

**The sure mercies of David  
Or  
The Big promises of God**

*Acts 13:34-36 ESV*

*(34) And as for the fact that he raised him from the dead, no more to return to corruption, he has spoken in this way, "I will give you the holy and sure blessings of David."*

*(35) Therefore he says also in another psalm, "You will not let your Holy One see corruption."*

*(36) For David, after he had served the purpose of God in his own generation, fell asleep and was laid with his fathers and saw corruption,*

**Introduction:**

I want to spend a little time looking at these verses in Acts that I have often read and every time I do I find it extremely challenging.

They are found in the middle of the summary, recorded by Luke, of a sermon preached by Paul in the synagogue in Antioch.

Now this sermon runs from verses 16 all the way to 41.

And it can be broken up into 3 parts.

The first is a sketch of Old Testament History.

The Second is God's provision of salvation through Jesus Christ and finally Paul gives an initiation to the Jews of Antioch to repent and surrender to his Lordship.

And in the middle of all of this is this incredible passage that references the life of David.

*He has spoken in this way, "I will give you the holy and sure blessings of David."*

This is a quote from Is 55:3

*Isaiah 55:3 ESV*

*(3) Incline your ear, and come to me; hear that your soul may live; and I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David.*

The New King James Version renders this... *the Sure Mercies of David*.

So the English words we have here are, *holy and sure blessings* are translated from Greek words that mean:

Righteous and faithful blessings.

But because it is originally from the Hebrew we have lost some of the meaning that lies in behind it all.

The Hebrew word for mercies means-  
covenant mercy,  
steadfast love,  
loving kindness.

This is God's attitude and the attitude God takes towards those to whom He pledges Himself.

In Psalm 89 this whole concept is explained to us by the person who wrote the Psalm, a man called Ethan the Ezrahite.

*Psalms 89:3-4 ESV*

*(3) You have said, "I have made a covenant with my chosen one; I have sworn to David my servant:*

*(4) 'I will establish your offspring forever, and build your throne for all generations.'" Selah*

Ethan was the grandson of Judah, a contemporary of Solomon and was renowned for his gift of wisdom and insight.

Now this Psalm is a tremendous Psalm and I think incredible gutsy.

In this psalm Ethan calls God onto the mat and challenges Him and holds up His word as a reminder to Him.

Here's Ethan's issue with God: In the fifth year of Rehoboam's reign, the Pharaoh of Egypt, marched against Jerusalem with a large army, conquered the fortified cities, and stole the gold out of the Temple.

Everything has gone wrong for king and nation. And Ethan looks around, sees what is going on, and asks "why?" This doesn't fit with what God promised David and his descendants!" The place is a mess.

So Ethan writes a psalm where he calls God on the carpet. I don't think God's offended either. After all, he put it in his Bible.

It starts: "I will sing of the loving kindness of the Lord forever; to all generations I will make known thy faithfulness with my mouth." Ethan isn't saying this to butter God up.

Ethan is simply reminding God that He has a reputation for faithfulness -- for keeping His word -- and that reputation is now on the line.

Ethan uses the word faithfulness eight times in the Psalm. Faithfulness is the big issue for Ethan -- God's faithfulness to the

promises He has made -- particularly the promises God made to David.

Ethan reminds God of what He has promised. Verses 3-4: "I have made a covenant with my chosen; I have sworn to David my servant, I will establish your seed forever, and build up your throne to all generations." "That's your promise God. You said it."

Here is Ethan looking at the challenges facing the Children of Israel.

The desperation, the need, even the sense of desertion some of them feel.

He doesn't run out on God, He runs to God and Say...REMEMBER ME, RMEBER US.

But I want you to think about something.....

God made those promises prior to David's greatest failings.  
Prior to his biggest trails  
God made those promises.

God gave David a promise.  
And regardless of how bleak those things looked at times  
Regardless of what David faced at times  
Regardless of his sin and short-fallings..  
God had made promises.

This promise gave a nation hope.  
This promise gave a family purpose.  
This promise meant redemption for all of mankind.

But now think...think about what happened between the time that the promise was given and the promise was delivered.

After good king Hezekiah, came Manasseh, who reigned for 55 years and was so devoted to false gods that he offered his own son in the fire to an idol. This is hardly the way to see the line of David preserved.

A little after Manasseh came Josiah. He was the last good king of Judah we read of in the older Scriptures. His reign lasted only 31 years. All four who came after him were wicked men sitting on David's throne. They put images of other gods right in the Temple of the Lord. In contempt for such unfaithfulness, God seem to leave His House and sent the Babylonians to destroy Jerusalem.

The Egyptians carried one king off in exile to Egypt. Shortly afterwards the Babylonians captured Zedekiah, the last king in Jerusalem, murdered his sons in front of him and then gouged out his eyes. Maybe they thought that would be the end of the dynasty of David.

But God had not forgotten His promise to David.

The heir to the throne of David was taken captive by the Babylonians and taken into captivity and was safe.

The Gospel of Matthew tells us that Jehoiachin had a son, Shealtiel, who had a son Zerubbabel. Zerubbabel became the governor of Judah. The line went on for 28 generations.

The nation was restored as well. God promised by His prophets that a remnant of Judah would return to their land again. He said in advance how long their captivity would last. The Lord even named the heathen king who would order their return and give them the resources to do it. Cyrus even returned sacred things taken from the temple. So Judah was not wiped out as a nation. But Egypt was; Assyria was; Babylon was.

But that line of David is forever safe and secured by God's promise and power.

The prophet Micah arises and declares that not only has God not forgotten, but He will in fact ensure that in the very village that King David was born, Bethlehem, and the Son of Promise Himself will be born.

But that wasn't enough.

He continued to try and stop the promises of God.  
Kings arose yet again to try and stop the promises of God.

Herod tried to kill this Son of Promise; he failed even though he managed to kill all the other baby boys in the area of Bethlehem.

The devil himself tried to get Him to sin, but he failed too.

Many of His people hated Him. Some saw His miracles and still did not believe. His enemies tried to kill Him ahead of God's schedule, and they failed too. One of his closest associates betrayed Him, but by then it was God's chosen time.

Barnes in his commentary says that the mercies of God spoken of David is the favor and promises that were spoken by God over his life.

These promise were called “sure”.  
These promises were called “unfailing”  
These promises were called “certain”

David was given a promise that was a multi generational promise.

God had made a promise.

Nations could do nothing about it.

Evil rulers could do nothing about it.

Satan himself could do nothing about.

FRIEND, David...could do nothing about it!

The promises of God are yes and Amen!

The sure mercies of David that are spoken of here relate to the coming of our Lord and Savior. They were very specific promises to David.

We can sit back and say...*ah yes...that is David's deal, that was really big and David was important.*

But what we miss here is the pattern that underlies the principal.

Everything God does, He does according to a pattern and based on a principle of His kingdom.

God has a unique pattern for your life just like He had for David.

Now this plan had two levels-

It had an individual and a corporate promise.

- It had a promise made to David as a man
- And it had a promise mad to the Jews as a people.

I believe that our lives are suppose to be lived like that.

God makes promises to us as individuals.

He tells us of our walk, our careers, and our future.

But these are never in isolation to the kingdom.

These are never promises that stand alone.

These are not promises that are about the measure of our consumption, our fame, our future.

All prosperity.

All success.

All prominence is for a reason and purpose.  
Saul thought that his kingship was for him.  
His army was for him.  
His fortune was for him.

He didn't realize that he was appointed by God for a kingdom purpose.

What is the point of massing vast amounts of personal capital if you are not prepared to cash it all in for eternal coin.

Friends we can take none of this with us.

The only things we take with us to glory are the relationships that we have, the souls that we have won and the Christ that we have loved.

I read these passages and I am deeply moved.

But it is the next verse in that cuts me.

It is this next verse that wretches my heart.

*(36) For David, after he had served the purpose of God in his own generation, fell asleep and was laid with his fathers and saw corruption,*

Friend we will all see corruption.

There will come a day when they will stand around your grave and say goodbye.

That doesn't worry me, that doesn't concern me, that doesn't move me....what moves me is this.

***For David, AFTER HE HAD SERVED THE PURPOSES OF GOD IN HIS OWN GENERATION.***

I want that...I ache that my life would be counted as being worthy of words like that.

HERE LIES JOHN KING AFTER HE HAD SERVED THE PURPOSE OF GOD FOR HIS GENERATION.

Two things that I see here should challenge us all:

**Served the purposes of God:**

What does God want you to do?

Have you ever stopped and asked Him?

Henry Ford said:

*All Fords are exactly alike, but no two men are just alike. Every new life is a new thing under the sun; there has never been anything just like it before, never will be again.*

*A young man ought to get that idea about himself; he should look for the single spark of individuality that makes him different from other folks, and develop that for all he is worth.*

*Society and schools may try to iron it out of him; their tendency is to put it all in the same mold, but I say don't let that spark be lost; it is your only real claim to importance.*

Some of you will finish school this year.  
You have already made up your mind that you will go here and study that.

Or once you have finished college you will return home and do this...  
But have you ever ask God what you will do?

Mike Dove was on the way to New York.  
He had his whole life planned according to his will and his purpose...and then he asked God.

Andrea Stroud had someone council her and tell her what she was to do with her life, and who she was to become and then she asked God.

Scott Pearce was working Ball greens in North Richland Hills.  
Orlando and Marisol were settled in Chicago.

Chad Wilbourn was selling cars.  
Greg Taylor was just attending a kick boxing class.

Beccy and I had our life planned out.

We were going and blowing.  
We had all the connections.  
All the plans made.  
All the ideas on how it would look and what we would do.

And then we asked God.

Listen-

*When I stand before Glory I will not give account for how faithful I have been to my dreams, but how faithful I have been to His purpose.*

I will not be held liable for my hardships, but answerable for my cowardliness.

I take not my failures to glory, but my victories.  
Not my tears, but my stories.

My career does not measure up to His calling.

Don't dream small.  
This is not the time, nor the season.  
The days are short and the hours few.

This is the time to pray audacious prayers.

Again-

*When I stand before Gory I will not give account for how faithful I have been to my dreams, but how faithful I have been to His purpose.*

I do not think that the questions that should consume us should be “How much money should I make when I leave college?” but “how will I impact and change this world for good and for God”.

Now this is not a revelation you get at one time at one point in history.

It is an unraveling, an emerging, and a dawning.

When we come to the place and relax and realize that God’s greatest desires for us, are the same as our greatest dreams.

They don’t clash, they reveal themselves over time.

If 10 years ago you told me that what I am doing now would bring the greatest satisfaction I have ever experience, I would have said you where crazy.

But now I am here doing this...there is nothing else I want to do and nowhere else I want to go.

## 1. for His generation

The WHO said it best.....*this is my generation.*

If we do not take responsibility for those that are dying around us and going to hell who will?

Illusions of grandeur are not the same as visions of greatness.

Grandeur is what I can get from it.  
Greatness is what I can give to it.

One is about me.

The other is about how I can serve and belong to something bigger than myself.

Having God-sized vision.

No visions that are truly God given will be accomplished in a single lifetime.

*Heb 11*

*38 of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth.*

*39 And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise,*

Abraham didn't see it.

But he put it in the heart of his son Isaac who so inspired Jacob that the grandson how never knew him, become the nation that was promised to Abraham.

Joseph didn't see it.

Yet on his death bed prophesied about the inheritance that was coming, the promise that was there's, the freedom they would walk in.

Moses didn't see it.

All his life he journey towards it, but died never knowing the dream that he has so crucially been involved in obtaining on behalf of God's people.

Joshua didn't see it.

He battled all life. Carved out great chunks of the promise. Gave it to all and died with in the boundaries of his inheritance...and yet! His parting words where words concerned not with their possessions, but there hearts. He, as a father to a multitude looked into the heart of his people and realized that they had not arrived, that there was still so much more for them to do, not with the material things, but with the important things.

David didn't see it.

For years he ran, he hid, he lied, he killed, he fought and he prepared. And all that he had financially, all that he had politically, and all he had relationally he left for his son to do the thing that was in his heart.

Jesus didn't see it.

He came for one purpose alone to bring salvation to the earth and establish His church. He died between two criminals to the

sounds of taunts and catcalls from the crowd. Even after He transcended to glory, He left the future of the world in the hearts of some men and women who were huddled in a room waiting for something to happen that they didn't understand and couldn't comprehend.

He had never lived to see it, but had died to achieve it.

You can tell a God sized vision and a God inspired life because it is:

- Multigenerational in its execution
- Selfless in its focus
- Daunting in its possible impact
- impossible in its fulfillment
- exciting in its prospects
- frightening in its thought of failure
- demanding in its detail
- exacting in its price
- All consuming in its focus.
- God glorifying & Christ exalting in all that it does

In fact in every area of our life the vision for our marriage our family our children our areas of dominion have the same aspect.

God never called you to have a job, but to participate in having dominion.

It is time to dream big folks.

*It is time to stop shrinking from the challenges that lie before us and start to look to the promises that God has for us.*

What if you gave yourself as a missionary to the local schools for two years?

What if you gave your self as a missionary to the local colleges?

### **3. What are you prepared to give in order to obtain?**

Theodore, Bishop of Syria records the true accord of Telemachus.

The life of Telemachus.

He lived in a remote village, tending his garden and spending much time in prayer. One day he thought he heard the voice of God tell him to go to Rome, so he obey, setting out on foot.

Weary weeks latter, he arrived in the city at a time of a great festival. The little monk followed the crowd surging towards the coliseum.

He saw the gladiators stand before the Emperor and say,  
"We who are about to die salute you."

Then he realized that these men were going to fight to the death for the entertainment of the crowd. He cried out,  
"In the name of Christ stop!!!"

As the games began, he pushed his way through the crowd, climbed over the wall, and dropped to the floor of the arena. When the crowd saw this tiny figure rushing towards the gladiators and saying "In the name of Christ stop! ", they thought that it was part of the show and began to laugh.

When they realized that it wasn't, the laughter turned to anger. As he was pleading with the gladiators to stop, one of them plunged a sword into his body. He fell to the sand. As he was dying his last words were...

"In the name of Christ stop!"

Then a strange thing happened.

The gladiators stood looking at the tiny figure lying there.

A hush fell over the coliseum.

Way up in the upper rows, a man stood and made his way to the exit. Others began to follow. In dead silence everyone left the coliseum.

The year was 404 AD, and that was the last battle to the death between gladiators in the Roman Coliseum.

Everything of eternal value is traded for a life.

It has always been that way; it will always be that way.

Nothing we can buy is of eternal value.

Your life must individually shine, but it must always be for a kingdom, a corporate purpose.

There has to be purpose to your prosperity.

There must be a purpose to your success and notoriety .

The sure mercies of God were to David as a man but always in the context of the kingdom of God.

I don't want to be famous...I want to make God famous.

Will my reputation grow?

Will I grow in stature with both God and man...absolutely, that is a promise.

Will I prosper, will I make millions? I absolutely indeed to try.

But to what end?

To sell a book?

To pitch a deal?

To have a second car?

A plane?

Maybe...

I just hope that when I am standing in the presence of Caesar that I would think nothing of jumping into the arena to address an injustice.

How sad it would be to stand before glory and say.....

*Sorry God, I saw the fight going on, but I was closing a sale and didn't want to interrupt the flow.*

Life is an exchange...God gives you days on earth; in return we are to give Him the kingdom.

Four things that will help us

**a) That we would be a people moved by the plight of the world around us**

The depravity  
The desperation  
The need

That our greatest concerns would not be the obstacles that lie ahead of us, but the thought that we died not having fulfilled our purpose for our generation.

That we pulled back instead of pushed on when the going got tough.

As a church we are drawing aside and praying and fasting for break through for our city and nation.

Break through in the supernatural.

Break through in souls and break thoughts in personal lives and destinies.

And above all else that we will live worth of this great calling.

This great opportunity and desperate cry that lies before us to bring a Living Jesus to this dying World.

To see a reformation for the Cause of Christ in our life time.

A break through for our business people and captains of industry.

For too long secular work has been seen as secondary to sacred...and that is simply not the case. There were 11 tribes of priests and one tribe of kings.

**b) Put yourself in a position for God to speak to you**

- from the word
- from council
- prophetically

- my journals

I am not worried about my future I am actively participating in it.

**c) don't sit on your hands - use them**

You're here now - do something.

Start where you are with what you got.

There is no big opportunity coming your way - God is wanting to see what you will do with what you have got

- Missionaries to TCU
- Missionaries to High schools
- don't look around America for the next great job opportunity - look here, you are sitting in the third or fourth largest economy in the world
- the state of Texas.
- You can get a job anywhere, but you can't be part of a church family like this anywhere.

**d) The harder the battle, the sweeter the victory.**

Don't think that eternal impact comes without a battle

