



# International Bible Lessons Commentary

Uniform Sunday School Lessons Series

L.G. Parkhurst, Jr.

## 2 Samuel 7:1-17 New International Version October 22, 2017

The [International Bible Lesson](#) (*Uniform Sunday School Lessons Series*) for **Sunday, October 22, 2017**, is from **2 Samuel 7:1-17** [Some will only study 2 Samuel 7:1-6, 8-10, 12-16]. **Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further** follow the verse-by-verse *International Bible Lesson Commentary*. **Study Hints for Discussion and Thinking Further** will help with class preparation and in conducting class discussion: these hints are available on the [International Bible Lessons Commentary](#) website along with the *International Bible Lesson* that you may want to read to your class as part of your Bible study. You can discuss each week's commentary and lesson at the [International Bible Lesson Forum](#).

**(2 Samuel 7:1) After the king [King David] was settled in his palace and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies around him,**

After God rejected King Saul for his continual disobedience and rejection of God's law, the prophet Samuel anointed the shepherd boy, David, to be the next king of Israel. So, King Saul tried to kill David before he became king. David never lifted his hand against King Saul, and after Saul was killed in battle David became the new king. King David reunited the twelve tribes of Israel, and he defeated or subdued all of Israel's enemies; thus, with God's help David brought peace to God's people.

**(2 Samuel 7:2) he said to Nathan the prophet, "Here I am, living in a house of cedar, while the ark of God remains in a tent."**

King David built a beautiful palace for himself from the cedars of Lebanon, but the ark of God remained in a tabernacle or tent as God had commanded Moses to build according to the pattern He showed him. After the prophet Samuel died, the prophet Nathan became an advisor to King David. When David considered all that God had done for him, David wanted to express his love for and appreciation to God by building God a palace, a glorious temple to house the ark of the Lord.

**(2 Samuel 7:3) Nathan replied to the king, “Whatever you have in mind, go ahead and do it, for the LORD is with you.”**

From experience, Nathan knew the heart of King David. He knew King David loved God, that God was with him, and that God had enabled David to achieve all he had done for God’s kingdom. Therefore, Nathan’s immediate response, before consulting God in prayer, was to tell King David to do exactly what he wanted to do. Nathan assumed that King David’s good intentions would be acceptable to God and God would want a temple built to honor Him now that the Kingdom of Israel was at peace in the Promised Land.

**(2 Samuel 7:4) But that night the word of the LORD came to Nathan, saying:**

What seemed a good idea at first to these two godly men was not a good idea to God. Other gods (false gods and idols) had temples built for them, but God did not need or want a temple built in His honor. He did not want to be thought of as just another god among many gods. God honored King David’s good intention however; so, God would allow a temple to be built for Him, but God wanted to stop David from building that temple; therefore, that same night the LORD spoke to the prophet Nathan.

**(2 Samuel 7:5) “Go and tell my servant David, ‘This is what the LORD says: Are you the one to build me a house to dwell in?’**

Since the prophet Nathan had affirmed King David’s good intention from the first, it may have been somewhat easier for him than for someone else to go to the king and declare, “Thus says the LORD;” the LORD forbids you from building the temple. God’s question is rhetorical in the sense that God expects King David to conclude that “No, I am not the one to build a house for You to live in.” The eternal infinite God is too great for any house made with human hands. God is larger than the ark and the tent that symbolized His presence with His people. God is greater than the universe He has made.

**(2 Samuel 7:6) I have not dwelt in a house from the day I brought the Israelites up out of Egypt to this day. I have been moving from place to place with a tent as my dwelling.**

Through Nathan, God told King David that He had not lived in a house from the days of the Exodus to that very day. God had given Moses the design for the ark and the tabernacle (the smaller, elaborate shelter), and the tent (the larger shelter that covered the tabernacle to protect it from the elements of nature). Each part of the ark and the implements for sacrificial worship had special spiritual significance. God moved in a tent to lead His people, but now they had reached their earthly destination; so, a tent or tabernacle was no longer needed to house or cover the Ark of the Covenant. An

appropriate temple could now be built with God's permission.

**(2 Samuel 7:7) Wherever I have moved with all the Israelites, did I ever say to any of their rulers whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, "Why have you not built me a house of cedar?"**

God told King David that He had never wanted anyone to build Him a house of cedar. This was David's idea, not an idea inspired by God. God had wanted a tent so He could best serve His people and humbly lead them to the place He had prepared to bless them. God had commanded Moses, the tribal leaders, and later King David to care for or "shepherd" His people, not build Him a house. God called Israel together as His people so He could care for them and prepare them as a people for the coming Messiah "the Good Shepherd" to save us from our sins, not so they could meet extravagant demands (such as idols and false gods demand through their priests). God humbled himself to live in a tent; just as the Son of God humbled Himself to come to us as a man in human flesh and tabernacle among us.

**(2 Samuel 7:8) "Now then, tell my servant David, 'This is what the LORD Almighty says: I took you from the pasture, from tending the flock, and appointed you ruler over my people Israel.'**

God reminded King David that he was God's servant in order to serve His people. As LORD of hosts, God prefers to work through human leaders to bless His people. God had blessed King David so he could bless God's people. From caring for sheep, David had learned the qualities of a good shepherd, and God had taken him from the pasture to shepherd His people as a leader over His people (a leader who was a shepherd, not a dictator or tyrant). God used all of David's experiences to prepare him to be a leader.

**(2 Samuel 7:9) I have been with you wherever you have gone, and I have cut off all your enemies from before you. Now I will make your name great, like the names of the greatest men on earth.**

God reminded King David that He was with him and His might had defeated David's enemies. God would make David's name as great as the names of Abraham and Moses. Indeed, the Messiah who was to come would be called the "Son of David," and people looked upon King David as an example of what the Messiah would accomplish. What the prophet Nathan declared to King David did come true with the birth of Jesus Christ, and Jesus by His actions made the David's name even greater. What God promised David through the prophet, God fulfilled in space and time as further evidence that God is true to His word and keeps His promises. Even today, millions still read the Psalms of David.

**(2 Samuel 7:10) And I will provide a place for my people Israel and will plant them so that they can have a home of their own and no longer be disturbed. Wicked people will not oppress them anymore, as they did at the beginning**

God appointed the Promised Land for His people and He planted them there to bear fruit that would bless the peoples of all nations. They would live there and not be disturbed as long as they obeyed God and His law. No evil doers would afflict them as long as they did not need the discipline of God to lead them to repentance and back to true faith in God. The prophets who followed Nathan warned the Israelites to remain loyal to God, but they did not; so, God uprooted them and sent them into exile.

**(2 Samuel 7:11) and have done ever since the time I appointed leaders over my people Israel. I will also give you rest from all your enemies. “The LORD declares to you that the LORD himself will establish a house for you:**

God did give King David and Israel rest from their enemies after God conquered them through David’s leadership and throughout the reign of King Solomon (who destroyed the kingdom from within when he married foreign wives and set up altars to their idols). God would make King David a house, which meant that the Messiah would be from the line of King David (one of King David’s descendants).

**(2 Samuel 7:12) When your days are over and you rest with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, your own flesh and blood, and I will establish his kingdom.**

David must have thought of Solomon or one of his other sons when he heard this prophecy. Indeed, the Messianic line would be through the king who ruled after King David, King Solomon. God did establish King Solomon’s kingdom in peace as long as he lived, and the 12 tribes of Israel remained united until after King Solomon died and ten tribes of Israel rebelled and established the Northern Kingdom, Israel. Unlike Saul, whose kingly line stopped with the death of his son Jonathan in battle, one of David’s sons would follow him as king.

**(2 Samuel 7:13) He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.**

God told David that his son, the king who followed him, would build Him a house, and the temple he built would honor God and His name: “the LORD of hosts.” Even though the united tribal kingdom under David and Solomon divided after King Solomon’s death, the throne of David and Solomon would be an established kingdom forever when

the Messiah came. When Jesus came, He claimed to be greater (or wiser) than King Solomon; He led people back to the true God and His followers have blessed people from and within every nation through His gospel (Luke 11:31).

**(2 Samuel 7:14) I will be his father, and he will be my son. When he does wrong, I will punish him with a rod wielded by men, with floggings inflicted by human hands.**

Though God was going to treat King Solomon as His son and be as a father to him, God knew that King Solomon and those kings who followed Him would commit iniquity. Even though God gave King Solomon wisdom and the honor of building a temple for Him, God knew that King Solomon would lead His people into idolatry and also build altars to false gods too. As a father, God declared that He would discipline King Solomon as a father would discipline a son. God declared that He would punish King Solomon and other disobedient kings using other human beings (foreign armies for example).

**(2 Samuel 7:15) But my love will never be taken away from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you.**

King David knew from experience what had happened to King Saul. David saw the line of King Saul come to a tragic end due to his unrepentant heart and mind. God punished King Solomon and his descendants for their sins, but this punishment was designed as discipline to lead them to repentance and back to faith, as a father disciplines a son instead of destroying him. Steadfast love motivates God when He disciplines His children.

**(2 Samuel 7:16) Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever.”**

Though the kings who followed King Solomon lost their power over the area that David and Solomon ruled, God promised that the kingdom and throne of David and Solomon would be established forever, a promise God fulfilled when He sent Jesus the Messiah into the world. From His throne in heaven, Jesus reigns over all the kingdoms of the earth, and His people bless others around the world.

**(2 Samuel 7:17) Nathan reported to David all the words of this entire revelation.**

The Bible recorded for all subsequent generations the words of God to Nathan, and Nathan reported to King David exactly what God had said. In the subsequent years and various kingships that followed, people can see how God kept His promise to King

David, King Solomon, and King Jesus. Therefore, people can have confidence that God will eventually fulfill all that He needs to complete through Jesus when He comes again.

### **Questions for Discussion and Thinking Further**

1. Why do you think Nathan immediately told David to do all that he had in mind?
2. What made Nathan change his mind? What did Nathan do then?
3. Did God ever want a house of cedar? What reason did God give for His answer to Nathan and King David?
4. What are some of the things God said He had done for David? What are some of the things God said He would do for David?
5. Who eventually built a house for God? Describe what God said He would do for him?

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Begin or close your class by reading the short weekly *International Bible Lesson*.

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