



## “Dynasty -- Tabernacle”

Ninth Sunday after Pentecost  
Saturday & Sunday, July 21-22, 2018

All Services  
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Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church  
Camp Hill, Pennsylvania

2 Samuel 7:1-14a; Psalm 89:20-37;  
Mark 6:30-34, 53-56

It was the perfect gift for my wife, Linda . . . so I thought. I am pretty sure we had talked about getting one at some point. We had admired others who had them and I knew that it would be a benefit for her, a real time saver. No . . . the rice cooker that I wanted to get her for Christmas would be a blessing! There was only one problem. . . she didn't ask for it and she didn't want it.

Last week Pastor Brock shared with us the wonderful story of David dancing as the Ark of the Covenant is brought in to the new capital of Jerusalem. David is at the height of his power, his enemies, the Philistines, had been defeated, there was peace in the land, his power had been consolidated, the kingdom unified in a new capital.

And now David is living in a grand house built by King Hiram of Tyre, Israel's trading partner and political ally whose kingdom was on the coast of the Mediterranean. And now David wanted to build a place for the Ark of the Covenant. He wanted to build a nice house for his God. It's not unusual for a ruler of those ancient days to build a house for his God. If you've ever studied archeology at all, you can see that the ancient world is full of temples and places for God to dwell.

It was the way royalty honored their god and it was also a sign of the blessing that both they and their people had received from God. The people could be assured of God's presence with them.

Both David and the prophet Nathan, David's advisor, are sure that this is the right thing to do. It would be a blessing for David and for the nation to build such a temple. It was only one problem . . . God didn't ask for it and God didn't want it.

You see, God liked being on the move. Our God is really more of a camper, camping, than going to a resort. In Exodus, the freed slaves made their way through the wilderness in the Promised Land. The Ark of the Covenant, that symbol of God's presence with his people, was placed in an ornate tent called the Tabernacle along with elaborate lampstands, golden altars for the burning of incense, and beautiful tapestry screens.

The tabernacle communicated God's holiness and greatness, his oneness and presence among his people. And placed at the center of the encampment, as they

traveled from place to place, was the Tabernacle, the symbol of God, surrounded by the tents of the Twelve Tribes. The symbolism is rich and wonderful. God at the center, moving with his people where he directed them to go as they traveled to the Promised Land.

And now, David wants to tie down God to one spot, one house, one temple. And if we're honest with ourselves, we're not much different than David. After all it's a little uncomfortable to have a God who is constantly on the move. A God who is "on the loose" if you will, moving and shaking people to their very spiritual core. Changing hearts, transforming lives. . . and maybe even changing us! God Forbid!

I mean we're Lutherans after all. We get a little uncomfortable, a little suspicious of Spirit-filled language, "God on the loose" talk. We like it, if we're honest with ourselves, to have God tied down, just a little bit, so that God can be controlled. But God won't be controlled! God didn't need to live in a lifeless building. He already had a living building in which to dwell.

Now a little Hebrew is in order here. The word for "house" in Hebrew is "*beth*". For example, Bethlehem is the house of bread; Bethel the House of God. And so, a house is a physical structure, but *beth* also has another meaning. Yes, it means house, but it also means 'house' as in a 'family.' For example, the House of David. So, it is both a physical structure but also a living family. And that's the promise of God. Within God's 'no' for David to build a *temple* is God's 'yes' to build a *family*, to build a *dynasty*. God makes the promise to David for a house, a family, a dynasty that will last forever.

This is the longest monologue since Moses 500 years before, and it becomes a major theme, a major theological understanding of who God is, and the means by which God will reach out to show his love to his people.

Even though David's descendants, all of the future kings, would bring punishment and ultimately destruction to the nation because of their unfaithfulness and corruption, God never withdraws his faithful, loving commitment to David's descendants. God would lift up his people and care for them. God would make sure that they understood that they were never alone. God would be that Good Shepherd leading his people through dark valleys, to greener pastures and eternal life.

Israel would face many challenges both within the nation and from outside. They would endure invasion and finally destruction at the hands of an enemy 500 years after this particular scripture from Second Samuel. But in another 500 years, they would also experience redemption through the promised messiah, Jesus Christ, born of the House of David, the Dynasty of David.

God later accepts the building of the temple but on his timetable. It's David's son Solomon who will build the temple. But David, by now old and retired as king, served as the chief fund raiser calling upon the people to support the work of building the temple.

But the lesson is clear, you don't need a building . . . but we do need a house . . . each other and God dwelling with us and us on the move for mission and ministry in God's

world. If God is to build a house, it will be built by God. A house, not just brick and mortar, but faithful people, a part of God's holy dynasty, giving their all to God in the tabernacle of worship, in the building of authentic relationships with each other, and the serving of our neighbor in need not only locally but all around the world. We are a part of God's holy dynasty. Amen.

In the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

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