

Jesus, Man of War  
2 Samuel 10:1 - 12

Nutshell: David, a representative of God in an enemy world, had to be a warrior. Christ came as a warrior, and, in the Cross, He cracked the foundation of the enemy citadel. Now it will take only a touch for the whole structure to fall. In the meantime, Christ's mission is peace.

I. Context: David wisely pursuing the duties of a king.

II. Text

2 Sam 10:1 And it happened afterward, the king of the sons of Ammon died. And his son Hanun reigned in his place.

Literal Standard Version with modifications

The next four outline items, III. - VI., are based on the 4 uses of Scripture listed in 2 Tim 3:16 AND the 3 depictions of preaching in 2 Tim 4:2.

III. Teaching

Summary So Far

- A. The Book of Kingdoms, our 1 & 2 Sam + 1 & 2 Kings, is the story of Israel's kings, beginning with the prophet Samuel, who anointed both of the first two kings, Saul and David
  1. Samuel warned Israel vs. having a king, 1 Sam 10:19, Hos 13:11
  2. **Saul** was apostate *man's* version of king. God previewed *His* version via **David**, 1 Sam 13:14
- ✿ B. 1 Kings 15:5 tells us that David kept God's commands *except* in the Bathsheba incident. This dramatically shapes our approach to each incident in David's life.
- C. The chronicler presents David as God's chosen king, a *picture* of Messiah, but *not* the Messiah; a *reference point* for all subsequent kings of Judah, e.g., 2 Kings 14:3
- D. David as king
  1. David was anointed king over **Judah**, 2 Sam 2. 2 Sam 2:12-32: trouble between Judah and Israel (the 9 northern tribes) begins.
  2. After Ishbosheth's assassination, **Israel's** elders anointed David KING, 2 Sam 5:1-5

3. David finally vanquished Jebus (Jerusalem), 2 Sam 5:6-10, where he had taken Goliath's head, 1 Sam 17:54
  - a. David rebuffed 2 Philistine invasions, 5:17-25
  - b. David retrieved the Ark from its 'wanderings', 6:1-19; first, ignoring God's instructions, leading to a death, then properly, with great joy
4. Now David wants to build a **permanent** form for the Tabernacle. This will be the Temple, 7:1-3
  - a. God corrected David: "I'm building *you* a house, 7:4-11
  - b. Then, "Your son will build the Temple," 7:12-13
- ★ 5. God had chosen *Abraham* to make a nation from which Redemption would come.
  - a. Now God says the Redeemer will be a king who comes through **David's** permanent kingdom, 7:14-17
  - b. 7:18-29, David's deep, beautiful prayer: God, You are doing this. Indeed, be resolved to do it!
6. In chap 8, David battled aggressive neighbors, east, west, north, and south, dedicating the captured brass, gold, and silver to the Temple, 8:7-12.
  - a. His massive victory over Edom + the Syrians gained him a name, 8:13-14
  - b. David was "just and moral" (word pair used of Abraham and Messiah) via his govt, 8:15-18
7. In chap 9, David found Jonathan's son Mephibosheth, through whom he fulfilled his oath to show favor to Jonathan's heirs.

**Kid-speak:** Remember last time we talked about David? Who was Jonathan's son whom David helped? Mephibosheth.

- E. 10:1, Now David is 'caught up'!
1. Since Saul's death, David's life has been stair steps, each step an accomplishment leading to a next step.
    - a. Made king of Judah: rewarding those who recovered Saul's body, 2:4-5
    - b. Made king of all Israel: capturing Jebus, 5:4-6
    - c. Repelling the Philistines: bringing the Ark to Jerusalem, ch 6
    - d. With a new house: ready to build one for God, 7:1-2
    - e. Securing his borders: instituting a just govt administration, 8:13-18

- f. Cabinet in place: find an heir of Saul, ch 9
- 2. Chap 10 is David's first 'breathing room'. No necessary 'next thing' waiting. However, life keeps serving up challenges, no matter what.
- F. 10:1, We learn about Hanun's dad, Nahash, in 1 Sam 11:1-11.
  - 1. Remember, Ammon and Israel were **kin**. Ammon was from Lot, Abraham's nephew. But they squabbled.
  - 2. The region of Gilead, mostly in Gad, was contested.
- G. The war in this chapter continues into fateful 2 Sam 11, David's downfall

2 Sam 10:2 And David said, "I will show kindness to Hanun the son of Nahash, as his father showed kindness to me." And David sent to comfort him concerning his father by the hand of his servants. And David's servants came into the land of the sons of Ammon.

- H. We don't know when Nahash showed David kindness. Saul had beaten Nahash, 1 Sam 11
  - 1. Nahash's kindness was probably when David was running from Saul,
  - 2. probably when David left his parents in Moab, 1 Sam 22:3-4 (Moab: Lot's other son), going through Ammon
  - 3. Remember, nations at odds with Saul had seen David as an outcast from Saul and hence a possible ally

**Kid-speak:** Who was Hanun? He was the son of Nahash. What had Nahash done? He helped David. So now David wanted to tell Hanun that he was sorry that his dad died.

- I. "Kindness," the OT word for grace, but usually translated "mercy" or "kindness"
  - 1. This was the word in the last chap (v 1, 3, 7) David used of the kindness he wished to bestow on an heir of Saul
  - 2. The grandson of David's enemy, Saul, received David's kindness. Hanun, the son of David's friend, rejected it.
- J. In chap 8, Ammon was listed as territory David subdued, v 12. Perhaps they simply acknowledged David's superiority and paid tribute.
- K. David sent "servants."
  - 1. These servants were authorized to speak David's mind

2. *We* are authorized to speak Jesus' mind

2 Sam 10:3 And the officials of the sons of Ammon said to their lord Hanun, "Is David honoring your father in your eyes because he has sent comforters to you? For has David not sent his servants to you to investigate the city, and to gain intelligence of it, and to overthrow it?"

- L. It would be one thing for Hanun's officials to say Be careful, but this is arrogant advice, stirring up trouble with no proof
1. Of course, David has been aggressive to Ammon's neighbors. But even if he had subjugated Ammon, he had obviously left them to rule themselves.
  2. This was, of course, poorly reasoned counsel. David had made straight-up war when war was his aim

**Kid-speak:** What did Hanun's helper men tell him? "Don't trust David! He just wants to find out how to beat us!"

M. Won't unbelievers perceive *us* as underminers of their system, telling them to turn to a different lord and different ways? Ultimately, yes, 2 Tim 3:12, "All who desire..."

2 Sam 10:4 And Hanun took the servants of David, and he shaved off half of their beard, and he cut off their long robes in the middle- to their sitters, and he sent them away;

- N. Wuh-oh. Shouldn't oughter done that.
1. Hebrew men weren't supposed to shave their beards, Lev 19:27. Hence, shaving half the beard (presumably one side of the face, so the man would be forced to shave the other himself) was a distinct indignity.
  2. Their body-length robes were cut to (nearly) expose them
    - a. But this also would have meant the removal of the tassels all Israelites were to wear on the fringes of their robes, Num 15:38-41; Deut 22:12 (*arba kanfot*)
    - b. These insults were being sent to David and Israel's God

2 Sam 10:5 And they declared *it* to David, and he sent *messengers* to meet them; for the men were exceedingly humiliated. And the king said, "Remain in Jericho until ya'll's

facial hair grows; then you shall return.”

O. David’s envoys were too ashamed to come all the way to Jerusalem. “They,” meaning messengers, told David. David sent return messengers.

1. “Were in a state of exceeding humiliation” gives the idea better in English
2. Jericho was just on the Israel side of the Jordan, coming back from Ammon, about 40 mis. from Jerusalem

**Kid-speak:** King Hanun made really bad fun of the men David had sent to make Hanun feel better! Wow, that was mean!

2 Sam 10:6 And the <sup>1</sup>sons of Ammon saw that they had become a stench to David. And the sons of Ammon sent and hired <sup>2</sup>Aram from Beth-rehob, and <sup>3</sup>Aram from Zobah, twenty thousand footmen; and <sup>4</sup>the king of Maacah *with* a thousand men; and <sup>5</sup>the men of Tob *with* twelve thousand men.

P. We don’t know if David would have been militarily aggressive if the Ammonites didn’t act first. Perhaps he would have given Hanun a way to amend his insult.

1. 1 Chron 19:6 fills in some details, including mercenary \$
2. David had already defeated the Arameans (Syrians) from Zobah, 2 Sam 8:3-5
  - a. David had obviously left them well-armed
  - b. Now Hadadezer wouldn’t mind some payback.

2 Sam 10:7 And David heard, and he sent Joab and all the legion, the warriors.

Q. David’s forces as a *whole* are called warriors. They were now battle-hardened and had no (significant) weak links. They are *all* called “chosen” in v 9.

2 Sam 10:8 And the sons of Ammon came out and arranged the battle at the opening of the gate. And Aram of Zobah, and Rehob, and the men of Tob, and Maacah were split off in the field.

R. 1 Chron 19:7 lets us know that they chose an outpost city, Medeba, to defend.

1. The Ammonites themselves defended the city, into which they could retreat or from which they could shoot arrows
2. All their hired forces were stationed in the field, presumably hidden from view, from where they could surround David as he approached the city

**Kid-speak:** King Hanun knew he had started a fight with David, so he sent a lot of money for some other army men to come help his army fight David's army.

- ◆ S. We are reminded here of two other battles against five forces
  1. Abraham retrieved Lot from 5 armies, Gen 14
  2. Joshua fought 5 Amorite armies, Josh 10

2 Sam 10:9 And Joab saw that the front of the battle was towards him *both* before and behind. And he chose from all the chosen in Israel, and he arranged *them* to meet Aram.

- T. The (hidden?) forces in the field moved up behind David's men. Now Joab had two separate battle fronts to contend with.
  1. *All* Israel's army is called "chosen."
  2. Then another "chosen" group is selected from among them (already known to Joab, no doubt) to face the Arameans (Syrians) in the field. This indicates that the Arameans' numbers were probably greater than the Ammonites.

2 Sam 10:10 And the rest of the people he gave into the hand of his brother Abishai, and he arranged *his troops* to meet the sons of Ammon.

- U. Abishai was the one who had snuck into Saul's camp with David. (On the naughty side, he also helped Joab kill Abner.)
  1. Abishai "arranged" (v 8, 9, 10, 17) his men.
  2. He would have been looking for the best deployment. Middle first? Flanking maneuver? Feint one way to expose their counter maneuver?

**Kid-speak:** Hanun's five armies made a smart move and trapped David's army! Joab was David's general. All he could do was split his army in two to fight in two different directions.

2 Sam 10:11 And he said, "If the Syrians are stronger than I, then you shall be a deliverance [*yeshua*] for me; and if the sons of Ammon are stronger than you, then I will come to deliver [verb form] you.

V. Joab's speech: If you're getting' whapped, I'll try to help you. If I'm getting' whapped, then you for me. (If we're *both* getting' whapped, Ah, well! No need for strategy. We're just done for.)

2 Sam 10:12 "Be strong, and we will strengthen ourselves for our people, and for the cities of our God; and Yahweh will do *what is good* in His eyes."

W. The imperative "Be strong" occurs 26x. My favorite 3 are Josh 1:6, 7, 9. It is often paired with the imperative, "and be resolute."

1. Same verb, not imperative, "We will strengthen ourselves"
2. Paraphrase: "If we make ourselves strong in spirit, then we will act in strength."

X. They were at the border of Israel. If they lost, an invasion of Israel would have probably ensued.

1. "For our people": our kin
2. "And for the cities of our God": the One who made us a people

Y. "And Yahweh will do *what is good* in His eyes."

1. 'But our enemies have false gods. Can't we just assume that since we're the people of the *real* God, He'll help us?'
2. GOD PROMISES ULTIMATE BUT NOT ALWAYS IMMEDIATE VICTORY. He's not our magic charm.
3. Plus, we are *real, active agents* in this world. What we do matters. We have to set a plan in motion BEFORE we know whether it will 'succeed' (which sometimes turns to our detriment) or 'fail' (which often turns to our good).

**Kid-speak:** Joab knew that if they lost, Hanun would probably take over Israel! They would all be slaves! Joab said, "We'll have to fight our very best and trust in God."

IV. How does this relate to Christ?

Christ is a warring God. David's life pictures a world at war. But presently, Christ offers peace terms. We are peace ambassadors, often abused for our services.

V. For the Walking Wounded (1 Thess 5:14, “Uphold the strengthless”)  
Christ is the mighty, fighting on behalf of the weak (all of us).

VI. Conviction (2 Tim 4:2, “Convince, rebuke”): **What have I done wrong?**  
**How have I lost righteousness?**

How much progress has Jesus, man of war, made in His war  
against sin in my soul?

VII. Correction/ Realignment (2 Tim 4:2, “Exhort/encourage”):  
**How will I correct my error? How will I regain uprightness?**

Lord, let me perceive Your war campaign, particularly *my* sin.

VIII. Schooling in Righteousness: **How will I avoid the error and follow Christ?**  
Thank you, Lord, that I may fight *with* You vs. my sin.

Wrap-up: Jesus is a man of war. When He comes up against  
sin, it’s a fight. No compromise on His end.

His people “are freewill offerings in the day of His power,”  
Ps 110:3. The new man He creates in us has a new volition.  
Our new will can **decide** to fight with Christ against sin.

By the same token, that will can be lacking. To the degree  
that that will is lacking, Christ’s people should be dissatisfied  
and cry out to Him for “the day of His power.” We call it  
revival.

It glorifies Jesus to fight sin. It is not preferable that sin  
would never have existed. Its existence is by God’s design.  
With sin, God is able to “display His anger and make His  
power known,” Rom 9:22, which is a side of God we *need* to  
know if we want to know Him as He *is*.

Being called to hate and fight sin with Jesus is another part  
of God’s character in which we should rejoice: His  
incomprehensible GENEROSITY. Even more, how could His  
*creature* become “the fulness of Him who fills all in all”? Eph  
1:23.