

David Dreams of a Temple

Opener: Describe a time when what God had for you was much better than what you thought you wanted.

Scripture: After the king was settled in his palace and the Lord had given him rest from all his enemies, ²he said to Nathan the prophet, “Here I am, living in a house of cedar, while the ark of God remains in a tent.” ³Nathan replied to the king, “Whatever you have in mind, go ahead and do it, for the Lord is with you.”

⁴But that night the word of the Lord came to Nathan, saying: 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?’ ⁶I have not dwelt in a house from the day I brought the Israelites up out of Egypt. I have been moving from place to place with a tent as my dwelling. ⁷Wherever I have moved with the Israelites, did I ever say to any of their rulers, ‘Why have you not built me a house of cedar?’”

⁸“Now 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. ⁹I 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. ¹⁰And 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 ¹¹ 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: ¹²When you rest with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you and I will establish his kingdom. ¹³He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. ¹⁴I will be his father, and he will be my son. When he does wrong, I will punish him with floggings inflicted by wicked human hands. ¹⁵But my love will never be taken away from him, as I took it away from Saul. ¹⁶Your house and kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever.” ¹⁷Nathan reported to David this entire revelation. 2 Sam. 7:1-17 (condensed)

In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, ²but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe. Hebrews 1:1-2

Discussion Questions

1. 2 Samuel 7 begins with David talking to Nathan about building a temple for the Lord. Why does that sound like a great idea? What does it indicate about his relationship with God? 2 Samuel 7:1-3
2. How does God respond to David’s idea? What does God’s response reveal about His priorities and intentions? 2 Samuel 7:8-17
3. What mistake did David and Nathan make when it came to evaluating David’s good intentions related to building a house for God? What are some examples of good intentions we might have for ministry that may not be what God intends for us to do? 2 Samuel 7:4-7
4. God goes on to promise to establish an everlasting dynasty for David’s descendants. How do these promises relate to His previous interactions with David and earlier promises to Abraham? How does this covenant pave the way for the eventual coming of the Messiah? 2 Samuel 7:8-17
5. What does Hebrews 1:1-2 tell us about Nathan’s role in David’s life? How does God reveal His intentions to us today? What’s an example of when God has spoken to you through His Son?
6. Not every ‘open door’ should be assumed to be God’s will. How can we examine opportunities to assess whether they’re really His will? Are there any good intentions you have that God seems to be saying “no” to right now?

Wrap Up: What did God mean when He said that He was going to build David a house? David already had a “house,” which was why all this began. God’s purpose was much bigger than that. He was going to build David a household. And through David’s descendants God would establish His eternal Kingdom on earth. In fact, it was in this covenant with David that God announced and laid the groundwork for recognizing Jesus as the Son of David, King of the Jews, and Messiah!