

A close-up photograph of a stone sculpture of a human face, likely a king or deity, wearing a crown. The face is the central focus, with a large, detailed eye looking slightly to the left. The crown is ornate with circular motifs. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the texture of the stone and the contours of the face.

Chapter 10

# The Kingdom of David

*"His line shall endure for ever,  
his throne as long as the sun before me.  
Like the moon it shall be established for ever;  
it shall stand firm while the skies endure."*

*Psalm 89: 36-37*



Chapter 10

# The Kingdom of David



**Read**

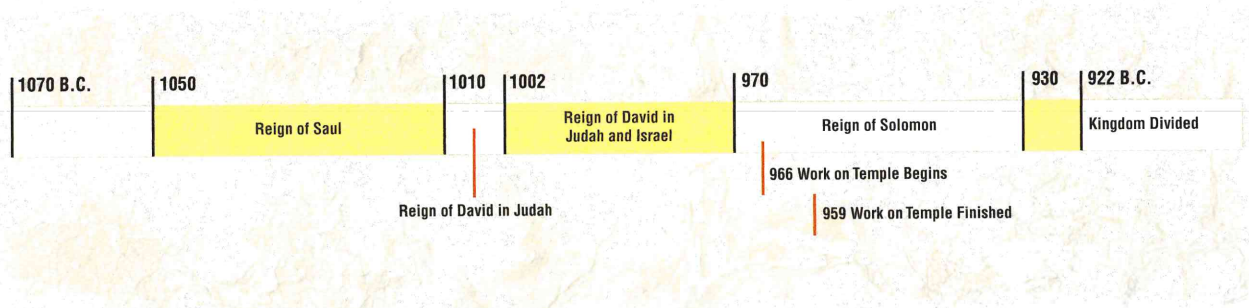
**1 Samuel**  
26:6 - 11

**2 Samuel**  
6:1 - 7:29  
11:1 - 12:14

**Psalms 89**

**W**ith Saul dead, David was free to take over the kingdom. But it didn't just fall into his hands. The tribe of Judah followed him, but the northern part of Israel chose to follow Ishbaal, one of Saul's sons.<sup>1</sup> (His name is given as Ishbosheth in 2 Samuel. The word "bosheth" means "shame;" the writer wrote that instead of "baal" so that readers would not have to speak the name of a horrible Canaanite false god.)

Only after a long civil war did David finally wear down Ishbaal's armies. In the end, two of Ishbaal's own generals, seeing that the situation was hopeless, assassinated Ishbaal and brought his head to David. They thought they would get a reward. Instead, David had them executed as murderers, saying they had "slain a righteous man."<sup>2</sup> Unlike most rulers, David could distinguish between the character of Ishbaal and the unfortunate circumstances that made Ishbaal his enemy.



## Jerusalem, David's New Capital

When the founders of the United States were deciding where to put the capital of the new country, they faced a serious problem. Whatever city they chose, it would make one state seem more important than the others. In the beginning, it was hard to hold the states together, and more regional jealousy was the last thing the new nation needed. So the national government finally decided to build a new city, one that would not be in any state. Even today, the District of Columbia is governed directly by Congress.

David had exactly the same problem. It was hard to hold the twelve tribes together. If David put his capital in his own homeland, Judah, the northern tribes—already rebellious—might think he wanted nothing to do with them. But if David put his capital somewhere in the north, it would seem as though he was turning his back on his faithful followers in Judah.

But there was an ancient city right on the border between Judah and the other tribes, a city that belonged to none of the tribes.

Jerusalem was one of those Canaanite cities that the Israelites had failed to destroy during the conquest. “But the people of Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites who dwelt in Jerusalem; so the Jebusites have dwelt with the people of Benjamin in Jerusalem to this day,” says Judges 1: 21. Joshua 15: 63 says that *Judah* failed to drive out the Jebusites, and that the Jebusites are still dwelling with the people of Judah. Evidently Jerusalem was right on the border between Judah and Benjamin.

Finishing the job that ought to have been done generations before, David finally attacked the proud and wicked Jebusites. The Jebusites thought Jerusalem could never be taken. They heaped insults on David, telling him that even the blind and the lame in their city could turn back his puny army.<sup>3</sup> So David offered his generals an incentive: “Whoever shall smite the Jebusites first shall be chief and commander.”<sup>4</sup> His general Joab made the first strike, so Joab became David’s right-hand man—his prime minister, so to speak. We’ll hear a lot more about Joab later. David’s army drove out the Jebusites, and David immediately made his home in Jerusalem.

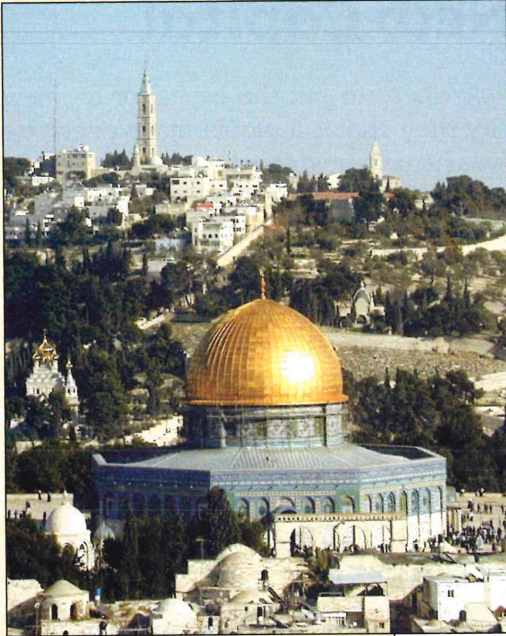
From that time on, Jerusalem was David’s capital. It even became known as the City of David—a name the old part of the city still bears today. David built up the city, and his new ally King Hiram of Tyre sent Phoenician craftsmen to build a palace for King David. We know from other historical sources that Tyre was just entering a golden age of prosperity under King Hiram, and this would not be the last time in his long reign that Hiram would prove a friend to Israel.



The City of David from the southwest. The earliest city of Jerusalem is the City of David on a smaller hill south of and lower than the Temple Mount. Jerusalem stands high in the Judean hills with no access by sea or river. The ground drops steeply away on all sides except to the north. To the east, between Jerusalem and the Mount of Olives is the Kidron Valley. The Hinnom Valley curves around the city to the south and west. The Central or Tyropoean Valley cuts through the ancient city.



# David's Kingdom



The Dome of the Rock mosque built upon the Sacred Stone of Abraham on Mount Moriah (Temple Mount) is where Solomon's Temple first stood. Planned by David and built by Solomon, the Temple was the worship focal point for Israelites until its destruction by Babylonians in 587 B.C. Three times the Temple was built or rebuilt: Solomon's Temple, the Second Temple and Herod's Temple. All three were destroyed. The mosque was built over the Temple ruins in 691 A.D. by caliph Omar.



The upper portion of this excavation in the City of David is thought to be where the palace and citadel of David may have been located. The stepped stone structure dates to about 1000 B.C. (the time of David). This area was inside the city walls when the Temple was built.





## Bringing The Ark To Jerusalem

Once David had firmly established himself at Jerusalem, he decided to bring the Ark of the Covenant there. That would make Jerusalem not just the political center of Israel, but the religious center as well.

David's first try at bringing the ark was a dismal failure. He brought a brand-new cart to carry it, but the cart rocked back and forth. When one of the procession reached out to steady the ark, he was struck dead on the spot. David was so afraid of God's wrath that he refused to go any farther. He stopped and left the ark in the care of Obed-edom, whose house was nearby.

What went wrong? David had not followed the law. The instructions for carrying the ark were very specific: it had to be borne on the shoulders of Levite priests.<sup>5</sup> And no one could ever touch the ark itself.<sup>6</sup> As the sign of God's presence among his people, it was a holy thing. David himself understood exactly what went wrong: "we did not care for it in the way that is ordained."<sup>7</sup>



David didn't try bringing the ark to Jerusalem again for three months, and he spent those months making preparations. This time, he would do everything right. He prepared a place for the ark and pitched a tent there. He told the Levites who would carry it to sanctify themselves. He arranged for a magnificent procession, with music and sacrifices.<sup>8</sup>

**Thy solemn processions are seen, O God,  
the processions of my God, my King, into the sanctuary —  
the singers in front, the minstrels last,  
between them maidens playing timbrels ... (Ps 68: 24-25)**

This time, everything did go right. David himself led the parade, dressed not as a king but as a priest, in a linen ephod. He leaped and danced for joy "with all his might."<sup>9</sup> And when the ark reached its place, David himself offered the sacrifices.

Why was it all right for David to act as a priest? He was not a Levite. When Saul tried offering sacrifices, he was severely punished.

But there was a huge difference between David and Saul. David was a man after God's own heart. Saul's sacrifices were just a business transaction with God. David danced and made offerings out of love and joy, not because he wanted something from God. And God had chosen David for a new covenant that would begin to erase some of the distinctions made by the law.

Saul's daughter Michal, David's wife, understood the difference, too. She watched David from her window and thought he looked ridiculous. When she came out to meet him, she was dripping with sarcasm. "How the king of Israel has honored himself today," she said with a sneer, "uncovering himself before the eyes of his servants' maids, as one of the vulgar fellows shamelessly uncovers himself!"<sup>10</sup>

For Michal, royal dignity was the important thing. She could not understand the sincere love and joy that David had felt. Like Saul, she had never felt it herself.

"I will make merry before the LORD," David told her. "I will make myself yet more contemptible than this, and I will be abased in your eyes; but by the maids of whom you have spoken, by them I shall be held in honor."<sup>11</sup>



## The Liturgy Of The Ark

**W**hat was that grand procession like when David brought the Ark to Jerusalem? Many scholars believe that the actual liturgy David used is preserved for us in Psalm 24. We can imagine what the scene must have been like.

As the Ark slowly moves toward Jerusalem, hundreds of voices sing a hymn of praise:

**The earth is the LORD's, and the fullness thereof,  
the world and those who dwell therein;  
for he has founded it upon the seas,  
and established it upon the rivers.**

Then the procession reaches the base of Mount Zion, and the choir sings a new hymn:

**Who shall ascend the hill of the LORD?  
And who shall stand in his holy place?  
He who has clean hands and a pure heart,  
who does not lift up his soul to what is false,  
and does not swear deceitfully.  
He will receive blessing from the LORD,  
and vindication from the God of his salvation.  
Such is the generation of those who seek him,  
who seek the face of the God of Jacob.**

Now a huge orchestra of every kind of instrument makes a joyful noise,<sup>22</sup> and to the sound of drums and harps and cymbals and lyres, the Ark makes its way up the hill to the gates of the city. Finally, the procession reaches the gate. The music stops, and the choir sings out,

**Lift up your heads, O gates!  
and be lifted up, O ancient doors!  
that the King of glory may come in.**

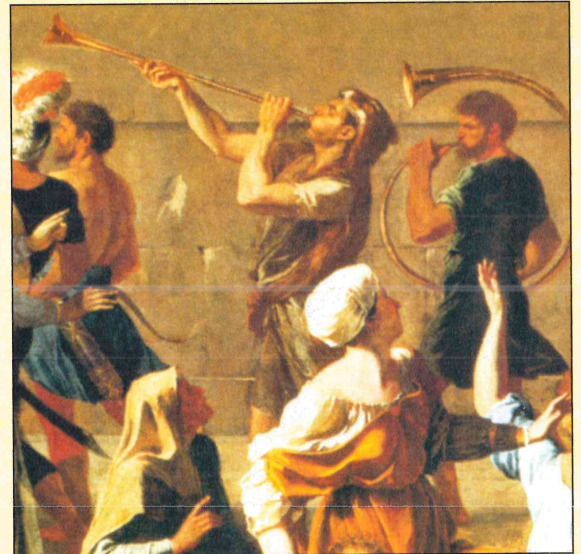
**On cue, the people inside the gates call out,  
Who is this King of glory?**

**From the choir outside comes the answer,  
The LORD, strong and mighty,  
the LORD, mighty in battle!**

**Then again the choir sings out,  
Lift up your heads, O gates!  
and be lifted up, O ancient doors!  
that the King of glory may come in.**

**Once again, the people inside the gates call out,  
Who is this King of glory?**

**From the choir outside comes the answer,  
The LORD of hosts,  
he is the King of glory!**



Then the orchestra strikes up again, and to thunderous cheers and shouts of joy, the Ark enters the city, with King David himself leaping and dancing at the head of the procession.

All this is guessing, of course. But it is a well-educated guess. David wrote Psalm 24, and we know from 1 Chronicles 15 that he himself prepared the music for the procession. It is not unreasonable to assume that he wrote the words and music for the occasion himself. Even if Psalm 24 is not exactly the liturgy used on that occasion, it gives us a good idea of the sort of thing David would have written.



## The Covenant With David

Now Jerusalem was the political and spiritual capital of Israel, and Israel had become a power to reckon with in the region. David's conquests had built Israel into a small empire. After a while, Jerusalem had grown to reflect the new status of David and Israel. The crowning glory of the city was David's palace, built of cedar wood imported from Lebanon. The City of David had begun to look like an imperial capital.

But the Ark of the Covenant was still in a tent. It was probably a richly decorated tent, but it was still only a tent.

"See now," David said to the prophet Nathan, "I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwells in a tent."

Nathan understood what David had in mind right away: a temple, a real building where for the first time the True God could be worshiped as magnificently as the false gods of the Canaanites. "Go, do all that is in your heart," Nathan replied, "for the LORD is with you."<sup>12</sup>

But that night Nathan had a vision from God. "Go and tell my servant David, 'Thus says the LORD: Would you build me a house to dwell in? I have not dwelt in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day...'"<sup>13</sup>

David will not build a temple, God told Nathan. Instead, God had something much more important for him.

*"... Moreover the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house. When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come forth from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son. When he commits iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, with the stripes of the sons of men; but I will not take my steadfast love from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away from before you. And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure for ever before me; your throne shall be established forever."*  
(2 Sm 7: 11-16)

Nathan went to David the next morning and told him everything God had promised. And God was giving David a lot.

- *The Lord will make you a house:* David will be the founder of a **dynasty**.
- *I will establish his kingdom:* The son of David will be ruler of a **kingdom**.
- *He shall build a house for my name:* David's son will build the **temple** that David had planned to build.
- *I will be his father, and he shall be my son:* David's son would be adopted as **God's own son**. This is the first time the idea of divine sonship is applied to one individual. Before this, the whole people of Israel had been called God's first-born son, but no single person had ever been "son of God."
- *I will chasten him... but I will not take my steadfast love from him:* God would **never disown** David's line the way he disowned Saul, no matter how much his descendants might sin. The covenant would be permanent. Like a loving father, God would punish his son, but only for his own good. Nothing could change the father-son relationship.
- *Your throne shall be established for ever:* The dynasty of David would **never end**. Dynasties rise and fall in all other earthly monarchies, but the throne of David would always be occupied by a descendant of David himself.



Even David, one of the great poets of all time, had trouble finding words to express his feelings. He ran to the tent where the Ark was kept, sat down in front of it, and poured out his heart.

Then King David went in and sat before the LORD, and said, "Who am I, O LORD God, and what is my house, that thou hast brought me thus far? And yet this was a small thing in thy eyes, O LORD God; thou hast spoken also of thy servant's house for a great while to come; this is the law for man,<sup>14</sup> O LORD God! And what more can David say to thee? For thou knowest thy servant, O LORD God! Because of thy promise, and according to thy own



heart, thou hast wrought all this greatness, to make thy servant know it. Therefore thou art great, O LORD God; for there is none like thee, and there is no God besides thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears. What other nation on earth is like thy people Israel, whom God went to redeem to be his people, making himself a name, and doing for them great and terrible things, by driving out before his people a nation and its gods? And thou didst establish for thyself thy people Israel to be thy people for ever; and thou, O LORD, didst become their God. And now, O LORD God, confirm for ever the word which thou hast spoken concerning thy servant and concerning his house, and do as thou hast spoken; and thy name will be magnified for ever, saying, 'The LORD of hosts is God over Israel,' and the house of thy servant David will be established before thee. For thou, O LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, hast made this revelation to thy servant, saying, 'I will build you a house'; therefore thy servant has found courage to pray this prayer to thee. And now, O LORD God, thou art God, and thy words are true, and thou hast promised this good thing to thy servant;

now therefore may it please thee to bless the house of thy servant, that it may continue for ever before thee; for thou, O LORD God, hast spoken, and with thy blessing shall the house of thy servant be blessed for ever." (2 Sm 7:18-29)

David is par excellence the king "after God's own heart," the shepherd who prays for his people and prays in their name. His submission to the will of God, his praise, and his repentance, will be a model for the prayer of the people. His prayer, the prayer of God's Anointed, is a faithful adherence to the divine promise and expresses a loving and joyful trust in God, the only King and Lord (cf. 2 Sm 7:18-29). In the Psalms, David, inspired by the Holy Spirit, is the first prophet of Jewish and Christian prayer. The prayer of Christ, the true Messiah and Son of David, will reveal and fulfill the meaning of this prayer. (CCC 2579)





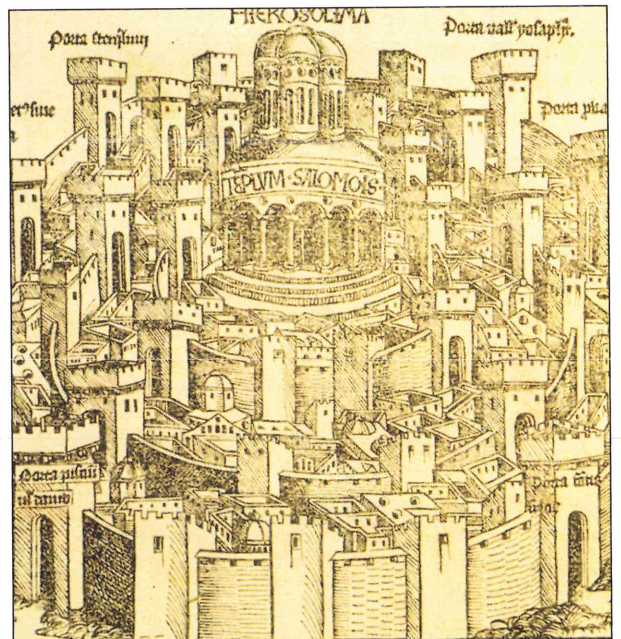
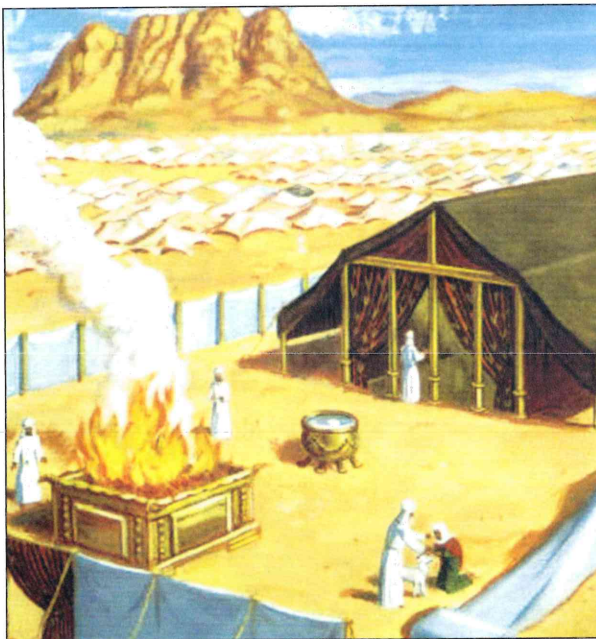
A page from 1 Chronicles shows King David placing the Ark of the Covenant in the Tabernacle.  
 From The Wenceslas Bible, Prague, ca. 1389-1395



## Beyond Sinai To Zion

From the moment David learned of God's covenant with him, Jerusalem replaced Sinai as the center of Israel's religion. At Sinai, God had given the people of Israel a law designed to set them apart from the other nations and keep them separate. Now the time had come for the Israelites to begin the mission that God had always planned for them: to be a nation of priests, leading the other nations of the world to God.

The Sinai Covenant	The Zion Covenant
<b>Tent:</b> the center of worship is a temporary shelter that can be moved with nomadic tribes	<b>Temple:</b> the center of worship is a permanent structure that draws all people to Jerusalem
<b>National:</b> the covenant is with Israel only	<b>International:</b> the covenant reaches to all nations through Israel
<b>Exclusive:</b> designed to keep the nations out	<b>Inclusive:</b> designed to invite the nations in
<b>Torah:</b> a law designed to keep the Israelites separate from the nations	<b>Wisdom literature:</b> a new Torah designed to speak to all mankind
<b>Sin offering:</b> the most important religious ceremony is an offering to atone for sins	<b>Todah:</b> the most important religious ceremony is the thank offering (in Greek, "eucharist") in thanksgiving for God's deliverance





## The Davidic Covenant: Seven Primary Features

When we look at how the history of David's dynasty developed, we can point out seven primary features of the Davidic covenant:

1. David's line will have a **kingdom**. A kingdom is more than just a nation. The difference between a kingdom and a nation is like the difference between England and Wales, or the United States and Iowa. And David and his descendants will be more than kings; they will be *great* kings.

And I will make him the first-born,  
the highest of the kings of the earth. (Ps 89: 27)

2. The covenant is made with David's whole **dynasty**.

Moreover the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house [that is, a dynasty]. When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come forth out of your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house [that is, the Temple] for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. (2 Sm 7: 11-13)

3. When the son of David is anointed, he is adopted as **God's own son**.

I will be his father, and he shall be my son. (2 Sm 7: 14)

I will tell of the decree of the LORD:  
He said to me, "You are my son,  
today I have begotten you." (Ps 2: 7)

Anointing with oil makes the Son of David "messiah" in Hebrew or "Christ" in Greek—that is, the Anointed One. Psalm 110 calls him a priest as well as king: "You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek."<sup>15</sup> (Melchizedek was king and priest in the Jerusalem of Abraham's time.)

4. The covenant is **unlimited** in time and space. David's throne will be everlasting, and "the ends of the earth" (Ps 2: 8; Ps 72: 8) his kingdom's boundaries.

"...His line shall endure for ever,  
his throne as long as the sun before me.  
Like the moon it shall be established for ever;  
it shall stand firm while the skies endure." (Ps 89: 36-37)

Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage,  
and the ends of the earth your possession. (Ps 2: 8)

May he have dominion from sea to sea,  
and from the River to the ends of the earth! (Ps 72: 8)

When Jesus tells his disciples to be his witnesses "in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth,"<sup>16</sup> he draws a kind of concentric map of David's kingdom, showing that Jesus is the new heir of the Davidic covenant.

5. **Jerusalem** becomes the spiritual center of the world. Zion, the central mountain of Jerusalem, eclipses Sinai. Now Zion is the holy mountain of God.

I have set my king  
on Zion, my holy hill. (Ps 2: 6)

For out of Zion shall go forth the law,  
and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. (Is 2: 3)

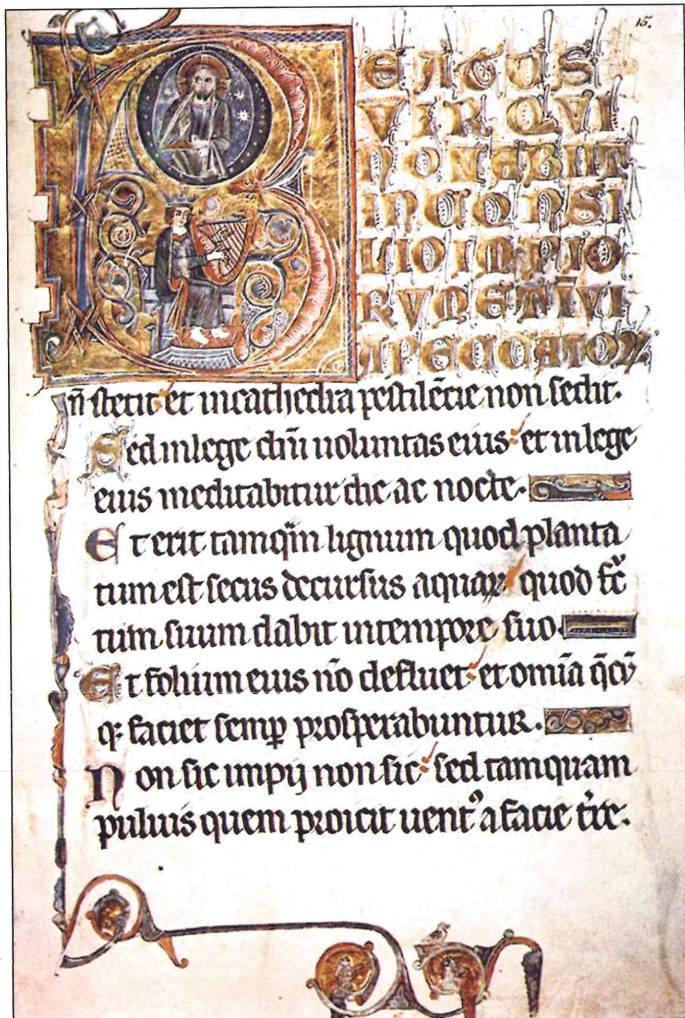


The prophets foretold a time when all nations would flock to Zion (see Is 2). In Sirach 24, Wisdom searches the universe for a resting place, but finally rests at Zion by the commandment of God.

In the New Testament, Zion takes on even more meaning. The Temple would be built on the next hill over, but Zion is where the Upper Room was—the room where Christ’s Church was born. And the New Testament writers would speak of a new Mount Zion as a “heavenly Jerusalem”<sup>17</sup> welcoming all believers.

**6. The Temple** is the architectural sign of the Davidic covenant, a building where all people of the earth were invited to worship the God of Israel. It is a place of international family reunion. As we’ll see in the next chapter, it was even built by Gentiles: the talented Phoenician artists and craftsmen sent by King Hiram of Tyre.

**7. Wisdom** is the new law of the Davidic covenant. Solomon, David’s son, would be given wisdom to govern. Wisdom literature is to the Davidic covenant what the Pentateuch was to the Mosaic covenant. “Thou hast shown me the law for man,” David says in 2 Samuel 7: 19.<sup>18</sup> “Law” is “Torah”—the name Jewish tradition gave to the five books of Moses. And “Adam” is used to mean all mankind. In other words, God has revealed to David a Torah for Adam—a law for all mankind. David’s son is going to get something more than Moses got: a law for every nation, not just for the people of Israel. We’ll read more about that new law in the next chapter of this book.



*“Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked...” (Ps 1: 1f.)*

An illuminated page from the Psalter of St. Margaret of Hungary, ca. 1261, open to Psalm 1. The first initial B of the text is the most beautifully decorated letter in the manuscript showing Christ in the upper half and King David playing his harp in the lower half.



## The Davidic Covenant In Psalm 89

**O**f old thou didst speak in a vision to thy faithful one, and say:  
“I have set the crown upon one who is mighty,  
I have exalted one chosen from the people.  
I have found David, my servant;  
with my holy oil I have anointed him;  
so that my hand shall ever abide with him,  
my arm also shall strengthen him.  
The enemy shall not outwit him,  
the wicked shall not humble him.  
I will crush his foes before him  
and strike down those who hate him.  
My faithfulness and my steadfast love shall be with him,  
and in my name shall his horn be exalted.  
I will set his hand on the sea  
and his right hand on the rivers.  
He shall cry to me, ‘Thou art my Father,  
My God, and the Rock of my salvation.’  
And I will make him the first-born,  
the highest of the kings of the earth.  
My steadfast love I will keep for him for ever,  
and my covenant will stand firm for him.  
I will establish his line for ever  
and his throne as the days of the heavens.  
If his children forsake my law  
and do not walk according to my ordinances,  
if they violate my statutes  
and do not keep my commandments,  
then I will punish their transgression with the rod  
and their iniquity with scourges;  
but I will not remove from him my steadfast love,  
or be false to my faithfulness.  
I will not violate my covenant,  
or alter the word that went forth from my lips.  
Once for all I have sworn by my holiness;  
I will not lie to David.  
His line shall endure for ever,  
his throne as long as the sun before me.  
Like the moon it shall be established for ever;  
it shall stand firm while the skies endure.”

(Ps 89: 19-37)



## The Davidic Covenant: Three Secondary Features

Besides those seven primary features of the Davidic Covenant, we can also see three secondary features that will become very important under the New Covenant.

1. The **Queen Mother** becomes an important part of the royal government. It starts with King Solomon in 1 Kings 2: 19:

So Bathsheba went to King Solomon, to speak to him on behalf of Adonijah. And the king rose to meet her, and bowed down to her; then he sat on his throne, and had a seat brought for the king's mother; and she sat on his right.

Everyone bows before Solomon, but Solomon bows before his mother. From that point on, the Queen Mother becomes a permanent fixture, a symbol of the continuity of David's royal line. She is also one of the king's most important advisers. Proverbs 31 is identified as the advice of the queen mother of King Lemuel: "The words of Lemuel, king of Massa, which his mother taught him." (One Jewish tradition has it that Lemuel was a pseudonym for Solomon himself, in which case these are really the teachings of Bathsheba.)

Of course, the role of Queen Mother will take on much more meaning in the New Testament, when the heir to the throne of David is Jesus Christ, whose mother is **Mary**.

2. The "**prime minister**" or chief steward becomes a distinct office in the royal government. The king has many servants, but one man is chief among them and stands between the king and his other ministers. Almost two centuries after David, Isaiah prophesied a transition in the royal government in which one prime minister would be replaced by another (see Is 22: 15-25). From his prophecy, we can tell that everyone in the kingdom could identify the prime minister: "he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and to the house of Judah."<sup>19</sup>



The sign of the prime minister's office is the *keys of the kingdom*. "And I will place on his shoulder the key of the house of David; he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open."<sup>20</sup> Compare that to Jesus' words to **Peter**: "I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."<sup>21</sup>

The Davidic Covenant establishes the *Queen Mother* as a symbol of the continuity of David's royal lineage from Bathsheba to Mary.



3. The **thank offering** or “sacrifice of thanksgiving” becomes the primary liturgy celebrated at Temple, rather than the sin offering.

Do I eat the flesh of bulls,  
or drink the blood of goats?  
Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving,  
and pay your vows to the Most High;  
and call upon me in the day of trouble;  
I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me. (Ps 50:13-15)

For thou hast delivered my soul from death,  
my eyes from tears,  
my feet from stumbling...

I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving  
and call on the name of the LORD.

I will pay my vows to the LORD  
in the presence of all his people,  
in the courts of the house of the LORD,  
in your midst, O Jerusalem. (Ps 116: 8, 17-19)

The thank offering is unleavened bread and wine freely offered to God in gratitude for deliverance. Ancient Jewish teachers predicted that, when the Messiah came, no other sacrifice would be offered: the thank offering alone would continue.

The word for “thank offering” is “**todah**” in Hebrew, which was later translated as “**eucharistia**” by Greek-speaking Jews.

## Summary: The Main Features of the Davidic Covenant

### Seven Primary Features:

1. God gives David a **kingdom**.
2. God promises David a **dynasty**.
3. The king becomes **God’s adopted son** when he is anointed.
4. The covenant is **unlimited** in time and space.
5. **Jerusalem** is the spiritual center of the world.
6. The **Temple** is the architectural sign of the covenant.
7. **Wisdom** literature is the new Torah.

### Three Secondary Features:

1. The **Queen Mother** becomes an important figure.
2. The **prime minister** is a permanent feature of the government.
3. The **thank offering** becomes the primary liturgy celebrated at the Temple.



The Davidic Covenant establishes the *prime minister* to stand between the King and the other ministers. The sign of the office is *the keys of the kingdom*.



SUPPLEMENTARY READING

**Augustine, *City of God*, Book XVII**

He who thinks this grand promise was fulfilled in Solomon greatly errs; for he attends to the saying, "He shall build me a house," but he does not attend to the saying, "His house shall be faithful, and his kingdom for evermore before me." Let him therefore attend and behold the house of Solomon full of strange women worshiping false gods, and the king himself, aforetime wise, seduced by them, and cast down into the same idolatry; and let him not dare to think that God either promised this falsely, or was unable to foreknow that Solomon and his house would become what they did. But we ought not to be in doubt here, or to see the fulfillment of these things save in Christ our Lord, who was made of the seed of David according to the flesh, lest we should vainly and uselessly look for some other here, like the carnal Jews. For even they understand this much, that the son whom they read of in that place as promised to David was not

Solomon; so that, with wonderful blindness to Him who was promised and is now declared with so great manifestation, they say they hope for another. Indeed, even in Solomon there appeared some image of the future event, in that he built the temple, and had peace according to his name (for Solomon means "pacific"), and in the beginning of his reign was wonderfully praiseworthy; but while, as a shadow of Him that should come, he foreshadowed Christ our Lord, he did not also in his own person resemble Him. Whence some things concerning him are so written as if they were prophesied of himself, while the Holy Scripture, prophesying even by events, somehow delineates in him the figure of things to come. For, besides the books of divine history, in which his reign is narrated, the 72nd Psalm also is inscribed in the title with his name, in which so many things are said which cannot at all apply to him, but which apply to the Lord Christ with such evident fitness as makes it quite apparent that in the one the figure is in some way shadowed forth, but in the other the truth itself is presented. For it is known within what bounds the kingdom of Solomon was enclosed; and yet in that Psalm, not to speak of other things, we read, "He shall have dominion from sea even to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth," which we see fulfilled in Christ. Truly he took the beginning of His reigning from the river where John baptized; for, when pointed out by him, He began to be acknowledged by the disciples, who called Him not only Master, but also Lord.



A page from the Duc de Berry's Psalter, 1402, painted by the Flemish artist, Beauneveu. The illustration shows King David on a great throne playing his harp.



## VOCABULARY

### CHASTEN

To punish for the purpose of correcting. God promised that he would chasten David's successors when they needed it, but never abandon them.

### EUCCHARIST

Greek for "thank offering." See Thank Offering.

### JEBUSITES

The Canaanite inhabitants of Jerusalem, whom the Israelites had not conquered up to the time of David.

### JERUSALEM

A Canaanite city conquered by David that became the capital and religious center of Israel.

### JOAB

An Israelite general who became David's prime minister by being the first to strike the Jebusites in Jerusalem.

### NATHAN

A prophet. One of David's chief advisors.

### PRIME MINISTER

A servant of the king who oversees all the affairs of the kingdom; the king's most trusted advisor.

### QUEEN MOTHER

The mother of the reigning king. Under David and his successors, the Queen Mother was a very influential figure in the kingdom.

### THANK OFFERING

A sacrifice made in thanksgiving for God's deliverance. Under David and his successors, it became the primary liturgy of the Temple.

### ZION

The hill on which the oldest part of Jerusalem was built. A poetic name for the city of Jerusalem.

## STUDY QUESTIONS

- Who was Ishbaal?
- Why did David decide to live in Jerusalem?
- Why did David fail to bring the Ark of the Covenant into Jerusalem the first time?
- Why was David able to perform sacrifices and dress like a priest when his predecessor Saul had been punished for sacrificing?
- Why did David want to build a temple?
- Who was Nathan?
- List the six promises God made in his covenant with David.
- According to point 2579 of the CCC, how was David's prayer a model for the prayer of his people?
- Study the chart comparing the Sinai covenant and the Zion covenant found in this chapter. List three ways in which the Zion covenant is more universal than the Sinai covenant.
- List the primary features of the Davidic covenant.
- List its secondary features.
- What was the sign of the prime minister's office under the Davidic covenant?
- What is the Thank offering?
- What is the difference between a kingdom and a nation?
- What important New Testament event takes place on Mount Zion?
- How does this sign help us to recognize Peter as Christ's "prime minister"?



PRACTICAL EXERCISES

1. When David first tried to have the Ark of the Covenant brought to Jerusalem he did not prepare properly and disaster resulted. A man was killed when he disrespectfully reached out to touch the ark. As the sign of God's presence among the chosen people, the ark needed to be treated with a great respect. What sacrament did Jesus Christ give the Church in order that we might have God's presence with us today? Whenever we enter a church or attend Mass, what signs of respect should we show toward our Lord in the Precious Sacrament in the tabernacle or on the altar? What are some ways in which the tabernacle is like the Ark of the Covenant?

2. One of the three secondary features of the Davidic covenant is that the Queen Mother becomes an important part of the royal government. In the New Testament, Jesus is the heir to David's throne and Mary is his Queen Mother. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* states: "The Church's devotion to the Blessed Virgin is intrinsic to Christian worship" (Lk 1: 48; Paul VI, MC 56). "The Church rightly honors the Blessed Virgin with special devotion" (LG 66) (CCC 971). What are some ways you can increase your devotion to Mary? Find a book of prayers and learn a new prayer to Mary such as "Hail Holy Queen" or the "Memorare."



This miniature of King David praying is from the Gradual of the Archbishop of Esztergom, Hungary, ca. 1520.

Endnotes

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| <p>1. 2 Sm 2: 8-10.<br/>                 2. 2 Sm 4: 5-12.<br/>                 3. 2 Sm 5: 6.<br/>                 4. 1 Chr 11: 6.<br/>                 5. Ex 25: 13-15; 1 Chr 15: 15.<br/>                 6. Nm 4: 15.<br/>                 7. 1 Chr 15: 13.<br/>                 8. 1 Chr 15.<br/>                 9. 2 Sm 6: 14.<br/>                 10. 2 Sm 6: 20.<br/>                 11. 2 Sm 6: 21-22.<br/>                 12. 2 Sm 7: 2-3.<br/>                 13. 2 Sm 7: 5-6.</p> | <p>14. We have preferred the translators' alternate reading, rather than the hypothetical correction of the Hebrew text.<br/>                 15. Ps 110: 4.<br/>                 16. Acts 1: 8.<br/>                 17. Heb 12: 22.<br/>                 18. See the footnote reading in the RSV. The translators' preferred reading, "thou... hast shown me future generations," is based on a hypothetical correction of the Hebrew text.</p> | <p>19. Is 22: 21.<br/>                 20. Is 22: 22.<br/>                 21. Mt 16: 19.<br/>                 22. Many scholars believe that the direction "Selah," which appears here in the psalm, indicates an instrumental interlude.</p> |
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