

## 6. When God says, "No."

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It was the bottom of the ninth inning. The score was tied, one out, the runner was on the third base and doing his best to distract the pitcher. The next batter is the best slugger of the school and this is his last game in the high school before college. This kid has college recruiters standing in a line waiting for him to sign on their contracts and they are watching him now from the stands.

If there was any time to show off his powerful batting, this is it. One smack over the fence would bring the runner and himself to the home plate and he is going to be the hero of the school. The pitcher is sweating already. As the batter was heading up to the batting box, he glanced over the third base side and he couldn't believe what he just saw. The the third base coach was giving him a sign for a suicide squeeze bunt play. He was thinking, "What do you mean a suicide squeeze play? Don't you know this is my last game and the recruiters are watching me?"

But the order is order. As the pitcher threw a ball, he quickly pulled his bat to the front and did a perfect suicide squeeze play. The runner slid into the home plate and they won the game.

This slugger could do what he wants by trying to smack the ball over the fence, but the order from the coach was a squeeze bunt play to bring the runner home. Even though he didn't like the order from the coach, he was faithful and obedient. Actually, that was what the recruiters wanted to see more than his powerful swing. A willing heart to sacrifice himself for the team's victory.

None of us wants to hear 'No' to any of our plans. As a matter of facts, we don't want to hear any 'Nos' from anyone, period. Our idea is "As long as I get my way right away, all the time, everything will be fine."

However, to our surprise, our heavenly Father reserves right to say, 'No' to anything we plan. Because we are His, the whole universe belongs to Him, He brought us into life and He can take us back if He wants. But He is more merciful and gracious than we can possibly imagine.

We are going to see how David took God's 'No' and let's learn from this great man of God.

### A. PERSONAL DESIRE

*2 Sam 7:1-3 Now it came to pass when the king was dwelling in his house, and the Lord had given him rest from all his enemies all around, 2 that the king said to Nathan the prophet, "See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwells inside tent curtains." 3 Then Nathan said to the king, "Go, do all that is in your heart, for the Lord is with you."*

V1 God's covenant with David makes this one of the greatest chapters of Bible. The message of the Bible from this point on rests upon this promise that God makes to David.

This leads us to believe that the events of 2 Samuel 7 happened after the wars of conquest described in 2 Samuel 8. This section is placed before the war accounts in the text to show its greater importance.

v2 Cedar wood was especially valued in that region. This means that David lived in an expensive, beautiful palace. When he remembered that the ark of God dwells inside tent curtains, the contrast bothered him. David was troubled by the thought that he resided in a nicer place than the ark of the covenant. David wanted to show his gratitude and thankful heart toward God by doing something for Him.

v3 It didn't take a prophet to read David's mind. He was formulating a dream to build his Lord the grandest, most spectacular temple in the world. Sharing David's desire, Nathan assured him that his plan lined up with God's will.

I would have said the same thing. The fact of the matter is, if someone came to me and said, "Pastor Joonho, I'd like to completely pay for the 20 acre lot that you want at Sahuarita Road with a 15,000 square feet church building that includes a fellowship hall and a kitchen for Calvary Chapel of Sahuarita." I'll be honest with you, I would not say, "Well, let me go and pray about this and see whether this is what the Lord wants." I would say, "Hallelujah, this is from God." But that might not be the will of God. I understand how Nathan felt. David's plans sounded good. Nathan could not think of anything better than building a house for God.

However, Nathan spoke too soon without seeking the Lord.

## **B. A DIVINE RESPONSE**

*2 Sam 7:4 But it happened that night that the word of the Lord came to Nathan, saying, 5 "Go and tell My servant David, 'Thus says the Lord: "Would you build a house for Me to dwell in? 6 For I have not dwelt in a house since the time that I brought the children of Israel up from Egypt, even to this day, but have moved about in a tent and in a tabernacle. 7 Wherever I have moved about with all the children of Israel, have I ever spoken a word to anyone from the tribes of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd My people Israel, saying, 'Why have you not built Me a house of cedar?'"*

v4 In wanting to build God a temple, David's heart was in the right place. Yet, just because David's plan was noble and his friend was applauding it didn't mean it was God's will. It's a good idea to remember that every plan we may come up for God isn't necessarily of God.

v5 Although Nathan had at first encouraged David to build a temple for the ark, the Lord revealed that this was not His intention at all.

Most of us are so stuck in the thinking, "What can God do for me? After all He is God," that we never really want to do more than God commands. But David wanted to do more than God commands. This is a wonderful place to be in our relationship with God.

v6 God had met with His people in a tent. In other words, God identified Himself with His people. That is why 2000 years ago Jesus Christ came to earth and took upon Himself our humanity. Apostle John says about this.

*John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.*

That word 'dwelt' means 'tabernacled'. Instead of 'meeting' man in a flimsy tent made of linen, God met man in a flimsy tent made of flesh. He came to earth and identified Himself with us. God has always identified Himself with His people.

The Lord willing, we are going to study more in-depth about the tabernacle and learn how it portrays Jesus Christ next week.

v7 Throughout the history of God's dealings with the Israelites, never once did He reprove them for failing to build Him a permanent sanctuary. Building the temple was David's idea – not God's commandment. Being generous that He is, God gives him credit for David's willingness to build a temple.

That was a hard message for Nathan to hear and even harder to pass on to the king.

There is a parallel verse that shows why the Lord refused David's good intention:

*1 Chronicles 22:8 but the word of the Lord came to me, saying, 'You have shed much blood and have made great wars; you shall not build a house for My name, because you have shed much blood on the earth in My sight.'*

### **C. PLANS FOR FUTURE**

*2 Sam 7:8 Now therefore, thus shall you say to My servant David, 'Thus says the Lord of hosts: "I took you from the sheepfold, from following the sheep, to be ruler over My people, over Israel. 9 And I have been with you wherever you have gone, and have cut off all your enemies from before you, and have made you a great name, like the name of the great men who are on the earth. 10 Moreover I will appoint a place for My people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own and move no more; nor shall the sons of wickedness oppress them anymore, as previously, 11 since the time that I commanded judges to be over My people Israel, and have caused you to rest from all your enemies. Also the Lord tells you that He will make you a house.'*

v8 God's refusal wasn't a rejection of His faithful king but a redirection. He had a different plan for him that neither Nathan nor David would ever have dreamed of.

Can you imagine how David felt when he was told 'No' by God for his plan to build a holy temple for His glory?

Can you imagine how Moses felt when he was told 'No' by God right at the edge of the Promised Land? When over two million people were allowed to enter into the land that God promised for forty years ago, Moses was not allowed to enter because of his one-time disobedience.

Pastor Chuck Smith who started Calvary Chapel wanted to be an evangelist when he was young. But God had a different plan. He said, "No" to pastor Chuck and made him to be one of the most profound Bible expositors in the world. Through that man, we now have great evangelists like Greg Laurie, Mike MacIntosh and Raul Ries who bring many people to Jesus around the world.

v11 God took away David's dream, it's true, and for an instant, the king's heart must have sunk. However, when the Lord told David 'No,' God had a much greater 'Yes' behind it. The Lord gave David a covenant that far outshined the privilege of building a temple.

### **D. GOD'S COVENANT WITH DAVID**

*2 Sam 7:12 "When your days are fulfilled and you rest with your fathers, I will set up your seed after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. 13 He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the*

throne of his kingdom forever. 14 I will be his Father, and he shall be My son. If he commits iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men and with the blows of the sons of men. 15 But My mercy shall not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I removed from before you. 16 And your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. Your throne shall be established forever." 17 According to all these words and according to all this vision, so Nathan spoke to David.

v13 The family of David did rule over Israel for more than four centuries, but was eventually removed by the nations which God had sent because of their never ending idolatry.

v14 This descendent of David will enjoy a special relationship with God. If he sins, God will not reject him. Instead, God will chasten him without rejecting him.

v16. God promises David that the reign of his dynasty will last forever, because it will turn into the Messianic Kingdom through Jesus Christ.

The prophets foretold a greater fulfillment of these promises:

*Isaiah 9:6-7 For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.*

*Jeremiah 23:5 "Behold, the days are coming," says the Lord, "That I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness; A King shall reign and prosper, And execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell safely; Now this is His name by which He will be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.*

*Luke 1:31-33 And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end.*

Jesus is building the Father a magnificent house in the sense that we are God's temples.

*1 Corinthians 6:19 Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?*

## **E. A GRATEFUL AND TRIUMPHANT PRAYER**

*2 Sam 7:18 Then 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 this far? 19 And yet this was a small thing in Your sight, O Lord God; and You have also spoken of Your servant's house for a great while to come. Is this the manner of man, O Lord God? 20 Now what more can David say to You? For You, Lord God, know Your servant. 21 For Your word's sake, and according to Your own heart, You have done all these great things, to make Your servant know them. 22 Therefore You are great, O Lord God. For there is none like You, nor is there any God besides You, according to all that we have heard with our ears. 23 And who is like Your people, like Israel, the one nation on the earth whom God went*

to redeem for Himself as a people, to make for Himself a name--and to do for Yourself great and awesome deeds for Your land--before Your people whom You redeemed for Yourself from Egypt, the nations, and their gods? 24 For You have made Your people Israel Your very own people forever; and You, Lord, have become their God. 25 Now, O Lord God, the word which You have spoken concerning Your servant and concerning his house, establish it forever and do as You have said. 26 So let Your name be magnified forever, saying, 'The Lord of hosts is the God over Israel.' And let the house of Your servant David be established before You. 27 For You, O Lord of hosts, God of Israel, have revealed this to Your servant, saying, 'I will build you a house.' Therefore Your servant has found it in his heart to pray this prayer to You. 28 And now, O Lord God, You are God, and Your words are true, and You have promised this goodness to Your servant. 29 Now therefore, let it please You to bless the house of Your servant, that it may continue forever before You; for You, O Lord God, have spoken it, and with Your blessing let the house of Your servant be blessed forever."

v18 David's rhetorical question reflected his sense of unworthiness to have been extended such a gracious promise from God.

v25 David prayed for the fulfillment of the promise. As David undoubtedly knew, God's will would be accomplished whether he prayed for it or not. But like David, when we pray in God's will for God's will, we become a part of His will. We also become an expectant people, ready to respond to God with great praise when He had accomplished His will.

David would spend the rest of his reign gathering materials, organizing workers, and drawing plan for a temple he would never build, so Solomon could build a glorious one to God. How he must have longed to stroll through the majestic halls and admire the immense columns, to run his fingers along the intricately carved stone and sing praises to His Lord in the golden sanctuary. Still, he was content. His son would build his Lord's temple and worship within its walls.

Had David been the here-and-now type, the disappointment of God's 'No' might have blinded him to the preciousness of God's promise. He might have become disillusioned and bitter – even jealous of his future son, who would accomplish what he couldn't.

Sometimes we focus so much on the privileges that God has given others that we overlook the priceless inheritance that He's laid in our laps. David didn't make that mistake. Overflowing with gratitude, he praised the God who had given him so much.

v28 David's prayer boldly asks God to do what He promised. This isn't passive prayer, nor arrogant prayer. This is bold prayer that says, "God, here is Your promise - now I trust You to fulfill it completely and to be faithful to Your Word." God is pleased to see us coming to Him with His promises for us.

This kind of prayer makes God's promise into our truth. Just because God promises something doesn't mean that we possess it. Through the prayer like this and believing in Him, God fulfills them and they become true in our lives. If we don't exercise in faith, God's promise is left unclaimed.

- We may make His promise for forgiveness into our truth.

*1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*