



Culture of Prayer Conference

Session 3: David's Heart After God

I. Looking into David's Heart:

The Word of God makes some statements about David that in many ways set him apart from all other men. These calculated statements about how God viewed David have been preserved for generations as God's way to make declaration about how unusual of a man David was and how cherished he and his life ambition was to the heart of God. This unique testimony from Heaven had everything to do with a promise that David made to God in His youth. I want to encourage you to become familiar with the solemn vow that David made in Psalm 132 to build God a resting place. This was a sober commitment that David carried out his whole life through. This session is aimed at helping us make discoveries into the devotion he had to see the house of prayer established and sustained in his generation.

"Lord, remember David and all his self-denial. He swore an oath to the Lord, he made a vow to the Mighty One of Jacob: "I will not enter my house or go to my bed, I will allow no sleep to my eyes or slumber to my eyelids, till I find a place for the Lord, a dwelling for the Mighty One of Jacob (Ps. 132:1-5)."

A. David's Lifework:

David seemed to care about things that most men in history have not given much energy to; he made it his lifework to establish a dwelling place for God. For him this was about way more than construction a building, he understood God's presence could only rest in the midst of people under certain circumstances. This is what he labored and prayed to see established in Jerusalem; for it to become a city where God's presence would dwell and where His purposes would be released in an unusual way in his generation.

B. The Context of David's Vow:

When David was a boy he was growing up in a dark time for Israel, her leadership had permitted the ark of the covenant to be captured by the Philistines, the enemies of God's people. The ark represented the very presence of God, so it is an unthinkable reality that the leadership of the nation would have allowed such a thing and then once it was gone make no effort to go get it back. David was painfully aware of this and the lack of honor attention the ark was given under Eli and then King Saul.

"The man who brought the news replied, "Israel fled before the Philistines, and the army has suffered heavy losses. Also your two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead, and the ark of God has been captured (1Sa. 4:17)."

“She named the boy Ichabod, saying, “The Glory has departed from Israel”—because of the capture of the ark of God (1Sa. 4:21)”

“Let us bring the ark of our God back to us, for we did not inquire of it during the reign of Saul (1Ch. 13:3).”

C. Identifying the Problem:

The essence of David’s vow was about ending a crisis; the lack of God’s manifest presence in the community. If we are honest with ourselves by and large, the Church in America cares about many good things, but for the most part the lack of God’s presence in our midst is not much of a burden to us. The barrenness of the tangible presence of God has become so normal for us that no one even challenges that it could look any other way. We are currently living in a spiritual crisis and I am afraid that we have very little sense of it.

D. Understanding David’s Heart:

This was David’s revelation and the vow he made was the overflow and direct response to his hearts’ ache over this understanding. This revelation was very disruptive to David’s life and it caused him to make his decisions very differently from other men. He became a man of unusual dedication and Heaven took notice of him in an equally unusual way even labeling him a man after the heart of God. Perhaps if we can understand how David thought then we can begin to pursue God’s heart like David did.

II. **God’s Commentary on King David:**

Some very rare things are recorded in the Bible about David. He seems to be set apart in many ways from every others person in our Bible. The following section assesses how God viewed David; these are calculated statements that have been preserved for the generations to come as a witness. The way God allows the scripture to boast about David is a clear declaration from the Father about how unusual of a man David was. As we read through these testimonies it is important that we remember why these statements were made about him. What was it about David that made God’s commentary about Him so drastically different from all other men? What did he do during his lifetime that so set him apart from other great men that he would be esteemed in such unprecedented ways?

A. Man After God’s Heart:

God uniquely called David a man after His own heart, a statement that is not repeated of anyone else in the Bible. This makes David a very unusual case study.

1. Before David became king:

God spoke to Saul through Samuel the Prophet that the Lord’s eyes had found one who was a man after His own heart. This was true of David in his youth before he had done anything for God that we remember him for. His heart was fully the Lord’s.

“But now your kingdom will not endure; the Lord has sought out a man after his own heart and appointed him ruler of his people, because you

have not kept the Lord's command (1Sa. 13:14)."

2. After David was long gone:

It is interesting that the New Testament re-testifies to this reality as being true of David after his life was spent. This reflection includes all of his sins and weaknesses and the statement was still considered to be true about him.

"After removing Saul, he made David their king. He testified concerning him: 'I have found David son of Jesse a man after my own heart; he will do everything I want him to do (Ac. 13:22)."

B. Obeyed All God's Commands:

The scripture actually says that David did all that the Lord commanded him to do his whole life. This statement was also written about David after his passing with all the mistakes of his life taken into account.

"For David had done what was right in the eyes of the LORD and had not failed to keep any of the LORD's commands all the days of his life—except in the case of Uriah the Hittite (1Ki. 15:5)."

C. Accomplished All of God's Purposes:

David was said to have accomplished the full will of God in his generation, serving the fullness of God's purpose and doing all His will. This is a powerful statement and a rare testimony about a man's life.

"For David, after he had served the purpose of God in his own generation, fell asleep, and was laid among his fathers (Ac. 13:36)"

D. God Made David a Witness Forever:

At the time of the writing of Isaiah over 300 years had passed from the time of David. God declares through this prophet however that David was made a witness of what God was looking for in a man, in a relationship, in a leader and in a lover.

"Give ear and come to me; hear me, that your soul may live. I will make an everlasting covenant with you, my faithful love promised to David. See, I have made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander of the peoples (Is. 55:3-4)."

E. The Measure for All Kings:

After David's death all the kings of Israel and Judah were compared to him with regard to how well they did. It is interesting that God permitted that a man become the barometer for good kingship and standard for seeking the Lord.

"Asa did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, as his father David had done (1Ki. 15:11)."

"He did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, but not as his father David had done (2Ki. 14:3)."

“Unlike David his father, he did not do what was right in the eyes of the LORD his God (2Ki. 16:2).”

F. The Good Motives of David’s Heart:

Even at the end of David’s life the Lord peered into David’s soul and spoke well even of motives that would never see fruition, namely to build a permanent structure for God’s presence in Israel.

“My father David had it in his heart to build a temple for the Name of the LORD, the God of Israel. But the LORD said to my father David, ‘Because it was in your heart to build a temple for my Name, you did well to have this in your heart (2Ch. 6:7-8).”

G. The End Time Prayer Movement:

The last days will see (are seeing) a global prayer movement spread through the nations as a testimony of God’s worth. The early church had a revelation that this end time move of God would be actually be called God rebuilding David’s Tabernacle. God relates the end time move of God to bringing back David’s worship ministry; the return of Jesus to rule and reign is specifically related back to David.

“After this I will return And will rebuild the tabernacle of David, which has fallen down; I will rebuild its ruins, And I will set it up; So that the rest of mankind may seek the Lord, Even all the Gentiles who are called by My name, Says the Lord who does all these things (Ac. 15:16 NKJV).”

H. Forever Jesus is David’s Son:

This wild statement is in agreement however with the full testimony of scripture which says that Jesus would come from David’s lineage and so be David’s son. God looked at David’s life and at his response to the issue of the bareness of God’s presence in the land and He chose David out of all the people on the planet to be the one through whom His Son would be born. Jesus is the Son of God and He is not called the son of any other man, but forever He will be called the “son of David.”

“This is the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah the son of David (Mt. 1:1)”

“All the people were astonished and said, “Could this be the Son of David (Mt. 12:23)?”

III. A Love & Commitment to the Ark of God:

The Ark of the Covenant was representative of God Himself. David had unwavering respect and adoration for God’s Ark his whole. The Ark is the centerpiece of David’s Tabernacle; all that was done in that tent revolved around the Ark and was an expression of David’s (and everyone who participated in the worship order) devotion to the Lord. This concern and reverence for the Lord’s presence began early in David’s life and continued throughout.

A. Young David Heard About the Ark:

David had heard stories about the Ark of the Covenant as a boy growing up in Bethlehem. His interest in the Ark and concern for God's presence began at an early age.

"We heard it in Ephrathah, we came upon it in the fields of Jaar: "Let us go to his dwelling place; let us worship at his footstool- arise, O LORD, and come to your resting place, you and the ark of your might (Ps. 132:6-8)."

B. David Purchased the Temple Mount:

David solemnly purchased the site on Mount Zion in Jerusalem where the Temple would later be built. This is where the Ark would then be housed for generations.

"On that day Gad went to David and said to him, Go up and build an altar to the LORD on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite." So David went up, as the LORD had commanded through Gad...Araunah said to David, "Let my lord the king take whatever pleases him and offer it up"...But the king replied to Araunah, "No, I insist on paying you for it. I will not sacrifice to the LORD my God burnt offerings that cost me nothing." So David bought the threshing floor and the oxen and paid fifty shekels of silver for them. David built an altar to the LORD there and sacrificed burnt offerings and fellowship offerings. Then the LORD answered prayer in behalf of the land (2Sa. 24:18-25)"

C. Once King He Brought Up the Ark:

After David became King of Judah he immediately made plans to bring the Ark of the covenant to Jerusalem. This had long been his plan and the desire of his heart to have the presence of God near to him.

"Let us bring the ark of our God back to us, for we did not inquire of it during the reign of Saul." The whole assembly agreed to do this, because it seemed right to all the people (1Ch. 13:3-4)."

D. He Set up a Tent on Mount Zion:

David had a Tabernacle set up on Mount Zion as an immediate place for the Ark to rest in the midst of the people of God. He then assembled all of Israel to bring it to the place he had prepared for it.

"After David had constructed buildings for himself in the City of David, he prepared a place for the ark of God and pitched a tent for it. Then David said, "No one but the Levites may carry the ark of God, because the LORD chose them to carry the ark of the LORD and to minister before him forever." David assembled all Israel in Jerusalem to bring up the ark of the LORD to the place he had prepared for it (1Ch. 15:1-3)."

E. David Brought up the Ark:

David brought up the Ark with the most extravagant display of reverence, offerings and worship. (For the whole story of the two attempts to bring the Ark to Jerusalem please see 2Sa. 6:1-9 & 2Sa. 6:11-22).

"They brought the ark of God and set it inside the tent that David had

pitched for it, and they presented burnt offerings and fellowship offerings before God (1Ch. 16:2)."

"They brought the ark of the LORD and set it in its place inside the tent that David had pitched for it, and David sacrificed burnt offerings and fellowship offerings before the LORD (2Sa. 6:17)."

F. David Established Night and Day Worship:

Once in place David positioned singers and musicians around the Ark of God's presence night and day. Teams were organized to be in place around the Ark perpetually, there were thousands of people enlisted to this task to ensure that the Lord was always being worshiped and His presence tended to by priests. They were instructed to worship and intercede on behalf of God's purposes and people in what would become the most extravagant unceasing offering in human history. This was the most profound way that David could have expressed his devotion to God and desire for God's presence.

"He appointed some of the Levites to minister before the ark of the Lord, to extol, thank, and praise the Lord, the God of Israel...They were to play the lyres and harps, Asaph was to sound the cymbals, and Benaiah and Jahaziel the priests were to blow the trumpets regularly before the ark of the covenant of God. That day David first appointed Asaph and his associates to give praise to the Lord in this manner (1Ch. 16:4-7)."

G. David Himself Spent Significant Time There:

David set up a night and day worship tent in great part so that he himself could dwell in that reality. He understood better than perhaps anyone in Israel that God's presence rested on the Ark and wherever that Ark was there would be very real benefits related to encountering God. It was out of this revelation and experience that David wrote the no famous "one thing" passage found in Psalm 27.

"One thing I ask from the Lord, this only do I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze on the beauty of the Lord and to seek him in his temple (Ps. 27:4)."

H. The Mark of His House:

The presence of the Ark surrounded by night and day worship became the marking characteristic of David's kingship and heritage. This was the thing that so distinguished his leadership for all other kings in the nations and even what would distinguish him in Israel as time went on. As previously discussed, all future kings were measured against King David as to whether they were fully committed to the Lord their God or not. The barometer for this measurement was uniquely related to whether or not a king instated David's worship model with singers placed around the Ark night and day; it is the key to house of David.