



The “Winds of Change”  
...when God says “No”

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2 Samuel 7-8

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Even in the ancient days, kings did not fight wars every day. When King Nebuchadnezzar “ruled the roost” he looked at what he had accomplished

during his reign and stated "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built?" Solomon seemed forever busy collecting wealth and wives, entertaining foreign guests, and writing books. And King Hezekiah spent his time financing and supervising scholars who copied and preserved the Scriptures. But even with the historical flaws in his life, it appears that David spent **his** leisure hours ...*at least at this point in his life*, thinking about the Lord and how he might improve the spiritual state of the kingdom of Israel. We must remember that while David was indeed a king, he was also a shepherd before that and that trait seemed to follow him into leadership and give him a compassion and caring heart for his people.

This chapter tells of what were possibly the best days of David’s life. He was the King of Israel. His nation was united and they were at peace. There was, after years of battles and trials, finally time to meditate and reflect on the blessings and the grace of God. As David thought about these things, a dream was born in his heart. He wanted to build God a permanent dwelling place.

Since the time the Tabernacle began during the days of Moses, God’s presence had dwelt in what was essentially a glorified tent. David felt it was time to give the Lord a proper, permanent place to manifest His glorious presence. What a great idea! What a righteous endeavor! But the only problem with this dream is that God said “**No!**” To David and Nathan, and no doubt what would have been the vast majority of Israel, this idea would have been considered to be a “no-brainer.” *Of course you should build God a temple! What an awesome idea! Why would God say no to such a great plan!* But He **did** say no. An inexplicable and unfathomable “no.”

I believe there are indeed those of you that have heard that reply from God on some personal matter or heart desire. It was something you really wanted to do and on the surface the premise screamed the affirmative and yet you still heard that “still small voice” inside you whisper that word: “No.” Maybe it was some form of ministry, or a relationship, or a career move. It is as if God said, “*That is not what I have planned for your life. I want you to take a different path.*” There will be many of you who will hear Him say “No” to your dreams in the future.

What do you do when God says “*No*”? I think David shows us what we are supposed to do when God looks at our dream and says “*No, that is not My plan for your life.*”

David’s desire was a good desire! He rightfully thought that God deserved better, and our actions and service ought to reflect our love and His glory. It was a gracious desire. David remembered all that God had done for Him. He was thankful! He wanted to ‘give back.’ It was a Godly desire. David wasn’t personally seeking for anything nor was such an act in anyway self-serving or self-glorifying. It was all about God in every way. Despite all of this, God *still* said no.

The fact that David wanted to build a house for the Lord shouldn’t surprise us. During his years of exile, David had vowed to the Lord that he would build Him a temple. His bringing the Ark to Jerusalem was surely the first step toward fulfilling that vow. It troubled David that he was living in a comfortable stone house with cedar paneling while God's throne was in a tent, and so he shared this dream with Nathan the prophet.

Certainly it is good to have dreams! Especially as they serve and glorify God and further His kingdom! But, we must always be certain that our dreams are from the Lord, even when they seem to be an obvious “yes” to us. Thank God for a dream and a desire to serve the Lord! Again, there is nothing wrong with having a dream; we simply need to be sure that our dreams are from the Lord and that they are part of His plan for our life.

While David had a good, gracious, and godly dream, his dream was not from the Lord. Even those he trusted...those from whom he received council encouraged Him to follow this plan. But notice that Nathan apparently didn’t even pray about this matter. It sounded good to him, and thus he answered out of his own wisdom and thought that this plan was of the Lord too. Few of us would argue that David’s dream had all the earmarks of a desire impressed upon him by the Lord. But, his dream turned out to be his own creation and not the will of the Lord.

When our dreams are from the Lord, they will come to pass in detail. (Example - Joseph in Gen. 37:5-11) When our dreams are merely our own, they will likely come to nothing. One had better pray they do come to not, for nothing is worse than schemes that come to fruition on our own power and efforts! DL Moody once said “*Our greatest fear should not be of failure, but of succeeding at something that doesn't really matter.*”

After this knee-jerk affirmation and positive counsel, Nathan returned home. Then during the night, God came to him and told him to go back to David and ‘clean up his mess.’ To tell David that his plan was not of the Lord. God seems clear in **verses 5-7** that David’s dream to build a temple was not from the Lord. It had in fact originated within the heart of David. He simply *wanted* to do this so bad that he was blind and deaf to the voice of God. Again, the motives were right; but the dream was mans and not God’s!

But, when God said “*No*” to David, He didn’t just kick him to the curb. When God said “*No*”, He tempered His no with some very precious words that were for David. Instead of allowing David to give to Him; God turned everything around and gave to David. He closed a door and opened another. David was reminded by God that he had been made the partaker of God’s work, God’s victory and God’s kingdom. God had put him on the field of play, and it was so important

that he recognized that and not become lost in secondary pursuits and other battles that were not his to fight.

David had a desire to build a house for the Lord; but God tells David that He (God) is going to build David a house. God promises David that he will have a son. A son that will walk with the Lord and he will be treated as a son by God. He will be established in his kingdom and he will even be chastened when necessary like an earthly father does. God tells David that this son will build the house for God!

Sometimes God says “*No*” to our dreams and to our plans. When He does, it is not to defeat us or to discourage us. He does it because He has something far better than we could have ever imagined planned for us. David thought he would build a temple and God would be happy with His work and sacrifice. He found out that it was not God’s will for him to build a temple at all. He also found out that God had some things planned for his future that he never could have dreamed up on his own.

Some of you have witnessed the death of your dreams. You have watched as life has altered the plans and dreams of your youth. But how often, when we remain obedient and undeterred by such change of plans we discover that He has something far better in mind for us than we could have ever dreamed up on our own. God always has the best plan!

What was David’s response to God’s “*No*”? The latter half of chapter 7 reveals a response that was one of utter devotion to the Lord. David exudes a humble heart and devotion. He trusted God to know the way and the path before him. Verse 18 says he went in and “*sat down before the Lord.*” He acknowledged the fact that he was unworthy of all that God intended to do with Him. In **verse 20**, like a little child, he even referred to himself in the third person. David, the mighty king, assumed the place of a humble child before the presence of the Lord.

Even though David did not get his way in this matter, he willingly accepted God’s plan for his life. His words are filled with trust and praise for the God he loves. Unlike some folks who pout when they do not get their way, David just praised the Lord because He trusted God to have his back and to guide him to a full life.

David was not allowed to build the Lord’s Temple. But, he was allowed to make preparations...to participate in the fulfillment of that dream. In 1 Chron. 22:1-19 we are told that David gathered all the materials necessary for the construction of the building. Then in 1 Chron. 28:1-17, David gave Solomon the plans and the instructions necessary to fulfill the dream. So, in the end, David was still a part of seeing the dream accomplished. It did not happen as he planned it, but he still got to be part of God’s plan; and that is a dream come true!

- 1) **Do you think that David's reasons for desiring to build God a house were righteous?** *(yes...it was a desire to glorify God, honor what God had done in his midst, and to focus the people's hearts and eyes on Jehovah. These are all good motivations!)*
  
- 2) **Could he have built it? Did he have the resources, the money and the power?** (yes!)
  
- 3) **Why would God not let David build Him a house?** *(God said that David was a "bloody" man...a "man of war." Which was a "reason" enough, but the bottom line is that even though David may not have clearly understood why the answer was 'no' and frankly maybe we don't yet today either, God had a plan that did not and does not, consider the wants and desires of mankind, even if they are righteous! Just because it is a "good idea" does not make it a "God idea.")*
  
- 4) **Does a righteous heart and "good motivations" have an impact upon God's "thumbs up" or "thumbs down" on decisions we make or desires we have in our life?** *(Yes! Sure! He certainly will look at the motivations of our hearts, the ability, the desire, and the motivation for the task. This is a fact because He may have plans for us that are yet not materialized because of these issues existing in our immature lives.)*
  
- 5) **Is the existence of such (righteous heart and good motivations) have a definitive impact upon God's will in the matter?** *(Absolutely not. God will still do what he planned...with or without you. He will not change His mind even if yours is righteous and pure! ...NOTE Isaiah 55:8-9 ...*
  - <sup>8</sup> *"For My thoughts are not your thoughts,  
Nor are your ways My ways," says the Lord.*
  - <sup>9</sup> *"For as the heavens are higher than the earth,  
So are My ways higher than your ways,  
And My thoughts than your thoughts.*
  
- 6) **Have you ever been in such a situation as this?** How would you/did you react in that situation?
  
- 7) **How DO we find out the will of God on a matter?** *(Hint: word of God, direct non-tangible spirit voice, council of community members, 'waiting' on the Lord, 'open' doors, ability, and ?. Seek ALL these things, not just one or two.)*
  
- 8) **It's been said that our greatest struggles are with ourselves, with our own pride and selfishness.** How far do you think that this is true of yourself? How are you dealing with it?