

2 Samuel 7:1-29

David Wants to Build God a Temple

2 Samuel 7:1-2 - "And it came to pass, when the king sat in his house, and the LORD had given him rest round about from all his enemies; That the king said unto Nathan the prophet, See now, I dwell in an house of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth within curtains."

This was the point in history described earlier in the Torah:

- **Deuteronomy 12:10-11** - "When you cross the Jordan and live in the land that the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance, and He gives you rest from all the enemies around you and you dwell securely, then the LORD your God will choose a dwelling for His Name."

Although David later does battle with Israel's enemies, they no longer invade the land, but David invades theirs.

Rashi says David understood this and declared "He remarked: "Behold it has been fulfilled. If so, it is incumbent upon us to build the Temple."

Nathan the prophet is first mentioned here, but we don't know much about him. Nathan wrote histories of the reigns of both David (**1 Chronicles 29:29**) and Solomon (**2 Chronicles 9:29**), and was involved in the music of the temple (see **2 Chronicles 29:25**). The Midrash teaches that two honorary seats flanked the throne of King Solomon, one for Nathan and the other for Gad the Seer. A lost Book of Nathan the Prophet is mentioned in 1 and 2 Chronicles. Nathan was also involved in the music of the temple (see **2 Chronicles 29:25**).

God's Response

2 Samuel 7:4-7 - "And it came to pass that night, that the word of the LORD came unto Nathan, saying, Go and tell my servant David, Thus saith the LORD, Shalt thou build me an house for me to dwell in? Whereas I have not dwelt in any house since the time that I brought up the children of Israel out of Egypt, even to this day, but have walked in a tent and in a tabernacle. In all the places wherein I have walked with all the children of Israel spake I a word with any of the tribes of Israel, whom I commanded to feed my people Israel, saying, Why build ye not me an house of cedar?"

Rashi, quoting other rabbis, has God say to Nathan: "This man that I am sending you to is hasty. Perhaps he will hire workers and I will find Myself incurring him loss. Hurry and tell him [it is] not you who will build the house. He is wont to make vows just as it is stated... 'how he swore unto the Lord and vowed unto the Mighty One of Jacob, if I will enter the tent which is my house...' (**Psalm 132:2**). Perhaps he will say I will not eat nor will I drink until I do that (build the Temple) and I will find Myself incurring him loss.'"

Although David's desire was sincere and outwardly humble, it contained a hint of the same kind of error that made Israel desire a king, and Uzzah to reach out his hand to steady the ark. God doesn't need our help. Israel doesn't need to imitate other nations. If pagan temples are more glorious than the simple Tabernacle, so what?

The story of David finding a habitation for the Lord is really a picture for us of the spiritual presence of God coming to rest within the heart of His people. God's habitation is ultimately the fragile earthen vessels of His church, which is also portrayed in the incarnation, by His coming into the world in the human form of Jesus of Nazareth.

God Will Build David a House

In response to David's offer to build Him a Temple, God instead promises to build David an eternal royal house and throne and kingdom, which points initially to Solomon but is fulfilled in the Messiah's eternal kingdom.

2 Samuel 7:8-17

God reminds David that He found him in a lowly "sheepcote," which is a humble shed, and made him a king over Israel. In the same way, Jesus was born in a stable and yet is crowned king of kings.

But David was not going to build God a temple. Why?

His desire was good, and God says so:

- **2 Chronicles 6:8** - "you have done well to have this in your heart."

But...

- **1 Chronicles 28:2-3** - "It was in my heart to build a house as a resting place for the ark of the covenant of the LORD and as a footstool for our God. I had made preparations to build it, but God said to me, 'You are not to build a house for My Name, because you are a man of war who has spilled blood.'"

God had defeated all of Israel's enemies and they no longer invaded the land, but David would still conduct numerous battles against them. In contrast, Solomon's entire reign would be peaceful.

Fulfilled Ultimately by Messiah

In fact, the prophets depict the Messiah as building a future temple, which Jesus explained was the temple of His body, and the temple built of living stones, His church.

- **Zechariah 6:12** - "And speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD:"

2 Samuel 7:14 - "I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men:" (Meaning he would be punished as a Father chastises his child out of love, and not be utterly destroyed).

"I will be his father, and he shall be my son" is a reference to Christ

- **Hebrews 1:5,8** - "For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son?...But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom."

The Temple Fulfilled

- **John 2:18-22** - "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" speaking of His body.

James quoted **Amos 9:11** in the Jerusalem council in **Acts 15:15-16**:

Amos 9:11 - "In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old:"

The prophecy of **2 Samuel 7** is fulfilled both in Solomon and in Jesus the Messiah.

What's the reference to chastisement mean?

Solomon was chastised for his idolatry and pride by losing the 10 tribes after Jeroboam's rebellion (**1 Kings 11**). Solomon was a sinner, but who was never forsaken, while Jesus was sinless yet forsaken on the cross ("My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"). Jesus was sinless but was both chastened and forsaken for our reconciliation: **2 Corinthians 5:20-21**.

These scriptures hint that Jesus is the builder of the eternal temple. He's also described as the chief cornerstone, the stone that the builders rejected. He indicated His body was the temple. In **1 Corinthians 6:19** Paul says our physical bodies are the temple of God. Peter says we are "living stones" in it (**1 Peter 2:5**). **Ephesians 2:19-22** connects the church as the spiritual temple.

- **Ephesians 2:19-22** - "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."

Finally, this outside-of-time temple is described in **Revelation 11:19** - "Then the temple

of God was opened in heaven, and the ark of His covenant was seen in His temple. And there were lightnings, noises, thunderings, an earthquake, and great hail."

But it also is clear that this is merely a picture of a spiritual reality -

- **Revelation 21:22-23** - "But I saw no temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, because the glory of God illuminates the city, and the Lamb is its lamp...."

Solomon understood the limitations and symbolic nature of the project when he began it:

2 Chronicles 2:6 - "But who is able to build him an house, seeing the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain him? who am I then, that I should build him an house, save only to burn sacrifice before him?"

David's Prayer of Thanksgiving

2 Samuel 7:18 - "And the king David went in and sat before the Lord; and he said: "Who am I, O' Lord God, and what is my house, that You have brought me thus far?"

David was humbled by God's promise.

Rashi - "You have done to me as You have done to Adam to whom You showed the generations that were destined to come forth from him."

But this prayer was unique. David "sat before the Lord." although it was forbidden to sit in the Temple courtyard. Here, David as king enters, sits and communes with the Presence of God in the most intimate way.

Other previous promises about their posterity - Eve in **Genesis 3:15**, that her seed the Deliverer would crush the head of the serpent, but be bruised in the heel. Abraham was told of Isaac the "child of promise." And then Aaron's descendants were given the perpetual priesthood. Now David was promised an eternal royal dynasty and house.

2 Samuel 7:19 - "And this was yet a small thing in thy sight, O Lord GOD; but thou hast spoken also of thy servant's house for a great while to come. And is this the manner of man, O Lord GOD?"

"for a great while to come" - The Targum, "thou hast spoken of the house of thy servant unto the world to come." This usually refers to the times of Messiah. In other words, this was a promise that surpasses soon coming events, to be fulfilled ultimately by the Messiah.

Summary

We need to reconsider Psalm 132.

Psalm 132:3-5 - "Surely I will not come into the tabernacle of my house, nor go up into my bed; I will not give sleep to mine eyes, or slumber to mine eyelids, Until I find out a place for the LORD, an habitation for the mighty God of Jacob."

There is nothing more important than making sure God's presence is resting within us. Nothing is more crucial to our present peace of mind or to our eternal destiny. But it is costly. The way in to our heart is through the cross, and that costs us our life.

Despite God's refusal to let David build the temple, David continued to plan for it and received merit for that, according to the rabbis.

The Temple's actual location became known later only after David sinned by numbering the people, and the death angel brought a plague on the city until he stopped at the threshing floor of Atad/Ornan on Mount Moriah. David then buys the land for 500 shekels of gold (**1 Chronicles 21**), and Mount Moriah would become the Temple Mount.

And David had to first die before Solomon could begin building the temple itself.

Psalm 132:11-12 - "The LORD hath sworn in truth unto David; he will not turn from it; Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne. If thy children will keep my covenant and my testimony that I shall teach them, their children shall also sit upon thy throne for evermore."

David is said to have died on Pentecost, and Peter references this during his sermon, as the Holy Spirit descends to dedicate the new temple of Christ's Body.

This is quoted in a remarkable statement by Peter:

- **Acts 2:29-31** - "Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption."

This suggests that David understood God's vow that his descendent would "sit upon the throne... forevermore" was referring to the Messiah; and that David knew this was what was meant. The succeeding Davidic kings were most often rebellious against God. But the kernel of the prophecy is directed toward Christ.

Once God takes up residence within us, we can know that He has defeated all our enemies and we can be at rest. The world, the flesh and the devil can take their best shot. The Temple for us has become a resting place and a refuge of peace and tranquility.

