

Nathan – The Prophet

Of some eleven men of the name Nathan in the Old Testament, only six can at least be identified as separate individuals.

This article will only focus on Nathan the prophet involved in the story of King David's life.

Nathan appears without any introduction when King David expresses his wish to build a temple, [2 Samuel 7:1-3].

Nathan approves at first but after speaking with God informs David that this task is for David's descendent, [2 Samuel 7:4-10].

David apparently arranges, at Nathan's instigation, the music for temple worship, [2 Chronicles 29:25].

When Adonijah plans to seize his father's throne, Nathan advises Bathsheba to remind King David of his promise to name Solomon his successor.

Supporting this reminder, Nathan is instructed to proclaim Solomon, King David's successor, [1 Kings 1:11-45].

The prophet Nathan lived up to the meaning of his name "*he [God] has given,*" when he was a necessary and helpful gift from God to King David.

Nathan is best known for his fearless denunciation of King David's double sin against Uriah the Hittite and the parable in which it was couched, [2 Samuel 12:1-9].

Nathan was able to help King David see his own wrongdoing by showing that he would not have tolerated such actions from anyone else.

King David's repentance allowed Nathan to comfort him with the reality of God's forgiveness, and at the same time remind King David of the very painful consequences his sin would bring, [2 Samuel 12:10-14].

Nathan's approach helps all of us to judge our own actions.

How often do we make choices that we would condemn others for making?

It is helpful to ask ourselves how God and others see our actions.

Unfortunately, we have a capacity to lie to ourselves.

God has provided two safeguards against self-deception, His Word, the Christian Bible, and true friends.

In each case we are given a view that is beyond ourselves.

If we do not have a friend like Nathan, we need to ask the Creator God to give us one.

Also ask the Creator God to use us as a suitable Nathan for someone else.

Lessons from the life of Nathan –

We should not be afraid to tell the truth to those we care about.

A trustworthy companion is one of God's greatest gifts.

God cares enough to find a way to communicate to us when we are wrong.