

Place: Lurgan Baptist Church: 25:9:2011

GRAPPLING WITH THE GIANTS

Reading: 2 Samuel 7:1-29

8. THE GIANT OF DISAPPOINTMENT

Try and visualise the following scenes in your mind.

Scene number 1: A young girl sits in a lonely room thinking of the circumstances that have recently come to pass. Plans had been formulated for a wedding with the boy of her dreams but seemingly out of nowhere, conflicts arose and there will be no wedding.

Scene number 2: For years a man has worked hard and performed his job well. Climbing the ladder of success has not been easy. Finally, the opportunity has come for which he has been waiting. The position he has always wanted has become available. But although he is in line for the promotion a kid right out of University nudges him aside and shatters his dreams.

Scene number 3: The waiting room in the Doctor's Clinic has been filled with fears, tension, and questions.

The name is called and a young couple nervously walk through the door to hear the results of the test.

At the marriage altar they expected a full, rich, happy life to be theirs. Then a lump appeared. Sitting down the Doctor confirms their worst fears. Within a period of time these two would say goodbye. Now literally, thousands of similar scenes could be played out before our eyes. One common thread weaves its way

throughout the fabric of these stories. God has said “**No,**” to their plans and dreams. All of us know what it means to have our dreams shattered and our plans changed. *Perhaps as a young man there was a desire in your heart to be a preacher of the gospel. You told the Lord you would do it but it never worked out. Perhaps as a young lady there was a dream in your heart to be a missionary or to give your life in some other form of service but it never worked out. Maybe there was a dream in your heart to make a lot of money so that you could give generously to the work of the Lord but that dream never came to pass.* It is as if God said, “*That is not what I have planned for your life. I want you to take a different path.*” Grappling with the giant of disappointment is not easy. Sometimes disappointment so crushes a person that he is emotionally handicapped for life. And yet there are people who rise above the broken dreams and live in victory. David had **big dreams**. His dreams revolved around doing something great for God who had been so good to him. David was enjoying a time of rest after all the problems he had been forced to endure. For David these days were a time to meditate and reflect on the blessings of God. As David mediated on the Lord a dream was born in his heart.

He wanted to build the Lord a permanent dwelling place. David even got tentative approval from God's spokesman, but his hopes were dashed against the breakers of God's will. You see, sometimes in His wisdom and love God permits the fond hopes of His people to be dashed to the ground. This we are going to look at a time when God stamped the box of

David's dreams with a bold black **no**. How did David handle it ? How do you handle it when God says no ? How do you deal with disappointment ? I want you to notice that the story in (2 Samuel 7) opens with,

(1) A HOLY RESOLVE

Can you picture this scene ? The kingdom had been united. Jerusalem had been taken. The Philistines had been defeated. David sat in a beautiful new palace that was built for him by Hiram King of Tyre (5:11) He considered the goodness of God in giving him rest from his enemies (7:1) He recalled the joy he and his kingdom had just enjoyed as the ark was brought to its new home in Jerusalem (6:17) Then the thought struck him, “ *Here I sit in a luxurious home while the ark rests in that drab tent, God deserves better.* ” My the plan begins to formulate. David proposed to build a house for God. This was his holy resolve. I want you to notice here that David had,

(a) A GLORIOUS PROJECT:

The kind of project that David envisioned was immense. He would build a temple worthy of the God who had done so much for him. His mind surely raced as he considered various aspects of the project and what the finished building might look like. It would have to be greater than any temple he had ever seen that was devoted to the gods of other nations. Moreover, if there was going to be a temple, there would have to be a plan of temple service. Thus,

toward the end of his life, David set in place structures that survived the Babylonian captivity and remained to the time of Christ.

By the end of his reign, he had twenty four thousand Levites trained to work in the Temple (1 Chron 23:4) Then he organized the rest of the Levites to be responsible for other areas of ministry. (1 Chron 23:5) You see, David believed this temple should be

“ *exceeding magnificent of fame and of glory throughout all countries.* ” (1 Chron 22:5) Great leaders take time to plan and prepare for great undertakings. It was a glorious project. Now it's not wrong for us as believers to consider what we may do to advance the Lord's cause on this earth. Dr. Rendall says, “ *as a Servant David wished to honour his Master: as a Saint he wished to glorify his God: as a Steward he wished to dedicate his possessions to the Lord.* ” My would it not be great if more of us were concerned with the things of the Lord ? Exercised about how we could promote the cause of Christ. Do you know what God said about David's exercise ? “ *Thou didst well in that it was in thine heart.* ” (2 Chron 6:8) (a)

(b) A GREAT PASSION:

Do you know what it was ? He loved the Lord. And this love for God naturally expressed itself in a desire to worship the Lord. Many of the psalms he wrote would be used by Israel and later by the Christian church to express praise and worship. Because the worship of God was centralised in the Tabernacle, it was only natural that David continually longed to

worship God in that setting. My here is young man under 40 years of age whose heart is full to overflowing with love to the Lord. (5:5) When David thinks of all that God has done for him he pours out his heart in adoring gratitude to the Lord. Later on in this passage we find him sitting in the Lord's presence saying, "*Who am I, O Lord God ? and what is my house that Thou hast brought me hitherto ?*" (7:18) Whatever rest, prosperity, blessings David enjoyed he ascribed not to his own skill and power but to God's hand on his life. Now in the light of that he desires to show his love and gratitude by building a house for the Lord. My do you ever sit in the presence of the Lord and ponder His blessings to you ? Can you not testify that God's love has surrounded you, God's grace has sustained you, God's hand has strengthened you and in the light of that are you prepared to say, "*Here am I Lord I gave myself unreservedly to you.*" Is it not the "*mercies of God,*" that Paul uses as a basis for his appeal to the saints at Rome ? He says, "*I beseech you mercies of God.*" (Rom 12:1) Was it not C.T. Studd who said, " If Jesus Christ be God and died for me, then can no sacrifice can be too great for me to make for Him." My what have you "*rendered unto the Lord for all His benefits toward you ?*" (Ps 116:12)

(c) A **GODLY PERSPECTIVE:**

Look if you will at (7:2) Now since Nathan was God's spokesman David decided to bounce a new idea off him. "*Nathan, I'm troubled that I have a nicer house than the Ark does.*" (7:2) Now implied in that

statement was that a new majestic home should be provided for the Ark of God. David struggled with his comfortable lifestyle compared to the condition of the Tabernacle which had served Israel for centuries. It just did not seem right to David that he lived in a comfortable palace and that a decaying tent remained the national symbol of the worship of God. He longed to build another palace even greater than his own. This would be a place for the worship of God. Even the structure itself would remind all who came to worship of the awesomeness of their God. My to David it was a principle. ***He would not do less for God than he would do for himself.*** He would not do for the house of God less than he would do for his own house. My it was unthinkable to him that the symbol of the Presence of God, the Ark of the Covenant, should still have only the trappings of Israel's long-past nomadic existence.

(1 Chron 16:1) So David determined to do something about it. Now I wonder are we as godly in our perspective as David was ? Here he was disturbed by the fact that he lived in a luxurious home while the ark was placed in a tent. You see a tent was the lodging place of a nomad.

And a nomad was the lowest and least significant member in the social structure of the Hebrew people. Surely thought David the Ark was worthy of a permanent building. Now do you ever think like that ? Are we ever convicted between what we spend on our homes and what we give to God's cause ? Is there a striking contrast between what we spend on ourselves and what we offer to the Lord ? Between what we

spend on our families and what we give to the work of the Lord ? My the problem that they faced in Haggai's day is one of the greatest problems we face today. Do you know what it is ? **Selfishness.** That's why the prophet cried, "*Is it time for you, O ye that dwell in your ceiled houses and this house lie waste ?*" (Haggai 1:4) No money, time, energy for the work of the Lord but money, time, energy for ourselves, our homes, our families ? My "**To do less for God than you do for yourself shows where your heart is.**" Here then was A Holy Resolve. Can't you imagine that as David lay his head on his pillow that night, he had a difficult time going to sleep. The thing David wanted to do more than anything else in the world was going to happen. He was going to build a temple worthy of the God who had done so much for him. But David was not the only one who had difficulty sleeping that night. Although Nathan had agreed that David's idea was good and told him to proceed, the Lord had other plans. For we notice here not only a (1) but,

(2) A HEAVENLY RESPONSE

You see while **man Proposes, God Disposes.** How did God handle David's proposal ? Well, notice,

(a) GOD'S FIRST RESPONSE:

Look if you will at (7:5) In the parallel passage in (1 Chron 17:4) we read, "*Thou shalt not build me an house to dwell in.*" God's refusal to let David build a House for the Ark was based on 4 reasons.

- (1) No precedent had been established. (5:6) God had never dwelt in a permanent building only a tent.
- (2) No request had been made by God for such a Building. (7:7) These plans were David's initiative not God's.
- (3) No man of war could build this house. For this was to be a House of Peace. (1 Chron 22:8 28:3)
- (4) No safety for the ark could yet be assured since Jerusalem was not completely fortified against her enemies. (1 Kings 5:3-4)

Now all of this makes sense unless it's your idea that has just been shot down. Now there was nothing wrong with David's dream, his motives were pure, his intentions were well-pleasing to God (2 Chron 6:8) but he was not the **right man** to carry out the job. God wanted a man of peace to build His house. *I wonder has something like this ever happened in your life ? Has God ever shattered your dreams ? Has the Lord ever said **no** to one of your goals ? Has He ever come to you with a negative ? Has God crossed out your plans ? Going to the mission field ? Entering the Lord's work ? Marrying a certain believer who walked close to the Saviour ? Or was it perhaps that in your heart you had a very real dream of a home and children ? But the years have slipped by, and God has said, "**No.**" My the Lord's mysterious **no** is hard to handle but if you really believe that God loves you, wants the best for you, if you trust Him with your life He will show you the better plan He has for you. You see the Lord did not stop with a negative for notice,*

(b) GOD'S FURTHER RESPONSE:

Look if will at (7:12-13) God said to David,
“ Solomon thy son he shall build My house and My courts.” (1 Chron 28:6) You see David’s dream after all would be realised his project would be fulfilled. The Temple would be built. Initially, his plans had been cancelled, now they are to carried out in splendour. My when God says “ **no**,” He has a better way. He never intends to frustrate or disillusion us. God only wants to show us something better. I wonder what the Lord is saying to you this ? You see in His will and wisdom God is able to accomplish your plans and fulfil your dreams. Oh, He may do it without your aid or assistance. He may choose to use another instrument entirely. Not David but Solomon was to build the Temple. My when God says “ **No**,” look for a bigger goal not a smaller one. Look for a supernatural goal not one that you can do. Look for an eternal goal not one that will decay. Look for a spiritual goal, not one of human origin. Make Christ the focus of your goal. (a) (b) But did you notice,

(c) **GOD’S FINAL RESPONSE:**

You see rather than David building a house for God, God promised to build a house for David. David wanted to build God a house of stone, but God was to build David a royal house, a family that would reign on his throne. In essence God said, “ *Don't be disappointed. Look how far you have come. From Shepherd to Sovereign. From leading a flock of sheep to leading God's people.* (7:8) *And haven't you enjoyed My Presence with you over the years as we*

have walked through the valleys and up to the mountains ? Didn't I help you conquer all your enemies ? Now you sit as undisputed King in Jerusalem. Your name has become great. Are you still disappointed ?” But my God did not stop there. The curtain of time was folded back and the prospects were awesome.

Prophetically, this is known as the Davidic Covenant and it’s important to notice that 5 promises were made to David and Israel.

- (1) **A Promise of Residency:** “ *May dwell*,” (7:10)
- (2) **A Promise of Security:** “ *Neither*,” (7:10)
- (3) **A Promise of Posterity:** “ *I seed*,” (7:11-12)
 This clearly has reference to David’s physical descendants for David's line would always be the royal line.
- (4) **A Promise of Authority:** “ *I throne..*,” (7:13)
 David’s throne was to be established forever.
- (5) **A Promise of Perpetuity:** “ *And house ...*,” (7:16)

The ultimate fulfilment of these promises is in Jesus Christ. (Lk 3:31) Do you recall the message of the angel to Mary ? “ *And the Lord God shall gave unto Him (Christ) the throne of His father David.*” (Lk 1:32) And it is our conviction that Christ will fulfil this Davidic Covenant when He sits on David’s throne and rules during the Millennial Kingdom. *Prophetically, here is God’s future programme for Israel but Practically is this now what God does for us* ? Not only does He bring to pass the desires of our hearts, but often in His grace and goodness towards us he adds the “ *superabundance of His generosity.*” He “

does exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think.”

(Eph 3:20) Has God said **no** to you recently ? Are you now discovering that He is providing a better way ?

Disappointment His appointment

Change one letter, then I see

That the thwarting of my purpose

Is God's better choice for me

Disappointment His appointment

No good thing will He withhold

From denials oft we gather

Treasures of His love untold

In Scotland a family by the name of Clark had a dream. Husband and wife with their nine children wanted to emigrate to the U.S.A. To make that dream a reality, they struggled, scrimped, and saved. Finally they managed to accumulate enough money and obtain all the paperwork they needed to take the trip and begin a new life in a new land. Ship reservations were made and the family was ecstatic. ***Then, tragedy struck.***

Seven days before they were to leave the youngest of the children, a little boy, was bitten by a dog. The bite wasn't serious, but the doctor also had to hang a yellow sign on the Clark's front door. The yellow sign warned everybody to stay away, there was a possibility, a very small chance, that the boy had contracted rabies from the bite of the unknown dog. Their ship was to sail in one week, the family was quarantined for two. They would have to stay behind as their ship, and their dreams, sailed into the sunset.

The father, outraged at what he felt was the unjust, unfair hand that he had been dealt, went down to the pier to stare as the ship set out. Furious at God, frustrated with his son, he cried and he cursed. He stomped home in a foul mood. He stayed that way, too. Then only a few days after his vessel had left port he got word that on the 15th April 1912 the very ship which was to have brought them to a new life, had been sunk. The Titanic had gone down. Hearing that news, Mr. Clark's attitude was instantly transformed. Excitedly, he hugged his son. Prayerfully, he thanked his God. Their lives had been spared. Their tragedy had been turned into a triumph. My have your dreams been shattered ? How have you reacted ? David's response to ***God's no*** was godly, gracious and full of trust. For not only we see here (1) (2) but we see,

(3) A HUMBLE REACTION

How did David react ? Did he become bitter in heart ? Did he argue and protest ? Did he blame the Lord ? Did he sulk ? There's a beautiful phrase in (7:18) He was,

(a) THOUGHTFUL IN GOD'S PRESENCE:

The word "*sat*," means to "*tarry or linger*." He was not in a hurry. He searched for appropriate words. My the promises had not bloated him they humbled him. Look at his expressions, "*Who am I*," (7:18) "*What is my house*," (7:18) "*What can David say*

more unto thee," (7:20) Is this not how we should approach God ? When David heard of all that God had done for Him in the **past**, and all that God would do for him in the **future**, he was overwhelmed. There was no complaint because his desire had been refused, but humility as he reflected on the goodness of God. My has God said **no** to you ? Then before you turn away, before there creeps into your life some bitterness, just sit down before the Lord and think about His goodness to you. You may have your dreams shattered, but hasn't God given so much more than you imagined ? Has He not saved you by His grace ? Has He not used you to accomplish His will in the world ? When God says "**no**," to your dreams and plans it's because He has something better in mind for you. David (a)

(b) GRATEFUL FOR GOD'S PROMISES:

For, as he faced God's denial he was brought to a place where he began to claim the promises of God for himself. (7:25) Whatever you need this there is a promise in God's Word which will exactly meet it. Do you need **peace** ? The Lord Jesus says, "*My peace I give unto you.*" (Jn 14:26) Do you need **guidance** ? God says, "*I will instruct,"*" (Ps 32:8) Do you need **grace** ? The Lord says, "*My grace*" (2 Cor 12:9) You see when God says **no** to your dream He wants to teach you that every need of your soul can be met by His precious promises. David (a) (b) and then he was,

(c) HELPFUL TO GOD'S PEOPLE:

Fight the will of God and it will break you: accept the will of God and it will make you. David knows now that it's God's Purpose that Solomon build the Temple (7:13) but this did not prevent David from gathering the materials. He says, "*I have prepared with all my might for the house of my God.*" (1 Chron 29:2 22:4 2 Sam 24:24) David helped God's people **Materially**: he assembled the materials that would be used in the building of the temple. (1 Chron 22:14) David helped God's people **Organisationally**: He made sure there were adequate labourers for this great building project. (1 Chron 22:15) David helped God's people **Spiritually**: for he said to the nation " Keep and seek for all the commandments of the Lord your God." (1 Chron 28:8) My **disappointments are not only opportunities for maturity, but they are also opportunities for ministry.** Can I ask, what have you been doing in the years since God's no came to you ? Have you been idle or involved ? Have you been giving of your substance to forward the work of the Lord ? Have you been enlisting others to serve in God's vineyard ? (1 Chron 22:15)

Leonard Wright would often talk about when he was a young man he wanted to be a missionary for the Lord. But his family was very poor. He was not able to get an education, not able to move in that direction. He said that along the way he was disappointed that he was never able to become a missionary. But then he said, "*But you know God is letting me be the building superintendent of our church and God lets me have the opportunity to teach others. I'm just trying to get others ready to do for God, what I wanted but was not*

able to do.” My if you cannot build you can gather the materials, if you cannot go you can send someone else. If God has said **no** to you, then will you help someone else fill that place on which you had set your heart ? The Giant of Disappointment. Are you grappling with it ? Has God recently said **no** to you ? Then be alert for God may be about to give you something better.