

# DAVID, THE FAITHFUL KING

## + SESSION OUTLINE

1. The Lord's king seeks to make a house for God (2 Sam. 7:1-3).
2. The Lord's king is promised a house from God (2 Sam. 7:8-16).
3. The Lord's king extols the grace of God (2 Sam. 7:18-24).

Background Passage: 2 Samuel 5-7

## + WHAT WILL MY GROUP LEARN?

God promised that He would provide a king who would rule His people perfectly without end.

## + HOW WILL MY GROUP SEE CHRIST?

God promised David that future kings of Israel would come from his family and that his kingdom would endure forever. God fulfilled 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 without end.

## + HOW SHOULD MY GROUP RESPOND?

Because we have experienced the mercy and grace of our King, we offer ourselves in His service so that we might reveal Jesus Christ to the world, guiding others to find everlasting rest in His kingdom.

# GROUP TIME

NOTES

## INTRODUCTION

**SETTING:** After David defeated Goliath, his status changed significantly. No longer a lowly shepherd, now he was a national hero. But David's fame with Israel had a negative effect on his relationship with King Saul as he became the focus of Saul's jealous paranoia and murderous rage. David then went from national hero to public enemy number one until the death of Saul. Only then was David sought out by the people to be king. From David's anointing to being settled on his throne and at peace in his kingdom was about twenty-five years. But God's purpose came true with more promises yet to come.

**INSTRUCT:** As learners arrive, be prepared to offer them something they likely don't want or help them in a way they likely don't need. (For example, ask if they would like a crayon for class. Or offer to wipe off their hands with a sanitizing wipe.)

**DISCUSS: What's the difference between being helpful and just being busy?** (we are helpful when we are actually alleviating someone of a hardship; we're busy when we're simply active; sometimes we're busy checking email or reorganizing a sock drawer without actually accomplishing anything; being helpful focuses on the needs of another person; being busy is trying to solve a problem that isn't a problem)

**TRANSITION:** If you're actively involved in a church, you've realized that there are many needs in a congregation and community. Many believers' hands work together in order to be a light for Jesus where God has placed you. You may find yourself busy in church, but every now and then, it's wise to stop and ask, "Am I really doing the things God has for me?" In today's session, David makes a decision to be busy for God, but like us, he'll realize that being busy is not always following God's calling.

# POINT 1

## THE LORD'S KING SEEKS TO MAKE A HOUSE FOR GOD (2 SAM. 7:1-3).

**1** Now when the king lived in his house and the LORD had given him rest from all his surrounding enemies, **2** the king said to Nathan the prophet, "See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwells in a tent."

**3** And Nathan said to the king, "Go, do all that is in your heart, for the LORD is with you."

**READ:** Ask a volunteer to read aloud **2 Samuel 7:1-3** from his or her Bible.

**EXPLAIN:** Use the **VERSES 1-2** commentary to highlight the following point (*the bold words fill in blanks in the DDG*):

Just because an idea is **good** doesn't mean it aligns with God's plan or timing. David rightly sought to **honor** God, but God determines how that should occur.

**DISCUSS: What are some steps we should follow when considering a work for the Lord?** (we should seek the Lord's direction through Bible study, prayer, solitude, fasting, worship, and other spiritual disciplines; we should presently be walking in obedience to God's commands, serving, loving, forgiving, helping, and living sacrificially; we should seek wise counsel from other believers)

**EXPLAIN:** Use the **VERSE 3** commentary to emphasize the following idea (*the bold words fill in blanks in the DDG*):

We need spiritual **mentors** in our lives, but they **cannot** take the place of a personal **relationship** with God.

**DISCUSS: What should a healthy Christian mentoring relationship look like?** (mentors should not dictate another's life but should walk alongside, sharing personal experiences, wisdom, and guidance; spiritual mentoring should focus on the Word of God and its study; mentors should encourage spiritual disciplines, accountability, prayer, and obedience to God)

**TRANSITION:** David thought he had a great idea, and Nathan agreed. But our good plans are not always in line with God's great path. David's desire was for God's glory, and we'll see in God's response that God was pleased with David's passion, even as He corrects David's plan.

## COMMENTARY

**VERSES 1-2** / It had been a long road for King David to settle into his palace. Immediately after defeating Goliath, Saul's son Jonathan committed himself to David, symbolically affirming David's future reign (1 Sam. 18:1-4). David also fought alongside and led Saul's army as a successful military commander, which resulted in accolades from the Israelite people and intense jealousy from King Saul (1 Sam. 18:5-9). For about the next decade, David carefully balanced gaining strength, popularity, and support with not killing—or being killed by—the sitting king. And though Saul and his sons were killed in a battle with the Philistines (1 Sam. 31), David's rise to the throne would not be immediate. Shortly after Saul's death, David would be made king of Judah (2 Sam. 2:1-4), yet his struggle to be king over all Israel would last seven more years (2 Sam. 2:11; 5:1-5).

As David solidified his sole rulership over all Israel, he arranged for the ark of God to be moved, with worship and sacrifice, to a tent in his capital in Jerusalem (2 Sam. 6). With peace between his neighbors and no immediate challenge to the throne, David felt settled, rested. The Hebrew word for **“rest”** here is a verb that can mean “to rest, to settle down, to be quiet, to let remain, to lay down,” and the phrase actually points to the action of **“the LORD”** in granting this rest. David had struggled for decades, both internally and externally. God had ordained David's appointment as king, his struggle in the waiting, and his tough fight to see his calling fulfilled. In this moment we see that the same God who led him into battle and strengthened his arms to fight also gave him time to rest.

In that calm, David must have turned his eyes to the ark, still in its nomadic tent. Perhaps David felt a twinge of guilt, sitting in a home constructed of wooden walls while the symbol of God's presence was surrounded by mere fabric. Or maybe he thought building a permanent resting place for the ark in Jerusalem sounded like a fun project in that time of peace. David,

with hundreds of warriors and no battles to fight, might have thought a massive construction project would keep them busy.

Whatever the thought process behind his plan, we know one thing for certain based on the rest of the narrative: it wasn't God's plan or timing. Though the idea was noble and God-honoring, it wasn't God's idea. We, as believers, would be wise to remember that not every good thing is part of God's plan. We may have the best of intentions and nothing but God's glory in mind, but we also must remember that God's thoughts and ways are not ours (Isa. 55:8). God is not simply looking for accolades, honor, or acknowledgment—He is looking for obedience. And though sometimes His plans include a glorious building or a beautiful creation, they usually include acts of humility, service, and self-sacrifice as well.

**VERSE 3** / David thought his idea was pretty good, and he made a wise next step: he ran it past Nathan the prophet. This is the first time Nathan enters the story of Israel, but it isn't the last. He will show up again to confront David with his sins (2 Sam. 12:1-12). Later, he voices the Lord's blessing for a son born to David (2 Sam. 12:25). Nathan also figured into the spiritual and political landscape of Israel, siding with that same son as God's chosen king to succeed David after his death (1 Kings 1). We easily can see that Nathan was a mentor, a voice of God's Spirit, and a close confidant to David.

But mentors aren't flawless. Nathan thought the idea of David's building a house for God in Jerusalem sounded like a good idea, and without consulting the Lord through prayer, he gave David the green light to proceed. David's heart was in the right place, but apparently neither he nor Nathan had thought to ask God for His direction. These two could have used the counsel from Proverbs 3:5-6: “Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.”

# POINT 2

## THE LORD’S KING IS PROMISED A HOUSE FROM GOD (2 SAM. 7:8-16).

**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. **10** 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, **11** 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. **12** 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. **13** He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. **14** 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, **15** but my steadfast love will not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away from before you. **16** And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me. Your throne shall be established forever.”

**READ:** Ask a volunteer to read aloud **2 Samuel 7:8-16** from his or her Bible.

**EXPLAIN:** Use the **VERSES 8-11A** commentary to emphasize how God had demonstrated His faithfulness to David (*the bold words fill in blanks in the DDG*):

**ESSENTIAL DOCTRINE #16:** *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 of “faithful” to God’s coming through on His word in 1 Thessalonians 5:24. We **reflect** God by keeping the promises we make to Him and to others.

**DISCUSS:** **What are some ways God has proven His faithfulness to you?** (be prepared to share an answer of your own to jump-start the conversation)

**EXPLAIN:** Use **PACK ITEM 8: THE PROMISED SON** and the **VERSES 11B-16** commentary to explain the following point (*the bold words fill in blanks in the DDG*):

God promised to build a **house** for David, meaning he would have a **dynasty** and legacy. The throne of David would cease for a time, but never God’s faithfulness, because the promise ultimately pointed to **Jesus**.

NOTES

### VOICES from THE CHURCH

“God’s chosen king, the one to whom he promised an enduring dynasty, had faults and occasionally needed divine humbling. God himself would have to provide a king who would have no faults.”<sup>1</sup>

–Michael Williams



## COMMENTARY

**VERSES 8-11A** / Though David had a good idea and Nathan agreed it was a good idea, neither man chose to check with the Lord—not a good idea. God came to Nathan that very night and set him on the right course (2 Sam. 7:4). When we read God’s words to Nathan, intended to be conveyed to David, we don’t hear impatience, frustration, or judgment. We see clearly that Nathan’s communication with God was an open highway, and God was not angry at Nathan’s call to grant permission to David. Like a mother who smiles at her little boy who picked her some flowers—even though they were her prized buttercups—God approved of the intent and the focus on bringing Him glory from both David and Nathan.

But God reminded Nathan that He had not asked for a house, nor had He ever instructed anyone to build a permanent structure for Him (7:5-7). When God determined a house was needed, then He would put someone on the job.

Still, the Lord approved of David’s intent, but David also needed to be reminded of who provided for whom. God had anointed David and led him from the pasture to the palace and the throne. And though not every step along the way was easy or pleasant, God was always with David, strengthening him, leading him, and helping him learn to depend and focus on God alone because David’s successes over his enemies were God’s victories. David had grown up into the king God planned because he followed the Lord through the smooth days as well as the rocky ones.

Because of the Lord’s commitment to David, God was going to make **“a great name”** for David. Not only that, but God would allow His people the blessing of settling down and resting under the rule of a king after God’s own heart. Like settling into a forever home, knowing you will never need to uproot your family, the comfort, security, and peace for Israel promised by God were not only a gracious blessing for David but would be given to his descendants as well.

**VERSES 11B-16** / As if the promises for peace and protection weren’t enough, God turned the tables on David: The Lord didn’t want David to build a house, a temple, for Him, but God would certainly build **“a house”** for David. The promise of this house had nothing to do with wood and stone but everything to do with dynasty and legacy.

God promised that David would have a son to sit upon the throne of Israel after him; this was the promise of a dynasty. But God also promised that this son would build the house for the Lord that David had dreamed of constructing. Furthermore, God Himself would be a father to David’s son, and within that relationship, He would discipline and love him as a good father does. On top of all those things, God would **“establish the throne of his kingdom forever,”** meaning the lineage of David’s royal descendants and his kingdom would not end. Because David was familiar with God’s faithful love, he could be confident in this amazing promise.

But we know how the story goes: David’s descendants occupied the throne over all Israel for a few decades. But then, because of disobedience, the kingdom split, and David’s descendants ruled only over Judah once more before centuries of disobedience resulted in captivity and exile.

Did God fail to keep His promises? No. The sins of the kings after David and the people of Israel required that the Lord keep His promise to discipline His people. The throne and kingdom ceased for a time, but the line of David continued, even in exile. Eventually, a man named Joseph, a direct descendant of King David, would claim and care for the son of a woman named Mary. This adopted son of Joseph was the Son of God who came to fulfill the covenant with David of a forever kingdom. Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of the temple constructed by David’s son and the promised king after David whose kingdom will have no end (see John 2:19-22; Matt. 1:1-16).

# POINT 3

## THE LORD'S KING EXTOLS THE GRACE OF GOD (2 SAM. 7:18-24).

NOTES

**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?"

**19** 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! **20** And what more can David say to you? For you know your servant, O Lord GOD! **21** Because of your promise, and according to your own heart, you have brought about all this greatness, to make your servant know it. **22** 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. **23** 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? **24** And you established for yourself your people Israel to be your people forever. And you, O LORD, became their God.

**READ:** Ask a volunteer to read aloud **2 Samuel 7:18-24** from his or her Bible.

**EXPLAIN:** Use the **VERSES 18-21** commentary to highlight the following point (the **bold** words fill in blanks in the DDG):

David's response to God's promise was **humility** expressed in **prayer**, seeing his sinful humanity in contrast to God's power and grace.

**EXPLAIN:** Use the **VERSES 22-24** commentary to emphasize the following idea (the **bold** words fill in blanks in the DDG):

David also responded with **praise** for God's holiness and greatness. The same Lord who had chosen and rescued sinful Israel had chosen David to bless Israel and the **world**.

**DISCUSS:** What are some of God's great attributes and acts that should result in our praise? (God's lovingkindness, grace, mercy, justice, faithfulness, holiness; God's plan of redemption and salvation through Christ Jesus; God's plan for a new heaven and earth; His plan for eternal life; God's plan for my life; specific ways God has blessed in my life; God's faithful discipline in my life)

## COMMENTARY

**VERSES 18-21** / Upon hearing the Lord's message from Nathan, King David went into the tent that housed the ark and sat in the Lord's presence. This image is especially poignant for the man who wrote, "in your presence there is fullness of joy" (Ps. 16:11). God's presence is where we know His peace, His love, and His mercy.

David's opening words to the Lord—"Who am I?"—were genuine. When God interacts with people, revealing His grace and glory, our first response should be humility. In light of God's calling and His holy, divine identity, we must recognize that we are broken vessels, yet God still chooses to bless and use us. David also realized that he and his house were receiving God's blessings by God's grace alone. David then acknowledged God's power, being able to make and keep the promise of a dynasty for one man's family. And God's promise was not just a blessing for David's family but for all humankind. As the Lord promised to Abraham, "in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed" (Gen. 12:3), so too this same promise would continue through the line of David, blessing generation after generation to the ends of the earth.

David then verbalized a personal reason for humility: "**You know your servant, O Lord God.**" This thought is fleshed out more thoroughly in Psalm 139, which David began with the words, "O LORD, you have searched me and known me." What joy to be fully known and fully loved by God.

David also identified at least part of the reason, why God had sent His message through Nathan, was by pointing to God's "**promise**" and "**heart.**" The Hebrew term for "promise" points to a spoken word or thing spoken about. The term for "heart" points to the inner man, the will, understanding, reflection, memory, conscience, and the seat of human appetites, emotions, and passions. Together these terms point to the fact that God had revealed His promise to David because it was true and God had determined to bring it to pass. God

wanted His promise known and His heart revealed to His faithful follower.

**VERSES 22-24** / Can you hear the passion in David's voice as he uttered, "**Therefore you are great, O Lord God**"? This prayer was no trite recitation. David was blown away by the generous grace of his Lord; he was overwhelmed that God would be that good and gracious toward him. David's time in God's presence left an impression on his mind and heart. May we never rush our time in the presence of the Lord; everything else pales in comparison as we sit awhile in His presence.

Though verse 22 doesn't contain the word holy, it defines it well: "**There is none like you, and there is no God besides you.**" God is wholly other and therefore holy—He is nothing like us, nothing like our sin-twisted conceptions of Him, and nothing like the world imagines He is. David was sitting there slack-jawed at the fact that this holy God was promising his family a seat on an eternal throne.

The holiness of God also spread to His people Israel as He set them apart from the nations, both with His presence and His law (see Lev. 26:12). God acted to redeem Israel from bondage in Egypt and to make a name for Himself through great and awesome works on Israel's behalf, showing that He alone is God. The Lord had chosen Israel to be His people "**forever,**" often in spite of their sin and rebellion, and now He had promised an eternal throne over His people in the lineage of David.

The grace God showed to Israel and David continues to this day under the perfect rule of King Jesus, David's descendant. Through faith in our crucified and resurrected Savior, believers share in this same identity—we are "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession" (1 Pet. 2:9). We have been forever redeemed from our sin through Jesus to make His name great as we testify to His power and grace in our lives.



# MY RESPONSE

Because we have experienced the mercy and grace of our King, we offer ourselves in His service so that we might reveal Jesus Christ to the world, guiding others to find everlasting rest in His kingdom.

NOTES

## HEAD:

Our loving, holy God has a perfect plan for all of His creation. It spans eternity past and future, bringing Him glory and honor as He reveals Himself. God's perfect plan includes redemption, salvation, hope, and eternal promises. We can't always see the plan, understand it, or know His plan fully, but as we walk in His path for us, we join Him in it. Our good ideas may be sincere and God-honoring but may not always be part of His plan. As the Lord reveals Himself and His will to us, we trust His plan even when it doesn't align with our ideas.

**What are some ways you will seek God's plan in the small things of your daily life?**

## HEART:

When God chooses to make His presence known in our lives, we should respond with an overflow of worship. Whether He comes to us with instruction, reprimand, hope, or assurance, we should reflect David in asking, "Who am I?" because we have experienced God's presence and heard His Word. Each encounter with the Lord of Armies reminds us of His holiness and His love. And as we find ourselves worshiping Him in spirit and in truth, our faith is strengthened, our hearts are re-focused, and our minds are renewed.

**What faithful and gracious actions from the Lord in your life will propel you to respond in humility and worship?**

## HANDS:

We serve a creative God who is always at work. As beings created in His image, we are most like Him when we are creatively working. As we align our hearts and minds with His, we find ourselves part of the work of faith: serving, helping, going, healing, fixing, sharing, giving, and more. As the Lord reveals His intended work for you, take a step of faith and say yes to being a part of His kingdom on earth.

**Where has God called you to work to reflect His kingdom plan, and how will you obey?**

### VOICES from THE CHURCH

"In the hearts of the people is a groping, inarticulate conviction that if the right ruler would only come along, the world would be healed of all its wounds. Creation is headless and desperately searching for its head."<sup>2</sup>

-Richard Lovelace

## POINT 1: THE LORD'S KING SEEKS TO MAKE A HOUSE FOR GOD (2 SAM. 7:1-3).

### + COMMENTARY

“The palace which Hiram had sent men and materials to build in Jerusalem had been finished. It was magnificent for that age, though made wholly of wood: houses in warm countries not being required to possess the solidity and thickness of walls which are requisite for dwellings in regions exposed to rain and cold. Cedar was the rarest and most valuable timber. The elegance and splendor of his own royal mansion, contrasted with the mean and temporary tabernacle in which the ark of God was placed, distressed the pious mind of David.”<sup>3</sup>

### + INTERACTIVE DISCUSSION GUIDE

Consider a time in your own life when you felt at rest: after finishing a big project at work, when the last child moved out of the house, when you finally finished a family move, etc. Share your thoughts at the time (“We were ready to stay home for a while!” or “I couldn’t wait to not be stressed”) and the actions you took to recover.

Say something like: “We know David lived in a cedar palace, which was probably exquisite and beautiful. We don’t know what that looked like exactly, but let’s imagine it might have been like some of the most beautiful houses today.” Share the following website with group members—[architecturaldigest.com/the-31-best-celebrity-homes-of-all-time](https://architecturaldigest.com/the-31-best-celebrity-homes-of-all-time)—and invite them to scroll through the pictures and briefly view some of these amazing celebrity homes.

Then take some time to consider David’s heart: he was living in a beautiful palace, he was at peace with his neighbors, and his thoughts still went to the Lord. You may want to point out that we tend toward watching a new television series or catching up on sleep when we find ourselves in similar situations. Say: “However, in times of peace and prosperity, we have a unique opportunity to offer so much to the Lord. Like David, perhaps we can offer our time, our money, our energy, and our talents for His glory.”

# EXTRA

## POINT 2: THE LORD'S KING IS PROMISED A HOUSE FROM GOD (2 SAM. 7:8-16).

### + COMMENTARY

“Jehovah gave two reasons why David’s proposal to build Him a temple should not be carried out: (1) He had hitherto lived in a tent in the midst of His people; (2) He had not commanded any former prince or tribe to build a temple. This did not involve any blame, as though there had been something presumptuous in David’s proposal, or in the fact that he had thought of undertaking such a work without an express command from God, but simply showed that it was not because of any negligence on the part of the former leaders of the people that they had not thought of erecting a temple, and that even now the time for carrying out such a work as that had not yet come.”<sup>4</sup>

### + COMMENTARY

“Instead of David building a house for God, God would establish a house for David (7:11b). In Hebrew, the word ‘house’ has a wide variety of meanings. It can refer to a physical dwelling but also to a family, and, as in this case, to a royal family, David’s dynasty. This promise of a dynasty will echo throughout the Bible and reach its culmination in Jesus, born of David’s line. God made it even clearer that David was not to build the temple by specifying that this task would fall to one of his sons (7:12-13a). He made many promises to this descendant of David: his throne would be established forever (7:13b), he would be a son to God (7:14), and most importantly, unlike the case with Saul, God would never withdraw his blessing even in the event of disobedience (7:14-15). Saul lost the throne and God’s gracious favour, but David and his descendants would not lose these things . . . God’s choice of David and his descendants marked an important turning point in the spiritual life of God’s people. From then on, the future of God’s people was linked to solidarity with the family God had chosen. This is why the northern tribes who later separated from Judah were considered apostate, even though they represented the majority of the Israelites. Their separation from and rejection of David’s dynasty was seen as a refusal to submit to the will of God.”<sup>5</sup>

### + INTERACTIVE DISCUSSION GUIDE

Direct learners to verse 15, and enlist several volunteers to read the verse from a variety of translations. Point out that the phrase “steadfast love” can also be translated “mercy,” “lovingkindness,” “grace,” “faithful love,” “loyal love,” and more. Point out that God was declaring this aspect of His character in the midst of His promise to David and his descendants. Using a tablet or by connecting a phone to a screen, show the following 5-minute video, which thoroughly describes the richness of the Hebrew word *khesed*, translated “steadfast love”: [bibleproject.com/explore/video/loyal-love](http://bibleproject.com/explore/video/loyal-love), or type “Bible Project Khesed” into a search engine. Point to the fact that God had already revealed His *khesed* to David many times. Here, the Lord was bringing those actions taken by God back to David’s thoughts. Say: “We would be wise and find our own faith strengthened if we took time to remember God’s *khesed* in our own lives.” Go first by considering an overt act of God’s faithful, steadfast love or mercy you have experienced, and then invite others to do likewise. Ask: “How often do you consider God’s faithfulness to you? Better yet, how often do you demonstrate the overflowing *khesed* of God by being a

faithful, merciful, gracious person?” As a group, consider some everyday acts of *khesed* you can incorporate both individually, as families, and corporately.

### POINT 3: THE LORD’S KING EXTOLS THE GRACE OF GOD (2 SAM. 7:18-24).

#### + COMMENTARY

“In response to this message, David goes and sits before the LORD, probably meaning that he went to the tent and sat in front of the ark of the covenant, the symbol of God’s presence (7:18a). The repetitions in David’s prayer are remarkable. He addresses God as the Sovereign LORD seven times and as the LORD Almighty (or Lord of Hosts) twice. David refers to himself as God’s servant ten times, uses the word *house* meaning ‘dynasty’ seven times and the word *forever* five times . . . David begins by praising the incomparable God of Israel (7:22-24). He acknowledges God’s sovereignty, and that he alone is God (see 1 Sam. 2:2). Other gods are no gods at all. The Lord is the only true God. By the unmerited favour he has shown to David and to the nation of Israel, God has made his great name known (see Ex. 15:11-13; Deut. 7:6-8; 1 Sam. 4:7-8). Then David’s tone changes and becomes bold, even demanding (7:25-29). The change is signalled by the phrase *and now*, which was used especially in covenants between a suzerain and a vassal, a stronger and a lesser party, to indicate a move from the past to the present. Significantly, the phrase was generally used by the suzerain, rather than the vassal. But David uses it three times (7:25,28,29 in the Hebrew) to ask God to keep his promise. David is not expressing doubt—in fact, he is very sure and excited that all that God has said will happen! He boldly appropriates the promise and requires God to do his part.”<sup>6</sup>

#### + MUSICAL OPTION

Direct learners to David’s opening words to his prayer in 2 Samuel 7:18. Ask for a show of hands of those who could ask the same thing of God: “Who am I and who is my family that we would find ourselves here?” If you have a particular testimony of such words, share it.

If you are able, play the song, “Who Am I?” by Point of Grace and provide learners with a few minutes of quiet reflection on this great question. If not, you may want to read the lyrics, readily available at several online resources. Then say: “‘Who am I?’ is not just a question we ask when we find ourselves living in a cedar palace with peace on every side. But every time we consider the Lord’s hand in our lives—in both good times and bad—we are humbled at His providence and presence.” Challenge learners to take some time this week to journal their own thoughts of “Who am I” in their personal worship time, thanking God for His blessings, mercy, and leadership.

#### References

1. Michael Williams, *How to Read the Bible Through the Jesus Lens* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012), 46.
2. Richard F. Lovelace, *Renewal as a Way of Life* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1985), 41.
3. Robert Jamieson, Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown: *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*, Volume 1: Genesis to Ecclesiastes (Delmarva Publications, 2013) [eBook].
4. Carl Friedrich Keil and Franz Delitzsch, “Commentary on 2 Samuel 7,” in Keil & Delitzsch *Old Testament Commentary*, StudyLight.org, December 12, 2021, <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/eng/kdo/2-samuel-7.html>.
5. Gbile Akanni and Nupanga Weanzana, “1 and 2 Samuel,” in *Africa Bible Commentary*, gen. ed. Tokunboh Adeyemo (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2006), 387-88.
6. Jerald Mall, “2 Samuel,” in *South Asia Bible Commentary*, gen. ed. Brian Wintle (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2015), 382.