

4. The new king of Israel

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Little Johnny was asked by his mom, "Are you hungry, Johnny?" Often his response is, "What are you cooking?" If it was vegetables, then he is not hungry at that particular moment. But if it was ice cream, then he would be starving.

In the same way, we will sometimes say, "Lord, what is your will? Before I am going to obey Your will, I would like to know what I am getting myself into." But God may tell us something that we don't want to hear. The question is, are we going to do no matter what He says?

This section of the Word of God is usually passed over. I am confident, however, that it has been given to us for at least two reasons:

1) To show us the family of the Lord Jesus Christ and to give us His genealogy.

2) To give us an example. It has been given to us that it might spiritually minister to us.

1 Corinthians 10:11 Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.

A. THE MURDER OF THE PUPPET KING

2 Samuel 4:1-12 When Saul's son heard that Abner had died in Hebron, he lost heart, and all Israel was troubled. 2 Now Saul's son had two men who were captains of troops. The name of one was Baanah and the name of the other Rechab, the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, of the children of Benjamin. (For Beeroth also was part of Benjamin, 3 because the Beerothites fled to Gittaim and have been sojourners there until this day.) 4 Jonathan, Saul's son, had a son who was lame in his feet. He was five years old when the news about Saul and Jonathan came from Jezreel; and his nurse took him up and fled. And it happened, as she made haste to flee, that he fell and became lame. His name was Mephibosheth. 5 Then the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, Rechab and Baanah, set out and came at about the heat of the day to the house of Ishbosheth, who was lying on his bed at noon. 6 And they came there, all the way into the house, as though to get wheat, and they stabbed him in the stomach. Then Rechab and Baanah his brother escaped. 7 For when they came into the house, he was lying on his bed in his bedroom; then they struck him and killed him, beheaded him and took his head, and were all night escaping through the plain. 8 And they brought the head of Ishbosheth to David at Hebron, and said to the king, 'Here is the head of Ishbosheth, the son of Saul your enemy, who sought your life; and the Lord has avenged my lord the king this day of Saul and his descendants.' 9 But David answered Rechab and Baanah his brother, the sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, and said to them, 'As the Lord lives, who has redeemed my life from all adversity, 10 when someone told me, saying, 'Look, Saul is dead,' thinking to have brought good news, I arrested him and had him executed in Ziklag—the one who thought I would give him a reward for his news. 11 How much more, when wicked men have killed a righteous person in his own house on his bed? Therefore, shall I not now require his blood at your hand and remove you from the earth?' 12 So David commanded his young men, and they executed them, cut off their hands and feet, and hanged them by the pool in Hebron. But they took the head of Ishbosheth and buried it in the tomb of Abner in Hebron.

What do you see here?

When Ishbosheth heard that Abner who put him on the throne was dead, he knew that his days were numbered. He trusted in man to gain his position, so when the man was gone he knew his position would be soon gone. Ishbosheth was weak because he trusted in man. This is one of the Christian believers' frequent spiritual mistakes. We tend to trust people's words and programs more than what God can do for us.

Mephibosheth was the last male descendant of Saul with a strong legal claim to the throne of Saul. At this time he was only 12 years old – and he was lame. We are going to set aside his story for now and revisit when we get to chapter 9.

Abner's death left a power vacuum in the Northern Kingdom. Among the opportunists eager to take charge are two of Ishbosheth's men, Baanah and Rechab from Beerothites. These brothers, Baanah and Rechab were not soldiers fighting together for David. They were murderers and opportunists who deserved just punishment.

These two guys used the spiritual language "the Lord has avenged" to describe their despicable actions. We all have seen the people who use spiritual language to cover up their sins or to justify their wrongdoings.

David would not accept the evil deed of Rechab and Baanah, though it seemed to serve a good purpose – unifying Israel under David's reign as king. While it is true that God overrules all the actions of men, and compels them ultimately to serve His high purposes, it is equally true that no servant of His can ever consent to do evil that good may come. It is an arresting truth that our Lord in the days of His earthly life would not accept the testimony of demons.

David had learned a very important lesson and that was the commitment of his life to the Lord, not to take things in his own hands.

B. KING DAVID OVER A UNITED ISRAEL

2 Samuel 5:1-5 Then all the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron and spoke, saying, 'Indeed we are your bone and your flesh. 2 Also, in time past, when Saul was king over us, you were the one who led Israel out and brought them in; and the Lord said to you, 'You shall shepherd My people Israel, and be ruler over Israel.' ' 3 Therefore all the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron, and King David made a covenant with them at Hebron before the Lord. And they anointed David king over Israel. 4 David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years. 5 In Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months, and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty-three years over all Israel and Judah.

What is your interpretation of this?

Finally, after 7 years of civil war, the nation of Israel is reunited under David. Israel is about to enter its greatest period of prosperity and expansion. David will reign for a total of 40 years and 6 months.

It's sad that the tribes only turned to David when their previous choice was taken away. On the same principle, it's sad when Christians only really recognized Jesus as King when other choices crumble. We should choose Jesus outright, not just when other options fail.

The elders of Israel received David's leadership because it was evident God called him to lead. These 3 characteristics should mark anyone who leads God's people:

- A leader must belong to God's people in heritage and heart.
- A leader must demonstrate the capability to lead with the vision from God.
- A leader must have an evident call from God.

C. THE CONQUEST OF JERUSALEM

2 Samuel 5:6-10 And the king and his men went to Jerusalem against the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land, who spoke to David, saying, 'You shall not come in here; but the blind and the lame will repel you,' thinking, 'David cannot come in here.' 7 Nevertheless David took the stronghold of Zion (that is, the City of David). 8 Now David said on that day, 'Whoever climbs up by way of the water shaft and defeats the Jebusites (the lame and the blind, who are hated by David's soul), he shall be chief and captain.' Therefore they say, 'The blind and the lame shall not come into the house.' 9 Then David dwelt in the stronghold, and called it the City of David. And David built all around from the Millo and inward. 10 So David went on and became great, and the Lord God of hosts was with him.

Please give me your interpretation of this portion.

Notice the first move that David makes to consolidate the kingdom. He moved the capital of Israel from Hebron to Jerusalem. There were great reasons why David moved the capital city to Jerusalem: First, it is located right in the middle of the whole kingdom. Second, it is a natural defense-minded city. The elevation of 1920 feet sea level, sitting on top of high cliffs except for the north side.

David came to the place of greatness because the Lord God of hosts was with him. In God's plan, there is almost always a hidden price of greatness. Often those who become great among God's people experience much pain and difficulty in God's training process. God used at least 15 years of David's life in preparation for the throne of Israel.

D. DAVID EXALTED THE LORD

2 Samuel 5:11-12 Then Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David, and cedar trees, and carpenters and masons. And they built David a house. 12 So David knew that the Lord had established him as king over Israel, and that He had exalted His kingdom for the sake of His people Israel.

What do you get out of this?

David knew 3 things that made his reign great. Every godly leader should know these 3 things very well:

- David knew that God called him and established him over Israel.
- David knew that the kingdom belonged to God – it was God's kingdom.
- David knew that God wanted to use him as a channel to bless His people. It was not for David's sake that he was lifted, but for the sake of His people Israel.

So, if you feel that you are called to be a leader wherever God designates, you must take this fact into your heart. It is God who appoints you; it is God who owns everything you are leading and have; it is God who is doing this for the people around you through you. It's not about you and certainly not for your glory.

E. MORE WIVES, MORE PROBLEMS TO COME

2 Samuel 5:13-16 And David took more concubines and wives from Jerusalem, after he had come from Hebron. Also more sons and daughters

were born to David. 14 Now these are the names of those who were born to him in Jerusalem: Shammua, Shobab, Nathan, Solomon, 15 Ibhar, Elishua, Nepheg, Japhia, 16 Elishama, Eliada, and Eliphelet.

What kind of interpretation are you getting from this paragraph?

God did not put His stamp of approval upon David's multiple marriages. We will find that God definitely disapproves of polygamy. This was in direct disobedience to Deuteronomy 17:17.

We know nothing about the first two boys mentioned in v14, but we do know something about Nathan and Solomon. From the line of Nathan came Mary the mother of Jesus. From Solomon came Joseph, Mary's husband. The Lord Jesus Christ received the bloodline and the legal title to the throne of David through Nathan and Solomon. That is the reason this information is recorded for us here.

Though David was sensitive toward God spiritually, but when it comes to his passion for women, he was not much of a spiritual man and he was setting himself up for a lot of heartaches and the fall with Bathsheba.

F. CAMPAIGNS AGAINST THE PHILISTINES

2 Samuel 5:17-25 Now when the Philistines heard that they had anointed David king over Israel, all the Philistines went up to search for David. And David heard of it and went down to the stronghold. 18 The Philistines also went and deployed themselves in the Valley of Rephaim. 19 So David inquired of the Lord, saying, 'Shall I go up against the Philistines? Will You deliver them into my hand?' And the Lord said to David, 'Go up, for I will doubtless deliver the Philistines into your hand.' 20 So David went to Baal Perazim, and David defeated them there; and he said, 'The Lord has broken through my enemies before me, like a breakthrough of water.' Therefore he called the name of that place Baal Perazim. 21 And they left their images there, and David and his men carried them away. 22 Then the Philistines went up once again and deployed themselves in the Valley of Rephaim. 23 Therefore David inquired of the Lord, and He said, 'You shall not go up; circle around behind them, and come upon them in front of the mulberry trees. 24 And it shall be, when you hear the sound of marching in the tops of the mulberry trees, then you shall advance quickly. For then the Lord will go out before you to strike the camp of the Philistines.' 25 And David did so, as the Lord commanded him; and he drove back the Philistines from Geba as far as Gezer.

What is your interpretation of this?

As David seeks God and looks to Him for guidance, he is blessed. God honored David's dependence on Him and gave him the promise of victory. The Philistines even brought their idols to the battle as a good luck charm, thinking they would help defeat the Israelites as the Israelites did with the Ark of Covenant in 1 Samuel 4.

God gave Dave victory once. Why bother to pray again? He could have said, "Let's go out and wipe them out." That's the mistake we so often make. Because God did it this way once, we think God has established a pattern. The truth of the matter is that God will not be limited to a pattern. We should not be guilty of trying to formulate the pattern by which God works.

Rather than trying to formulate the plan and say, "God, here is our plan. Bless our plan." We are so prone to do that. It may not be His plan at all. So our prayer is really wasted. Don't try to get God on your side, get on His side. It's a lot easier. We need to discover the will and the way of God and move with God rather than trying to get God to move with us.

When we are used to with someone or some programs, it can easily take away our dependence on God.

Throughout David's reign, there never was any peace with this enemy, the Philistines. The Philistines that were mentioned throughout the Bible are like fleshly desires in our hearts. There are constant struggles between our spiritual inner men and fleshly desires. It is no wonder why Jesus told us to deny ourselves and pick up our crosses and follow Him.

Romans 7:15 For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do.

G. APPLICATIONS

- 1) We should not depend on the ability or the promises of another person, but only God.
- 2) We must realize that God is not the last resort or option in the midst of our difficult times.
- 3) If you feel that you are called to be a leader wherever God designate, you must remember this: It is God who appoints you; it is God who owns everything you are leading; it is God who is doing this for the people around you through you. It's not about you and certainly not for your glory.