

An Eternal House for An Eternal King

4th Sun. in Advent – 12/20/20 – Mt. Calvary Luth.
Text: 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16 Pastor Keith Besel

v. 11b, “...the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house...”

v. 16, “**And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before Me. Your throne shall be established forever.**”

Introduction

✘ You ought to see my “To Do” list at home! In fact, I suspect it is much like the “To Do” list that many of you have, where you can’t hardly turn around, or go into any room in the house without seeing one or more – or many items from your list that you want to fix, improve or completely rebuild/replace.

➔ The problem is that I just never seem to reduce the size of the list. And the list of “To Dos” is especially long during the holidays. With decorations that need to be unpacked and put out, and gifts to purchase, and cookies and treats to make, and cards to send out (if you even do them at all), it’s quite overwhelming, isn’t it?

✘ Much more serious though are the things you and I want to do for God that we never accomplish. Think just for a moment, “What’s on your ‘To Do’ list for God? What’s on our congregation’s list?”

➔ Here’s a common one that even the great King David couldn’t do: “Build and grow the Kingdom”. But if you haven’t learned by now, then it’s time today for all of us to understand that the Kingdom of God cannot be built; cannot even be grown by human effort. It is only accomplished by the eternal King, Jesus.

I. King David thought he could build a house for God.

✘ As we hear in our Old Testament Reading today, King David believed that, once he was settled in his own “house of cedar” (v. 2), he could and should do something good for God.

➔ And to be fair, he had already accomplished so much. He and his armies had conquered all of his surrounding enemies. He ran the Jebusites out of Jerusalem and claimed it as “The City of David” (2 Sam. 5:9). He destroyed the Philistines in the Valley of Rephaim – twice! (2 Sam. 5:22-25).

➔ He increased both the size and strength of the city of Jerusalem, building himself a house with cedar trees from the kingdom of Tyre. 2 Samuel 5:12 acknowledges that David knew he could not have done any of it if not for God’s presence with him. “And David knew that the LORD had established him king over Israel, and that He had exalted his kingdom for the sake of His people Israel”.

➔ Most important though was that David initiated and accomplished the return of the Ark of the Covenant – understood to be the earthly throne for God. Finally it was back among God’s promised people of Israel; back in the Tabernacle where God intended for it always to be. It had been taken away 58 years earlier when the Philistines destroyed the Tabernacle.

✘ But even now, with peace and all of God’s holy vessels restored, David felt that something important was lacking.

➔ It’s as if we see a light bulb go on over David’s head as he considers all that he has accomplished and built but then compares it to the place of worship; the Tabernacle. In verse

two David says to the prophet Nathan, “See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwells in a tent”.

→ Like so many believers still today, David had prioritized building and acquiring things for himself and others rather than “building” for God. And as a result, much like we see today, his family was racked by problems in the years to follow – there are his own sins of adultery and murder, incest among his children, and rebellion from a son and future king, Solomon just to name a few.

✘ So, just as it has been for every sinner ever to live, regardless of earthly rank or influence, all of David’s earthly accomplishments eventually turned to dust along with his own body after he died and was buried in the ground.

→ In the end David would not be the one to build the temple to hold the Ark of the Covenant. Why? Because it wasn’t God’s will.

✘ In Psalm 127:1 we hear this very important truth, “Unless the LORD builds the house, those who build it labor in vain”.

→ It’s not that God doesn’t want us believers to do things for Him. It’s just that, as Nathan indicates in verse three, our hearts and motivations must be pure and open to following God’s will rather than our own. And that means that we need to first know well all that God has already done for us in the past, so that we can better understand what He plans to do for us, and through us in the future.

→ What might seem like a “no brainer”; an obvious thing that God would want us to do, may in fact not be God’s desire for us and our actions, just as we see here with King David.

II. The house God builds demands the most attention

✘ As the LORD shows David, when God constructs His earthly place of presence it is, by necessity, perfect and lasting. And He uses all that He had done for David and His people in the past to make that truth apparent.

→ Beginning with verse six He reminds David – it was Yahweh who delivered the Israelites out of slavery to Pharaoh in Egypt.

→ Yahweh was the one who shepherded them through the wilderness for 40 years and brought them successfully into The Promised Land.

→ Yahweh was the one who guided and led David’s armies; Who actually fought for them against their enemies, and finally brought them rest and peace at the time of this text.

→ Yahweh is the one who provided the Tabernacle; the place for His ark to rest as an assurance of God’s mighty presence among His people here on earth.

✘ And guess what friends – God has done the same for you and me!

→ Each of you – take a quick and honest look at your own life and you will see the same sinful insufficiencies that David saw in his life; how your own personal priorities have so often taken first billing instead of the priorities that God desires of you each day; how your family struggles with sin – and especially how you continue to sin against every Commandment of God.

→ And yes, because of it, like David, you too will die and be buried, and everything that you hold so dear here on earth will eventually turn to dust.

✘ But still, just as it was for David, God is the only one who does, and who provides everything that you and I need!

- He has so undeservedly delivered you from sin and its slavery as He brought you through the waters of baptism. He continues to shepherd you through the wilderness of this sin-scorched world with His perfect Word of truth and His grace-filled Sacraments of baptism and Holy Communion.
- By His power alone He has conquered Satan who prowls around you every day, looking to devour you and take you into eternal ruin.
- And yes, as He promised to King David, He is the one who built for you, the perfect and eternal temple in His only begotten son – Jesus!
- ⊗ This is the greatest accomplishment that you and I and all the earth needs in our relationship with God. We need God with us in the flesh – not according to our design or according to our human way of constructing a dwelling place for a king.
 - No, notice in the latter part of verse 11 how God reverses things for David. Instead of David doing something for God, we hear this: “The LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house”.
- ⊗ Likely, David didn’t fully understand what the LORD meant by this promise, because David’s thinking, like ours so much of the time, was constrained by our earthly limitations and our lack of faith.
 - But verse 12 that has been cut out of our official Reading today really leaves David no excuse to misunderstand. The LORD says to David, “When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers (that’s Old Testament lingo for our death), I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom”.
 - You see, this promised-earthly-place for God’s choice as King to take up residence and live and reign among and over God’s people; this “house” is a person.
 - You and I know who it is, don’t we? He’s the One whose coming we are so eager to celebrate this week at Christmas. He’s the One whom we heard the angel Gabriel talking with Mary about in our Gospel Reading today in Luke 1:32-33 when Gabriel said, “He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to 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”.
 - Yes, this is the baby Jesus, the Son of David and the Son of God. And His house; His temple; His throne is the earthly flesh of an infant!
- ⊗ In John 2:19-21 Jesus even called Himself the temple, saying to the Jews, “‘Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.’ The Jews then said, ‘It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?’ But He was speaking about the temple of His body.”
 - Yes, Jesus there predicted His own destruction and death on the cross for your forgiveness and mine, and His glorious resurrection from death in victory as our eternal King!
 - And the fact that He has now ascended in the flesh to reign upon His throne forever at the right hand of God the Father, means that He has now made for you and me an eternal house as well in His presence. In John 14:2-3 Jesus told His disciples before His ascension, “In My Father’s house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to Myself, that where I am you may be also”.

III. God builds “the King’s house” for you!

- ⊗ Yes, friends, that means that you and I now have the same hope as David; that God builds “the King’s house” for us as our eternal place of rest!
 - ➔ Why else would He go to all of the work of setting up and promising the coming of the Messiah in the flesh if He did not intend it for our benefit and salvation?
 - ➔ Why else would He send Gabriel to Mary to explain the miracle He was sending through her for the souls of all the world.
 - ➔ Because just as the prophet Nathan proclaimed to David in verse three, so the LORD commissions all of us to live now in His kingdom in sincerity and faith and says, “Go, do all that is in your heart, for the LORD is with you.”

Conclusion

- ⊗ “The LORD is with you”. That’s the truth that David missed at first, just as we so often do. We see and know that the cloth tent; the Tabernacle was never intended by God to be a permanent place for His presence. And even the Temple that David’s son Solomon built was destroyed after 400 years, just as its replacements were also eventually demolished. And we are tempted in our negative tendency to think as so many people do today that this is proof that God and Jesus and all of this talk about an eternal King still reigning over our souls, and for our salvation today is utter nonsense; a false hope.
 - ➔ But Christians, this is why Advent and Christmas are so very important for us to understand correctly from Scripture. God gave His promise to David and to Mary and to you and me for our personal and eternal comfort.
 - ➔ He wants His people to have a lasting hope, not in earthly things or in their own accomplishments, but in His eternal King, Jesus; in His eternal kingdom where we live!
- ⊗ May you this week and always look into the manger – and in that tiny, wiggly baby before Mary and Joseph and the shepherds, may you see God’s eternal house for Your eternal King! Amen.