

2 SAMUEL 7:1-29

Who Am I, O LORD God, and What Is My House?

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WHO AM I, O LORD GOD, AND WHAT IS MY HOUSE?

Structure of the Book

1. David's Triumphs (1:1-10:19)
2. David's Troubles (11:1-19:43)
3. Appendix (20:1-24:25)

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WHO AM I, O LORD GOD, AND WHAT IS MY HOUSE?

David's Triumphs (1:1-10:19)

1. Kingdom Reset: A Man After God's Own Heart (1:1-2:7)
2. Accessions & Assassinations (2:8-5:5)
3. Jerusalem Made the Capital of the Kingdom (5:6-6:23)
4. Who Am I, O LORD God, & What Is My House? (7:1-29)
5. David's Kingdom at Its Height (8:1-10:19)

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WHO AM I, O LORD GOD, AND WHAT IS MY HOUSE?

Review: King David Conquers Jerusalem

- David was now enthroned as king over all Israel. What was the first thing he did?
- He conquered Jebus – i.e., Jerusalem, the city that had first appeared in Scripture as “Salem” under the mysterious Melchizedek (Gen. 14). Its Canaanite occupiers, the Jebusites, thought that the city with its great walls was an impregnable fortress.

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Review: King David Conquers Jerusalem

2 Samuel 5:7:

Nevertheless, David took the stronghold of Zion, that is, the city of David...

- *How? Because David knew the city's Achilles heel: the water shaft! This water shaft was associated with the Gihon Spring, a subterranean, freshwater spring still located in the Kidron Valley, on the eastern slope of Jerusalem. This spring was the very key to the existence and importance of Jerusalem.*

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Review: King David Conquers Jerusalem

- What does Gihon mean? It comes from the root word meaning "to surge or gush out." It was an intermittent spring, meaning that it would erupt 3-5 times a day in winter, and less frequently in autumn. It produced a massive yield, roughly 600,000 cubic meters of water annually, or about 300 gallons per minute, making it the most powerful water source in the Judean hills.

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Review: King David Conquers Jerusalem

- Waters named "Gihon" appear three times in Scripture:
- The second time was when David ordered that his son Solomon be brought down to the Gihon Spring where Zadok the Priest and Nathan the prophet anointed him King of Israel.
- The third time was when Hezekiah blocked and concealed the entrance to the spring and built a tunnel redirecting its waters so as to flow into the Pool of Shiloah, located safely behind the walls of the city.

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Review: King David Conquers Jerusalem

- The Pool of Shiloah, or Pool of Siloam (Siloam being the Greek transliteration of the Hebrew word Shiloah), is mentioned in John 9, as the place where Jesus healed the man born blind.
- And with regard to the waters flowing from the Gihon Spring to the Pool of Siloam, there are at least two other times when this same "river" of Jerusalem is mentioned, which flows from the surging spring through an underground tunnel to the pool where it serves as a reservoir for the city:

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Review: King David Conquers Jerusalem

Isaiah 8:6-8:

Because this people have refused
the waters of Shiloah that flow gently...
therefore, behold, the Lord is bringing up against them
the waters of the River, mighty and many,
the king of Assyria and all his glory.

Psalms 46:4:

There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,
the holy habitation of the Most High.

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Review: King David Conquers Jerusalem

- Did you notice that I skipped the “first” mention of the waters of Gihon in Scripture? That’s because I was saving the cool part for last! The first time that the word Gihon appear in connection to water is in the Garden of Eden! According to Jewish tradition, the Gihon Spring with its gently flowing waters winding their way into and through the city of Jerusalem, is linked to the primordial “Gihon River,” the one mentioned in Genesis 2:3 as one of the four rivers flowing out of Eden! (Which is interesting in connection to the river in Ezekiel 47.)

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Review: King David Conquers Jerusalem

- So David had taken the stronghold of Zion, that is, the city of David. As Isaiah showed last week, Zion thus begins as a stronghold, a keep, a place of refuge and protection, which seems to be the root meaning of the word. Specifically, it is the stronghold where God is present, where God dwells. And this word grows to incorporate the whole of Jerusalem (Isa. 2:2-3), and then to refer to the meeting place of God and his people in worship everywhere, the place of his presence and reign (Heb. 12:22-24).

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Review: Hiram Builds David a House

2 Samuel 5:11-12:

And **Hiram king of Tyre** sent messengers to David, and cedar trees, also carpenters and masons who **built David a house**.

And David knew that the LORD had established him king over Israel, and that he had exalted his kingdom for the sake of his people Israel.

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WHO AM I, O LORD GOD, AND WHAT IS MY HOUSE?

Who Am I, O LORD God, & What Is My House (7:1-29)

1. David to Nathan:
I Will Build the LORD a House to Dwell In (17:1-2)
2. Nathan to David:
You Are the Man to Do It! (17:3)
3. The LORD to Nathan:
David is Not the Man to Do It (17:4-7)
4. The LORD to David:
No, But I Will Make YOU a House (17:8-16)
5. David to the LORD:
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WHO AM I, O LORD GOD, AND WHAT IS MY HOUSE?

I Will Build the LORD a House to Dwell In (7:1-2)**2 Samuel 7:1-2:**

Now when the king lived in his house
and **the LORD had given him rest**
from all his surrounding enemies,
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."

- *The King! Not "David." The King.
Three times in three verses.*

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I Will Build the LORD a House to Dwell In (7:1-2)

- We have seen that God's promises have been fulfilled. Rest is hard for people of action! What to do now?
- David was good at fighting. But would he be good at sitting? And in fact, as it will turn out, idleness in a king is a dangerous thing, leading to things like hanging around on the roofs of palaces, looking down over the city that now bore his name, down on other people's roofs, looking not as shepherd and protector, but as wolf and predator. As we'll see.

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I Will Build the LORD a House to Dwell In (7:1-2)

- Things are settled, but David is unsettled.
- He sees the incongruity between the fact that he is living in a great house, while the LORD – the LORD! – still dwells in a tent. So he proposes to build the LORD a house, a temple, a permanent dwelling place in Zion.
- And let's note that his proposal was not without scriptural warrant!

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WHO AM I, O LORD GOD, AND WHAT IS MY HOUSE?

I Will Build the LORD a House to Dwell In (7:1-2)

Deuteronomy 12:10-14:

But when you go over the Jordan and live in the land that the LORD your God is giving you to inherit, and when he gives you rest from all your enemies around, so that you live in safety, then to the place that the LORD your God will choose, to make his name dwell there, there you shall bring all that I command you: your burnt offerings and your sacrifices...

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I Will Build the LORD a House to Dwell In (7:1-2)

Deuteronomy 12:10-14: (cont'd)

Take care that you do not offer your burnt offerings at any place that you see, but at the place that the LORD will choose in one of your tribes, there you shall offer your burnt offerings, and there you shall do all that I am commanding you.

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I Will Build the LORD a House to Dwell In (7:1-2)

- Thus, David once again shows that he is a righteous King who has read and knows God's law, and knew that when the promised rest had come, that God was to be worshiped in a central sanctuary. Of course, he seemed to miss that part about "the place that the LORD your God will choose," but it seems that David simply assumed on this point.
- In any event, this was surely a good thing, proposed with pure motives, to glorify God. A no-brainer, surely!

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I Will Build the LORD a House to Dwell In (7:1-2)

- One more thing to consider: David probably thought that by building this house for the LORD he would be helping to establish a permanent, secure central site for God's worship, which would no longer be subject to enemy depredations as the mobile tabernacle had been. (Recall how Shiloh had been destroyed after the ark was captured by the Philistines.)

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I Will Build the LORD a House to Dwell In (7:1-2)

- But again, the emotional catalyst for David's proposal is the incongruency he feels between his exalted living conditions and the humble dwelling place of the LORD.
- We must acknowledge that there is something undeniably noble about David's purpose here. He is not acting like the kings of the nations, who build temples to their gods to exalt their own glory. To the contrary, David is uncomfortable with his living in comfort while the LORD God Almighty dwells in a tent.

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I Will Build the LORD a House to Dwell In (7:1-2)

Psalms 132:1-5:

A SONG OF ASCENTS.

Remember, O LORD, in David's favor,
all the hardships he endured,
how he swore to the LORD
and vowed to the Mighty One of Jacob:
"I will not enter my house or get into my bed,
I will not give sleep to my eyes or slumber to my eyelids,
until I find a place for the LORD,
a dwelling place for the Mighty One of Jacob."

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You Are the Man to Do It! (7:3)**2 Samuel 7:3:**

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

- *Nathan the prophet agrees with David’s proposal.*
- *He answers on the basis of what must have seemed self-evident! “Clearly the LORD is with you, David, and clearly this is a good and God-honoring thing to do! So go, do!”*

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You Are the Man to Do It! (7:3)

- “Go for it! You are the man to do it!”
- Keep in mind that Nathan is no lackey, as we’ll see shortly. He is a true prophet of God.
- Nathan blesses the project without consulting the LORD, presumably because the project is transparently and obviously a good thing. David himself, the man after God’s own heart, is mightily blessed by God, and all Israel in him. His desire is to glorify God by building him a house. What could be wrong about this?

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David Is Not the Man to Do It (7:4-7)

2 Samuel 7:4:

But that same night

the word of the LORD came to Nathan:

- *A phrase that was last used in 1 Samuel 15:*

1 Samuel 15:10-11:

The word of the LORD came to Samuel:

"I regret that I have made Saul king,
for he has turned back from following me
and has not performed my commandments."

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I Will Build the LORD a House to Dwell In (7:1-2)

- *And one that won't be used again until 2 Samuel 24:*

2 Samuel 24:11-12:

And when David arose in the morning
[after taking the unauthorized census],
the word of the LORD came
to the prophet Gad, David's seer.

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David Is Not the Man to Do It (7:4-7)

- When the word of the LORD comes in each of these three instances, it is made suddenly and powerfully apparent that what we have decided and done is out of accord with God's will.
- God intervenes with the revelation of his perspective, and we are in that instant made aware of the incongruity between his perspective and our own.

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I Will Build the LORD a House to Dwell In (7:1-2)

- *They acted according to what seems best to them, but they had not sought God's will, and so they now find themselves at odds with God's perspective.*

Deuteronomy 12:8-9:

You shall not do according to all that we are doing here today,
everyone doing whatever is right in his own eyes,
for you have not as yet come to the rest
and to the inheritance that the LORD your God
is giving you.

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WHO AM I, O LORD GOD, AND WHAT IS MY HOUSE?

David Is Not the Man to Do It (7:4-7)

2 Samuel 7:4-7:

But that same night
the word of the LORD came to Nathan:
“Go and tell my servant David,
‘Thus says the LORD:
Would you build me a house to dwell in?’”

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David Is Not the Man to Do It (7:4-7)

2 Samuel 7:4-7:

“I have not lived in a house since the day
I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day,
but I have been moving about in a tent for my dwelling.
In all places where I have moved
with all the people of Israel,
did I speak a word with any of the judges of Israel,
whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying,
“Why have you not built me a house of cedar?””

- *Permission denied!*

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David Is Not the Man to Do It (7:4-7)

- *“Man proposes but God disposes.”*

Proverbs 19:21:

Many are the plans in the mind of a man,
but it is the purpose of the LORD that will stand.

Proverbs 16:9:

The heart of man plans his way,
but the LORD establishes his steps.

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David Is Not the Man to Do It (7:4-7)

- Permission to build the proposed temple is denied – denied, at least, to David.
- We are told that God Almighty doesn’t need such a shelter and that he had neither used one up to this point nor had ever requested one.
- Indeed, shall the dominion and omnipotent omnipresence of the LORD God Almighty, creator of heaven and earth, be localized to dwell in a physical house? Would even the greatest house be fit for God?

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David Is Not the Man to Do It (7:4-7)

Isaiah 66:1-2:

Thus says the LORD:

“Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool;
what is the house that you would build for me,
and what is the place of my rest?

All these things my hand has made,
and so all these things came to be, declares the LORD.

But this is the one to whom I will look:
he who is humble and contrite in spirit
and trembles at my word.

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WHO AM I, O LORD GOD, AND WHAT IS MY HOUSE?

David Is Not the Man to Do It (7:4-7)

- Will we localize God Almighty? He who made all things? The LORD needs no house of human construction.
- Two lessons here. First, what makes a space holy and glorious is not the outward splendor of its structure and materials and location. What makes a space holy and glorious is its function for worship and the presence of God there in it. Worship is where God's people meet with the real presence of God – God with us! Such that the tent where God is present is more glorious than any temple where he isn't.

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David Is Not the Man to Do It (7:4-7)

- Second, it's interesting to note that God's first response to Israel's request for a king was negative, as was the first request of Israel's king to build a temple. Why, given that in fact king and temple are indeed part of God's plan? Because they were asking for the wrong reason!

Elsewhere, we're told further that David is a man of war. He's not the one who should build this temple. In short, this wasn't the time.

1 Chronicles 28:2-3

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