

Two Year Bible Trek  
Week 30  
2 Samuel 7-10; 1 Chronicles 17-19

**Key Concepts:** These two sections establish the Davidic Covenant in which God promises that a descendant of David will reign over Israel forever. They also tell us that King David is not only the dominant leader of the people but Israel is the dominant military power in the area

**Stories:** In 1 Samuel we have David finding some rest, David wanting to build a “house” for God, God refusing the offer and promising to make David a “house”, the Davidic Covenant, David’s prayer, ongoing military conflicts, David’s governmental appointments, David’s kindness to Saul’s grandson, the appointment of Ziba to care for Saul’s lands, and finally conflict with and domination of the Ammonites and Syrians. The stories in 1 Chronicles closely parallel those in the Samuel texts with a few exceptions. The first is that it is mentioned that the bronze captured by David is used by Solomon in the Temple (1 Chron. 18:8). The second is that the stories of Saul’s grandson are not included. Finally David’s sons, while listed as priests in the Samuel text are listed as government officials in the Chronicles text.

**Brief Summary:** Chapter seven of 2 Samuel is one of the most important in the Old Testament. It is the creation of another covenant. In the past we have seen the Noetic Covenant (God will not destroy the earth with a flood), the Abrahamic Covenant (God will bless Abram and through Abram all the families of the earth), the Mosaic Covenant (in which the people agree to obey God’s Law) and the Priestly Covenant (where Aaron is promised that his descendants will be priests forever). Now we find the Davidic Covenant. In this covenant, God promises that a descendant of David will always sit on the throne of Israel. The word play in this part of the text centers on David wanting to build a “house” or temple for God, while God wants to build David into a “house”, or lineage of kings. This covenant plays a central role in later Judaism and Christianity.

As noted above, one of the main differences between Samuel and Chronicles concerns the story of Saul’s grandson, Mephibosheth. The writer of Samuel has portrayed David as a man who recognized the ongoing political realities of ruling a divided kingdom. One of those realities concerned the remnant of the house of Saul. Chances are that even as David proved himself an able military leader, there was an undercurrent of support for Saul’s family. By honoring Mephibosheth, David binds those factions to himself. This is also seen in the fact that David names a servant of Saul, Ziba, to care for Saul’s lands. The Chronicler cannot include this story because he had earlier declared that all of Saul’s family was wiped out.

Another significant difference between these two stories concerns David’s sons. Samuel tells us that not only did David sacrifice but that his sons were priests. This is seen as simply the natural way of things in which the king shares priestly duties. Chronicles cannot allow this understanding to stand. The only people who can be priests are those who are of the official Aaronic families. Chronicles wants to maintain a separation of powers between the political (king) and religious (priests).

The other major emphasis in this section is that of the expanding influence of Israel as a regional power. Israel never becomes a dominant world power, but for a small period of time when Egypt, Assyria and Babylon were weak, Israel filled the vacuum.

1. Where in the New Testament do you see the Davidic covenant being important?
2. Why do you believe it might be important to separate political and religious power?
3. What similarities do you see between this period of history and the present situation in the Middle East?