

Message #3**II Samuel 2:1-11**

The first chapters of II Samuel are all about David becoming the King of Israel. Make no mistake about this fact; David is God's choice to be king. David was a man chosen by God, who was "after God's own heart" (I Sam. 13:14). He was anointed to be king over Israel when he was a teenage shepherd (I Sam. 16:1, 12-13).

Now the selection of David as king was far more important than when God selected Saul as king. The entire future program of God centered on Jesus Christ, which would include Jesus Christ reigning as King of Kings would come through David (II Sam. 7:16). David as king would become the kingly line of Jesus Christ (Luke 3:23-31). When God selected David to be the king of Israel, this was a critical moment in the entire sovereign plan of God for the ages.

When we come to this part of II Samuel, we come to the beginning of the reign of David. What we see here is that when the power went from Saul to David, it was not an easy transition. Even though at this point Saul is dead, David did not have a smooth glide into kingly power.

What we see in these verses is this:

EVEN THOUGH IT WAS THE SOVEREIGN WILL OF GOD FOR DAVID TO BE KING, DAVID'S ELEVATION TO THE THRONE DID NOT COME INSTANTLY OR EASILY.

David was totally and completely in the center of God's will in becoming king of Israel, but the process was not easy. It was a time process filled with many struggles. You would think after Saul was dead, the process of him becoming king would have been easy.

From David's perspective, he was saddened by the death of Saul, but he must have thought well now we can get on with what God wants me to do, become the next king of Israel. But David was in for a rude awakening. His rise to becoming king would not be easy. It would come as a result of many years of struggle.

There is a tremendous lesson to learn from this. When we are exactly where God wants us to be and doing exactly what God wants us to do in the eternal program of God, things will not always be easy or quick. **But the good news is eventually the wonderful, sweet blessings of God will come.**

Now this text really begins David's kingly ministry. There are five historical observations we want to make:

HISTORICAL OBSERVATION #1 – David begins by asking God about His will. 2:1

When this story begins, David had just returned from a tremendous victory over the Amalekites. He had slaughtered them and had recovered an awesome amount of spoils.

In the aftermath of this, David learned that Saul and his sons were dead. He was deeply and truly saddened by the news and he certainly was aware that he was to be the next king.

But what David does in **verse 1** is significant; **he does not move forward without consulting God.** Even though he is really in a moment of victory, we find him humbly asking God for directions as to his next move.

He did not know exactly what God wanted him to do next, so he prayed. This is important. This is a critical key to his future greatness. He talks to God about what he should do.

As long as people think they know what God wants them to do, they will not ask God about it. Any who want to know God's will in some decision, must go to God and ask Him. David would later write, "I sought the Lord and He answered me" (Ps. 34:4).

This was a great way to begin his role as king of Israel, he starts by praying.

Now what David specifically asks God is whether or not he should "go up." In fact, this point is stressed five times in verses 1-3 (3x v. 1; 1x v. 2; 1x v. 3). **Now this request about ascending up, will turn out to refer to 1) location, 2) elevation, and 3) coronation.** This will be a major move up for David.

Geographically, it would mean that David would move north to one of the cities of Judah. David was living in Ziklag in the Deep South and he wanted to know whether or not God wanted him to move to a city in Judah.

God answered him and said yes go up in elevation and direction. So then David asked God which city he should move to. God said move to Hebron. Hebron was located about 24-30 miles NE of Ziklag and about 19 miles SE of Jerusalem.

So David is not making any move until he consults God.

There is something intriguing here about where God directs David to go. He could have said well go to Jerusalem and I will see to it that the keys of the city are turned over to you. In all reality that is where David will end up. But that was not God's will at the moment. There was much that needed to be done before God would direct David to Jerusalem, so He told him to go to Hebron.

Hebron was the city of Abraham (Gen. 13:18; 14:13). It was where the LORD appeared to him via three men who informed them that Sarah would have a son (Gen. 18:1-15). Sarah died there (Gen. 23:2); Abraham was buried there (Gen. 25:9, 10); so was Isaac (Gen. 35:27-29) and Rebekah, Jacob and Leah (Gen. 49:31:50:13). God directs David here because it is a direct connection to Abraham.

Fulfilling God's will in life is a process. God directs us little by little to place by place, step by step. The ultimate fulfillment of the plan of God for any of us does not happen overnight.

HISTORICAL OBSERVATION #2 – David obeys and does what God told him to do. 2:2-3

David is starting off right. He immediately obeyed. He took his two wives and his men and their families and they all moved up north to Hebron.

Now there are literally hundreds and thousands of people moving with David. He brought with him all his men and their families, plus his own.

Now in all reality what is prompting this move is that it is the will of God. Most people who relocate do not relocate because it is the specific will of God for their lives.

Most people who move and relocate to another place do so for the following reasons:

- 1) Relationship change; 2) Job change; 3) Different climate or environment; 4) Finances; 5) Aging related issues; 6) Downgrading; 7) Upgrading; 8) Family.

David's move was for none of these reasons. **He is moving because it is the specific will of God that he moves.**

Believers make a mistake when they pick up and move without consulting God. In fact, things may not turn out well for those who do that.

HISTORICAL OBSERVATION #3 – David is anointed king over Judah. 2:4a

When you specifically do the will of God, good things happen. David was immediately blessed by God for following the word and will of God. When he got to Hebron, he was anointed as king by one of the tribes of Israel, Judah. **It was a small beginning, but it was a beginning.**

David experienced three major anointings for being king:

- 1) He was anointed by Samuel to be king of Israel - I Sam. 16
- 2) He was anointed by the men of Judah to be king of Judah - II Sam. 2:4
- 3) He was anointed by the elders of Israel to be king of Israel - II Sam. 5:3

Now the first anointing by Samuel occurred when David was a teenager. So what we observe here is that the actual process of getting David from Samuel's anointing to king of Israel was no instant or easy matter. It was quite an ordeal.

God's secret, silent, sacred sovereignty was at work every step of the way in David's life. The things David endured and the difficulties he faced and the time that elapsed were all part of God's sovereignty.

Getting to where God wants us to be in life is a process. Usually if it is the will of God, it starts small, but then it grows and grows. That is what happens with David.

HISTORICAL OBSERVATION #4 – David grants grace and honor to the men of Jabesh-gilead. 2:4b-7

The men of Judah informed David that it was the men from Jabesh-gilead that gave Saul a proper burial. They had risked their lives to recover the four bodies and cremate them and bury their bones (I Sam. 31:11-13). Jabesh-gilead was located about 70 miles north of Hebron.

Many years before Saul was killed, he had delivered the people of Jabesh-gilead from the Ammonites (I Samuel 11) and the people never forgot that and wanted to do something nice for Saul. So they went and performed some type of cremation and took him and his sons' bones and buried them in Judah.

It is interesting that about 25 years later, David will dig up the cremated bones of Saul and his sons and rebury them in the tribe of Benjamin's territory (II Sam. 21:12-14).

David saw this as an act of respect and kindness. So David began his reign by inviting these warriors to join him. According to **verse 5**, David sent messengers to the men. He was God's chosen king of Israel now that Saul was dead and David invited them to join him. This was his first official act as king.

This does teach us something about honoring the dead. It does mean something to God. When we do good things for those who have lost faithful loved ones, it does matter.

Now when the men of Jabesh-gilead came to David, he did four very positive things:

Positive Request #1 - He asks God to bless them for their kindness. 2:5

David does not ask God to bless everyone, but those who are loyal for their kindness to Saul. Now the word "kindness" is the word for mercy. This is a critical Biblical and theological term. If we think through what they did, they took it upon themselves to risk their lives to go get bones that could not do anything for them. Those bones were totally helpless and hopeless and these men went and rescued them. That is what the mercy of God does for sinners.

Positive Request #2 - He asks God to show them His mercy and His truth. 2:6a

David uses the same word "lovingkindness" which is mercy. He asks God to do the same for them and also permit them to come to terms with His truth. David believed that understanding the truth of God was a blessing from God and He asks God to let them grasp truth. Understanding the truth of God is a blessing of God.

Positive Request #3 - He promises that he will do good things for these people. **2:6b**

David says as king, I will do good things for you. In Hebrew the pronoun “I” is emphatic. So David is stressing what he will personally do. David says I have not only prayed that God will do good things for you, but I am going to do good things for you.

Positive Request #4 - He challenges them to be strong and courageous because he is now the king. **2:7**

David did all of this because these men honored the dead bodies of Saul and his sons.

HISTORICAL OBSERVATION #5 – David is not accepted as king by everyone. **2:8-11**

When it comes to the true work of God in bringing His man to be the leader, rarely will it be 100%. In fact, if it is 100 % it may not be the real leader God sent.

David was God’s choice of king, but not everyone in Israel was willing to submit to the will of God in this. Only Judah had honored David as the king at this point and the other eleven tribes seemed to back Ishbosheth, the son of Saul.

According to **verses 8-9**, Abner, who was the cousin of Saul, was the military commander of Saul, and David certainly had not won him over to his side. In fact, it was David who humiliated Abner previously for not protecting Saul (I Sam. 26:15-16).

After Saul’s death, Abner took it upon himself to take Ishbosheth the son of Saul to Mahanaim and make him king. Ishbosheth became the king of Israel for two years. Mahanaim was a Levitical city located on the east side of the Jordan River. It was one of the cities of refuge (Josh. 21:38). Abner probably thought this will be a safe place for us to live.

We don’t know a lot about Ishbosheth, but as Dr. Warren Wiersbe observed, he appears to be a “weak puppet ruler manipulated by Abner” (II Sam. 3:11; 4:1)” (*Be Restored*, p. 30).

Now Abner clearly knew that David was to be the next king of Israel. Saul himself had testified of that. But Abner was not about to accept it, so he made Ishbosheth his puppet king.

What is fascinating is that Ishbosheth is not God’s choice, but he has the support of the majority of the people of Israel for a short while.

Ishbosheth was eventually assassinated during the last two years of David’s reign in Hebron. David reigned in Hebron for seven years and six months.

PARTING THOUGHTS:

- 1) There is value in adversity and loss in that we can draw close to the Lord.**
- 2) To be guided by God, we need to pray and ask God to guide us.**
- 3) Getting to what God wants us to be ultimately takes time.**
- 4) Following God is a step-by-step process and if we don't obey God, we will never know the will of God.**
- 5) When you are doing God's will, rarely will you initially have 100% support.**