

FOR DAVID'S SAKE (PART 1)

Jon Macon

In 1 Chronicles 17:10-12, God sent Nathan the prophet to David and made him an extraordinary promise: “Furthermore I tell thee that the Lord will build thee a house. And it shall come to pass, when thy days be expired that thou must go to be with thy fathers, that I will raise up thy seed after thee, which shall be of thy sons; and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build me a house, and *I will establish his throne for ever.*” Psalm 132:11-12 also emphasizes the certainty of the promise that David’s children would “sit upon thy throne for evermore.” From this point onward, the scriptures record God’s faithful keeping of His promise.

Rehoboam’s throne preserved when Solomon punished

After becoming the next king of Israel, Solomon himself expressed his confidence that God would keep the promise He made to his father David: “And king Solomon shall be blessed, and the throne of David shall be established before the Lord for ever” (1 Kgs 2:45). He also prayed for this to happen: “Therefore now, Lord God of Israel, keep with thy servant David my father that thou promisedst him, saying, There shall not fail thee a man in my sight to sit on the throne of Israel; *so that thy children take heed to their way, that they walk before me as thou hast walked before me*” (1 Kgs 8:25). This last part — for David’s children to walk before God as he had — was key. God emphasized this very point to Solomon in 1 Kings 9:4-5.” Unfortunately, Solomon’s foreign wives turned his heart from God, and God decided to take the kingdom away from him (1 Kgs 11:9-11). Yet, the timing and the extent of God’s punishment of Solomon would be based in part on His mindfulness of David. The Lord told Solomon, “Notwithstanding in thy days I will not do it *for David thy father’s sake*: but I will rend it out of the hand of thy son. Howbeit I will not rend away all the kingdom; but will give one tribe to thy *son for David my servant’s sake*, and for Jerusalem’s sake which I have chosen” (1 Kgs 11:12-13). God gave ten of Israel’s tribes to Jeroboam the son of Nebat (1 Kgs 11:35). He preserved the city of Jerusalem with the tribes of Judah and Benjamin for Solomon’s son Rehoboam. The Lord did this “*for David my servant’s sake, whom I chose, because he kept my commandments and my statutes*” (1 Kgs 11:32-34), that David “may have a light always before me in Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen me to put my name there” (1 Kgs 11:36).

Abijam, Jehoram, and Hezekiah

After becoming king of two tribes in Israel, Solomon’s son Rehoboam obeyed the Lord for three years, and then turned to wickedness (2 Chr 11:17-12:1). God did not “destroy him altogether” after he showed some humility (2 Chr 12:12). Unfortunately, Rehoboam’s son Abijam was no

FOR DAVID'S SAKE (PART 1)

(continued)

better. "He walked in all the sins of his father, which he had done before him: and his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God, as the heart of David his father. *Nevertheless for David's sake did the Lord his God give him a lamp in Jerusalem, to set up his son after him, and to establish Jerusalem*" (1 Kgs 15:3-4). The next two kings of Judah, Asa and Jehoshaphat, were righteous, but Jehoshaphat's son Jehoram married the daughter of wicked Ahab. "And he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, as did the house of Ahab: for the daughter of Ahab was his wife: and he did evil in the sight of the Lord. *Yet the Lord would not destroy Judah for David his servant's sake, as he promised him to give him always a light, and to his children*" (2 Kings 8:18-19). Judah sank into wickedness for a long time thereafter, but God continued to regard His servant David and the promise He made to him. When the mighty Assyrians under Sennacherib overran all of Judah and surrounded the city of Jerusalem, righteous Hezekiah turned to God for deliverance. The Lord said, "I will defend this city, to save it, for mine own sake, *and for my servant David's sake*" (2 Kgs 19:34). God would not let a single arrow be shot at the city, and sent an angel into the camp of the Assyrian army and killed 185,000 soldiers that night (Isa 37:33-37). God promised Hezekiah His continued protection of Jerusalem "for mine own sake, *and for my servant David's sake*" (2 Kgs 20:6).

Jesus the Christ

Long, long ago, God foretold through Jacob the prophet that "the scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet" (Gen 49:10), a prophecy that is still being fulfilled through Jesus Christ. God had promised that David's crown would flourish (Psalm 132:18). But when the kingdom of Judah met its end, God promised that no future descendant of David would "prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more *in Judah*" (Jer 22:30). This prophecy thus precluded the possibility of a restoration of Israel's physical kingdom, or of an earthly reign by the coming Messiah. Isaiah prophesied that there would be no end of the increase and peace of the Christ's kingdom, "*upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever*" (Isa 9:6-7). In Luke 1:30-33, the angel Gabriel told Mary that she would give birth to Jesus Christ, who would "be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." Christ possesses this throne (Acts 2:36), and "he shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev 11:15).