A Servant Receives God’s Promise

Summary and Goal
After David became king and God gave him rest from his enemies, David considered why the ark was in a tent while he was in a palace. In this session, we will see God deny David’s plan to build the temple and instead promise to give David, and Israel, blessings that would extend beyond this life into the next. God was showing David that He would remain faithful to His promises, despite the frequent faithlessness of His people. We will see that these promises also come to us who believe in the greater David, Jesus Christ. In Christ all the promises of God find their yes (2 Cor. 1:20). Therefore, we have hope beyond this life, and if we keep our eyes on the future God has for us, we can endure to the end.

Session Outline
1. God promises to give His people eternal rest (2 Sam. 7:8-11a).
2. God promises to establish an eternal kingdom (2 Sam. 7:11b-13).
3. God promises to provide an eternally beloved son (2 Sam. 7:14-16).

Session in a Sentence
God promised that He would give His people the true King they needed and fulfilled that promise in Jesus.

Christ Connection
God promised David that future kings of Israel would come from his family and that his kingdom would last forever. God kept 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 everlasting.

Missional Application
Because we have experienced the mercy and grace of our King, we offer ourselves fully to His service so that we might reveal Jesus Christ to the world that others would find everlasting rest in His kingdom.
EXPLAIN: Relate the story of Florence Chadwick in the DDG (p. 57). Then connect its conclusion to our need to fix our eyes on the promises of God when we feel fatigued by life and struggle to move forward.

On July 4, 1952, Florence Chadwick, age 34, stepped into the cold waters of the Pacific Ocean off Catalina Island to go swimming. This was not a recreational swim but a challenge swim: She wanted to be the first woman to swim the twenty-one mile channel between Catalina Island and the California coastline. The physical challenge was daunting. The visible and invisible sea creatures, including the sharks circling her, were intimidating. But the fog hemmed her in. She could hardly see her support boats that carried her mother, her trainer, and her support staff, and though they encouraged her to keep going, the fog ended her challenge. After swimming 15 hours and 55 minutes, exhausted, she asked to be taken out of the water. Sitting in the boat, she found out she only had a half-mile left to reach her destination. Later she told a reporter: “Look, I’m not excusing myself, but if I could have seen land I know I could have made it.”

Surely we can relate with Chadwick when, at times, we are so fatigued by life, so physically, emotionally, and spiritually drained, that we feel as if we can go no further and want to give up. But in these times, more than ever, we need to fix our gaze on the promises of God and what lies ahead of us because of our faith in Christ. We need to consider our circumstances in light of the eternal future God has for us.

INTERACT: Ask group members the following question.

Why might it be difficult to fix our eyes on eternal things instead of what is immediately before us? (our priorities are wrong; our sin lowers our gaze in shame; it takes spiritual discipline to set our minds on things above, and we’ve not trained ourselves well to do so; we live isolated lives without meaningful connection with those who could help us)

SUMMARIZE: In this session, we will see God deny David’s plan to build the temple and instead promise to give David, and Israel, blessings that would extend beyond this life into the next. God was showing David that He would remain faithful to His promises, despite the frequent faithlessness of His people. We will see that these promises also come to us who believe in the greater David, Jesus Christ. In Christ all the promises of God find their yes (2 Cor. 1:20). Therefore, we have hope beyond this life, and if we keep our eyes on the future God has for us, we can endure to the end.

For session-by-session training videos, please visit MinistryGrid.com/GospelProject.
For additional teaching options and other resources, please visit GospelProject.com/additional-resources.
Point 1: God promises to give His people eternal rest (2 Sam. 7:8-11a).

SAY: David brought the ark of the covenant into Jerusalem, but it remained in a tent. David wanted to build a house for the Lord (2 Sam. 7:1-2), but the Lord said no on account of his years as a warrior-king (1 Kings 5:3-5) and because the Lord had not commanded that to be done (2 Sam. 7:4-7). Yet the Lord had more to say, so through the prophet Nathan, God said He would make a house—a dynasty for David. The foundation of this house was God’s promise to give Israel what she had longed for—rest.

READ: Ask a volunteer to read 2 Samuel 7:8-11a (DDG p. 58).

8 “So now this is what you are to say to my servant David: ‘This is what the LORD of Armies says: I took you from the pasture, from tending the flock, to be ruler over my people Israel. 9 I have been with you wherever you have gone, and I have destroyed all your enemies before you. I will make a great name for you like that of the greatest on the earth. 10 I will designate a place for my people Israel and plant them, so that they may live there and not be disturbed again. Evil-doers will not continue to oppress them as they have done ever since the day I ordered judges to be over my people Israel. I will give you rest from all your enemies.

EXPLAIN: Use the first paragraph in the DDG (p. 58) to highlight God’s promise of rest to the Israelites and His promise of a greater rest to David.

When the Israelites were slaves in Egypt centuries before, God promised that He would take them out of a land of slavery to a land that had rest on every side. Now, generations later, the Lord brought rest to the battle-scarred, blood-soaked land through King David (v. 1). But as we see in God’s promise to David, God had something much more profound in mind for His people. The rest that they were experiencing was incomplete. It was a shadow of the substance that was yet to come.

• If we think deeply, we realize that the rest we long for is not just physical. Neither is it just emotional. There is a kind of rest that a vacation can never really provide. We need a more profound rest that gets beneath the surface and refreshes our very soul. We need a spiritual rest, a complete rest rooted in the Lord and in Him alone. God had given David rest in the land as king. Yet God also promised a coming rest—a future rest, a complete rest. God was not done offering rest for His people because His people still did not have the rest He desired to give them.

Commentary: Through Moses, God’s people were brought out of slavery, but they had not yet entered their promised rest. So the promise was reiterated time and again for forty years (e.g. Deut. 12:8-14). Through Joshua, God brought His people into the land and gave them victory over their enemies, leading to a limited rest in the land (Josh. 11:23; 23:1), but the Lord allowed some nations to remain to test them, tests that they failed (Judg. 2:20-23). Through the judges, God preserved His people and disciplined them so that they might turn from their evil ways and pursue Him alone (2:11-19).
INTERACT: Ask group members the following question.

How can we be at rest physically but still spiritually restless? (we can enjoy being in our sin; we can settle for satisfaction and fulfillment in anything other than God; we can find ourselves coasting through life without regard for spiritual matters)

EXPLAIN: Use the second paragraph in the DDG (p. 58) to show that King Jesus, the greater David, brings about the ultimate fulfillment of God’s promise of rest.

Taking God’s promises to David here as a whole, otherwise known as the Davidic covenant, we see that rest would come through someone in David’s lineage. This rest would begin in this life and reverberate into the next (2 Sam. 7:13). We know that the descendant who would provide this rest is Jesus Christ, the son of David (Matt. 1:1). And we know that Jesus did not come just to provide this rest for the nation of Israel but for all who trust in Him as Savior and King.

- Jesus referred to Himself as the Lord of the Sabbath (Luke 6:1-5), the day of the Lord’s rest in creation, and in doing so, He declared that the rest that God promised, the rest that we need, is found in Him.

- As the Lord of all rest, Jesus provided the rest that we long for and need by dying in our place to redeem us from all that enslaves us in this world. On the cross, Jesus uttered something very important regarding this rest: “It is finished” (John 19:30). Not I am finished, not even you are finished—it is finished. Jesus was speaking of the work that the Father had given Him to do. So with His final breath on the cross, Jesus declared that He had completed all the work necessary. There is nothing left for Him to do, and surely nothing for us to do. This absence of work—rest—comes through Christ’s completed work on the cross. Just as God rested on the seventh day after He completed the work of creation, so Jesus rested after He accomplished the work of redemption.

- What is more, one day Jesus will return to make all things new, to wipe away every tear, and to bring us to a place where we will never feel restless again.

INTERACT: Ask group members the following question.

What are some ways we attempt to work for eternal salvation as if Christ’s work on the cross were incomplete? (we do good works to try to earn God’s favor; we punish ourselves for our sin; we view our good works and evil works on a scale and try to maximize our good ones; we try to build something for God to make us worth God’s time)
Point 2: God promises to establish an eternal kingdom (2 Sam. 7:11b-13).

READ 2 Samuel 7:11b-13 (DDG p. 59).

11b “The LORD declares to you: The LORD himself will make a house for you.
12 When your time comes and you rest with your fathers, I will raise up after you your descendant, who will come from your body, 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.

EXPLAIN: Use the paragraph in the DDG (p. 59) to show that Solomon was the first fulfillment of God’s promise in this passage (we will study this in a few weeks), but its ultimate fulfillment is found in Christ Jesus.

The promise made here first came to fruition through David’s son Solomon, but only partially. Solomon would be the one to build the temple that David wanted to build (1 Kings 5–8), but Solomon’s throne was not forever. Besides the fact that Solomon died, his kingdom was torn in two on account of his disobedience, yet his son would reign after him over part of the kingdom because of God’s promise to David. A greater king was needed to bring about perfect peace and establish the eternal kingdom God spoke of. This promise could only be fulfilled in Christ Jesus.

INTERACT: Ask group members the following question.

What are some Old Testament prophecies we have already studied that find their ultimate fulfillment in Christ Jesus? (the son of the woman to crush the head of the serpent; Abraham’s blessing to the whole world; God would raise up a prophet like Moses)

SAY: God promised He would build an eternal kingdom. This kingdom began with David in Israel, but it is being completed by Jesus through His church. While the church is not the kingdom, the church is an expression of the kingdom and evidence that the kingdom of God has come near. Through the church, the body of believers, God’s name is honored, Jesus is worshiped, and His gospel is proclaimed. Wherever these happen, God’s kingdom is present and moving in the name of our King Jesus and in the power of His Holy Spirit.
FILL IN THE BLANKS: Provide group members with the answers for the call-out in their DDG (p. 59) as you further explain the relationship between the eternal kingdom God promised to David and the church.

**Church and Kingdom:** The church and the kingdom of God are closely related, though not identical. When the Bible speaks of the kingdom of God, it is referring to the reign of God in the world. The church is the people of God who live under His loving rule now, anticipating the full manifestation of God’s kingdom in the future. The church’s mission is to witness to God’s kingdom, proclaiming God’s message of salvation through Christ and demonstrating the power of the gospel through good works so that others may be brought to live under God’s reign.

**Essential Doctrine “Church and Kingdom”:** The church and the kingdom of God are closely related, though not identical. When the Bible speaks of the kingdom of God, it is referring to the reign of God in the world. The church is the people of God who live under His loving rule now, anticipating the full manifestation of God’s kingdom in the future. The church’s mission is to witness to God’s kingdom, proclaiming God’s message of salvation through Christ and demonstrating the power of the gospel through good works so that others may be brought to live under God’s reign.

*Illustration:* A local church is like an outpost or an embassy of the kingdom. An embassy is one nation’s presence in another nation. This is not a figurative presence either; it is literal. An embassy’s grounds are considered sovereign soil of that nation. The ambassador who serves in an embassy is considered to speak directly for his or her nation’s leader. In the same way, when a local church honors Jesus as King, the world is able to see the kingdom of God among the kingdoms of this world. So, the promise God made to David about an eternal kingdom is advanced in the church that Jesus is building on earth, which will last into eternity (see Matt. 16:16-19).

**INSTRUCT:** Ask group members to consider their attitude toward the church using the scale in their DDG (p. 59).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is your attitude toward the church?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distrustful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apathetic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Committed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loving</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SAY:** Jesus Christ was raised from the dead and given power and dominion far above all things for the sake of His bride, His body, the church (Eph. 1:20-23). Through Jesus and His church, God is making good on His promise to David to usher in an eternal kingdom. May we view the church as God’s plan in the world and labor in love to join with her in what God is doing to complete and fill the kingdom of the Son He loves.
Point 3: God promises to provide an eternally beloved son (2 Sam. 7:14-16).

READ 2 Samuel 7:14-16 (DDG p. 60).

14 I will be his father, and he will be my son. When he does wrong, I will discipline him with a rod of men and blows from mortals. 15 But my faithful love will never leave him as it did when I removed it from Saul, whom I removed from before you. 16 Your house and kingdom will endure before me forever, and your throne will be established forever.”

EXPLAIN: Use the first paragraph in the DDG (p. 60) to show once again how Solomon was first in view in this promise but Jesus is the ultimate fulfillment of God’s promises.

Again, Solomon is the first person in mind here, the builder of the Lord’s temple. Imagine the blessing of being described as God’s child with an everlasting love. (Do you have to imagine?) Solomon did turn aside from following the Lord and was disciplined as the Lord said (1 Kings 11–12). Yet Solomon remained in God’s love as a son while he suffered the consequences. And one day the greater and perfect Son of David, the unique Son of God, would come to be disciplined, not for His wrongdoing but for ours.

• Though Solomon’s kingdom was split in two and his descendants ruled on a limited throne, God was still faithful to His promises to David. For God was speaking about Solomon, but He was not only speaking about Solomon. He was also speaking about Someone much greater than Solomon.

• Jesus spoke about Himself in this way: “The queen of the south will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and look—something greater than Solomon is here” (Matt. 12:42).

• As great as David was, as great as Solomon was, no king, prophet, or leader who came before measured up to God’s promises because they all were sinful men and women in need of a Savior themselves. There has never been one like Jesus, nor will there ever be another like Him.

INTERACT: Ask group members the following question.

Why might we view discipline from God as a lack or loss of love from our heavenly Father? (because we don’t have a faith relationship with Him through Jesus, the Son; because human parents can struggle to discipline their children in love; because we don’t view our sin in the same way as God, as serious and needing correction; because we struggle to equate the pain of discipline as something good from our loving Father’s hand)
INSTRUCT: As you read Jesus’ statements in the verses provided below, ask group members to record in the table in their DDG (p. 60) some ways Jesus revealed that He is the unique Son of David, the Son of God, the King with the everlasting throne promised to David.

- **Matthew 26:64**: “But I tell you, in the future you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven.”
  —Jesus Is … Enthroned at the Right Hand of God

- **Mark 2:5-7**: “Seeing their faith, Jesus told the paralytic, ‘Son, your sins are forgiven.’ But some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts: ‘Why does he speak like this? He's blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?’”
  —Jesus … Can Forgive Sins

- **John 8:57-58**: “The Jews replied, ‘You aren’t fifty years old yet, and you’ve seen Abraham?’ Jesus said to them, ‘Truly I tell you, before Abraham was, I am.’”
  —Jesus Was … Preexistent

- **John 14:6**: “Jesus told him, ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.’”
  —Jesus Is … The Way, the Truth, and the Life

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>JESUS IS THE UNIQUE SON OF DAVID, THE SON OF GOD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Matthew 26:64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark 2:5-7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 8:57-58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John 14:6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SUMMARIZE:** Use the second paragraph in the DDG (p. 60) to summarize the gift of the gospel in terms of God’s promises to David.

God didn’t just send us information or steps to follow to find salvation. God sent us a Person—His own Son. And He didn’t send His Son merely as a messenger but as the message Himself. Through Jesus’ sinless life, sacrificial death, and resurrection, the Father has provided all we need to believe and experience forgiveness of sin and have eternal life with Him in the eternal kingdom He promised to David in Jesus Christ.
PACK ITEM 7: GOD’S COVENANTS: Pass out copies of this handout as you explain the fulfillment of the Davidic Covenant in Jesus.

- In reading 2 Samuel 7, we are able to see the riches of God’s promises to David—**eternal rest**, **an eternal kingdom**, and an **eternal King**—all of which are fulfilled in Christ. This makes Jesus worthy of our complete trust and wholehearted obedience. What is more, these promises extend to us and then move through us and beyond us. We live in a world filled with restlessness, broken promises, and unmet expectations, and yet, we have a King who fulfills His promises and always makes good on His word. May we offer our entire lives to point people to this eternal Son and His glorious kingdom and exhort them to enter into the rest only He provides.

**READ** the following missional application statement in the DDG (p. 61), and encourage group members to choose at least one of the options below as a way to respond to the truth of God’s Word.

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

- **How will you respond to the Son of David, the Son of God—Jesus Christ—who laid down His life to save sinners?**
- **How can your group encourage and challenge one another to live with an eye on eternity rather than merely on today?**
- **Who is struggling with spiritual restlessness with whom you can share this week about the rest found in Jesus by faith?**

**CLOSE IN PRAYER:** Father, our hearts are restless until we find the King who can provide true and lasting rest. Thank You for providing that king in Jesus, the true Son of David. Help us to live daily in view of the privilege of being members of Christ’s kingdom as we serve the church and announce our King’s rightful reign to those who need to repent and join His family. Amen.

**INSTRUCT:** As your group departs, encourage group members to read and respond to the **Daily Study** devotions in their DDG (pp. 62-64), which build and expand upon the group study. Also advocate for small groups or families to use **Encourage One Another** (p. 65) for mutual accountability and fellowship grounded upon the foundation of God’s Word.
Daily Discipleship

Throughout the week following the session, use the ideas below to remind and encourage your group members to live as disciples of Jesus Christ. The Daily Study devotions in the DDG (pp. 62-64) will help group members get into God’s Word and study it for themselves. Encourage One Another (p. 65) will help group members and families fellowship with one another with purpose.

Daily Study

Brief daily devotions in the DDG (pp. 62-64) will help group members take initiative in their own discipleship.

- Make sure all group members have access to a Bible to read. Have some Bibles available to give to guests who may need one, or offer to get one and arrange a time to meet to give it and show how to navigate it for the devotions.

- Share the following idea from the devotion for Day 1 as a part of point 1 in the session: There are times when we act with what seems to be the right intentions, but we must always consider the greater issue of what will bring glory to God.

Consider leading by example and reading the daily devotions yourself with your own DDG. Based on your study, use brief messages throughout the week (group text, email, social media) to encourage your group to keep up with their daily time in God’s Word and to live it out. Here are a couple of examples you can use:

- Day 3: “Jesus would be the Prince of peace, who would bring peace in three ways: peace with God, peace with others, and peace within.”
- Day 4: “We don’t fix our gaze on David as we recognize his life of faithfulness. Instead, we turn our eyes and fix them on Jesus, the one true Hero.”

Visit www.GospelProject.com/Blog for additional content and resources you can use to help group members gain more insight into their daily studies. Send group members a link or a portion of a blog post or other content that you believe will be helpful and encouraging for their time in God’s Word.

Encourage One Another

This brief plan for fellowship and accountability in the group member’s DDG (p. 65) will help groups of 2-4 people to meet sometime during the week to reflect on the session and to share how God is working and they are responding. It could also be used for family discipleship with students and children who are using The Gospel Project in their groups.

- Encourage group members to keep one another mindful that in all they do they serve a risen King whose kingdom is everlasting and how this truth gives their lives meaning, purpose, and value.

- See yourself as a member of the group who also needs encouragement in the faith, and participate in such a group this week.
Additional Commentary

**Point 1:** God promises to give His people eternal rest (2 Sam. 7:8-11a).

“Having rejected David’s plan to build a house for him (vv. 4-7), God instead announced that he would build a house for David (v. 11). God reminded David of what he had done for him (vv. 8-9) and declared what he would do for him in the future (vv. 9-16). Central to the latter is the promise of an eternal kingdom (vv. 11-16). Here ‘house’ refers to a dynasty or royal line. If David’s descendants sinned, they would be disciplined but never forsaken (vv. 14-15; see also 1 Kings 11:39). His house, kingdom, and throne would endure forever. These promises are referred to elsewhere as ‘a covenant’ (e.g., 23:5) and as such are often referred to as the ‘Davidic covenant.’ The references to a great name (v. 9) and a descendant (v. 12) connect this covenant to the promises made to Abraham, including the Abrahamic covenant. This suggests continuity between the Abrahamic and Davidic covenants. Indeed, both are fulfilled in ‘Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham’ (Matt. 1:1).”

“The Lord’s words become eschatological in character as they describe the benefits that will accrue for Israel with the magnification of the house of David. David’s rise to the ranks of the ‘greatest men of the earth’ would mean that the Lord would provide Israel a secure and peaceful homeland (v. 10). In addition, justice would prevail for the Lord’s people: ‘wicked men will not oppress them anymore.’ The Lord planned a further benefit for David beyond those already mentioned: an era of tranquility awaited Israel’s king, for the Lord would ‘also give’ David ‘rest from all’ his ‘enemies’ (v. 11), an apparent reference to a continued and increased freedom from the threat of non-Israelite aggressors (cf. v. 1). These promises, however, were not fulfilled in David’s lifetime; later prophets understood them to refer to a future period (cf. Isa. 9:7; 16:5; Jer. 23:5-6; 33:15-16).”

**Point 2:** God promises to establish an eternal kingdom (2 Sam. 7:11b-13).

“The New Testament does not deny that some aspects of the prophetic revelation of v. 13 referred to Solomon (cf. Acts 7:47). But for the New Testament writers, the primary application of this verse was to Jesus, the ultimate ‘son of David’ (e.g., Matt. 1:1). One reason for this is that the Lord’s promise to ‘establish the throne of his kingdom forever’ seems to vault this portion of the prophecy beyond the bounds of Solomon’s reign and give it eschatological and/or messianic overtones … In applying v. 13 to Jesus, the New Testament writers took their cue from Jesus himself. Three of Jesus’ claims concerning himself allude to this verse. First, Jesus claimed he would build a temple (cf. Matt. 26:61; 27:40; Mark 14:58; 15:29; John 2:19-22). Second, he claimed to possess an eternal throne (cf. Matt. 19:28-29). Finally, he claimed to possess an imperishable kingdom (cf. Luke 22:29-30; John 18:36).”
“Because yhwh was the creator God, when he finally became king in the way he intended this would involve setting the world to rights, and particularly rescuing Israel from its enemies. ‘Kingdom of God’ and various equivalents (e.g. ‘No king but God!’) became a revolutionary slogan around the time of Jesus. Jesus’ own announcement of God’s kingdom redefined these expectations around his own very different plan and vocation. His invitation to people to ‘enter’ the kingdom was a way of summoning them to allegiance to himself and his programme, seen as the start of God’s long-awaited saving reign.”

**Point 3:** God promises to provide an eternally beloved son (2 Sam. 7:14-16).

“All through the Old Testament, God made promises about his intentions for his people. These covenants revealed God’s plan of salvation. God made promises to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Moses. He also made a covenant with David. The prophet Nathan was God’s messenger to David about this covenant (2 Samuel 7:5-16). God promised to make an everlasting kingdom through David’s descendants. The first sign of this covenant would be the reign of Solomon, David’s biological son, whose kingdom was greater than any other king of Israel. But God had an even greater Kingdom in mind. It would be a spiritual Kingdom whose King would be his own Son. That Son would also be a descendant of David (Matthew 21:9). In his sermon at Pentecost, the apostle Peter referred to God’s covenant made with David (Acts 2:25-35). Peter said David knew that ‘God had promised with an oath that one of David’s own descendants would sit on his throne’ (Acts 2:30). Peter told the throngs in Jerusalem that Jesus was that descendant of David. How amazing that even David was aware of God’s promise to send a Messiah to fulfill God’s plan of salvation!”

“God promised David his faithful love (Hebrew chesed). This is a rich term, encompassing all that would come to David’s line because he belonged to God. On the other hand, the Lord had removed such love from Saul because of his misguided heart.”

---

**References**

6. Ibid.
In this volume of *The Gospel Project*, we cover the roughly one hundred and twenty years of Israel’s heyday: the united monarchy. After decades of the devastating cycle of sin and deliverance and being ruled by a series of judges, the Israelites called on Samuel to appoint a king for them—one like those of the nations around them. God warned His people that what they were requesting would lead to heartache and trouble, but they insisted. So God, in His kindness, gave them what they wanted in order to teach them to trust Him.

What followed was a series of three kings: Saul, David, and Solomon, each ruling for about forty years. In some ways, these kings provide us with examples to follow: the fierce determination of David not to stand for anyone impugning God’s character; the mercy and kindness David showed to a foe and his family; the wisdom of Solomon. But we also discover that each of these three men fell woefully short of being the king God’s people wanted and needed, each one proving God’s warnings true. Bookending God’s people crying out as one for a king at the start of this volume, by the time we finish, we encounter God’s people being divided into two kingdoms.

Our takeaway is clear: The hope of humanity does not rest in any human king or leader but is fixed solely and securely in the King of kings, Jesus Christ. But at the same time, we see that God delights in using His people despite their failings. God would fulfill His covenant with David, even though he committed adultery and murder. This reaffirmed the promises God had made to Abraham generations before. And though Solomon would succumb to polygamy and idolatry, God used him to build the temple, a place for God’s people to worship and be in relationship with God.

So consider as you study: What might God do through us?