



Can God be contained?

READ 2 SAMUEL 7:1-17

When King David felt settled in his own house, he decided to build God a temple. He didn't like leaving the Ark of the Covenant in a tent all the time. But God told the prophet Nathan to tell David that he was not the right person to build the temple. God had been moving around with the people all along. God promised David a long line of descendants, but one of them would build the temple.

REMEMBER: 2 Samuel 7:6

God said, "I have not lived in a house from the time I brought the Israelites up from Egypt to the present day. Instead, I was traveling with them and living in a tent."

MORE TO CONSIDER

Listen to the song "Cannot Keep You" from Gungor. You can read the lyrics below the image:

[youtube.com/watch?v=5s6Mfk7VQUI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5s6Mfk7VQUI)

How do we build a temple to God in modern times? How can we find a way to gather, and to worship together, and to create spaces for fellowship with each other without imagining that the spaces we create are the only places in which God can dwell? How can we keep our buildings from becoming idols? Is there a way to honor the holy nature of the energy we create together without deeming one human-made object, room or building more holy than another? What happens to the way we think about our building when we understand that God's true temple is inside each one of us? Does that free us up to think about church differently? In what ways?

NEXT WEEK: 1 Kings 17:1-16 (17-24)

WONDER

DAY 1: Have you experienced moments of indescribable, uncontainable joy or transcendence? Maybe a song, a book, a meal you shared with good friends or family? Maybe it was a movie, a hike, a kiss, an embrace, a vacation? Is God ever like that experience of joy? How?

WONDER

DAY 2: Why does David want to build a temple? Why does God object?

PRESENCE

DAY 3: Can you contain God in a building? In one place? In one town or country? In one religion? In one idea? In one description, illustration or metaphor? Can God contain you? What does any of that really mean?

SURPRISE

DAY 4: Is God something that belongs to the past, something that we can study, learn and understand? Or is God ahead of us all the time, drawing us forward into a newer and bigger understanding every day? Can we ever get our heads around everything that God is? Can we ever know everything about God? Or is there always more to see and learn? What are the implications of that idea for us as a faith community?

PROGRESS

DAY 5: What does it mean that God is on the move? Should we be on the move, too? In which direction?

SURPRISE

DAY 6: What does this story have to say about the vision and future of your faith community? Are you settled? Are you comfortable? Perhaps too comfortable? Do you feel certain about who God is, and who God is going to be? Do you think your faith community should always do what you've been good at, or comfortable with, in the past? Is that too static for this God? Why, or why not?

PROGRESS

DAY 7: Or ... is your faith community called to be dynamic? Are you called to move forward with God into more grace, more love, more forgiveness, more inclusion? What does that look like? Have we lost the wonder of where God is leading? How do we make room for this wild, colorful, exotic, even dangerous presence of God in our lives?