

A scenic landscape photograph of a valley with mountains and a lake reflecting the sky and clouds. The text is overlaid on the upper portion of the image.

Nathan

Confronts David Concerning His Sin

Compiled y Dr. Harold Bollinger

Overview

NATHAN CONFRONTED DAVID CONCERNING HIS SIN

Nathans story is told in 2 Samuel 7-1 Kings 1. He is also mentioned in 1 Chron. 17:15; 2 Chron. 9:29; 2 Chron. 29:25.

This prophet lived up to the meaning of his name, “He *God* has given.” He was a necessary and helpful gift from God to David. He served as Gods spokesman to David and proved himself a fearless friend and counselor, always willing to speak the truth, even when he knew great pain would result.

In confronting David’s multiple sin of coveting, theft, adultery, and murder in his affair with Bathsheba, Nathan was able to help David see his own wrongdoing by showing that he would not have tolerated such actions from anyone else. David’s repentance allowed Nathan to comfort him with the reality of God’s forgiveness, and at the same time remind him of the painful consequences his sin would bring.

A prophet in the time of David

His message to David concerning the building of a temple.

2 Samuel 7:1-17

When the Lord had brought peace to the land and King David was settled in his palace, David summoned Nathan the prophet. "Look!" David said. "Here I am living in this beautiful cedar palace, but the Ark of God is out in a tent!"

Nathan replied, "Go ahead and do what you have in mind, for the Lord is with you."

But that same night the Lord said to Nathan,

"Go and tell my servant David, 'this is what the Lord says: Are you the one to build me a temple to live in?"

I have never lived in a temple, from the day I brought the Israelites out of Egypt until now. My home has always been a tent, moving from one place to another. And I have never once complained to Israel's leaders, the shepherds of my people Israel. I have never asked them, "Why haven't you built me a beautiful cedar temple?" "

"Now go and say to my servant David, 'this is what the Lord Almighty says: I chose you to lead my people Israel when you were just a shepherd boy, tending your sheep out in the pasture. I have been with you wherever you have gone, and I have destroyed all your enemies. Now I will make your name famous throughout the earth! And I have provided a permanent homeland for my people Israel, a secure place where they will never be disturbed.

It will be their own land where wicked nations won't oppress them as they did in the past, from the time I appointed judges to rule my people. And I will keep you safe from all your enemies.

“And now the Lord declares that he will build a house for you—a dynasty of kings! For when you die, I will raise up one of your descendants, and I will make his kingdom strong. He is the one who will build a house—a temple—for my name.

And I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his father, and he will be my son. If he sins, I will use other nations to punish him. But my unfailing love will not be taken from him as I took it from Saul, whom I removed before you. Your dynasty and your kingdom will continue for all time before me, and your throne will be secure forever.' "

So Nathan went back to David and told him everything the Lord had said.

This chapter records the covenant God made with David, promising to carry on David's line forever. This promise would be fully realized in the birth of Jesus Christ. Although the word *covenant* is not specifically stated here, it is used elsewhere to describe this occasion (2 Samuel 23:5; Psalm 89:3-4, 28, 34-37).

This is the first time Nathan the prophet is mentioned. God made certain that a prophet was living during the reign of each of the kings of Israel. The prophet's main tasks were to urge the people to follow God and to communicate God's laws and plans to the king.

Most of the kings rejected the prophets God sent. But at least God had given them the opportunity to listen and obey. In earlier years, judges and priests had the role of prophets. Samuel served as judge, priest, and prophet, bridging the gap between the period of the judges and the monarchy.

In this message from Nathan, God is saying that he doesn't want David to build a "house" for him.

Why didn't God want David to build the temple? God told David that his job was to unify and lead Israel and to destroy its enemies. This huge task would require David to shed a great deal of blood. In 1 Chron. 28:3, we learn that God did not want his temple built by a warrior.

Therefore, David made the plans and collected the materials so that his son Solomon could begin work on the temple as soon as he became king (1 Kings 5-7). David accepted his part in God's plan and did not try to go beyond it. Sometimes God says no to our plans. When he does, we should utilize the other opportunities he gives us.

David's request was good, but God said no. This does not mean that God rejected David. In fact, God was planning to do something even greater in David's life than allowing him the prestige of building the temple.

Although God turned down David's request, he promised to continue the house (or dynasty) of David forever. David's earthly dynasty ended four centuries later, but Jesus Christ, a direct descendant of David, was the ultimate fulfillment of this promise (Acts 2:22-36).

Christ will reign for eternity—now in his spiritual kingdom and in heaven, and later, on earth, in the New Jerusalem (Luke 1:30-33; Rev. 21). Have you prayed with good intentions, only to have God say no? This is God's way of directing you to a greater purpose in your life. Accepting God's no requires as great a faith as carrying out his yes.

David prepares a place for the Ark of the Lord.

1 Chron. 17:1-15

Now when David was settled in his palace, he said to Nathan the prophet, "Here I am living in this beautiful cedar palace, but the Ark of the Lord's covenant is out in a tent!"

Nathan replied, "Go ahead with what you have in mind, for God is with you."

But that same night God said to Nathan,

"Go and tell my servant David, 'this is what the Lord says: You are not the one to build me a temple to live in.

I have never lived in a temple, from the day I brought the Israelites out of Egypt until now. My home has always been a tent, moving from one place to another.

And I never once complained to Israel's leaders, the shepherds of my people. I have never asked them, "Why haven't you built me a beautiful cedar temple?" "

"Now go and say to my servant David, 'this is what the Lord Almighty says: I chose you to lead my people Israel when you were just a shepherd boy, tending your sheep out in the pasture. I have been with you wherever you have gone, and I have destroyed all your enemies.

Now I will make your name famous throughout the earth! And I have provided a permanent homeland for my people Israel, a secure place where they will never be

disturbed. It will be their own land where wicked nations won't oppress them as they did in the past, from the time I appointed judges to rule my people. And I will subdue all your enemies.

“And now I declare that the Lord will build a house for you—a dynasty of kings! For when you die, I will raise up one of your sons, and I will make his kingdom strong.

He is the one who will build a house—a temple—for me. And I will establish his throne forever. I will be his father, and he will be my son. I will not take my unflinching love from him as I took it from Saul, who ruled before you.

I will establish him over my dynasty and my kingdom for all time, and his throne will be secure forever.' ”

So Nathan went back to David and told him everything the Lord had said.

Hushai appealed to Absalom through flattery, and Absalom’s vanity became his own trap. Hushai predicted great glory for Absalom if he personally led the entire army against David. “Pride goes before destruction” (Proverbs 16:18) is an appropriate comment on Absalom’s ambitions.

Joab and Amasa were David’s nephews and Absalom’s cousins. Because Joab had left Jerusalem with David (see 2 Samuel 18:5, 10ff), Amasa took his place as commander of Israel’s troops.

Nathan Reproves David for his adultery with Bath-sheba and his murder of Uriah

2 Samuel 12:1-15

So the Lord sent Nathan the prophet to tell David this story: "There were two men in a certain town. One was rich, and one was poor. The rich man owned many sheep and cattle.

The poor man owned nothing but a little lamb he had worked hard to buy. He raised that little lamb, and it grew up with his children. It ate from the man's own plate and drank from his cup. He cuddled it in his arms like a baby daughter.

One day a guest arrived at the home of the rich man. But instead of killing a lamb from his own flocks for food, he took the poor man's lamb and killed it and served it to his guest."

David was furious. "As surely as the Lord lives," he vowed, "any man who would do such a thing deserves to die! He must repay four lambs to the poor man for the one he stole and for having no pity."

Then Nathan said to David, "You are that man! The Lord, the God of Israel, says, 'I anointed you king of Israel and saved you from the power of Saul.

I gave you his house and his wives and the kingdoms of Israel and Judah. And if that had not been enough, I would have given you much, much more.

Why, then, have you despised the word of the Lord and done this horrible deed? For you have murdered Uriah and stolen his wife.

From this time on, the sword will be a constant threat to your family, because you have despised me by taking Uriah's wife to be your own.

“Because of what you have done, I, the Lord, will cause your own household to rebel against you. I will give your wives to another man, and he will go to bed with them in public view. You did it secretly, but I will do this to you openly in the sight of all Israel.' "

Then David confessed to Nathan, "I have sinned against the Lord."

Nathan replied, "Yes, but the Lord has forgiven you, and you won't die for this sin. But you have given the enemies of the Lord great opportunity to despise and blaspheme him, so your child will die."

Gives Solomon the name Jedidiah

2 Samuel 12:25

And sent word through Nathan the prophet that his name should be Jedidiah—"beloved of the Lord"—because the Lord loved him.

After Nathan returned to his home, the Lord made Bathsheba's baby deathly ill.

Nathan assists Bath-sheba in securing to Solomon, her son, the succession to the throne

1 Kings 1:10-14

But he did not invite Nathan the prophet, or Benaiah, or the king's bodyguard, or his brother Solomon.

Then Nathan the prophet went to Bathsheba, Solomon's mother, and asked her, "Did you realize that Haggith's son, Adonijah, has made himself king and that our lord David doesn't even know about it?"

If you want to save your own life and the life of your son Solomon, follow my counsel. Go at once to King David and say to him, 'My lord, didn't you promise me that my son Solomon would be the next king and would sit upon your throne? Then why has Adonijah become king?'

And while you are still talking with him, I will come and confirm everything you have said."

When Nathan learned of Adonijah's conspiracy, he immediately tried to stop it. He was a man of both faith and action. He knew that Solomon should rightly be king, and he moved quickly when he saw someone else trying to take the throne. We often know what is right but don't act on it.

Perhaps we don't want to get involved, or maybe we are fearful or lazy. Don't stop with prayer, good intentions, or angry feelings. Take the action needed to correct the situation.

The Bible does not record David's promise that Solomon would be Israel's next king, but it is clear that Solomon was the choice of both David (1 Kings 1:17, 30) and God (1 Chron. 22:9-10).

Nathan Confronts David.

1 Kings 1:22-27

While she was still speaking with the king, Nathan the prophet arrived. The king's advisers told him, "Nathan the prophet is here to see you."

Nathan went in and bowed low before the king. He asked, "My lord, have you decided that Adonijah will be the next king and that he will sit on your throne?"

Today he has sacrificed many oxen, fattened calves, and sheep, and he has invited your sons to attend the celebration.

He also invited Joab, the commander of the army, and Abiathar the priest. They are feasting and drinking with him and shouting, 'Long live King Adonijah!'

But I myself, your servant, was not invited; neither were Zadok the priest, Benaiah son of Jehoiada, nor Solomon. Has my lord really done this without letting any of his servants know who should be the next king?"

Assists in anointing Solomon to be king

1 Kings 1:32-45

Then King David ordered, "Call Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah son of Jehoiada." When they came into the king's presence, the king said to them, "Take Solomon and my officers down to Gihon Spring. Solomon is to ride on my personal mule.

There Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet are to anoint him king over Israel. Then blow the trumpets and shout, 'Long live King Solomon!'

When you bring him back here, he will sit on my throne. He will succeed me as king, for I have appointed him to be ruler over Israel and Judah."

"Amen!" Benaiah son of Jehoiada replied. "May the Lord, the God of my lord the king, decree it to be so. And may the Lord be with Solomon as he has been with you, and may he make Solomon's reign even greater than yours!"

So Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, Benaiah son of Jehoiada, and the king's bodyguard took Solomon down to Gihon Spring, and Solomon rode on King David's personal mule.

Then Zadok the priest took a flask of olive oil from the sacred tent and poured it on Solomon's head. Then the trumpets were blown, and all the people shouted, "Long live King Solomon!" And all the people returned with Solomon to Jerusalem, playing flutes and shouting for joy. The celebration was so joyous and noisy that the earth shook with the sound.

Adonijah and his guests heard the celebrating and shouting just as they were finishing their banquet. When Joab heard the sound of trumpets, he asked, "What's going on? Why is the city in such an uproar?"

And while he was still speaking, Jonathan son of Abiathar the priest arrived. "Come in," Adonijah said to him, "for you are a good man. You must have good news."

"Not at all!" Jonathan replied. "Our lord King David has just declared Solomon king! The king sent him down to Gihon Spring with Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah son of Jehoiada, protected by the king's bodyguard.

They had him ride on the king's own mule, and Zadok and Nathan have anointed him as the new king. They have just returned, and the whole city is celebrating and rejoicing. That's what all the noise is about.

The sacred anointing oil was used to anoint Israel's kings and high priests, as well as to dedicate certain objects to God. The sacred tent where the oil was kept was probably the tent David set up to shelter the Ark of the Covenant (2 Samuel 6:17). It was not the tabernacle Moses carried in the desert; that tabernacle was still at Gibeon.

1 Chron. 29:29

All the events of King David's reign, from beginning to end, are written in The Record of Samuel the Seer, The Record of Nathan the Prophet, and The Record of Gad the Seer.

A seer was someone who received messages from God for the nation in visions or dreams.

Nathan assists David in the organization of the tabernacle

2 Chron. 29:25

King Hezekiah then stationed the Levites at the Temple of the Lord with cymbals, harps, and lyres. He obeyed all the commands that the Lord had given to King David through Gad, the king's seer, and the prophet Nathan.

Lessons from his life:

We should not be afraid to tell the truth to those we care about
A trustworthy companion is one of Gods greatest gifts
God cares enough to find a way to communicate to us when we are in the wrong.

Nathans approach helps us judge our actions. How often do we make choices that we would condemn others for making? It is helpful to ask ourselves how God and others see our actions. Unfortunately, we have a huge capacity to lie to ourselves.

God still provides two safeguards against self-deception: his Word and true friends. In each case, we get a view beyond ourselves.

You are holding Gods Word. Let it speak to you about yourself, even if the truth is painful. If you don't have a friend like Nathan, ask God for one. And ask God to use you as a suitable Nathan for someone else.

Key verse:

“Nathan reported to David all the words of this entire revelation” (2 Samuel 7:17).

To ask Jesus to come into your heart please pray this Prayer:

Dear Lord Jesus, I believe you are the Christ, the Son of the Living God. I ask you to forgive me of my sins and coming into my heart. I accept you as savior and will follow you as Lord. Amen.

References:

Holy Bible: King James Translation

Holy Bible: Living Bible Translation

Additional comments and charts are taken from: *Life Application Study Bible*.

Illinois: Tyndale House 2007. Print