

David the King 9 - Our Spiritual Legacy

1. All is vanity under the sun.

If there was something you wanted to accomplish before the end of your life, what would it be? Perhaps the idea of a "bucket list" would come to mind because it has been made so popular; but I don't mean that kind of accomplishment. Is there a something you would like to do like finishing a painting, building a dream house, becoming an expert at something – but then I would have to ask, "Why?" Solomon presented this frustration in the book of Ecclesiastes. On the first reading of Ecclesiastes, people often make the mistake that Solomon is encouraging the enjoyment of life. This is actually the exact opposite message of Ecclesiastes. Solomon sought wisdom, knowledge, women, mirth, building and he came to one conclusion about all of those things: all is vanity. He examined living "under the sun" and concluded that every pursuit done to merely pass away our years on earth are empty. He declared,

Eccl 1:2-3,14 Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; *all is vanity.*

3What profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the sun?

14I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and, behold, *all is vanity* and vexation of spirit.

And David wrote in the Psalms:

Ps 39:4-6 LORD, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it *is*; *that* I may know how frail I *am*.

5Behold, thou hast made my days *as* an handbreadth; and mine age *is* as nothing before thee: verily every man at his best state *is* altogether vanity. Selah.

6Surely every man walketh in a vain shew: surely they are disquieted in vain: he heapeth up *riches*, and knoweth not who shall gather them.

We ask people to live a circumspect life because we're concerned about the impact we have on others for the gospel. The way you can tell about your orientation in life is by the way you react to the challenge of living that circumspect life. It actually *is* appropriate for stewardship's sake to have a little resistance so that we make sure we can accommodate whatever obligations are necessary. For example, If you listen to a dozen Christian radio shows, read a bunch of Christian magazines, read a dozen devotional books, and then try to employ every great idea, you would not have enough time in all the days of the

week to do everything else you need to do. In being a good steward, you have to resist doing absolutely every single thing possible while carefully applying what you *can* do.

The more resistance you have to godliness, the more inclined you are to self. We view people who are trying to encourage us as meddling when our orientation is towards self. By avoiding those who challenge us to godliness because of the inconvenience, we end up being someone who only views people as necessary to get what we want. Make no mistake about it, this is a very common and gross problem. It is this person whose life is vain and empty because it consists only of material interests and disregards the nobler and higher things of life. A word of caution: don't just presume that this only applies to someone who disagrees with *you*. *You* might be the disagreeable person sometimes, too.

2. David's desire.

Once you set your aim for the higher things of life you find that you can't get any higher than finding God. The self-serving, self-centered person who lives to feed his lusts has a stunted morality, if any at all. So much of that which is moral involves our responsibilities for those around us. Remember, there is no goodness without God. An atheist can make no claim to the use of the word good in a moral sense. Moral language is the domain of theists. Someone who lives for himself is no better than an atheist morally. Seeking goodness will necessarily lead us to God and living for Him.

The highest meaning of life is found in serving God and the ultimate meaning in this life under the sun is the legacy we leave behind. If I am truly concerned about people and God, I will want to have some impact on this world knowing that we are facing the grave. If I should only leave a financial inheritance for my children, will what I leave behind only serve to influence someone to indulge in a life that ends in their eternal doom?

Although there are a few more events that are notable in the life of David, I would like to move on to the end of his life. David is facing the end of his days as we come to 2 Samuel chapter 7. In this scripture we see David talking to Nathan and he feels as though there is some way that living in such a fine house that he has not given God sufficient glory. The Tabernacle had been used for over 440 years, in various locations besides the wilderness, and was always at best a temporary place to worship God.

David's desire to build a permanent dwelling place, a temple, points out a problem that is common to this day. As a man after God's own heart, David always sought a way to put God first. He wanted to make sure that he did not give God the leftovers, or second best. How often do

people give God the leftover part of the day after they have used it for enriching self, recreation, and entertainment? How often do people use the tithe which belongs to God for their personal use and throw God a dry crust, if anything at all.? How often do people strive and struggle throughout the week to pay for all of their desires and then claim God's day for themselves, too, because they didn't properly prepare for times of rest so they could have time to get spiritual refreshment in the House of God?

2Sam 7:1-17 And it came to pass, when the king sat in his house, and the LORD had given him rest round about from all his enemies;

2That the king said unto Nathan the prophet, See now, I dwell in an house of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth within curtains.

3And Nathan said to the king, Go, do all that *is* in thine heart; for the LORD *is* with thee.

David approached Nathan with his desire and Nathan, at first, thought that on the face of it, it was a great idea. It seemed like such a no brainer.

4And it came to pass that night, that the word of the LORD came unto Nathan, saying,

5Go and tell my servant David, Thus saith the LORD, Shalt thou build me an house for me to dwell in?

6Whereas I have not dwelt in *any* house since the time that I brought up the children of Israel out of Egypt, even to this day, but have walked in a tent and in a tabernacle.

7In all *the places* wherein I have walked with all the children of Israel spake I a word with any of the tribes of Israel, whom I commanded to feed my people Israel, saying, Why build ye not me an house of cedar?

In God's first response to David, He deals with a subtle misunderstanding in worship. It is good to give God our best and do the best job possible. But it's also possible that we could become so proud of ourselves and what we offer to God turns into worshiping our worshipfulness. Grand cathedrals as well as gigantic worship centers can turn into a monument of our greatness. When people shout "Praise God" over beautiful choir arrangements, it might be more honest to say "Praise the choir." Pastors might lead their flock to having the best with the assumption that it is reflection of God's glory, suggesting that this is justified because God is not cheap in his blessings. They assume that people will never have the impression that the church's focus is on worldly wealth. Indeed, it would be a mistake to attract

the world by what they might hope to get out of God . Such thinking would find fault with John the Baptist who was trained and ministered in the wilderness, and who dined on locusts and wild honey.

God does not actually find fault with David in this. David wanted to exalt God. However, not all that is good is always right to do. All of our desires have got to fit within the economy of God's agenda.

8Now therefore so shalt thou say unto my servant David, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, I took thee from the sheepcote, from following the sheep, to be ruler over my people, over Israel:

9And I was with thee whithersoever thou wentest, and have cut off all thine enemies out of thy sight, and have made thee a great name, like unto the name of the great *men* that *are* in the earth.

10Moreover I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as beforetime,

11And as since the time that I commanded judges *to be* over my people Israel, and have caused thee to rest from all thine enemies. Also the LORD telleth thee that he will make thee an house.

God had called David for a specific ministry, to lead the flock of Israel, in battle, to cut off their enemies. God *would* accept the building of a house for Him for worship, just not by *David's* hand. The building of God's house of worship was reserved for David's son.

12And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom.

13He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever.

14I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men:

15But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took *it* from Saul, whom I put away before thee.

16And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever.

17According to all these words, and according to all this vision, so did Nathan speak unto David.

Now, we might be able to go along with this because David evidently understands the situation and God is of course always within His rights to do this...but our knowing that there is wisdom to be found if we dig harder, we should suspect that there is a deeper meaning here. We need a little more which we get when we look at David's charge to Solomon to actually build the Temple.

1Chr 22:6-19 Then he called for Solomon his son, and charged him to build an house for the LORD God of Israel.

7And David said to Solomon, My son, as for me, it was in my mind to build an house unto the name of the LORD my God:

8But the word of the LORD came to me, saying, Thou hast shed blood abundantly, and hast made great wars: thou shalt not build an house unto my name, because thou hast shed much blood upon the earth in my sight.

9Behold, a son shall be born to thee, who shall be a man of rest; and I will give him rest from all his enemies round about: for his name shall be Solomon, and I will give peace and quietness unto Israel in his days.

10He shall build an house for my name; and he shall be my son, and I *will be* his father; and I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel for ever.

Now we have some very significant details added on. David was not allowed because he had shed blood abundantly in battle. God was not disapproving of the fact that David was bloody, He had called David to do battle, but the job of building the Temple would be given to Solomon because his reign would be characterized by resting from warfare. He would rule in a reign of peace. This makes more sense, but we have to zoom out a little bit further. To get the picture that God is presenting we need to take into account the reign of King Saul. Saul, David, and Solomon were the only three kings that would rule over a united Israel. Even though they were very human and each one had their weaknesses and failures, nevertheless, Biblical symbols are never perfect representations of the spiritual...just like our pictures never do us justice and we can't believe that we look like *that!* Saul, David, and Solomon in their *reigns* represent the stages man goes through from being lost in sin, to salvation, and on to glorification in the resurrection. In the bulletin, sermon notes, and online I have a chart to bring this picture into focus.

Saul	David	Solomon
Tabernacle	Tabernacle	Temple
No Ark of the Covenant	Ark of the Covenant	Ark of the Covenant
Represents: Lost man	Represents: Saved man	Represents: Glorified man
living in disobedience	fighting against sin	living in eternal peace
in the earthly tabernacle, this temporary body	in the earthly tabernacle, this temporary body	in the heavenly temple, the permanent body
<i>without</i> the presence of God	<i>with</i> the presence of God	<i>with</i> the presence of God

Since everything is focused and revolves around the issue of having a Tabernacle and wanting to have the Temple built, we look at the place of worship that was available to Saul, David, and Solomon. Both Saul and David only had access to the Tabernacle during their reign. It was Solomon who was going to have the Temple. The key feature that described the spiritual nature of the Tabernacle or the Temple was the presence of the Ark of the covenant. The Ark of the covenant stood for the presence of God among His people.

Early in the reign of Saul, the Ark of the Covenant had been taken captive by the Philistines. When they realized that they could not keep the Ark as a trophy, it was returned to Israel, but not to the Tabernacle. A man named Eleazar was the guardian of the Ark of the Covenant during the rest of the reign of Saul. When David became the king, he restored the Ark of the Covenant to the Tabernacle. When Solomon built the temple, the Ark of the covenant was moved into the Temple.

Saul represents man in his lost condition, whose reign was characterized by living in disobedience. He possessed only a temporary dwelling place, which is what a tabernacle, a tent, is, with the presence of God missing in his life. His reign is symbolic of how man, called of God, fell, and lost the his innocence and fellowship with God.

David on the other hand, represents a saved man, the man who is after God's own heart. Unfortunately, he also dwells in an earthly tabernacle. The days of his sojourn are symbolic of how our days are marked by battles in our struggle and fight against temptation and sin.

In Solomon's time, his reign is no longer marked by battles, but by a kingdom at rest. Solomon, represents the resurrected and glorified man who would no longer be dwelling in a temporary tabernacle, but in an eternal temple, a house in heaven not built with hands, and ever filled with the presence of God.

2Cor 5:1-4 For we know that if our earthly house of *this* tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in

the heavens.

2For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven:

3If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked.

4For we that are in *this* tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.

David's desire was for the glory of God, but now you know why being a bloody man he could not build the Temple; why it had to be reserved for Solomon, the man of rest who would build the Temple.

But now, having presented this picture, we have the perfect context for what David did next. David might have been limited in what he would be allowed to do, but that wasn't a dead end for him.

3. A godly legacy for those who come after us.

This message started off by examining the vanity of life when someone is only concerned about grabbing for all that he can get during the days he spends under the sun. We moved on to David's noble desire to leave a legacy for the glory of God. It is in this context that the point of this message lies. Our concerns do not consist only of what we can do while we sojourn here under the sun like the vain man. There is a greater glory that lies ahead of us. The hope of the vain man dies with him when he departs from under the sun, but our impact on those around us can last beyond the days of our sojourn. David continues on in 1Chron 22:11 –

11Now, my son, the LORD be with thee; and prosper thou, and build the house of the LORD thy God, as he hath said of thee.

12Only the LORD give thee wisdom and understanding, and give thee charge concerning Israel, that thou mayest keep the law of the LORD thy God.

13Then shalt thou prosper, if thou takest heed to fulfil the statutes and judgments which the LORD charged Moses with concerning Israel: be strong, and of good courage; dread not, nor be dismayed.

14Now, behold, in my trouble I have prepared for the house of the LORD an hundred thousand talents of gold, and a thousand thousand talents of silver; and of brass and iron without weight; for it is in abundance: timber also and stone have I prepared; and thou mayest add thereto.

15Moreover *there are* workmen with thee in abundance, hewers and workers of stone and timber,

and all manner of cunning men for every manner of work.

16Of the gold, the silver, and the brass, and the iron, *there is* no number. Arise *therefore*, and be doing, and the LORD be with thee.

17David also commanded all the princes of Israel to help Solomon his son, *saying*,

18*Is* not the LORD your God with you? and hath he *not* given you rest on every side? for he hath given the inhabitants of the land into mine hand; and the land is subdued before the LORD, and before his people.

19Now set your heart and your soul to seek the LORD your God; arise therefore, and build ye the sanctuary of the LORD God, to bring the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and the holy vessels of God, into the house that is to be built to the name of the LORD.

But David did not seek to merely build a monument, he was concerned for the spirituality of all those who would come after him.

1Kgs 2:1-4 Now the days of David drew nigh that he should die; and he charged Solomon his son, saying,

2I go the way of all the earth: **[David knew he was going to die]** be thou strong therefore, and shew thyself a man;

3And keep the charge of the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, to keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his judgments, and his testimonies, as it is written in the law of Moses, that thou mayest prosper in all that thou doest, and whithersoever thou turnest thyself:

4That the LORD may continue his word which he spake concerning me, saying, If thy children take heed to their way, to walk before me in truth with all their heart and with all their soul, there shall not fail thee (said he) a man on the throne of Israel.

There are some things that are just going to be outside of our reach to accomplish. It might be outside of the reach of our ability or opportunity and this is especially true when it comes to the fact that someday we're going to die.

When I was very young I was concerned that I would not be able find a wife, but God blessed me with a wonderful partner in life. And then we had children. I hoped that I would live long enough to take care of them and prepare them for life. My goal was to live long enough so they could graduate from

high school at least. It was such a relief to reach that goal. I even thought I was home free, they had even gone to college and gotten married. And then came the grandchildren. Later, we got a call at Christmas that our youngest granddaughter was suffering seizures and was in the hospital. And again, we dropped everything to go be by their side. And then came the time when the call came that Bonnie was in a desperate condition over the birth of her last child, we dropped everything to go out and support them in whatever way we could. Life is full of those kinds of challenges. I thought my job had been done enough and that my children were safe and I could move on, but with the grandchildren my concerns had started all over again. There was a little bit more of a challenge because we can't be directly involved most of the time. Now, I wonder, will I live long enough to see my great grandchildren? It is said that my great great grandfather served in a way to protect Jews and resisted occupying Russian forces, and that some original multiple great grandfather was made a landowner and a nobleman because he had rescued and protected a knight in the realm of Charlemagne. I wonder what my great great grandchildren will know about me? Will they be aware at all of my love and concern for them? I wonder if my great great great grandchildren will know anything more about me other than that I was a preacher in New Jersey, and they probably may not even know that. Most importantly, will they have handed down to them the Gospel and will they receive it and serve Him faithfully?

We will not be able to affect all of our descendants directly, but we *can* provide a legacy for them. I work hard at writing but I worry that I can't work fast enough to leave enough teaching for those who come after me. And then even at that, I know that once I'm gone, there's nothing I can do to print and distribute anything. The most we can do is our best job so that others can use what we leave them if they are of a mind and heart to do so.

Luke 12:16-21 And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully:

17And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits?

18And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods.

19And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, *and* be merry.

20But God said unto him, *Thou* fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall

those things be, which thou hast provided?

21So *is* he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.

1Cor 15:19 If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.

It has been pointed out that you will never see a hearse with a U-Haul trailer in tow. It is a shame that there will be those who will resist this wisdom and flippantly say, "Oh well. I had better grab for all the gusto I can in this life." If someone has no fear of the judgment to come then there is nothing that will stop them from merely using people to fulfill their miserly existence.

Matt 6:19-21 Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:

20But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:

21For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

You might not be able to take your treasures to heaven when you die, but you *can* send them ahead. With every offering you make, you are creating a legacy. With every soul you invest in for Christ, you are laying up treasures in heaven. Underneath the stained glass are faded inscriptions of people who contributed to this ministry in days gone by. We have no idea who many of them are...but God does. So many might not have ever met George Wolfangle. But if it had not been for his work to keep this church alive, we would be sitting in a parking lot right now. God knows George Wolfangle. It will seem a shame that those who come far enough after us might not know what we did here, but God knows us, too. What will your legacy be? We must plan and carry out those plans for the spirituality of our children even more diligently as we do our vacations and our daytrips. The care we put into the ingredients of our recipes should not be greater than the care we put into bread of life. What is the world we are handing off to those who come after us?

1. All is vanity under the sun. Eccl 1:2-3,14, Ps 39:4-6
2. David's desire. 2Sam 7:1-17, 1Chr 22:6-19, 2Cor 5:1-4
3. A godly legacy for those who come after us. 1Kgs 2:1-4, Luke 12:16-21, 1Cor 15:19, Matt 6:19-21