of cedar."

So "house" here means...house.

Then the word shows up in verse 4.

David alludes to wanting to build God a house...

And God says, "Are you the one to build me a house to dwell in?"

So here, we can take the word to mean "temple."

David wants to build God a temple because right now the ark is traveling.

God is living in an RV and David wants to build him a permanent structure.

Finally we see that the word “house” can mean dynasty.

God says, I will raise up your descendent after you...and I will establish his kingdom.

I will make a “house” for you....

A dynasty.

So this Hebrew word for “house” is used in a few different ways.

David lives in a house and wants to build the Lord a house...

But God promises to make him a house.

At the time, Israel does not have a house...

They do not have a stable line of rulers to lead them.

They don't have a dynasty...

Look at their history.

After taking possession of the Promised Land under Joshua, they enter into the period of the Judges. (the book of Judges records this time)

The new generation of people rebel against the Lord.

The Lord gives them Judges to help guide them back to following the Lord...

But the people continue to stray...

This time period is full of fighting, violence, and disobedience.

After the Judges the people ask for a king to rule them.

In steps the handsome, tall, strong Saul.

“Surely we can build a dynasty around this guy and his family.”

“Surely he will bring lasting peace and rest to the land.”

But we know what happens with Saul.

Saul disobeys the Lord.

And he's killed in battle.

He falls on his sword instead of falling into the hands of the Philistines.

Not only is Saul killed...

But his sons die with him in battle (1 Sam 31:6).

All of the future kings.

All of his potential heirs...

Hopes of a dynasty and hopes of a ruler for the people die too.

David may be king over Israel now...

Resting in his palace from his enemies...

He may have a house to live in...

And there may be peace today...

But what about tomorrow?

What about next month?

What about next year?

Who's to say that David won't sin against God...

Sin against God and meet the same fate as Saul?

Sin against God and jeopardize the well-being of Israel...

And bring an end to this time of peace?

Security and peace are fleeting.

We all go through seasons of life that are rough...

3 months ago Puerto Rico was hit by Hurricane Maria.

Today there are still over a million people without power;
Hundreds of thousands still lack access to clean drinking water;
And of course housing is a mess.

Vieques is an island east of the main island...

Gregorio Rivera's house was destroyed.

If you were to see it today, 3 months later, you'd see:

The roof caved in;
Walls caved in;
Moldy tree branches;
And destroyed, moldy furniture.

He's unable to live in his house so he's staying across the street...

Gregorio is squatting in a house that has been abandoned for decades...

No running water, no electricity.
There's a few chairs and a mattress on the floor in the middle of the room.
For bathing he draws dirty brown water from a well out back.

This house provides no lasting security...

And no lasting peace.

I'm sure this is not what Gregorio had in mind for his future.

I don't think we're under much threat of hurricanes here in Edmonton...

But how quickly could you lose your job or your business?

With a dip in the economy that's a real possibility.

Can't pay the bills when you don't have an income...

Might lose the house.

Or who has control over cancer?

Or car accidents?

Who has control over how family will act during the holidays?

Peace, rest, and security is anything but guaranteed by this world.

Another thing that those sports teams I mentioned earlier have in common...

Not only are they all dynasties...

They all came to an end.

We know that our team will not be good forever...

Players get hurt, coaches retire, people get traded...

As much as we'd like them to...these dynasties don't last.

We long for a sense of peace and security that's lasting...

To know that everything will be okay.

Israel was looking for someone to tell them that things were going to be alright.

Someone to give them lasting peace and rest coming out of a time of war and violence.

What God says to David is, "I am going to build you a house."

"I am going to build you a dynasty."

"I am going to provide my people with a place of their own..."

"A place where they can rest from their enemies..."

"A home where they're protected."

God promises David a dynasty...

A succession of rulers from his blood that will lead God's people.

God promises David a dynasty...

A royal line and kingdom that will endure forever.

And this dynasty is different...

This dynasty and promise comes with an element of unconditional love.

Remember Saul?

Saul the Benjamite...

God said that *Saul* was the one to lead God's people...

Saul was going to be the one to deliver them from the hand of the Philistines
(1 Samuel 9:15-17).

This was supposed to be Saul's destiny.

But when Saul sins, the Lord cuts off Saul's line.

There was a conditional element to Saul's kingship (1 Samuel 12:24).

"If you follow my ways...then this will happen"

"If you disobey me...then you will perish..."

When Saul sins against God, God takes away his lovingkindness from Saul.

His throne is different from David's.

To David, God makes this special promise:

"I will make you a house...a dynasty..."

"And it will endure forever."

God says, *"My love will never be taken away from your successors..."*

"Yes they will sin..."

"And I will discipline them for their sin..."

"But I will never take my love away from them."

“I will always be faithful to them.”

The love that the Lord promises to David and his dynasty is unconditional.

Nothing can cause God to remove his love.

God promises David a dynasty...

And God fulfills this in Christ.

We read it in Luke...

The angel says to Mary:

“The Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end.” (Luke 1:33)

Christ is the fulfillment of this rich Old Testament prophecy.

The people were seeking peace, and rest, and security...

But they never found it in David...

It didn't come through Solomon...

Even though he was probably the wealthiest person to ever walk the earth.

It doesn't come through Rehoboam, Asa, Jehoshaphat or any other king.

These kings were not able to bring the peace and rest that God promised to his people.

Sin was too widespread...

Disobedience against God was too common...

The Fall was too pervasive.

The only one able to bring peace was the Son of the Most High...

The Messiah...

The anointed one.

The one born of the Virgin in a feeding trough...

Destined to rule God's people as the eternal king.

In Christ we see firsthand the love and faithfulness of God towards his people.

He promised to David his unconditional love...

And thankfully he did...

Because as we know David sinned...

Solomon sinned...

And so did every other king that ruled in David's line.

God had every right to strip David and his line of kingship.

He would have been just in treating David as he treated Saul.

But God chose to show his love and favor through David.

And he showed his love for his people in David's physical descendent: Jesus Christ.

People of God, this is your ruler!

This is your King!

The Son of God, born to a woman...

The only king from David's line who didn't sin against God...

And the only king nailed to a cross for the sins of God's people.

Peace, rest, and security do not come from any earthly ruler...

They are only found in the person of Jesus Christ.

Christ is the promised eternal king.

This means that we are the subjects of Christ.

We follow our King and take our lead from him.

As Christ's people we seek the peace of our families:

The holidays are a time when we get together with our loved ones...

Some of our loved ones aren't so lovable...

And maybe there's tension or past fighting.

As Christ's people we seek peace in these relationships...

We ask the Spirit to convict us of where we've sinned...

To open our eyes to where we're to blame...

And then we repent...

We turn not just to God, but to that person.

We accept responsibility and say "I'm sorry for saying that..."

"I'm sorry for doing that..."

We clean off our side of the street and give the results up to God.

If we're not speaking to certain people then we ask the Spirit to open doors...

To open the door of our heart to be willing.

Or we pray for their well-being.

This is what we do as subjects of the eternal King.

As Christ's people we also seek the peace and well-being of our city.

Our best opportunity to do this is in our jobs.

I was talking to Bert this week about his job.

He travels around the city repairing tires on commercial and industrial vehicles.

Bert is a carrier of peace throughout this city.

As a servant of the king, Bert does his job well.

He's in a specialized service with long-standing customers.

And he's contributing to the well-being of this city...

Repairing tires so that floaters can fertilize the crop...

Providing people with food.

Repairing tires so that construction vehicles can continue building roadways and train stations.

He's doing a job that most big name tire companies are incapable of doing.

We need the work that Bert does so that the city can continue to flourish...

So people can continue to eat and continue to travel to their jobs and have places to work.

In a way, Bert's work is comparable to what God does every day to sustain the universe.

We don't realize that God is keeping tilt of the earth exactly where it needs to be...

Or sending the right amount of sun and rain and wind...

We don't notice until it breaks or becomes distorted.

God is using Bert as one of those behind the scenes kind of guys keeping things going...

Helping to bring flourishing to Edmonton.

Christ is our king...

And his kingdom is one of peace and love.

In his kingdom people flourish.

We are called to honor our king by being a part of his kingdom in our families and in our work.

God promised a dynasty...

And God delivered a dynasty.

Jesus Christ is ruler over God's people forever.

His kingdom of love, peace, and justice shall never end.

We're going to end by praying a prayer attributed to St. Francis of Assisi:

As people under the care of Christ...

Our eternal king...

Make these words your own:

“Lord, make me an instrument of thy peace!
That where there is hatred, I may bring love.
That where there is wrong, I may bring the spirit of forgiveness.
That where there is discord, I may bring harmony.
That where there is error, I may bring truth.
That where there is doubt, I may bring faith.
That where there is despair, I may bring hope.
That where there are shadows, I may bring light.
That where there is sadness, I may bring joy.
Lord, grant that I may seek rather to comfort, than to be comforted.
To understand, than to be understood.
To love, than to be loved.
For it is by self-forgetting that one finds.
It is by forgiving that one is forgiven.
It is by dying that one awakens to eternal life.”