

“Two Opposing Kingdoms”
2 Samuel 2
(Preached at Trinity, July 29, 2018)

I'm supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord's Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I'll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. In **Chapter 1** David learned of the deaths of Saul and Jonathan and called a national time of mourning. There is no mention of Saul's two other sons who also died in battle. There is now only one remaining son born to Saul, Ish-bosheth.
2. As we enter **Chapter 2**, David is making preparations for ascending to the throne. He knows he has been anointed by God but still recognizes his need for Divine direction, so he enquires, "Shall I go up to one of the cities of Judah." David is still in Ziklag but he knows he must enter Judah to become their king but he dare not move without first seeking God's direction. God's answer, "Go up."
3. David's days with the Philistines had come to an end. It was time for David and all who were with him in Ziklag to relocate to Hebron. Hebron was rich in covenantal symbolism. It was the burial place of Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, Jacob and Leah. It was there that David is anointed king over Judah. The kingdom of God has now come, God's king enthroned, but not all would receive it. David was enthroned over a single tribe - It would begin as a mustard seed. Like our Lord's Kingdom, David's kingdom was not immediately universally acknowledged or universally accepted.
Matthew 13:31-32 NAS - "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field; ³² and this is smaller than all *other* seeds; but when it is full grown, it is larger than the garden plants, and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and nest in its branches."
4. Meanwhile Abner, the commander of Saul's army, is hungry for power. He fears that with Saul dead he will lose the position he previously held. It is such a perfect picture of the heart of fallen man. We are self-willed and hungry for power. We hate authority and desire autonomy. Even though Abner knew David was God's anointed he sought to have his own way.
Romans 1:21 NAU - "For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened."
5. Abner brought Saul's son, Ish-bosheth and made him king over Israel. There were now two competing kings, one over Judah, the other over Israel - one anointed by God, the other anointed by man. While it may seem like just another account of ancient rival kingdom it is much more.
 - On one hand, Abner set the stage for the permanent division of the Northern and Southern tribes after the death of Solomon. Israel would only be united under the true King, Jesus Christ. This would only happen through the church.

Jeremiah 50:4-5 NAU - "In those days and at that time," declares the LORD, "the sons of Israel will come, *both* they and the sons of Judah as well; they will go along weeping as they go, and it will be the LORD their God they will seek. ⁵ "They will ask for the way to Zion, *turning* their faces in its direction; they will come that they may join themselves to the LORD *in* an everlasting covenant that will not be forgotten."

- More important, it puts on display the struggle that continues to this day. Sinful man refuses to bow before the King and Kingdom established by God.
6. Abner's move was a direct assault upon God. By opposing God's chosen king he was opposing God's authority. This will be the history of the world until Jesus comes in power and glory.
- I. Present opposition to the God's Kingdom
- A. There has been opposition to God's reign from the beginning
1. This was the problem in the garden. Adam denied God's right to rule
 2. Redemptive history is a continuation of man's hatred of God's reign
 - a. What was the chief problem during the days of Noah?
 - b. What was the chief issue with the Tower of Babel? Was it not a desire for independence?
Genesis 11:4 NAU - "Come, let us build for ourselves a city, and a tower whose top *will reach* into heaven, and let us make for ourselves a name"
 - c. What was the chief issue with Sodom and Gomorrah. Once again, it was a declaration of autonomy.
Genesis 18:20 NAU - "The outcry of Sodom and Gomorrah is indeed great, and their sin is exceedingly grave."
 3. The Psalmist states it clearly:
Psalms 2:2-3 NAU - "The kings of the earth take their stand And the rulers take counsel together Against the LORD and against His Anointed, saying, ³ "Let us tear their fetters apart And cast away their cords from us!"
- B. David was God's anointed
1. Abner's denial of David's rightful rule was a denial of God's rightful rule
 2. Sinful man continues to labor to establish their own kingdom. This world is a display of human efforts towards independence, of self-government. This is why there is such hatred towards authority. We should all examine our own hearts.
How do you feel about civil authority?
How do you feel about male leadership in the home?
Are you among those who believe the church should be a democracy?
- C. The ultimate display of rebellion is the denial of Christ's right to reign
1. Jesus told a parable
Luke 19:12-14 NAU - "A nobleman went to a distant country to receive a kingdom for himself, and *then* return. ¹³ "And he called ten of his slaves, and gave them ten minas and said to them, 'Do business *with this* until I come *back*.' ¹⁴ "But his citizens hated him and sent a delegation after him, saying, 'We do not want this man to reign over us.'"

2. The Jews rejected Christ as their King
John 19:15 NAU - "Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your King?"
 The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar."
 - a. Pilate wrote over the head of Jesus as He hung on the cross:
 "Jesus the Nazarene, the King of the Jews."
 - b. The priests were infuriated at this:
John 19:20-21 NAU - "Therefore many of the Jews read this inscription, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, Latin *and* in Greek. ²¹
 So the chief priests of the Jews were saying to Pilate, "Do not write, 'The King of the Jews'; but that He said, 'I am King of the Jews.'"
- D. The entire world today continues to reject the reign of Christ
1. It can be discouraging for God's people who remain in the tiny minority. It seems that we are all alone
 2. This has often been the heart of God's people
 - a. Elijah felt he was alone in following God – but he was wrong
Romans 11:2-5 NAS - "Or do you not know what the Scripture says in *the passage about* Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel? ³ "Lord, they have killed Thy prophets, they have torn down Thine altars, and I alone am left, and they are seeking my life." ⁴ But what is the divine response to him? "I have kept for Myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal." ⁵ In the same way then, there has also come to be at the present time a remnant according to *God's* gracious choice."
 - b. In 1566 the Scottish reformer, John Knox, was ready to give up in despair: "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit, and put an end at thy good pleasure to this my miserable life, for justice and truth are not to be found among the children of men."¹
 3. We must never presume that outward conditions are reliable indicators of the actual condition of God's Kingdom
- II. We are assured of the ultimate victory of God's Kingdom
- A. God Kingdom is progressing according to God's plan and purpose
1. In a great token of grace and mercy He invites sinful men to enter. But it is a holy Kingdom. All who enter must lay down their weapons of warfare against the King and surrender before His throne.
 2. The great New Testament command:
Matthew 4:17 - "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."
 3. It is with great folly that sinful men deny God's right to reign.
Psalms 2:4-6 NAU - "He who sits in the heavens laughs, The Lord scoffs at them. ⁵ Then He will speak to them in His anger And terrify them in His fury, saying, ⁶ "But as for Me, I have installed My King Upon Zion, My holy mountain."

¹ Dale Ralph Davis, *2 Samuel: Out of Every Adversity*, Focus on the Bible Commentary, (Great Britain: Christian Focus Publications, 2002), 37.

- B. Over and over in history God displays His wrath upon those who deny His Kingdom
1. Christians have stood bold though they were terribly persecuted—they stood bold because they were persuaded of the great victory of Christ.. One of the latter Roman emperors was Flavius Claudius Julianus who ascended the throne in A.D. 360. He was particularly cruel in his persecution of Christians. Taunting one believer named Agaton he asked him some questions with reference to so many Christians being put to death. “How is your carpenter of Nazareth? Is he finding work these days?” Without hesitation, the believer replied, “He is perhaps taking time away from building mansions for the faithful, to build a coffin for your empire.”²
 3. God will not be mocked. The psalmist says God scoffs at them. "He who sits in the heavens laughs, The Lord scoffs at them." Modern history displays this over and over:
 - a. In the midst of the enlightenment, when deism was spreading rapidly, Voltaire claimed Jesus did not exist and that the Gospels were produced by those who wanted to create God in their own image. On his death bed a priest asked him to denounce Satan to which he responded, "Now now, dear man, this is not the time to be making enemies." He died in 1778 and in 1814 his remains were stolen and dumped in a garbage heap. None were the wiser to this until 50 years later when his enormous sarcophagus was opened and discovered it was empty. Voltaire had proclaimed that within twenty-five years the Bible would be forgotten and Christianity would be a thing of the past. Forty years after his death in 1778 the Bible and other Christian literature were being printed in what had once been Voltaire’s very own home. **GOD WILL NOT BE MOCKED**
 - b. German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche declared Christianity as the religion of weaklings. He coined the phrase, “God is dead.” In the last months of his life he suffered a complete mental breakdown.
 4. God will not be mocked
 - a. Abner will soon meet his untimely end at the hand of Joab
 - b. Ish-bosheth would soon join him
2 Samuel 4:1 NAU - "Now when Ish-bosheth, Saul's son, heard that Abner had died in Hebron, he lost courage, and all Israel was disturbed."
2 Samuel 4:8 NAU - "Then they brought the head of Ish-bosheth to David at Hebron and said to the king, "Behold, the head of Ish-bosheth the son of Saul"
 - c. God was about to establish David upon his throne. Although assaults upon his right to reign would not end God promised him a kingdom that would never end.

² Ibid.

C. Jesus already sits on the throne

1. He has already been exalted – coronated as King of kings
Philippians 2:9-11 NAS - "Therefore also God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, ¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those who are in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, ¹¹ and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."
2. He has and is bringing His enemies beneath His feet in utter defeat
Psalm 110:1-2 NAS - "The LORD says to my Lord: "Sit at My right hand, Until I make Thine enemies a footstool for Thy feet." ² The LORD will stretch forth Thy strong scepter from Zion, *saying*, "Rule in the midst of Thine enemies."
Acts 2:36 NAS - "Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ-- this Jesus whom you crucified."
3. He is about to return as Judge of all the earth
Revelation 22:12 NAS - "Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward *is* with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done."
Revelation 1:7 NAS - "Behold, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. Even so. Amen."

Conclusion

1. Have you submitted yourself to the Lordship of Christ?
2. One of David's first acts as king was to commend Jabesh-gilead for their graciousness in providing a burial for Saul. After thanking them, he made a bid for their allegiance.
2 Samuel 2:7 NAU - "Now therefore, let your hands be strong and be valiant; for Saul your lord is dead, and also the house of Judah has anointed me king over them."
3. Abner foolishly attempted to set up a rival kingdom. This is precisely what people are doing today. Which kingdom have you vowed allegiance to?
 Jesus bids you to bow in allegiance to Him
Psalm 2:11-12 NAU - "Worship the LORD with reverence And rejoice with trembling. ¹² Do homage to the Son, that He not become angry, and you perish *in* the way, For His wrath may soon be kindled. How blessed are all who take refuge in Him!"