



WHO DOES WHAT?

When we want to do something, it can make us unhappy if we aren't allowed to do it and someone else is. But it didn't make King David unhappy one little bit. Here's the story.

David was king of Israel and Judah and a splendid king he was too. After defeating his enemies (and there had been plenty of them over the years!) he settled down and made Jerusalem his capital city. As kings do, he had a magnificent palace built and it became his home. That was when he had his good idea. Being a man of God, he sent for one of the Lord's prophets to tell him about his good idea. Nathan the prophet arrived at David's command and this is what the king told him.

Here I am, living in a palace of cedar, while the ark of God remains in a tent (2 Samuel 7:2).

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That may not make too much sense to you, but Nathan knew exactly what he meant.

The ark of the Lord was a beautiful box that had been made at God's instruction many years before. In it was a piece of the manna that the Lord had supplied to keep his people alive after they escaped from Egypt. And along with the manna there were the two stone blocks on which were written God's Ten Commandments. Over the years the ark of the Lord had been carried from place to place as God's people moved. They didn't feel safe when it wasn't with them. It had been captured by enemies but was now safely back in Jerusalem. As far as the people were concerned, all was well. However, David felt that it wasn't right that he should live in a magnificent palace made of cedar wood while the ark of the Lord was in a tent. That's when David had a good idea.

The prophet Nathan also thought it was a good idea. But that night the Lord spoke to Nathan and told him something different.

Go and tell my servant David, "This is what the LORD says: Are you the one to build me a house to dwell in? ... When your days are over and you rest with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you ... and I will establish his kingdom.

He is the one who will build a house for my Name
...’ (2 Samuel 7: 5, 12-13).

Nathan went back to King David and told him what God had said.

What did David do? Did he grump and say that it was his good idea to build a house for the ark of God? Did he moan that it wasn’t fair that his son should do what he wanted to do himself? Did David complain to Nathan that God had favourites? No, he did not. In fact, David prayed one of the most beautiful prayers in the whole Bible.

Who am I, O Sovereign LORD, and what is my family, that you have brought me thus far? And as if this were not enough in your sight, O Sovereign LORD, you have also spoken about the future of the house of your servant. ... Now be pleased to bless the house of your servant, that it may continue forever in your sight; for you, O Sovereign LORD, have spoken and with your blessing the house of your servant will be blessed forever (2 Samuel 7:18-19, 29).

And that’s exactly what happened. In those days ‘the house of your servant’ meant the family of your servant. And the house, or family, of David has been blessed forever because if was from his family that the Lord Jesus Christ came.

If you look up the beginning of the Gospel of Matthew, you’ll find a whole list of names. Read through them and do



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some addition and you'll discover that King David is Jesus' great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great (24 times great) grandfather!

So did David just get on with being king and leave the building of a house for the ark of God to his son Solomon? No, he didn't. He commanded those who ruled under him to come to Jerusalem and he made a speech.

'Listen to me,' he said. 'I had it in my heart to build a house as a place of rest for the ark of the covenant of the LORD ... and I made plans to build it. But God said to me, "You are not to build a house for my name ... Solomon your son is the one who will build my house ..."' (1 Chronicles 28:2-3, 6).

Then David gave Solomon some scrolls. They were plans he had drawn for the temple he had wanted to build! He'd even worked out the weight of gold that was needed. King David told those who ruled under him that he was providing 100 tons of gold and 240 tons of silver for the temple as well as bronze and iron and wood. Not only that, he was providing large quantities of fine stone and marble along with precious stones and specially trained workmen. That doesn't sound like a man who was annoyed with God

for not letting him carry out his good idea. Nor does it sound like a dad who was jealous of his son because God was going to let him do it instead.

Years passed, King David died and Solomon his son became king after him. God kept his word and Solomon was able to use his dad's plans, his silver and gold, stone, marble and ideas to build the most magnificent temple for the ark of God. It became the centre of worship for the Jewish people for hundreds of years.

When the temple was completed, King Solomon made a speech and we even know the words he used. Reading them shows us something about Solomon. Although God gave him the privilege of building the temple, Solomon freely admitted that the good idea wasn't his, but his dad's.

My father David had it in his heart to build a temple for the Name of the LORD ... The LORD has kept the promise he made, I have succeeded David my father and now I sit on the throne of Israel, just as the LORD promised, and I have built the temple for the Name of the LORD, the God of Israel (1 Kings 8:18, 20).

After he finished speaking to the people, Solomon prayed a long prayer to God. At the end of it he said, 'Now arise, O Lord God, and come to your resting place, you and the ark of your might.'

Animals had been killed and laid out in the temple as sacrifices to God. When Solomon finished his prayer, God sent fire



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from heaven to burn up the sacrifices and the glory of God filled the temple. Solomon must have known for sure that he and his father had done the right thing.

When David and Solomon prayed, they remembered how great God is and worshipped him. When we pray we shouldn't just come to the Lord with 'shopping lists' of things we want; we should remember who he is, who we are, and worship him for being so great.

