

Active in Goodness

2 Samuel 7:1-17

Enter into the Lord's presence with joy and gratitude.

Are you beginning to see patterns of sloth or pride in your life?

You are in Jerusalem awaiting the ark. Up until this week, we have seen a David who was very deliberate and patient. But, he gets a little too excited and opts for a quicker plan than God's. This leads to a catastrophe.

Pray that the Lord draws you out of sloth to embrace the kingly mission he has given you. Pray for the grace of freedom and humility for all Exodus Men, just as they are praying for you.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Lord and Master of my life, spare me from the spirit of indifference, despair, lust for power, and idle chatter. Instead, bestow on me, your servant, the spirit of integrity, humility, patience, and love. Yes, O Lord and King, let me see my own sins and not judge my brothers and sisters; for you are blessed forever and ever. Amen.

A Reading from the Second Book of Samuel

Now when the king dwelt in his house, and the Lord had given him rest from all his enemies round about, the king said to Nathan the prophet, "See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwells in a tent." And Nathan said to the king, "Go, do all that is in your heart; for the Lord is with you." But that same night the word of the Lord came to Nathan, "Go and tell my servant David, 'Thus says the Lord: Would you build me a house to dwell in? In all places where I have moved with all the people of Israel, did I speak a word with any of the judges of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, "Why have you not built me a house of cedar?" Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David, 'Thus says the Lord of hosts, I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, that you should be prince over my people Israel;...Moreover the Lord declares to you that the Lord will make you a house. When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come forth from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son. When he commits iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, with the stripes of the sons of men; but I will not take my steadfast love from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away from before you. And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure for ever before me; your throne shall be established for ever.'" In accordance with all these words, and in accordance with all this vision, Nathan spoke to David.

Reflection

This is an important moment in the kingdom of David. We read that David was

at rest from his enemies. He has, in other words, experienced a kind of Sabbath. His kingdom has become something of a Garden of Eden. He can now enjoy his reign.

Quite rightly, David wants to spend his sabbatical promoting the worship of the Lord. He does not want to use the spoils of his success to make his palace more lavish. Rather, he wants to make grander the house of the Lord. Here, David seems to be a better Adam.

While both David and the prophet Nathan think this is right, the Lord speaks to Nathan to tell him otherwise, saying that he had never asked for such a home. Very interestingly, the Lord instructs David (through the prophet) to concern himself instead with the building of his own family. The Lord declared to David through Nathan that he “will make [David] a house” and “will raise up [his] offspring after [him].”

What the Lord wanted from David was not a temple but a family. This seems to have been David’s greatest weakness, as we saw in his interaction with Michal. And, we will see it again in some of the dysfunction that occurs amongst his sons.

David wanted to build the Lord a temple. It was a good and holy desire. God will indeed have someone from David’s family build him such a house. Yet, the Lord also knows what is best and knew that, for whatever reason, it would not be good for David to build the temple. David needed to concentrate on being a father and husband, which was clearly his weakness.

Sometimes, the Lord withholds good things from us because he knows getting them will be detrimental. Are there good things you desire, perhaps even for the sake of the Lord, that you need to let go of in order to concentrate on what is needed? Is God keeping you from attaining a good desire (a job, success, a new house, etc.) because he desires for you to focus on your home and family?

Now place yourself before God, and converse with him.

Week 4 Action Items

Plan a Midsummer's Eve Bonfire for Friday and invite men into your fraternity.

Recommit to your daily prayer.

Evaluate your technology use.