

THE DAVIDIC COVENANT.

– 2 SAMUEL 6:4-16. – *OCTOBER 11.* –

"Thy throne shall be established forever." – 2 Sam. 7:16.

DAVID, during the first six years of his reign over all Israel, was kept actively engaged in resisting the enemies of Israel and enlarging the borders of the nation, in harmony with the original divine grant. Having to a considerable extent accomplished these things, and having built for himself a palace in Jerusalem, the reverential elements of his nature noticed the inconsistency of his dwelling in a palace while the typical residence of Israel's great King, Jehovah, was but the Tabernacle tent. His reverential impulses promptly suggested the building of a temple to replace the Tabernacle, and properly enough he consulted the Prophet Nathan, who rejoiced in this manifestation of the King's loyalty to the Lord, and indorsed the program. That same night, however, the Lord gave the prophet a message for the King, which, although it showed appreciation of David's intentions, forbade their execution, explaining that the reason that the Lord's presence was manifested in a tent, and not a permanent structure, was not because the Lord had not thought of this, nor because others of his servants would not have been glad to have erected such a structure at his bidding, but because the divine plan was otherwise. The Tabernacle was for the time being preferred, for certain reasons not explained at the time. The Lord, however, did assure David that by and by he would have a permanent temple, and that David's successor and son should erect it.

The Lord's people may learn a valuable lesson from this incident. We are not to conclude that, because our plans and projects are reverential and designed to be for the glory of God, therefore they must have the divine approval. With spiritual Israel, as with David, [R3259 : page 392] it is frequently true that "My ways are not as your ways, nor my thoughts [plans] as your thoughts [plans]; for

as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, saith the Lord." Those who are of David's disposition – "after God's own heart" – will not only consult with those whose judgment they would consider helpful, as David consulted with Nathan, but if subsequently the Lord rejects their best judgment, and does not cooperate in the execution of their plans, will do as David did in this instance: they will uncomplainingly acquiesce in the Lord's plans, and cooperate therewith, and thus further attest that they are of the kind the Lord loves to honor and call Beloved. To these also the Lord will grant other special blessings and favors, as he did to David.

The spirit of David in this matter – his desire to honor the Lord and to build him a great house or temple – finds its parallel in the heart sentiments of every true Christian. We do not refer to those who merely take pleasure in erecting grand temples of stone, but specially to those whose ambition it would be to organize the Church of the present time – to glory in its grandeur and completeness of organization and function and service for the Lord. Those not in the right condition of heart, heady, self-willed, confident that their good intentions must be pleasing to the Lord, have proceeded to build various structures, each claiming his to be the temple of the Lord. As they have neither sought nor received divine instruction on the subject, but are following their own ideals, there is necessarily considerable diversity in these buildings, each seeming to its builders to be the right, proper and appropriate temple of God. These temples now number hundreds, the larger and more imposing ones being the Roman Catholic temple, the Greek Catholic temple, the Church of England temple, the Methodist temple, the Lutheran temple, the Presbyterian temple, the Baptist temple, the Congregational temple, etc., etc.

But a small class follow the example of David, and receive instruction from the Lord to the effect that the present is not the time for temple-building; that he could have built his temple heretofore, and found many willing to serve him in this respect, but that he prefers

that his representation in the world in the present time shall be extremely simple and unostentatious. Such [R3259 : page 393] receive of the Lord assurances, however, that in his own time and way, under a succeeding form of the kingdom, a much more glorious temple shall be constituted than would be possible for us to build at the present time – an enduring temple which shall be filled with the glory of the Lord. All who are of the Davidic character, of the disposition *beloved* of the Father – acceptable members of his dear, beloved Son – will, as soon as they learn of the divine purpose, promptly submit themselves, and cooperate in the divine plan. That plan in the type was that David, as the man of war, battling for the right, and severely tried and disciplined, should represent the saints of God in the present militant condition, warring with the world, the flesh and the devil, and becoming in their own hearts and faith strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. According to the same type it is the mission of the present time to prepare the gold, silver and precious things for the future temple – ready for its construction. In the type these were literal things, but in the antitype, as the Apostle shows, the Lord's saints are the gold, silver and precious stones, which very shortly now, in the establishment of the Millennial Kingdom, will be all thoroughly organized on the plane of glory, honor and immortality, and filled eternally with the life and glory of the Father. As David and his work of preparing for the temple, typifies the Church in this present time, and our work of preparing ourselves and each other for the glories to follow, so Solomon's Kingdom which followed represents the Kingdom of the glorified Christ – the real Kingdom, of which the present is but the embryo, and the construction of Solomon's Temple typifies the resurrection of the Church, in which all the members shall come together in glorious completeness, in the morning of the Millennial day. "Weeping may endure for a night [in connection with our fightings with foes without and within, and suffering for righteousness' sake], but joy cometh in the morning [when that which is perfect shall have come, and when that which is in part shall have been done away]." (Psa. 30:5.) "God shall help her

[the Church, the Bride of Christ], and that right early" – in the morning. – Psa. 46:5.

In connection with this refusal of David's proposition the Lord gave him very gracious encouragement, reminding him that every step of his onward way had been guided from on high, and that it was because he had faithfully looked to the Lord as his guide and counsellor that he had now reached the degree of development and relationship to the Lord and to the Kingdom occupied. So the Lord encourages all who are of this David class in spiritual Israel today. All who are looking to the Lord, and hearkening to his Word, are reminded that the Lord is attending to his own work in his own way, and that it is a far superior way to anything which we could devise. We are pointed to the low estate we occupied on the animal plane, and how the Lord by his grace has advanced us step by step, until now we are children of God, heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord, if so be that we suffer with him. It is for us to appreciate the lesson of past experiences, and to trust that he who took us from the horrible pit and the miry clay, and placed our feet upon the Rock, and put the new song into our mouths, is able to bless us still further, and that in proportion as we hearken to his Word, through his prophet, the Scriptures.

The succeeding verses of the lesson mingle and commingle the natural blessings upon David and his literal posterity and upon natural Israel, with the still greater blessings that are to uplift all who will come into covenant relationship with God through the antitypical Son of David, the glorified Christ and his Millennial Kingdom. Vs. 10 undoubtedly had a measurable fulfilment in literal Israel, in that for several hundred years they remained in their own land, under their own covenant – an experience very different from that preceding under the rule of the Judges. But the time when the Lord will plant them, and when they shall be moved no more and afflicted no more by the wicked, must apply to the grander restoration of the future, when, as he has promised, he will gather them out of all nations and

peoples whither they are now scattered, and bring them into their own land. This later prophecy is in full agreement with the one made to David by Nathan. Then, as another Scripture declares, the Lord will restore to Israel her lawgivers as at the first, and her judges as at the beginning. Then it will be, too, that the house of David will be firmly established in great David's greater Son, the glorified Christ. Here the promises to the natural and to the spiritual seeds are more or less intertwined, just as they were in the Abrahamic promise. The seed of Abraham was both an earthly seed and a heavenly, as the sand of the sea and as the stars of heaven – the natural seed and the spiritual – and as the Apostle declares, the promise is sure to both of these, its proper part to each. – Rom. 4:16. Compare Rom. 11:25-32.

David's throne was perpetual through the line of Solomon down to Zedekiah, and when the Lord rent the Kingdom from the hands of Zedekiah he did not give it to another family, but proclaimed an interregnum – a suspension of David's Kingdom, which might not go to another. The language of the prophecy concerning Zedekiah is, "O thou profane and wicked prince, whose time is come that iniquity should have an end: remove the diadem, take off the crown; this shall no more be the same. I will overturn, overturn, overturn **[R3259 : page 394]** it, until he come whose right it is, and I will give it unto him." (Ezek. 21:27.) There has been no King of Israel, from Zedekiah's day to the present – the overturning of the Kingdom has been very thorough. The kings who reigned over Israel at the time of the first advent, and previously and subsequently, were not Israelitish kings, nor of Israelitish birth, but were appointees of Gentile governments, which, from Zedekiah's day to the present, have trodden under foot the sacred land. The fulfilment of this promise to David is nevertheless secure, sure as the word and oath of the Almighty; and we who were by nature Gentiles, but who have been betrothed to Abraham's great Son and David's great Son and Lord, are still looking forward to and praying and patiently waiting for the fulfilment of this promise, saying, "Thy Kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven" – even as our Lord taught us to do. As soon as this

antitypical David, "Beloved," shall have assumed the reigns of government at the time appointed of the Father, he, as the antitype also of Solomon, on the natural plane, will build the Lord's house, and his throne shall be established forever – for it is the throne of the Kingdom of Jehovah: and although in its mediatorial sense it will terminate at the close of the Millennial age, yet in a still higher sense it will continue to all eternity, because David's Son and Lord has been associated with the Father in his throne, and his Bride shall be with him where he is, and share his glory, according to his promise.

Much of this promise was applicable to Solomon. The Kingdom of David, or rather the Kingdom of the Lord, was established in the hands of Solomon. He did build a typical house or temple in the name of the Lord. God did deal with him as with a son, chastening his iniquity, yet continuing his mercy with him: he did not suffer the kingly power to depart from David's natural seed, as he took it from Saul.

The 14th verse may properly be applied to those begotten of the Spirit to be Sons of God and joint-heirs in the coming Kingdom. "For what son is he that the Father chasteneth not?" Even the Head of the body, although in him there was no sin, needed the experiences [R3260 : page 394] called chastisements for his preparation, for his great position in the coming Kingdom. Indeed, he bore the stripes of the children of men, as the Prophet declares, and we, as members of his body, will not be spared by the Father from the needed corrections in righteousness, which would make us meet for the inheritance of the saints in light – so long as we receive them in the spirit of sonship, seeking to know and to do the Father's will.

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