

When God Says Nothing...

II Samuel 7:1-7

II Samuel 7:2-7

• 2 That the king said unto Nathan the prophet, See now, I dwell in an house of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth within curtains. 3 And Nathan said to the king, **Go, do all that is in thine heart; for the LORD is with thee.** 4 And it came to pass that night, that **the word of the LORD came unto Nathan,** saying, 5 Go and tell my servant David, Thus saith the LORD, **Shalt thou build me an house for me to dwell in?** 6 Whereas 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. **7 In 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?**

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What Are We To Make of The Silence of God's Word?

- What is to be our attitude and actions when God says nothing?
 - Many argue for their beliefs and practices by saying, ***“the Bible does not say not to”***
 - Illus.: *The Bible does not say do not* use a piano, have ball teams, bake sales, have a special observance for Easter, Christmas, support schools, benevolent institutions from the church treasury...
 - Many (cf. Zwingli vs. Luther) believe that the silence of God's word is permissive
 - i.e. “we can do anything not specifically prohibited”
 - i.e. “when the scriptures say nothing we are at liberty to act”
 - ***God's silence is not permissive. It does not furnish authority for anything.***

Old Testament Illustrations:

- **Exodus 14:10-16** → Israel between Red Sea /Egyptians...
 - **Afraid** (10); Murmur and begin to despair (11-12)
 - What shall they do? Turn back? Something other than what they are presently doing? They could have argued, “God didn’t say not to...”
 - Moses said “**stand still**” (13); that is what they were to do till He spoke. “**Hold your peace**” (14) – in the absence of communication from God.
 - Verse 15 – only when God spoke were they to “go forward”.
 - God’s way works, and we should place our faith in His word.
 - God expected them to stay within the limits of what he said, and the absence of instructions from Him, they were not at liberty to do as they pleased. (Deut. 4:2; 29:29)

Exodus 14:13-15

- 13 And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will shew to you to day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more for ever. 14 The LORD shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace. 15 And the LORD said unto Moses, Wherefore criest thou unto me? speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward:

Old Testament Illustrations

- **Numbers 9:4-12** → The case of when the defiled could observe the Passover...
 - God had commanded Passover observance on the 14th day of the 1st mo.
 - Some had touched a dead body and were ceremonially unclean. What to do? Why can't we offer? "I know the Bible says...but why can't we..."
 - Moses said "**stand still**" (8). They had no right to act without authority from God. They were not permitted to change the day, even though in a difficult situation.
 - "**And the Lord spake...**" (9)
 - Lesson: We must worship God according to what He has said, and not according to our own wishes...what pleases us, etc. (Jn. 4:24)
 - When God is silent we are to stand still.

Old Testament Illustrations

- ***Leviticus 24:10-16*** → How to punish the blasphemer? What are we supposed to do?
 - They put him in ward till the mind of the Lord might be revealed. (12)
 - They could have argued “God did not say don’t drown, burn, or behead him...”
 - God specified stoning. (14)
 - If God had simply said execute him, they would have been at liberty to choose among options.
 - God’s silence did not authorize them to act...only his revelation. (cf. Num. 15:32-36)

The New Testament and the Silence of the Scriptures

- *Matt. 4:1-11*

- Three times Jesus answered the temptations of the devil with “it is written”, showing his reliance upon the word of God -- our support and defense.
- Notice great principles relating to the authority of God’s word from this passage:
 - 4:4 – “...by every word of God...” (authoritative)
 - 4:7 – “...it is written again...” (take into account and harmonize all that God has said)
 - 4:10 – “...thou shalt worship the Lord thy God...” (practical nature of God’s word, Dt. 29:29)

The New Testament and the Silence of the Scriptures

- Acts 15:24 → 24 Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, *Ye must* be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no *such* commandment:
- Matthew 28:20 → Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen

The New Testament and the Silence of the Scriptures

- **Heb. 7:11-14** → “...For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law...For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood.”
- **II Jn. 9** → “...Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God.”
- **I Pet. 4:11** → If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles (the very words) of God;

Conclusion...

- What is silence? (when God says nothing)
 - The absence of communication; the opposite of speech.
 - Only God's speech (revelation) furnishes authority.
 - His silence does not authorize anything, or give us the right to act.
- Why is God silent on many matters?
 - Is it because He inadvertently omitted some things? Absolutely not. (Gen. 17:1; Ps. 147:5)
 - Because He intentionally omitted it.
 - Because He chose not to reveal or provide authority.
 - When God has not spoken, we have no right to add to his word. To do so is sinful and incurs His wrath. (Rev. 22:18-19; Dt. 29:29; II Tim. 3:16-17)